Is Film Archiving a Profession Yet?
A Reflection 20 Years On

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In 1995 the journal *Film History* published my essay "Is film archiving a profession?" (Edmondson 1995a). I have been asked by the editors to revisit that question from a contemporary standpoint. In that article, I ventured the following definition:

> A profession is a field of remunerative work which involves university level training and preparation, has a sense of vocation or long term commitment, involves distinctive skills and expertise, worldview, standards and ethics. It implies continuing development of its defining knowledge base, and of its individual practitioners.

It was a definition with which I, and many of my self-taught colleagues in the field, could identify (Magliozzi 2003). The article explored each of the topics raised in the definition in order to respond to the question posed by the title. The answer to the question at the time was—yes, and no.

The field certainly attracted people with a passion and a sense of commitment. Distinctive skills, expertise and standards were clearly apparent. A world view or views had evolved through its signature international federations—FIAF, IASA, FIAT and AMIA[1]—and their interaction with UNESCO. An ethical framework existed but had yet to be codified. The first university course had appeared[2] and complemented the seminars, summer schools and short training courses that the federations had organised over the past two decades.

But this did not automatically mean that people working in the field personally *identified* as film archivists—or for that matter, sound or television archivists, preservationists, curators or whatever. Many preferred to identify with the professions in which they happened to hold formal qualifications, such as librarianship, archival science, materials conservation and museum curatorship.[3] These professions were widely and formally recognised by governments and other employers, and there were pay scales attached to them. There was no comparable recognition for something called a film archivist.

The World of 1995

It seems a long way from our digitally-dominated environment today, but in 1995 the digital revolution was still in the future, and our collecting and management preoccupations were with the physical realities of film, analogue audio and video tape and vinyl discs. The advance guard of the revolution, the compact disc (CD), introduced in 1982, was making its presence felt, and from a preservation viewpoint it was proving a problematic medium. The possibility that digital formats might actually usurp the traditional audiovisual media as the mainstay of production and dissemination, and therefore of archival preservation and access, if it was seriously entertained at all, was a paradigm shift that seemed fanciful.

On 27 October 1980, UNESCO's General Con-

ference had adopted the *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images,* the first international instrument to recognise the cultural importance of preserving films. It referenced the need for formal training in their safeguarding and restoration, and it called for cooperation and coordination among the organisations tasked with preserving the world's audiovisual heritage.

Accordingly, the following year, UNESCO brought FIAF, IASA and FIAT, together with ICA and IFLA,[4] into regular discussion with each other at what was called the Round Table of Audiovisual Records, thereby introducing the term "audiovisual" as a professional descriptor. The forum was not without its internal territorial rivalries, but at least UNESCO made the players talk to each other.

It was this grouping that ultimately led to the publication in 1990 of the UNESCO document *Curriculum Development for the Training of Personnel in Moving Image and Recorded Sound Archives*—the first major publication to outline a training vision specifically for the audiovisual archiving field. As Gregory Lukow (2000) wrote in his historical survey of the education of moving image archivists:

> [there are] a number of underlying concepts and assumptions embedded in the very language of the dialogue. For example, …the development of archival skills and knowledge sets was described, for the most part, as a matter of 'training' rather than 'education', be it post-secondary or continuing. Similarly, the individuals who needed to learn these skills were usually considered to be the 'staff' or 'personnel' of archives, rather than, simply and more expansively, 'students'.
>
> The structure and scope of the knowledge to be imparted was most often described in terms of a 'technical' or 'scientific' practicum that focuses on a range of specialised skills, rather than as an 'academic' model with curricular and degree offerings that combines hands-on training with broader, interdisciplinary requirements (137).

Lukow goes on to relate how the publication of this document, despite its limited focus on internal staff training, did assert the value of cross-disciplinary education and all-round training within all areas of archival practice, as opposed to strict divisions of labour along lines of technical specialisation.

A seminal moment, in the same year, was the inauguration of the first university-based, graduate level course offering a specific qualification in film archiving. This was at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England. It was available as a one-year option in the university's long standing MA programme in Film Studies. Other courses would follow, a subject I turn to later in this article.

Although a historical analysis of professional literature is beyond the scope of this article, a passing reference to its state around 1990 is necessary. The fields of librarianship, archival science, museology and conservation science were well established professions supported not only by graduate level university courses around the world, but also by a considerable professional literature. This diverse resource delved into the "how to" aspects of running libraries, archives and museums as well as the underlying theories, ethics and concepts on which professional practice was built. Monographs, journals, dissertations, and reference manuals offered more information than any individual could absorb in a lifetime.

Literature on film—cinema studies, film history, criticism and analysis, technical specifications, biographies and so on—was even then extensive. Periodicals ranged from the serious to the populist: publicity was and is the life blood of the film industry. In the other audiovisual fields of radio, recorded sound and television, much the same could be said. While cinema and media studies had by then found their way into universities as a legitimate field of study, in many countries it was still a young discipline.

Against this background, however, the archiving of the audiovisual media received relatively limited attention in the literature. If it appeared in the professional literature at all it figured as something of a footnote, each profession viewing the media through its own conceptual frame of reference. In film literature, the realities of film survival and the practicalities of preservation seemed a long way from the thoughts of most writers. What the film or sound archivist had to fall back on, therefore, were the journals and occasional publications of FIAF, IASA and other bodies, like the American Film Institute, which had now entered the field. This comparatively meagre resource tended to concentrate on historical, technical and practical issues, such as copying, storage and collection management. They filled a very real need, but it was not broad enough to support an identifiable profession.

Developing a Philosophy

In 1990, UNESCO had made a start by releasing a curriculum for the training of moving image and recorded sound archivists. But as Greg Lukow points out above, it implied the need for a further step from "technical training" for archive staff into the broader notion of "education" in the fullest academic sense.

Over the next few years, a small circle of film and sound archivists around the world saw the gap that needed to be filled and began discussing how to do it. Styling themselves as AVAPIN (Audiovisual Archiving Philosophy Interest Network), and using fax and snail mail in those pre-internet days, they began "to ponder their identity, image and professional affiliations, to consider the theoretical basis and ethics of their work, and to face practical issues of training and accreditation" (Edmondson 1998, iii). Eventually the corresponding group grew to over 60 participants. It fell to me, in consultation with a subset of this group, to develop these interactions into a consolidated whole. On the way, I contributed some articles to professional journals on the topic, including the *Film History* article mentioned at the beginning of this essay (Edmondson 1991, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1996).

A Philosophy of Audiovisual Archiving (Edmondson 1998), as the resulting book came to be called, had a long gestation, as draft texts were critiqued at workshops during the annual conferences of FIAF, IASA, FIAT and AMIA in 1994 and 1995, as well as being included in the early curricula of courses at George Eastman House, Rochester, USA and the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. The book was finally published by UNESCO, in English, French and Spanish language versions, in 1998.

After such extensive preparation and consultation one might assume that the book would be widely embraced as filling a clear need. Yet, at least within the professional associations, views were decidedly mixed. Some welcomed it. Others saw it as a pointless exercise in navel gazing, consuming valuable time and effort when film and sound archives faced huge practical backlogs of preservation and collection work. Indeed, I was expressly forbidden by my employer, the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, to spend any paid "work" time on drafting the final text: it had to be done in my own time, after hours.

In addition, because the book was about film AND sound archives, and treated both as part of a single profession called audiovisual archiving, I discovered I was a sitting target for the metaphorical slings and arrows of both professional camps. From today's viewpoint, it may seem incredible that "film" and "sound" archivists could engender mutual territorial hostility, but I actually worked in an institution where this had been a constant feature of corporate life! I acknowledge that for some, it raised deep seated and lasting issues of personal identity.

This rivalry is amply illustrated in a letter from the then FIAF Secretary General to two of his colleagues in December 1996:

> In compiling [a tentative draft for a FIAF Code of Ethics] I have drawn on the work done by Ray Edmondson in his work towards 'A Philosophy of Audiovisual Archiving'. I know that I am in a distinct minority in the FIAF EC in being interested in the work that Ray is doing—and I recognise that his IASA/Audiovisual links make him "tainted" in some people's eyes—but I do sincerely believe that what he has started is potentially valuable. Indeed, you could argue that when we have begun to talk about a FIAF Code of Ethics we are really only catching up to a place he passed through some years ago (Smither 1996).

To convey the flavour and intent of the *Philosophy*, I summarise some introductory thoughts from the 1998 edition. I reiterate that, in these pre-digital times, films, video and audiotapes, vinyl discs and CDs were all physical objects and it was much easier to differentiate between the respective "stock in trade" of film archives and sound archives. The digital convergence of the audiovisual media was still to come:

"This book] adopts the stance of UNESCO in conceiving of audiovisual archiving as a […] single profession with internal plurality and diversity […] It follows that it is not seen as a specialised subset of an existing profession" (Edmondson 1998, 3).

While acknowledging that audiovisual archiving is closely related to the other "collecting" professions, such as archival science, librarianship and museology, it was argued that its philosophy arises from the nature of the audiovisual media, rather than by automatic analogy from those professions. So the book tries to document what is actually the case,

rather than invent or impose theories or constructs: to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. Similarly, it tries to describe the audiovisual media in terms of what it is, rather than what it is not, and hence avoids phrases like "non-book," "non-text," or "special materials"—terms which imply that one type of material is "normal" or "standard," while everything else, by being defined in reference to it, is of lesser status.

The book goes on to discuss definitions, concepts, worldviews and terminology that are seen to define the profession, and then moves on to the ethics of institutional and personal behaviour.

Despite the initial doubts, the passage of time has vindicated the publication. A revised edition was published by UNESCO in 2004, and a third edition—updated for the "digital age"—in 2016. In all the various editions of the book have been published, or are currently being translated into, a total of twelve languages.[5]

About the CCAAA

The Roundtable of Audiovisual Records, established by UNESCO in 1981, had continued to meet regularly as a discussion forum. But by 1999, both UNESCO and the participants had recognized its need to become a more proactive body, shaping policy in the audiovisual archiving field, and embracing lobbying for greater preservation efforts worldwide. To accomplish this it was reconstituted as the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA) in 2000, and new members were later added. These were AMIA and SEAPAVAA in 2002, ARSC in 2007 and FOCAL in 2011.

If CCAAA is now the peak body of the audiovisual archiving profession, its opposite numbers are ICA (archival science), IFLA (librarianship), ICOM (International Council of Museums) and ICCROM (International Centre for the study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property). These four bodies are large, centrally organised, have a permanent staff and secretariat, huge global constituencies (how many libraries, archives and museums are there around the world?), significant budgets funded by membership fees, and are accredited with UNESCO.

The CCAAA is different to them in several respects. It is not a legal entity, has no fixed secretariat, no paid staff, a minimal budget and—in rel-ative terms—a much smaller constituency. It is an association of associations, and so is a forum rather than a directive body. In the annual meetings of its board, usually at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, each association is represented by its president and secretary-general (or equivalent). The presidency rotates around the membership. CCAAA is not itself accredited to UNESCO because that accreditation belongs, separately and individually, to its member associations. Compared to its older and bigger siblings, it is therefore a much more modest body.

It is directly responsible for two recurring events. It manages UNESCO's "World Day for Audiovisual Heritage," observed on 27 October each year, which was established by UNESCO's General Conference in 2005 and first observed in 2007. It organizes a Joint Technical Symposium (JTS) every few years, most recently in Singapore in 2016. In practice, the management responsibility for both events is shouldered in rotation by one of the member associations on the CCAAA's behalf. As will be seen from its website, the CCAAA also takes policy positions on a number of issues, such as the repatriation of heritage.

Many audiovisual archives are members of more than one of the CCAAA associations, because they find that no single association serves their entire spectrum of interests. At the level of the individual staff member, there may also be multiple memberships for the same reason.[6] The overlap in constituencies has increased over time, but I do not think the possibility of merging any of the associations has so far been seriously addressed. This may become an increasing problem.

While the CCAAA is potentially a unifying force for the profession, and could be taking strong public stances on core issues, its influence does not seem to reach much beyond the governing committees or councils of its member associations. Among audiovisual archivists generally the CCAAA has a low profile. Its website does provide some current news and a gateway to the websites of member federations, but its own proceedings are not made public and are therefore opaque to the average professional. In my view, it should post the minutes of its proceedings on its website, making its activities and thinking transparent and accountable—there is no better corrective to hasty or uninformed decision making. It should also make much greater use of the site's awareness raising possibilities. For example, it could bring together the policies and codes

of its member associations in a coherent framework so they can be compared and studied. This should create much wider interest and collective awareness among the individual members of the constituent associations.

Because of historic rivalries, and because each federation guards its autonomy and its individual accreditation to UNESCO, the federations have varied over the years in their level of commitment to the forum, which can only work as well as its members collectively wish it to. At the time of writing, I believe it is now supported more seriously than at any time in the past, but it seems to me there is still some distance to go.

Codes of Ethics and the Character of Professional Associations

I have asserted, in this article and in the *Philosophy,* that one of the defining characteristics of a profession is a code of ethics.

The CCAAA's opposite numbers, such as ICA, IFLA and ICOM and other associations in the archives, library and museum fields have long standing codes of ethics and related documents which are widely referenced, and which inform the policies and ethics of their member institutions as well as individual professionals. All the "collecting" or "memory" professions share common ethical values, and audiovisual archivists can profitably refer to them. Typically these values include honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability, confidentiality, objectivity, loyalty and acceptance of the rule of law.

CCAAA has no code of its own, although three of its first tier members do. I discuss them in chronological sequence.

The FIAF Code, mentioned above, was instituted in 1998.[7] It deals with the management of collections and their accessibility, with the relationships between archives and the sharing of knowledge, and with the personal behavior of individual staff of member archives—picking up such issues as private collections and conflicts of interest. It is clearly and simply worded. A formal, written commitment to the Code is a requirement of full membership in FIAF, and this commitment must be renewed at regular intervals.

In FIAF's Statutes and Rules there are procedures for dealing with violations of the Code by a member archive, which can result in a reprimand, a sus-

pension or an expulsion of the institution from the Federation. To the best of this writer's knowledge, the last eventuality has never happened. An inherent tension in requiring such standards of conduct is that organisations do not grow by expelling their members, so in practice there is some constraint on the application of the Code to members' behavior. IASA's original Code, adopted in 2005, is a very different creation.[8] Its *Ethical Principles for Sound and Audiovisual Archiving* is detailed, but deals entirely with technical issues and their application to the management of collections. Members do not have to formally commit to it, and there is no disciplinary procedure. In 2017, IASA adopted an additional code declaring its commitment to the values of openness, integrity and accountability on the part of all its officers.

Although IASA's principles make reference to the ethics statements of other organisations, such as ICOM and the Society of American Archivists (SAA), no single statement of ethics from related organisations and institutions covers the full scope of IASA membership.

The adoption of AMIA's Code in 2009 was preceded by extensive consultation with the membership. It is succinct, and is best described as an "aspirational" code. Because AMIA is founded on individual membership, it is a code relating to personal behaviour and values, representing what members will aspire to do—but may not be able to achieve in practice—in their individual workplaces. By definition, there is no compulsion or disciplinary procedure—it is, so to speak, self policing. It assumes that anyone who joins AMIA will *want* to observe these values.

Given these contrasting approaches, the question arises as to whether the CCAAA could take a central role in the development of a common code of ethics for the whole audiovisual archiving profession. It could be a powerful and unifying document.

Graduate Courses

In the same year (1990) that UNESCO released its document *Curriculum Development for the Training of Personnel in Moving Image and Recorded Sound Archives* the first graduate program in Film Archiving was established at the University of East Anglia, as an elective in its MA degree in Film Studies. The program operated successfully for nearly two decades,

producing some 150 graduates. The elective has now been discontinued by the University.

It was progressively joined by other programs which now operate in the Americas, Europe and Australia and offer a specific postgraduate qualification in moving image or audiovisual archiving. In addition, existing programs in information studies, archival science and librarianship in universities around the world have begun to add course units dealing with audiovisual archiving. Further, there are options in on-line training at various levels: AMIA and SEAPAVAA, for example, have begun to offer modules and resources in their websites.

By way of illustration of the options now available I will mention two programs in which I have been continuously involved since their inception.

The Selznick School of Film Preservation (George Eastman Museum, Rochester NY, USA) began in 1996. It offers a one year certificate course, to which can be added a second project-based year at the University of Rochester, resulting in a MA qualification. Entry is competitive: typical class size for the certificate course is 12 to 15, including a proportion of students from outside the USA.

The course encompasses both theory and practicum. The Museum's Moving Image Department is one of the country's most venerable archives, and students are rotated on hands-on assignments through all sections of the Department. Faculty includes the Department's staff as well as visiting specialists.

Students are encouraged to join the local AMIA student chapter, and to participate in that year's AMIA conference. Its 200-plus graduates to date are now scattered in archives around the world. There is a strong alumni network.

The Graduate Certificate in Audiovisual Archiving (Charles Sturt University, New South Wales, Australia) opened in 1997 as a distance-learning program provided by internet. It offers a Graduate Certificate (actually a post-graduate award.)

The course modules can be taken full time (1 year) or part time (2 years). The maximum manageable class size is 20. Written assignments are submitted electronically. Hands-on skills, such as film winding and examination or equipment operation, cannot be taught except in a theoretical sense, so the focus is on the management theory and practice, and relevant case studies. The course content covers both audio and moving image. The student community is international—geography is not an issue.

UNESCO and the Wider Field

As will be apparent, UNESCO's support has been vital to the development of the field, including helping to give it a collective identity. It established the World Day for Audiovisual Heritage. In doing so it resisted some pressure to instead establish a World Day for Archives, noting in support of its actions that the audiovisual sector had specific needs and deserved a distinct identity.

It has supported the field through definitive publications, including technical manuals and the *Philosophy,* taking the lead on establishing an initial training curriculum, and encouraging and subsidizing numerous training exercises and other gatherings organized by CCAAA members. It hosts the meetings of the CCAAA and has formal relations with most of its members.

The *Memory of the World* program, established in 1992, is a support framework for libraries and archives in general, including audiovisual archives. It is now a global phenomenon, with international, regional and national committees and activities. Its most visible manifestations are its registers of outstanding documentary heritage, which includes films and sound recordings. Gaining inscription on a register requires some hard work and must pass the test of meeting a set of criteria; in this writer's view, the audiovisual media should be far more prominent on the registers than is currently the case.

Beginning in 1980, with the *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images,* UNESCO has followed up with other normative instruments and declarations designed to assist the audiovisual archiving profession and identify the place of audiovisual heritage within the spectrum of documentary heritage. These include the *Vancouver Declaration*[9] and, most recently, the *Recommendation Concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage, Including in Digital Form.*[10] Despite its omnibus title, this instrument sets out a world's-best-practice standard for government support for archives and libraries, and includes a provision which can call on governments to periodically account for their performance.

Are We There Yet? The Marks of a Profession

Medieval and early modern tradition recognised only three professions: medicine, divinity and law.

The term has enlarged greatly in meaning over time and there are now many current definitions: an internet search will lead you to them. But by and large, they are consistent with the definition which I proposed in 1995, and which is at the beginning of this article.

So to draw the threads together and to try to answer the question posed by the title of this article, let me test my definition, this time using as a template the sequence of attributes which set out the definition of a profession as published in the 2016 edition of the *Philosophy*.

- *There is a distinctive body of knowledge, and literature*

The range of literature is now substantial and is developing in all directions. The immense technological changes of the last twenty years have seen a corresponding expansion of literature dealing with the technical and aesthetic issues created by the move to digital preservation and access. But the growth goes well beyond this, including into areas of archive management, accessibility, institutional history, advocacy, cultural memory and biography. The number and quality of journals has expanded and the base of scholarship includes a widening list of dissertations on archival issues.

This growth has been assisted by the development of the internet and online research, and also by greater popular hunger for "restored" films and audio through the digital media, encouraging awareness of archival practicalities in both serious and popular literature.

- *Code of ethics*

There is not yet a universal code of ethics for audiovisual archivists and archives, but the advent of the FIAF, IASA and AMIA codes—different as they are from each other — represents some advance on the situation in 1995, when there were none. While acknowledging that different federations have different needs, in my view a universal code adopted by the CCAAA is possible and desirable, would be a crucial reference point, and would enhance recognition and identity of the profession. It would improve its stature relative to bodies like ICA, IFLA and ICOM, whose own codes, among others, merit comparative study.

- *Principles and values*

These exist, as they have always existed, because they arise from the nature of the audiovisual media and so are a defining characteristic of the profession. This is a fundamental tenet of the *Philosophy*.

- *Terminology and concepts*

Clearly the profession has its own terminology and concepts. They have grown and evolved since 1995 to encompass, among other things, the changes brought by digital technology. They include a range of technical terms as well as concepts like "preservation," "content" and "carrier" that, in turn, have found their way into arenas such as UNESCO normative instruments. It is evident that they have become increasingly standardised across the profession. The *Philosophy* lists the most commonly used ones.

- *Worldview or paradigm*

It is the contention of the *Philosophy* that audiovisual archives and archivists have a distinct wordview and paradigm: a particular way of comprehending the audiovisual media. Whereas a (traditional) archive may perceive a film or sound recording as a "record"—that is, evidence of a transaction—and a library may view the same film or recording as a historical document, the view of an audiovisual archivist is to embrace the film or recording holistically, as a work in its own right, and not merely as an aspect of some other overarching concept. That is, the film or recording may be art, history, record, performance, technological artefact (and so on) *all at once,* and the systems and mindset of an audiovisual archive are built around that fact.

- *Written codification of its philosophy*

One exploration and discussion of its philosophical fundamentals (my own) has been published and widely disseminated, for which we can thank UNESCO, but it is far from being the last word, and there is room for many others to be broadening the debate and discerning the theoretical and practical implications. These might include, for example, the long term characteristics of both analogue and digital documents, the relationship between content, carrier and context, and the ethical issues of personal conduct, accountability and disobedience. I would add to that the questions raised by global warming and the environmental impact of archival work.

- *Skills, methods, standards and codes of best practice*

Written standards and codes are now much more in

evidence than they were in 1995, thanks to UNESCO and the various federations, as well as a host of individual authors. The skills and theory are now taught in graduate level university courses as well as in a continuing array of seminars, summer schools and similar events.

- *Forums for discussion, standard setting and issue resolution*

As I have observed from my own long term membership of several federations as well as participation in, and contact with, the CCAAA, these forums have grown in size, maturity and visibility since 1995. They are not perfect—no such bodies ever are. They do accommodate a diversity of opinions, within themselves and collectively within the CCAAA, and this can be a sign of strength and a corrective against fundamentalism or narrow orthodoxy. Conversely, it can be a sign of weakness if common values and purposes are lost sight of: strident views need to be handled in a collegial manner, and old prejudices have a way of lingering.

A notable development has been the advent of specialised festivals, such as *Cinema Ritrovato* in Bologna, and the *Giornate de Cinema Muto* in Pordenone,* which have showcased the restoration work of film archives in an educative and professional context. Such events, too, are forums for discussion and standard setting which help to give the profession a distinct identity.

- *Training and accreditation standards*

It is probably true by now that no one who really wants to gain training in the field is without some options. The existence of a range of postgraduate programs around the world, the inclusion of audiovisual archiving as an elective in postgraduate programs in related fields, and the availability of on-line training resources is far ahead of the situation in 1995.

Nevertheless, the lack of a mechanism for formally accrediting individual professionals through CCAAA or its member associations remains an unresolved issue. Bodies like ICA and IFLA have long since dealt with this need by—for example—recognising standards that are applied at the national level through affiliated associations, thereby establishing reference points which governments and other employers are able to recognise.

- *Commitment: members invest their own time in pursuing the best interests of their field*

My experience is that people who enter and persist in this field have a passion for it that is palpable. As I have at times pointed out to students, this is a field without great financial rewards, nor does it offer much in the way of personal recognition. In caring for the creative work of others, the results of an audiovisual archivist's work in building and preserving collections is likely to be taken for granted by those who use the collections.

Conclusions

It is worth being reminded that, historically speaking, the generic term "film archive" was chosen not because of any resemblance to manuscript or document archives, but because it communicated an *image* of stability and altruism. Their concern with mass culture gave film archives a relatively weak position in the hierarchy of cultural institutions, where they were not at first recognized as being in the same league as libraries, museums and traditional archives. After considering alternatives, FIAF settled on the term because it demonstrated the distance of film archives from the profit motive. It was a word which suggested solidity and safe keeping. What FIAF started, others have tended to follow.

So I conclude that film archiving—or more broadly audiovisual archiving—is undoubtedly a profession in its own right, albeit with some unfinished business for its federations to address. Whether it is widely *perceived* as its own profession is still a work in progress, and I believe the creation of accreditation standards across the profession, as well as a shared code of ethics, remains a vital and still unrealized part of that recognition.

As graduates emerge from the university courses now being offered, primary personal identification as an audiovisual archivist, rather than as a member of one of the older memory professions, is, I believe, now more likely than was the case in 1995. And it is a great reassurance that, as I have discovered, passion for the field is every bit as evident in the young people now entering it as it was for the older generation of pioneers. In that passion lies the guarantee of its future.

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Endnotes

1   International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) established 1938; International Association of Sound Archives (IASA) established 1969; International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT) established 1976; Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) established 1991.

2   University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. From 1990 a one-year Film Archive option was offered within a Masters program on Film Studies.

3   The writer holds a Diploma of Librarianship, and in the earliest years of his employment in the field, in the film archive at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, he was classified as a librarian.

4   International Council in Archives (ICA), International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

5   English, French, Iberian Spanish, Latin American Spanish, Iberian Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Farsi, German, Macedonian, Burmese.

6   As the former Deputy Director and current Curator Emeritus of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA), I can note that the NFSA is, or has been, a member of FIAF, SEAPAVAA, IASA, FIAT/IFTA and AMIA. As an individual, I have long standing personal memberships in AMIA, IASA and SEAPAVAA. I am also a professional member of the Australian Society of Archivists, which in turn is an affiliate of ICA.

7   http://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Code-Of-Ethics.html, last accessed 26 February 2017.

8   http://www.iasa-web.org/ethical-principles, last accessed 26 February 2017.

9   http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/unesco_ubc_vancouver_declaration_en.pdf, last accessed 26 February 2017.

10   http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49358&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, last accessed 26 February 2017.