

## Dissertation Reviews

### Guidelines for “Fresh from the Archives” Series

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Dear Colleague:

Thank you very much for contributing a piece for the “Fresh from the Archives” series on **Dissertation Reviews**. When writing your piece, please feel encouraged to frame the information within anecdotes from your own research. The goal of the series is to be both informative and enjoyable to read (so please think less in terms of a “dictionary entry,” and more in terms of an informative but casual conversation with a colleague who is seeking candid advice based on first-hand knowledge). Also, if you feel like we have missed anything critical or interesting, please feel encouraged to expand upon this list of questions.

#### THE BASIC QUESTIONS

- **Researcher introduction**
  - Introduction to your current research
  - Overview of why this archive, library, or collection is important to your current research
  - General dates/duration of your archival visit
- **Basic information about the facility**
  - Address, with special note regarding any hard-to-find locations, recently relocated facilities, etc.
  - Hours of operation, with special note regarding whether “official” opening/lunch/break/closing times correspond to “actual” working hours, vacation/holiday closures etc.
  - Any advice on what to do during lunch or staff breaks
  - Website address/URL
- **Registration procedures**
  - What special documents are required for foreign researchers (e.g., passport, introduction letter, formal explanation of research plan, complete list of desired materials, etc.)
  - How far in advance does one need to initiate the registration procedures? (i.e., How much time separates the start of the registration process from the start of requesting and viewing documents?)
- **State of indexes and catalogs**
  - How does one look up materials? (E.g., keyword searches on titles/files, paper indexes, a mixture of different formats, or something else?)
  - Are the files requested via paper forms or via computer? (Note: If you have an extra (blank) request form that could provide us, either digitally or in physical form, that would be much appreciated.)

- **State of digitization**
  - Among the sources you read, were any digitized?
  - Were any of your desired sources unavailable because they were/are in the process of being digitized? Did you hear of any other collections within the archive that were unavailable for this reason?
  - How do digitized sources facilitate and/or hamper the research process? (E.g. being able to text-search, but black-and-white scans of color originals?)
- **Requesting materials**
  - How many times can a researcher reasonably expect to submit/receive requested materials in one day?
  - What is the maximum number of files one is allowed to request at one time (and how flexible are the archivists on this point)?
- **Duplication/reproduction guidelines**
  - What kinds of duplication are permitted: photocopying, print-outs of digitized materials, digital pictures, hand-copying, nothing at all?
  - How much does duplication cost per page, in each of these formats?
  - If duplication is permitted, are there limitations in terms of quantity?
  - How quickly can a researcher reasonably expect a photocopy request to be completed?
  - When duplicating materials, does the archive also mark each document with the full file number (i.e., archival code) or should the researcher expect to do that her/himself?
- **Atmosphere/ambience**
  - Please describe the overall atmosphere of the archive, particularly in terms of reading room, noise levels, friendliness (or otherwise) of the staff
  - General rules, regulations, or other warnings about which future researchers should be aware.
- **General advice and guidance**
  - Overall, what advice would you give to someone interested in working at this archive? Again, please feel encouraged to draw upon personal experience and anecdotes.

### **FORMATTING GUIDELINES**

- For the length, we do not have an 'upper word-limit'. Please aim for **at least 800 to 1,000 words**, not including your list of source materials and your comments to the author.
- Prepare review in **RTF (Rich Text Format)** – we do not accept DOC, DOCX, PDF or ODT files.
- Single-space entire review.

- At the top of your review, the header should read as follows (please note bold/italics/caps):

**A review of *Archive/Library/Collection Name* (Name in Original Language) (Place).**

Example:

**A review of the *Zhejiang Provincial Library* (浙江省图书馆) (Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China)**

**A review of the *Rockefeller Archive Center* (Sleepy Hollow, New York, United States)**

**A review of the *Sichuan Provincial Archives* (四川省档案馆) (Chengdu, Sichuan, China)**

**A review of the *Archives départementales du Calvados* (Caen, France)**

**A review of the *Bodleian Library, University of Oxford* (Oxford, United Kingdom)**

- We would like a **one-line** gap between paragraphs, but please do not indent paragraphs.
- Citations of other works should be placed in parentheses in your text and must include full publication data: complete names of authors or editors, title, place of publication, publisher, date and page references.

Example:

(Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. 86-88, 103-104).

- Include page numbers for all quoted text – reviews cannot be published with uncited quotations or references. Examples: (pp. 86-88, 103-104) or (p. 66).
- Please do not include footnotes/endnotes, glossaries, or bibliographies.
- Double quotation marks should be used throughout, except in the case of nesting (then it becomes e.g. “Karl Marx said ‘Howdy, people!’ and drove away into the sunset.” Please place commas and periods *inside* double-quotes (“) and *outside* single-quotes (’).
- Proofread your review carefully and double-check romanizations of foreign names and words (including diacritics), page references and other numeric data; please include a PDF file if there are characters and diacritics not supported by RTF.
- Please include full names for authors that you mention in your review. So: Karl Popper as opposed to Popper, Prasenjit Duara as opposed to Duara, Tony Judt as opposed to Judt, Lorraine Daston as opposed to Daston. (Unless it is an obvious case, e.g. Nietzsche, Marx, Darwin, Mao and so forth.)
- Please email your completed “Fresh from the Archives” article to your relevant **Field Editor** (@dissertationreviews.org email) and **archives@dissertationreviews.org**. For a full list of our email addresses, please visit: <http://dissertationreviews.org/about-us/editorial-board>.
- Reviews will be edited by the Dissertation Review Editor and a copy-editor for style and content.

- **Your details** must be included at the end of the review. Please follow these guidelines:

- 1) Your full name as you would like it to appear in print
- 2) Your departmental affiliation (Department or Faculty)
- 3) Your Institutional affiliation (University/College)
- 4) Your Email Address or Website

**Example:**

Jane Doe  
Department of English  
University of Somewhere  
[jdoe@usomewhere.edu](mailto:jdoe@usomewhere.edu)

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise in providing your piece, and thank you for your consideration in following these guidelines.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Mullaney  
Stanford University  
Editor-in-Chief

Leon Rocha  
University of Cambridge  
Managing Editor

**Last updated: 2 September 2012**