Introduction

Gracen Brilmyer and Lydia Tang

Introduction

Preservation is entangled with many values. In an archival sense, appraisal—or the ways archivists select what to preserve and keep for future use—offers central questions to the profession: what materials are determined to have value for future users? What responsibilities come with selecting what to acquire and assessing capacity to process and store it? And how might archivists reassess what to continue storing, caring for, and preserving for the future? Inseparable from these questions are concerns around time, money, (physical and digital) storage, materiality, expertise, as well as access and use—in the present and the future. For disabled people, the concept of preservation can come with complicated connotations. We are often taught about our own elimination: through eugenic logics of "survival of the fittest" or rehabilitation practices that normalize us into "productive citizens," instilling beliefs that disability *should* be eliminated or at least avoided at all cost. We often face our own exclusion or assumptions that our lives shouldn't be preserved—through ableism, inaccessibility, institutionalization, as well as laws and barriers that can keep us out of public places. And we see how that is reflected in some histories of

documenting disability, which can lack our own voices, agency, or us all together.[1]

Yet, disabled people have long resisted such assumptions, showing the politics, community, resistance, and joy in being disabled. Mia Mingus tells us "It means something to be disabled. Never forget that."[2] Rosmarie Garland-Thomson pushes back against eugenic assumptions and instead makes "a case for conserving disability," highlighting the contributions to our world from "disabled people-as-they-are."[3] Disabled, sick, mad, chronically ill, blind, d/Deaf, and neurodivergent people know the magic that we bring to the world—the ways we perceive, navigate, build, care, and collaborate that is worth keeping for the future.

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1   As the co-editors of this book, we occasionally use "us" and "we" as we are speaking to communities—archival and disability—to which we belong. However, we acknowledge that these communities do not exist in singular and also intersect with other identities. We acknowledge our positions as they have shaped the ways that we relate to both disability and archives, and our unique life experiences that might not be shared by others in these communities. Lydia is a mixed race Chinese-American cis neurodiverse woman working in LIS technology from a middle class background. Gracen is a white, non-binary disabled and chronically ill person in academia from a middle class background. We invite our readers to consider your own identities and the assumptions that shape the ways you understand disability and archives as you engage with the topics discussed in this book.

2   Mia Mingus, "Access Intimacy, Interdependence and Disability Justice," *Leaving Evidence* (blog), April 12, 2017, https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2017/04/12/access-intimacy-interdependence-and-disability-justice/.

3   Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 9, no. 3 (July 18, 2012): 339–55, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-012-9380-0.

Preserving Disability: Disability and the Archival Profession meditates on the concept of "preservation" expansively for archives and disability, whether thinking about how it manifests in archival decision-making such as appraisal or in disabled lives and the systems that support or suppress them. *This book begins with the assumption that disability is something worth preserving.* First, it attempts to preserve disability quite literally as this anthology documents disabled people's perspectives and experiences of the archival profession. This book weaves together first-person narratives and case studies contributed predominantly from disabled archivists and disabled archives users, bringing critical perspectives and approaches to archives. Chapters span topics such as accessibility of archives and first-person experiences researching disability collections for disabled archives users; disclosure and accommodations and self-advocacy of disabled archivists; and processing and stewarding disability-related collections. We mark this present moment in the archival field as it intersects with disability—for workers, users, and the materials they encounter—and show how archives shape and are shaped by disabled people.

Second, this book asks critical questions of the archival profession to think about the values that underlie preservation: what we want to keep from the past, how we imagine disability into the future, and the work—and nuance—it takes to do this. Whether creating or expanding archival collections on disability or building better access and support systems for disabled people to use, work in, and learn about archives, this book imagines archival futures that center disabled people. Through the archival issues and interventions outlined in each chapter, we not only show the impact that the archival profession has on disabled people but also delineate areas for intervention and propose some practical—and expansive—approaches for doing so.

To introduce and contextualize this book, we first pay trib-ute to the previous work that has allowed this book to take shape. We could not have done this work without the intel-lectual and practical contributions of LIS workers of color as well as the crucial lineages of disability and accessibility within libraries. After outlining some of the pinnacle facets of these areas of knowledge, we then trace disability as it has been addressed within archives specifically. From scholar-ship, working groups, and the eventual formation of the So-ciety of American Archivists (SAA) Disability and Accessi-bility Section—from which this book directly emerged—we trace the archival histories that lead to this present moment in the archival profession.

Then, to orient our readers, we have divided the chapters in this book into three overlapping clusters, which allow us to illuminate major themes described amongst the authors. The first cluster focuses on the impacts of archives, center-ing the multifaceted ways that disabled users are affected by their experiences in archives. The second cluster turns to the experiences of disabled archival workers, highlight-ing the many barriers to applying, obtaining, and retaining jobs as well as the ways working in archives might shape our identities. The third and final cluster turns to dimensions of archival work and our relationships with records: some chapters focus on building or expanding collections on dis-ability while others show disabled approaches to description, processing, community outreach, and memory work. Col-lectively, the chapters in this book address the nuances of both disability and archives—critically drawing attention to the histories, present experiences, and future possibilities of the archival profession.

Starting Points

This book emerges from many lineages of disability story-telling and critical approaches within library and information studies (LIS) and elsewhere. From the histories of accessibility work in library spaces to the more recent work within archives, we are indebted to the many practitioners, thinkers, scholars, and community members who have laid the intellectual and practical foundations for this collection. While the description that follows is not an exhaustive representation of the work that has preceded us, we aim to show the ways that work on disability and accessibility in the archival profession has emerged from the collective work of others.

We are first and foremost indebted to the work disabled people do that is often considered outside of the "archival profession." Disabled people have long documented ourselves in many ways: through performances, poetry, social media, and art, and other forms of storytelling like Alice Wong's Disability Visibility Project. These practices of disabled making and documenting have shaped the ways we think about archiving (and have, for example, influenced much of the first author's research), inform our archival practices, as well as some of the chapters in this book. We acknowledge the ways disabled people preserve our own stories—inside and outside of what might be considered the archival profession—shape lenses and approaches within archives, and also help us call into question the many barriers presented for disabled people to enter the archival field.

When addressing the archival profession, we are confronted with a plethora of norms, specifically those that have historically solidified around whiteness and white supremacy. This book would not be possible if it weren't for the many archivists and librarians of color (and those working with and alongside them) who have laid critical groundwork on cri-

tiquing, dismantling, changing, and reimagining such traditions in our fields—both in scholarship and in practice. Many have identified the ways whiteness has catalyzed the materials that repositories hold—in legacy systems and today[4]—and have built frameworks for addressing racist materials and the descriptions thereof.[5] Crucial to this conversation has been the ways that whiteness has shaped professions in LIS through the ways materials are created, valued, processed, and represented.

Other important interventions have focused on workers of color and how whiteness has been normalized and thus invisibilized in the landscape of professional values, worker identities, workplace culture, and other facets of the LIS profession that take Western, Euroamerican assumptions

4   Dorothy Berry, "The House Archives Built," *Up//Root*, June 22, 2021, https://www.uproot.space/features/the-house-archives-built; Jennifer Bowers, Katherine Crowe, and Peggy Keeran, "'If You Want the History of a White Man, You Go to the Library': Critiquing Our Legacy, Addressing Our Library Collections Gaps," *Collection Management* 42, no. 3–4 (October 2, 2017): 159–79, https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2017.1329104.

5   For example, see: Anthony W. Dunbar, "Introducing Critical Race Theory to Archival Discourse: Getting the Conversation Started," *Archival Science* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 109–29, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-006-9022-6; Rachel E. Winston, "Praxis for the People: Critical Race Theory and Archival Practice," April 13, 2021, https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/11969.003.0020; Jessica Tai, "Cultural Humility as a Framework for Anti-Oppressive Archival Description," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3 (January 10, 2020), https://journals.litwinbooks.com/index.php/jclis/article/view/120. Melissa Nelson, "Archiving Hate: Racist Materials in Archives," *Melissa J. Nelson* (blog), March 18, 2020, https://melissajnelson.com/explore/information-management/archiving-hate-racist-materials-in-archives/.

as standards for practice. This work has laid bare how LIS work is political in the ways we treat materials, workers, and LIS education. It highlights how addressing these systemic issues is not a simple task, to avoid placing the labor of addressing issues solely on the very people who are harmed by them.[6] This book is informed and indebted to the foundations built by those cited above as well as the organizing from groups such as *We Here*, "the Society of American Archivists' Archives and Archivists of Color" Section of the Society of American Archivists, Documenting the Now, and many, many others who have identified issues around and interventions for documentation, aggregation, authorship, representation, education, labor, equitable pay, and professional values for marginalized and minoritized people within LIS. As we build toward more liberatory work, this organizing and scholarship have made possible the expansive critical conversations not only about norms in LIS professions but also how our work is intersectional and coalitional. We build on the critical work of those who have intervened in the

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6   For example, see: Tonia Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty: In Search of Black American Transitional and Restorative Justice," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (June 2017), https://journals.litwinbooks.com//index.php/jclis/article/view/42. April Hathcock, "White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS—In the Library with the Lead Pipe," accessed January 16, 2017, http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/lis-diversity/. Gina Schlesselman-Tarango, ed., *Topographies of Whiteness: Mapping Whiteness in Library and Information Science* (Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2017). Mario H. Ramirez, "Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative," *The American Archivist* 78, no. 2 (September 1, 2015): 339–56, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.78.2.339. Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez et al., "An Introduction to Radical Empathy in Archival Practice," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021), https://doi.org/10.24242/jclis.v3i2.171.

profession—on the ground and in written form—through addressing race, gender, sexuality, and class, engaging with those who have laid a critical foundation for disabled people to add, intersect, and develop our own approaches.

Histories of addressing disabled people and their access to cultural institutions can be traced back to libraries, which have a long history of developing accessibility services.[7] For example, during the mid-nineteenth century, major library institutions established accessible materials: The Library of Congress opened their reading room for the blind and The American Library Association (ALA) founded a Committee for Library Work with the Blind[8] while also shaping new accessibility measures for libraries to serve wounded veterans of World War I.[9]

Currently, the ALA's Policy Manual outlines a 9-point accessibility statement ranging from library services, facilities, collections, assistive technology, employment, library education, conferences, and publications. It describes how people with disabilities "need to be recruited into all levels of the profession" and that "graduate education should require students to learn about accessibility issues, assistive technology, the

7   Brian Wentz, Paul T. Jaeger, and John Carlo Bertot, eds., *Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and the Inclusive Future of Libraries* (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2015).

8   Jaeger, Paul T. and John Carlo Bertot. "Libraries Have Been and Continue to be the Champions for Access." *American Libraries.* October 5, 2015 https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/ada-inclusion-in-libraries/

9   Tang, Lydia. "Library Service for the Blind." *American Library Association Archives blog (blog).* October 3, 2014. https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/2014/10/03/library-service-for-the-blind/

needs of people with disabilities both as users and employees, and laws applicable to the rights of people with disabilities as they impact library services."[10] This work has established important inroads to addressing systemic awareness and inclusion within the library profession.

More recently, many library organizations and associations have established guidelines and best practices around such topics as the accessibility of digital resources[11] and emerging technology,[12] Universal Design for Learning,[13] and inclusive design for library spaces and services,[14] shaping new approaches to the accessibility and use of library spaces for disabled patrons. Additionally, focus has been placed on disabled library workers, highlighting biases against librar-

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10 American Library Association Policy Manual. B.9.3.2 Library Services for People with Disabilities. https://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/54libpersonnel#B.9.3.2

11 Southwell, Kristina L., and Jacquelyn Slater. "An Evaluation of Finding Aid Accessibility for Screen Readers." *Information Technology and Libraries* 32, no. 3 (September 15, 2013): 34–46. https://doi.org/10.6017/ital.v32i3.3423. Southwell, K.L. and Slater, J. (2012), "Accessibility of Digital Special Collections Using Screen Readers", *Library Hi Tech*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 457-471.

12 Zack Lischer-Katz, Jasmine Clark. (2021) "XR Accessibility Initiatives in Academic Libraries." *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 58:1, pages 780–83

13 For example: the conference presentations of Katie Quirin Manwiller

14 Michelle Kowalsky and John Woodruff, *Creating Inclusive Library Environments: A Planning Guide for Serving Patrons with Disabilities* (American Library Association, 2016).

ians of color and those with disabilities[15] and underscoring the impacts on disabled workers such as the discomfort, stress, and anxiety that can occur around disclosure, accommodations, and work.[16] Vital to the library literature are calls to action to better support disabled librarians.[17]

Alongside and building on the work around disability and accessibility in libraries, the documented archival literature and practice on disability coalesced later in the 20th century. Some of the earliest articles on disability in *The American Archivist* cover accessibility services for disabled patrons. For example, Deaf historian Lance Fisher's 1979 article made important contributions to archival access as he spoke from his experience as both an archivist and archival user and outlined accessibility measures as well as community outreach central for recruiting deaf patrons.[18] Shortly thereafter,

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15 Mary E. Brown, "Invisible Debility: Attitudes toward the Underrepresented in Library Workplaces," *Public Library Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2015): 124–33, doi:10.1080/01616846.2015.1036707; Michelle Khuu, "Make the Library Loud: Removing Communication Barriers for Library Workers with Hearing Loss," *Up//Root*, November 17, 2021, https://www.uproot.space/features/make-the-library-loud.

16 JJ Pionke, Fobazi Ettarh, Jessica Schomberg "Disability at Work: Libraries, Built to Exclude"; Jessica Schomberg and Shanna Hollich, "Introduction," *Library Trends* 67, no. 3 (May 8, 2019): 415–22, https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2019.0003; Joanne Oud, "Systemic Workplace Barriers for Academic Librarians with Disabilities | Oud | College & Research Libraries," accessed May 28, 2020, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.2.169.

17 Jessica Schomberg and Wendy Highby, *Beyond Accommodation: Creating an Inclusive Workplace for Disabled Library Workers* (Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2020).

18 "Lance Fischer, "The Deaf and Archival Research: Some Problems and Solutions," *American Archivist* 42 (October 1979): 463-64.

Brenda Kepley published a broad overview of accessibility tools, tips, and resources for archives to use in order to better serve a wide range of disabled people.[19] This early scholarship, taking shape at the same time as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was being signed into law, highlights some initial calls for archives to improve accessibility, expand their services, as well as navigate new legal compliance to better support disabled people.[20]

Archival conversations around disability and accessibility gained significant momentum around 2008, as a critical mass of outreach, scholarship, and best practices began to emerge. Another major push for accessibility and disability awareness came with the SAA Archives Management Round Table/Records Management Round Table Joint Working Group on Accessibility in Archives and Records Management in 2008.[21] They issued a survey, which resulted in a summary published in *Archival Outlook*,[22] followed by the creation of the *Best Practices for Working with Archives Researchers with Physical Disabilities* and *Best Practices for Working with Employees with Physical Disabilities*,

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19 Brenda Beasley Kepley, "Archives: Accessibility for the Disabled," *American Archivist* 46 (Winter 1983): 42-51.

20 Gilardi, Ronald. "The Archival Setting and People with Disabilities: A Legal Analysis." *American Archivist, 56, no. 4 (1993): 704–13.*

21 This is also the same year that Frank Serene published his book "Making Archives Accessible for People with Disabilities." Frank H. Serene, *Making Archives Accessible for People with Disabilities* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2008), https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/005813412.

22 Ganz, Michelle. "Survey Conducted on 'Accessibility in Archives." *Archival Outlook* (Nov/Dec 2008): 8, 24. http://www.archivists.org/periodicals/ao_backissues/AO-NovDec08.pdf

which was adopted by SAA in 2010. In addition to being iconically linked to the MPLP (More Product, Less Process) approach to archival processing, SAA President and Fellow Mark A. Greene was a champion of accessibility, hosting the SAA Accessibility Awareness Forum also in 2010. Greene's remarks at the forum showcased both his own journey as someone who developed a progressive disability and concluded with several leading questions to provoke introspection about the accessibility of the repository.[23]

This foundational work prompted a new wave of archival literature around physical archives' accessibility,[24] reparative description and metadata on disability,[25] and access to virtual materials.[26] For one, Sara White shifted the archival

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23 Greene, Mark A. "Archival Accessibility for All: An Awareness Forum." Presentation at Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 2010.

24 Griffith, Debra. "Ergonomics in the Archives." *Archival Outlook* (January/February 2011): 10-11; Tang, Lydia. "Engaging Users with Disabilities for Accessible Spaces." *Archival Outlook* (July/August 2019): 12-13. Tang, Lydia, Blake Relle, Erin Wolfe, and Fernanda Perrone. "Making Archives and Special Collections Accessible." *Archival Outlook* (November/December 2016): 4-5, 28.

25 For example: Rinn, Meghan. "Nineteenth-Century Depictions of Disabilities and Modern Metadata: A Consideration of Material in the P. T. Barnum Digital Collection." *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 5, no. 1 (March 20, 2018). https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol5/iss1/1.

26 Davis, Lora. "Providing Virtual Services to All: A Mixed-Method Analysis of the Website Accessibility of Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries (PACSCL) Member Repositories." *The American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (April 2012): 35–55. https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.75.1.a716w067468262h5. Sabharwal, Arjun. "Digital Representation of Disability History: Developing a Virtual Exhibition." *Archival Issues* 34, no. 1 (2012): 7–26.

landscape by bringing concepts from the field of disability studies into archival discourse. Centering on themes of complex embodiment as a way to account for the multifaceted nature of disability experiences, her 2012 article addressed appraisal, arrangement, and description.[27] White's now canonical article started pivotal conversations on how not only to address disability in archival materials but also to incorporate disability theories to think about the complexity of archival work. Building on White's work and also thinking alongside theories from disability studies, Gracen Brilmyer has more recently developed scholarship on disability and archives. While some of their work uses disability theory to address disability in history,[28] other projects use empirical research to highlight current issues in archival spaces. Using interviews, they have addressed archival representation

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27 Sara White, "Crippling the Archives: Negotiating Notions of Disability in Appraisal and Arrangement and Description," *The American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (2012): 109–24.

28 Gracen Brilmyer, "Towards Sickness: Developing a Critical Disability Archival Methodology," *Journal of Feminist Scholarship* 17, no. 17 (January 1, 2021): 26–45, https://doi.org/10.23860/jfs.2020.17.03; Gracen Brilmyer, "Toward a Crip Provenance: Centering Disability in Archives through Its Absence," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 9, no. 1 (February 17, 2022), https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol9/iss1/3; Gracen Brilmyer, "Archival Assemblages: Applying Disability Studies' Political/Relational Model to Archival Description," *Archival Science* 18, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 95–118, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-018-9287-6.

and accessibility[29] and have more recently (as featured in a chapter of this book) focused on disabled archivists, shaping discourse around disability and archives.

Nearly a decade after the formation of the Joint Working Group on Accessibility in Archives and Records Management, the SAA Task Force to Revise Best Practices on Accessibility was convened in 2017 to overhaul the 2010 *Best Practices*, placing an emphasis on developing greater guidance on invisible disabilities and merging the two earlier documents.[30] And shortly thereafter, *Guidelines* Task Force member Lydia Tang, recognizing the need for an established community of practice and with the guidance of an ad hoc visioning committee, pursued founding the SAA

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29 Gracen Brilmyer, "'They Weren't Necessarily Designed with Lived Experiences of Disability in Mind': The Affect of Archival In/Accessibility and 'Emotionally Expensive' Spatial Un/Belonging," Archivaria, December 5, 2022, 120–53; Gracen Mikus Brilmyer, "'I'm Also Prepared to Not Find Me. It's Great When I Do, but It Doesn't Hurt If I Don't': Crip Time and Anticipatory Erasure for Disabled Archival Users," Archival Science, October 18, 2021, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10502-021-09372-1; Gracen M. Brilmyer, "'It Could Have Been Us in a Different Moment. It Still Is Us in Many Ways': Community Identification and the Violence of Archival Representation of Disability," in *Sustainable Digital Communities*, ed. Anneli Sundqvist et al., *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 480–86, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43687-2_38.

30 The committee was co-chaired by archivists Sara White and Kathy Marquis. The revision was honored by an SAA Council Resolution in 2020.

Accessibility & Disability Section.[31] The petition to form the section met the minimum number of 100 signatures in less than 24-hours, and testimonies gathered from the petition immediately showed the importance of the section, as one respondent remarked:

> As an archivist with disabilities, I have long felt frustrated that there is no formal mechanism for discussing/acknowledging the topic of disabilities in archives (collections, archivists, users) in SAA. I have also been frustrated by accessibility challenges I have encountered attending SAA workshops and events and would appreciate a section being devoted to these issues and working towards making our profession and organization more accessible to all.

Despite the support from SAA membership, in its beginnings, the Section had to overcome assumptions that accessibility and disability would be "too niche" to justify a dedicated section in its scope. However, the section quickly demonstrated its value within the profession within just a few months of its founding by compiling work-from-home ideas into a crowd-sourced Google document of work-from-home projects ear-

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31 Tang, Lydia. "Petition to form Accessibility & Disability Section." Society of American Archivists Council Meeting. May 20-22, 2019. Chicago, IL https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0519-IV-E-PetitionAccessibilitySection.pdf; Tang, Lydia. "ADS Year One Retrospective." *Blog of the Accessibility & Disability Section* (blog). August 24, 2020. https://adsarchivists.home.blog/2020/08/24/ads-year-one-retrospective/.

ly in the pandemic,[32] garnering a SAA Council resolution for the effort.[33] It also served as an incubator for what would become the Archival Workers Emergency Fund, with several founding steering committee members propelling the grassroots fundraising initiative to support furloughed and laid off colleagues in need.[34] The section organized events such as panels during the October National Disability Employment Awareness Month and created a mentoring cohort initiative to continue to support disabled archivists rising in their careers. Section members collaborated together, launching a plethora of articles, conference presentations, and other projects which include the germinating ideas for this book.[35]

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32 "Advocating for Archivists at Home: An Interview with Lydia Tang." *CLIR News*. May 15, 2020/ https://www.clir.org/2020/05/advocating-for-archivists-at-home-an-interview-with-lydia-tang/; Tang, Lydia. "Archivists at Home After 1 Year," Accessibility & Disability Section annual meeting presentation, July 2021

33 Society of American Archivists Council Resolution Honoring Accessibility and Disability Section Steering Committee. https://www2.archivists.org/news/2020/council-resolution-accessibility-and-disability-section

34 https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/macnewsletter/article/id/12656/print/.

35 For example, see: Tumlin, Zachary, Bridget Malley, Lydia Tang, Chris Tanguay, and Lauren White, "Supporting the Retention and Advancement of Archivists with Disabilities," *Archival Outlook*, July/August 2021; Tang, Lydia, Bridget Malley, Chris Tanguay, Zachary Tumlin, and the Accessibility & Disability Section, "Toward Inclusion: Best Practices for Hiring People with Disabilities," *Archival Outlook*, July/August 2020; Ann Abney, Veronica Denison, Chris Tanguay, Michelle Ganz; Understanding the Unseen: Invisible Disabilities in the Workplace. *The American Archivist* 1 March 2022; 85 (1): 88–103. doi: https://doi.org/10.17723/2327-9702-85.1.88.

Building with and alongside much of the aforementioned contributions—and acknowledging that our description may be incomplete as some of the important work being done may not be documented, publicized in our circles, and, especially, published—*Preserving Disability* marks a point of critical capacity of disabled authors embracing their identity and empowered to share their perspectives on disability and accessibility. This book is a snapshot in time of disabled archivists, users, scholars, and thinkers writing about their work and experiences within the archival profession. It marks a key shift in the profession, where, instead of othering accessibility as a "task" to be optionally considered by abled people, disability and the narratives of disabled authors and their access to archives are centered. This book documents the expansion from compliance and guidelines-oriented models of access to addressing the need(s) for representing disabled experiences, the impacts of archives, and the labor of archivists from multiple places and perspectives.

However, we also acknowledge the limits of this English-language anthology produced in North America: to compile a collection of works addressing disability and archives is also to acknowledge the whiteness of this intersection, which we have attempted to offset, but cannot ignore. We recognize how disability-centered spaces can also be spaces of racism, homophobia, and/or lateral ableism and also how the archival profession is one steeped in a history of whiteness. Addressing this, and in no way ignoring it, we, as editors, are aware that the perspectives in this book only represent a sliver of the archival impacts and interventions in our present moment.

Chapter Organization

The chapters in this book are organized into three sections, which allow us to show the complexity of the archival profession as it relates to disability in the present moment. The first section, *Using Archives & Witnessing Oneself*, focuses on disabled archival users and using disability collections. This section shows the vast interpretations, responses, and uses of archival material on disability. It illustrates how disabled people are impacted by archives in a variety of ways. While some chapters show the multiplicity of ways that disabled people can be erased—in part or in whole—in archives, others show how their approach to such materials can activate records in new ways: to tell new stories and to educate others about disability history.

The second section shifts to the experiences of archival workers. *Navigating Employment,* tells stories of disabled archival workers in many aspects of the job market—from job position advertisements to the retention of disabled archivists. This cluster of chapters highlights the many barriers for disabled archivists—physical job requirements, worker safety, and the stress and anxiety around disclosure—as well as the ways that being an archivist shapes disabled peoples' sense of themselves.

Focusing on the realities of disabled archivists, the final section, *Doing the Work*, places emphasis on how the realities articulated in the previous sections affect the ways that archival collections are treated. The chapters in this cluster show a kaleidoscope of facets that archivists address: building disability-focused collections, processing and describing (and redescribing) materials, as well as assessing and building accessibility. Core to this work, as many pieces touch on, is the collective nature of archives and how community engagement helps build more just representation.

Although these sections are not mutually exclusive as they overlap with one another in a variety of ways, we hope that the organization of this book helps to mark a complex moment in the archival profession where disabled people shape and are shaped by archives through a variety of roles.

Using Archives & Witnessing Oneself

The first cluster of chapters turns to the impacts of archival decision-making: the ways that disabled users search for themselves in archives and the unique ways they activate records.

Hilary Stace, Susan Martin, and Martin Sullivan open this section by telling powerful stories of archival erasure and intervention in their chapter, "The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State and Faith-based care in Aotearoa New Zealand and the Opportunity it Provides to Hear, Research and Archive Stories of Disability History." Looking at eugenics history in New Zealand through the violent records of institutionalization, they trace the history of the Royal Commission of Inquiry's impact on historic abuse in State care. They cite ongoing projects which aim to counter the historical erasure and call for archivists—and a wide range of information professionals—to research, document, and archive disabled narratives in order to counter the prevalence of archival silences. This work, they show, is crucial and urgent, especially since even after deinstitutionalization, disabled people continue to face abuse and separation from whānau (family members).

Selena Moon writes in "Including Japanese American Disability History in the Archives" about the double discrimination Japanese Americans face within disability history being both inaccessible for disabled historians and a population omitted and overlooked within disability collections. She

notes that the representation of Asian American and Pacific Islanders among disability discourse is lacking, citing Alice Wong's Disability Visibility Project as an initial effort to counter this erasure. Moon shares her personal narrative as a scholar, including with her own struggles with (in)accessibility in museums, historical sites, and archival repositories. Through this research, she traces the lives of multiple disabled people who were forced to stay at incarceration camps and tells crucial histories that have long gone overlooked.

In "Seeing Sickness: Archival and Embodied Encounters with the Medical Panopticon," Alexandra Pucciarelli takes an autoethnographic approach to archival stories as the author researches a hereditary disease. In order to counter the many archival absences around the histories of her family, Pucciarelli weaves vulnerable first-person narratives with her research around her uncle, illness, and the ways in which records document, amplify, or erase aspects of sickness. Through this complication she exposes multiple tensions around hereditary disease, surveillance, and the archives we might use to understand and tell our stories.

Emma Yeo presents an autoethnography of her experience as a disabled researcher experiencing archives in England in her chapter,"'Uncovering the Past, Hiding Myself': Exploring the Archive Through Autoethnography." Piecing together the lives of disabled people through wills and other legal documents, Yeo describes "[a]s disabled people […] we are more than the pain and suffering enacted on us by institutions: both now and in the past." Recognizing hidden potential, Yeo proposes a method for users to tag and add metadata to allow for increased pathways of discovery. Through this work, she makes a powerful case for advocating for a self-empowered approach and collaboration with archivists as a solution to confronting barriers to accessibility.

Both assessing existing archival collections and describing a collective effort to address disability in archives, Cassandra J. Perry critiques how the sexuality of disabled people is often suppressed or stigmatized in the social narrative of sexuality—often missing from both archival collections focusing on disability and those that focus on sexuality—in "Making Sex in the Archive More Accessible: A Call for Preserving Accounts of the Sexual Experience of People with Disabilities by People with Disabilities." Searching for disability in sexuality archives and for sexuality in disability archives, Perry asks crucial questions about archival representation. The Disability and Sexuality Access Network's Sex and Disability (DASAN) collection seeks to offset the prevalent absence of this intersection and preserve the sexuality of disabled people. By highlighting different components of DASAN and the different barriers and issues both for users and archivists, Perry's case study highlights essential interventions in the archival landscape to represent complex disability histories.

Archival stories can be additionally complicated and transformed as they are activated through education. In "'It's So Liberating To Do The Work': Education in Archives Creates Space for People with Disabilities," Julia Pelaez and Jen Hoyer converse about teaching with primary sources. Pelaez is an Educator at the Brooklyn Public Library's Center for Brooklyn History who works with children in the 4th through 12th grades. Their chapter explores what matters when working with students with disabilities in archives, and what it feels like to be a disabled educator in the archives. They demonstrate how history can be understood, records can be activated, and archives can be transformed through their use in education.

This first section focuses on how disabled users interpret and understand materials and the absences they contain. Confronted with histories of othering, stigmatization, and unjust treatment, disabled users address moments of archival erasure through the ways disabled people are represented in ways that deny their agency or are not represented at all (Stace, Martin, and Sullivan; Moon; Pucciarelli; Yeo). Chapters in this section also think about the pitfalls and paradoxes of archival representation: how erasure might foster further disconnection (Stace, Martin, and Sullivan), how, despite being surveilled and heavily documented, disabled people are nonetheless erased in records (Pucciarelli), how disabled people of color might be difficult to find (Moon) or might have their sexuality and sexual lives erased (Perry). Yet, in the face of such absences, users can tell intimate stories of disability through the activation of records—through connecting with records (Yeo), calling on archivists to intervene (Stace, Martin, and Sullivan), building new projects that tell more complex stories (Perry), and utilize archives for education as a source of resilience and transformation (Pelaez and Hoyer).

Together the chapters in this section outline a complex landscape of archival impacts for disabled people. Some chapters show the vastness of erasure of disability—where records are never made, kept, described, or able to be accessed. Others show that while parts of one's identity can be represented, other aspects might be ignored, obfuscated, or unknown. This section highlights the complexity of witnessing disability in history and the ways users activate and respond to archives. It shows a variety of ways that disabled people can be erased or obscured, denied complex identities, or denied agency in archival records—as well as how histories of the documentation of disability intersect with the ways disabled people have been surveilled and in-

carcerated. Yet, disabled users can witness disabled narratives through their unique approaches to archives. This section shows what it feels like to be a disabled user, creator, and educator in the archives and what it feels like to transform our histories toward a variety of goals.

Navigating Employment

The second cluster of chapters addresses disabled archival workers—concentrating on the ways that applying for jobs, seeking accommodations, and professional standards influence disabled people's work.

This section opens with a chapter by Iris Afantchao, who traces the ways their experiences as an archival user inform their role as an archival worker. As someone with ADHD and chronic pain, Afantchao, in "Exploratory Archives as Community Care: a Self-Reflection," reflects on their path, drawing inspiration and strength from historic efforts on disability and racial justice they encountered in the collections. They show how normative structures and schedules of academia constrict archival interactions, showing the time it takes to, instead, explore archives through an expanse of creativity and solace. Finding struggles, advocacy, and activism of the past within collections—from students commenting on their college experience in the archives to the Black Panthers' fight against Medical Discrimination—history is in dialogue with the present and future as Afantchao transitions from a student to helping new students explore archives for the first time, a role, they show, that necessitates connections, community, and care.

Next, Chris Tanguay & Ann Abney, in their chapter, "Are You the Gatekeeper? Job Advertisements as Barriers to Employment for Disabled Archivists," illustrate some of the imme-

diate barriers faced by disabled people on the archival job market: job advertisements. They examine job requirements posted on archival professional listservs over a 16 year timespan and point out not only some of the pitfalls of archival job ads—which might have ambiguity around schedule characteristics and job permanence—but, importantly, the prevalence of requirements—such as lifting, movement, and communication. For example, their survey shows how 64% of the positions they surveyed listed "Communication (Speaking / Interpersonal Skills)" and 28% named lifting requirements. Tanguay and Abney's quantitative data around archival jobs illuminates a consequential facet for disabled applicants: the stark landscape of many barriers to acquiring employment. They show how such requirements as well as the language used in job descriptions can be a barrier, yet, alternatively, if addressed, can be an invitation for a wide array of disabled workers.

Building on similar themes and turning towards the next steps of obtaining employment, Veronica L. Denison, Gracen Brilmyer, and Tara Brar address archival job interviews and decision-making behind disclosure in their chapter "'Once I Show up…They're not Going to Hire me': Disclosing Disabilities During Job Interviews and the Impact on Professional Treatment." Using interviews with disabled archivists, they first show the impact of physical requirements in job descriptions—how requirements such as lifting boxes or climbing ladders not only deter disabled people from even applying but also are at odds with archives' diversity, equity, and inclusion statements. Second, they investigate how and when interviewees disclose their disabilities on the job market, citing the overwhelming stress and anxiety that shape how people might choose not to disclose out of fear of judgment, discrimination, or retribution. Their findings show how, especially in a profession with prevalent precarious employ-

ment and contract work, disabled applicants face many barriers to employment and feel a sense of isolation through many aspects of archival job-seeking.

The disabled perspectives in this section also tell stories of how disabled archivists navigate their jobs. In "The Intersection of Personal and Professional Bodies: Disability, Covid-19, and the Archives," Jennifer McGillan addresses a contemporary archival issue: that of the COVID-19 pandemic and the imperative to protect the very workers who manage access to archival material. Describing the response to the ongoing pandemic at the Mississippi State University Libraries, McGillian defines the personal and professional stakes of archival workers. She discusses navigating her own complex relationship with disability, disclosure, and organizing administrative policies and procedures to protect herself and others from incurring additional injury or harm. This case study serves as an illustrative example of the important work being done by disabled people on behalf of colleagues, students, and community. It is a powerful story of a network—of workers, patrons, administrators, and other stakeholders in the library and archival profession—that continually addresses, navigates, and remakes policies, community, and advocacy in an ever-evolving pandemic.

The final chapter in this cluster identifies multiple barriers for disabled archivists while defining best practices for future change. Building upon previous articles on interviewing for jobs and employee retention, Zachary Tumlin and David Spriegel weave in first-person narratives about inclusive and exclusionary employment practices in "'Ability to Lift' Your 'Little Black Clouds:' How to Not Exclude Disabled Archivists in Employment." They address a multitude of topics—from job postings, candidate evaluations, interviews, offers, disclosure, to workplace topics including accommo-

dations, job evaluations, and advancement—and compile a robust list of best practices for the archival profession to take forward.

In this section, we invite readers to sit with the complexity of the archival job market. From academic norms and graduate education that determines how we are trained and understand the profession (Afantchao) to encountering job advertisements that present barriers to even considering applying (Tanguay and Abney), authors navigate questions of "obscuring" or "revealing" themselves as disabled during the process of seeking, applying, and navigating the job market (Denison, Brilmyer, and Brar; Tumlin and Spriegel). Other chapters address what happens after the interview: best practices for employee retention (Tumlin and Spriegel), worker safety and support (McGillan), and central themes of community and care (Afantchao).

The second section contributes to the archival field as it expands the space-time of archival labor to recognize all of the time, energy, and work—which often goes unpaid and is invisibilized—that goes into seeking employment, navigating interviews, the job market, and accommodations as well as simply staying employed. These chapters show how archival labor is complex: not only do disabled archivists spend time and energy in navigating inaccessible spaces and procedures as well as requesting and navigating accommodations bureaucracy, but also manage the time it takes to *feel*—feel erased through and discouraged from applying for job postings (Tanguay and Abney); feel anxious while navigating when or how much to disclose to get accommodations (Denison, Brilmyer, and Brar; Tumlin and Spriegel); and feel empowered to advocate for change (Tanguay and Abney; Denison, Brilmyer, and Brar; McGillan; Tumlin and Spriegel; Afantchao).

Doing the Work

The final set of chapters also centers on disabled archivists, shifting focus to how being disabled influences interventions around archival description (and redescription), access, and outreach, while also underscoring how doing this work, in turn, shapes disabled archivists' sense of themselves.

This section begins with how some authors actively address archival gaps and build disability-centered collections. "From Collecting to Curating: The History and Mission of the Deaf Catholic Archives," by Rev. Joseph Bruce, S.J., Abby Stambach, Corinne Tabolt, and Lisa Villa draws upon oral history recollections by Deaf Catholic Archives volunteer curator Fr. Joseph Bruce, S. J.. Contextualized with a summary of the history of Deaf Catholicism, this chapter details the evolution of the collection ranging from a few papers rescued from the trash and stored under a bed to a now recognized community archives. The authors tell the unique history of the intersection of Deaf culture with Catholic traditions as they chronicle the ways the collection documents this community's spiritual and social lives. Through the Deaf Catholic Archives, they show the value not only of collections on Deaf culture and history, but also the importance of having Deaf people involved in the preservation and access of their own materials.

Starting with a personal story of disability, Amanda McGrory and Joel Blanco in "Accessing Athens: Archiving Adaptive Athletics" share McGrory's path from prize-winning Paralympian to archivist of the United State Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC). Recognizing the incompleteness of the USOPC's records, the authors describe their experience reaching out to past participants to gather recollections, records, and ephemera. This case study provides tangible and practical approaches to building collec-

tions by connecting with potential donors, building trust, and collectively preserving the community's legacy.

Language around disability, as many disabled authors have shown, is a powerful component of how we understand ourselves and are understood by others. Melissa Weiss, Jacquelyn Slater Reese, and Jay A. Edwards delve into problematic descriptive vocabulary in "Teeming With Troublesome Terms: Remediating Problematic Language Describing Disability in Special Collections" in their case study on collection analysis and reparative description. Guiding the reader through theories on disability in archives through their methodology for identifying troublesome terms, the chapter describes the complexity and decision-making that is required for handling disability terminology. As they discovered, most of their flagged terminology would not be changed because it was part of actual names or standard terminology, underlining that a simple "find and replace" solution to problematic words is unfeasible. Their chapter illustrates the complexity in language around disability and underscores the nuanced approach required for undertaking projects of this nature.

Also addressing language in "Disability in Archival Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiatives," Talea Anderson, Greg Matthews, and Gayle O'Hara share the results of their 2022 survey on reparative description applied to disability-related collections. Negotiating the ways in which language can embody, replicate, magnify, or address harmful histories, they tell a story of how disability is not always considered in regards to collections. Their survey results show how archival programs in the US aren't treating disability-related collections with the care and attention they deserve. They not only cite the need for the collecting of more materials—as less than half of respondents identified having collections related to disability—but also show a need for more awareness and

tools around the ethics of finding aid creatorship, language, and revision. They note that often accessibility and disability were omitted around Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) efforts and cite subtle but ingrained ableism within the profession that reflects prevalent issues in society.

Covering many aspects of archival processing in their chapter, "From Collection to Collaboration," Thomas Philo and Nancy Armstrong-Sanchez place emphasis on archival representation through their focus on multiple facets of The Hahn Disability Collection. Documenting Harlan Hahn, a prominent disability rights activist and professor, the collection spans his personal life, scholarship, and activism. Philo and Armstrong-Sanchez describe their evolving relationship—as a university archivist and a Disability Studies instructor—as they learn from the knowledge one another brings to this collection. Through this case study, they illustrate the vital importance of ongoing relationships between archives and the disability community as well as having disabled people involved in the processing of collections.

Processing collections on disability also deeply shapes disabled archivists' sense of themselves through their connection to historical and contemporary communities. In "'But Don't Those Cause You Seizures!?' Epilepsy Activism through Film Archiving," Michael Marlatt places focus on archival labor as an archivist with epilepsy and argues that film archiving can be a form of epilepsy activism. Marlatt delves into the crude humor and eugenist depictions of epilepsy in films and scientific studies. He recalls the ugly laws and their relationship to horror and voyeurism of depicting epilepsy and other disabilities on the screen. Recognizing that he doesn't see articles about film archiving by other disabled authors, Marlatt reinforces the importance of self-representation and inclusion in the field, as he leans into the

breaking of barriers and cathartic nature of working as a film archivist with epilepsy.

Also discussing their personal identity as it is and has been shaped through archives, Jessica C. Neal poetically meditates on the intersections of their identities as a Black, southern, queer, creative and neurodiverse person and the complicated relationship they had with accepting their non-visible disability and stigma. Their chapter, "Existing in Plain Sight: On Being a Black Archivist with Non-Visible Disabilities," uses personal narratives to touch upon grief on the death of their mother, preserving the memories of the dead, and resiliency over generations of violence and oppression. Weaving in stanzas by William Shakespeare, Maya Angelou, and other writers, Neal pulls together disparate life experiences and influences to inform and embrace their identities and professional mission. They think through "the silent struggle to be in constant negotiation with the mind to do what the body desires," while illustrating what it means to be—and to become—a Black archivist.

Lauren White also shares an autobiographical account of gradually recognizing and claiming her identity as disabled as it was shaped through working with disability collections in her chapter, "Does 'Nothing About Us Without Us' Include Me? How Preserving Disability History Helped Me Recognize My Own Identity as a Disabled Archivist." White shows the deep connections for seeing oneself in history for the people who build, organize, and process archival collections, which slowly influenced the ways she identified as disabled. However, navigating disabilities, she writes, also challenged her identity as an archivist. Through tracing her relationship both to disability and archives, White shows how interacting with the rich materials on disability in archives transformed her—not only in openly embracing her

disability identity but also in becoming an accessibility advocate in archival spaces.

Building and processing collections also involves considering how they are accessed. Accessibility is an essential focus for archives who wish to serve disabled users and support disabled archivists. In "Process and Lessons Learned from an Accessibility Audit at the Central Washington University Archives and Special Collections," Julia Stringfellow & Lauren Wittek describe the history and implementation of this work. Recruiting two self-identified disabled students for the project, Stringfellow and Wittek recount how the audit helped them to identify numerous access issues in the physical space—such as floor surfaces, lighting, and wheelchair accessibility—as well as issues with the archives website—such as audio descriptions, color contrast, and alt text. They used these findings to communicate accessibility issues with their institution as well as to prioritize the work of addressing different accessibility issues for their physical and digital holdings. This case study serves as a snapshot not only of common accessibility issues archives can face for disabled patrons, but also how an archives might design the assessment of these features.

Erin Baucom provides an overview of theory and practice in "The Evolution and Importance of Sustainable Accessible Online Cultural Heritage Materials." Covering not only different digital formats, accessibility standards, and disability laws (and loopholes) but also the personal and institutional strategies, workflows, and decisions (and even ignorance) that mediate access to online materials, Baucom identifies a complex landscape of digital access. She shows the intermingling of assistive technologies with digital formats, tools, and standards that may create unique barriers to access as well as a number of aspects for cultural heritage insti-

tutions to consider when addressing accessibility. Through best practices, strategies, and workflows, she shows the inapplicability of a "one-size-fits-all" approach to access, and underscores how guidelines must support unique solutions for each institution and their users.

Concluding this book and orienting to the future of the archival profession, Zakiya Collier, in their chapter, "Rehousing Archivists: Attending to a Livable Future for A Black, Queer Disabled Memory Worker," considers what it means to seek better conditions for disabled memory workers. Weaving together disability studies, Black women's speculative fiction, and Black studies as well as literature, pop culture, and personal experience, Collier makes a powerful provocation to the future of archives, asking what it means to "make a livable world for a Black, queer invisibly-disabled archivist possible and real." They critique the ways the profession is often tethered to an office and in-person work and both create debilitating working conditions while also maintaining ableist and inaccessible employment for those most marginalized. An act of refusal and dreaming otherwise, Collier calls to "re-home" archivists, to reimagine archives as we think through issues of legibility, capitalism, labor, accommodations, and possible futures.

This final section of chapters tells a complex story of what archival labor looks like—from describing materials, designing reparative description projects, and processing the complexity in materials on disability to integrating outreach with disability communities and assessing and adjusting accessibility measures for physical and digital materials. This cluster shows the work it takes to build archival collections of disability or address archival gaps (Bruce, Stambach, Tabolt, and Villa; McGrory and Blanco). Some chapters address the power of language and nuanced approaches toward repar-

ative and thoughtful (re)description, which can further influence how records are understood (Weiss, Reese, and Edwards; Anderson, Matthews, and O'Hara). Doing this work, as many chapters show, takes outreach, relationships, and trust-building to acquire new materials and process collections (McGrory and Blanco; Philo and Armstrong-Sanchez and Bruce, Stambach, Tabolt, and Villa). Working closely with materials on disability, as other chapters have shown, illustrates how archival work shapes disabled archivists' identities, which brings self-representation, meaning, and catharsis (L. White; Marlatt; Neal; Collier). And such archival projects, as other chapters outline, need to consider (physical and digital) access to the very communities that they aim to document or serve (Stringfellow and Wittek; Baucom) and, perhaps dream outside of archives to radically imagine memory work as something else entirely (Collier).

Not only does each of the chapters in this section illustrate a clear case of assessing, building, expanding, processing, and/or giving access to archival materials about and for disabled people—offering practical insights into what archival interventions can look like—but each also highlights how disability communities are vital for this work. Some chapters depict the ways archivists might feel connected to the materials one is processing or feel a sense of one's identity changing through the work, while others show how outreach, trust, and community are central. In other words, archival work in these chapters involves building relationships with past and present communities which can shape how we understand ourselves and how we are accountable to disabled communities. These pieces show how archival work by and for disabled people is not always straightforward, takes time, and doesn't necessarily align with a checklist. And, importantly, the chapters in this section show the necessity of the collective nature of this work which is always intertwined with access.

Through this collection of chapters, *Preserving Disability* sheds light on the unique ways that disabled people think about, shape, and are impacted by the archival profession—as workers, donors, educators, and users. We lay out practical examples and calls to actions for interventions into disability archiving and accessibility, theoretical frameworks for understanding disability history, language, and archival work, as well as a collective imperative within the archival profession to do better or imagine other ways of working and being. Importantly, through this book, we show that neither disability nor archives exist in singularity: decisions made in the past about what records are created, kept, and described impact people in the present; and those decisions are shaped by a profession that manifests a variety of barriers to different disabled workers—barriers which impact how we do our work and catalyze future uses of these materials. These chapters underscore that there is no one solution for how to process disabled collections or support disabled workers; there is no singular "fix" to problematic terms, no checklist for accommodating all disabled workers or users, and no way to anticipate how archival material will be used, understood, felt, and interpreted by disabled users. We hold this complexity with honor.

Conclusion

Returning to an expansive notion of preservation—as it permeates archival processes like appraisal, description, and therefore access as well as in a disability sense, where are stories, perspectives, and lives are valued—this book draws attention to the decisions we make about what to keep for the future. The contributions to this book quite literally make the case for the importance of preserving disability: preserve materials about disabled people in ways that allow for the nuances of identity, oppression, and history; preserve (and make livable) archival work for disabled archivists, who

navigate disclosure, accommodations, and labor; and pre-serve our desires—across the past, in the present, and for the future. Building on the growing landscape of archival literature about disability and thinking alongside other his-torically marginalized or minoritized perspectives, this book aims to recognize a critical strength of voices that shape our profession.

While this book outlines the present moment of the archival profession as it intersects with disability, it is also a call to action to our communities. The work isn't ever "complete." We hope this book lays a critical foundation for and cata-lyzes new projects, initiatives, and approaches to archives, representation, processing, labor, use, and beyond that cen-ter disabled people in all of our complexity.