

# **Stranger in a Strange Land**

Guest presentation LBSC 671

Robert Spangler

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# My background & who I am

Robert Spangler

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- IT Specialist at NARA, 2002-present
  - hired in a “mini-wave” of concern over NARA’s ability to handle electronic records
  - A non-archivist in an Archives, however, is always a bit of a stranger in a strange land.

# Previous experience

- Executive Office of the President (White House)
  - Email and Office Automation Systems Management
    - 1990-1996, 2000-2002
- Citigroup Information Services
  - Global Messaging Manager 1996-2000
- Digital Equipment Corporation and Various Contractors
  - Public and Private Client Support 1981-1990

# Education, then and now

- BS, MBA, University of Pittsburgh
- Teaching LBSC 682 at UMD, Fall 2013
  - “Management of Electronic Records and Information”
- Planning to Teach “Implementing Digital Curation” Spring 2014

# NARA

- The **National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)** is an independent agency of the Federal government charged with preserving and documenting government and historical records and with providing public access to those records

# Washington Facilities

- National Archives Building
  - 7th and Penn, DC
  - Home of the Charters of Freedom
- National Archives at College Park
  - “Archives 2”

# Agency Leadership

- The chief administrator of NARA is the Archivist of the United States
- Incumbent is David Ferriero, since 2009. Prior:
  - Director, New York Public Library
  - Duke and MIT library positions
- General Structure (tracks the lifecycle of records...)
  - Agency Services
  - Research Services
  - Office of Innovation
  - Information Services
    - Other administrative support

# Regional facilities

There are facilities across the country with research rooms, archival holdings, and microfilms of documents of federal agencies and courts pertinent to each region.

- Anchorage, Alaska, Pacific Alaska Region
- Atlanta, Georgia, Southeast Region
- Boston, Massachusetts, Northeast Region
- Chicago, Illinois, Great Lakes Region
- Denver, Colorado, Rocky Mountain Region
- Fort Worth, Texas, Southwest Region



# Regional facilities (cont'd)

- Kansas City, Missouri, Central Plains Region
- New York City, New York, Northeast Region
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mid Atlantic Region
- Riverside, California, Pacific Region
- San Bruno, California, Pacific Region
- Seattle, Washington, Pacific Alaska Region

# St. Louis Personnel Records

Three offices in the St. Louis, Missouri area comprise the National Personnel Records Center.

- Spanish Lake, Missouri, Military Personnel Records Center
- Valmeyer, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri, Civilian Personnel Records Center

In addition, Federal Records Centers exist in each region that house materials owned by Federal agencies. Federal Records Centers are not open for public research. For example, the FRC in Lenexa, Kansas holds items from the treatment of John F. Kennedy after his fatal shooting in 1963.

# Presidential Libraries

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- Herbert Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch, Iowa
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York
- Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, Kansas
- John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston, Massachusetts
- Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library in Austin, Texas
- Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in Yorba Linda, California
- Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, Georgia
- Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California
- George Bush Presidential Library in College Station, Texas
- William J. Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, Arkansas
- George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas, Texas

# Also of Note...

Archivist of the United States~

- not only maintains the official documentation of the passage of amendments to the U.S. Constitution by state legislatures, but has the authority to declare when the constitutional threshold for passage has been reached, and therefore when an act has become an amendment.
- NARA also transmits votes of the Electoral College to Congress.
- The Federal Register is a division of NARA; it is the official journal of the federal government of the United States that contains most routine publications and public notices of government agencies

# The records lifecycle

## Records Management:

- Creation or receipt of information in the form of records,
- Classification of the records to a taxonomy or file plan,
- Maintenance and use of the records in operations
- Disposition: Disposal or to an archive (if permanent)

## Archiving:

- Appraisal/transfer of the records by an archives,
- Processing: Description, finding aids, other preparation.
- Preservation of the records
- Access and reference of the records by researchers



# National Archives and Records Administration

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# **NARA's responsibility for records**

- Formulate records management policy
- Promulgate records management guidance
- Approve proposed records schedules and disposition actions
- Provide oversight on records compliance
- Facilitate transfer of permanently valuable records to the Archives



# The Archives part of NARA

- Preserve and make available the permanently valuable records of the government “for the life of the Republic”
  - From our current strategic plan:
    - *NARA drives openness, cultivates public participation, and strengthens our nation’s democracy through public access to high-value government records*

# Emergence of Electronic Records

- What may have worked for paper may not work anymore across the lifecycle
- We have left the relatively simple world where records schedules easily correlated to records creation, thence to archival constructs such as “series”
- E-records are specific technical entities in and of themselves and not just electronic versions of paper

# E-records and Records Management

## Records Management:

- Creation or receipt of information in the form of records,  
What does this mean in a world where central filing systems are gone and users create their own records simply by doing their jobs?
- Classification of the records to a taxonomy or file plan,  
How do we do this when no one is willing to file their own records?
- Maintenance and use of the records in operations  
Monolithic RM Applications have failed. Now what do we do?
- Disposition: Disposal or to an archive (if permanent)  
Transfer is now a complex technical task, not moving a box of paper.

# E-records and Archiving

## Archiving:

- Appraisal/transfer of the records by an archives,  
Are we appraising “records” now or “systems”?
- Processing: Description, finding aids, other preparation.  
Is reference the same in the age of the Google search box?
- Preservation of the records  
Access today’s documents in 50 years?
- Access and reference of the records by researchers  
What do we do about restrictions and classified material?

# Capstone and Email as an Exemplar

- developed as a way to solve the “email question” one and for all:
  - Is email a record?
  - The conundrum:
    - We can’t take all the email
    - We can’t **not** take email
    - There aren’t enough eyeballs in the world to file and read and process and preserve all the email
  - Email, as used in Federal agencies, simply does not lend itself to tried and true records management and archival principles. So what can be done?

## **1. What is the purpose of this Bulletin?**

This Bulletin provides agencies with a new records management approach, known as “Capstone,” for managing their Federal record emails electronically. This Bulletin discusses the considerations that agencies should review if they choose to implement the Capstone approach to manage their email records.

NARA developed the Capstone approach as part of NARA's continuing efforts to evaluate how agencies have used various email repositories to manage email records (see [NARA Bulletin 2011-03, “Guidance Concerning the use of E-mail Archiving Applications to Store E-mail,”](#)). This approach was developed in recognition of the difficulty in practicing traditional records management on the overwhelming volume of email that Federal agencies produce. Capstone will provide agencies with feasible solutions to email records management challenges, especially as they consider cloud-based solutions. Moreover, the Capstone approach supports the [Presidential Memorandum on Managing Government Records](#) and allows agencies to comply with the requirement in [OMB/NARA M-12-18 Managing Government Records Directive](#) to “manage both permanent *and* temporary email records in an accessible electronic format” by December 31, 2016.

NARA bulletins provide fundamental guidance to Federal agency staff, who must then determine the most appropriate ways to incorporate recordkeeping requirements into their business processes and identify the specific means by which their agencies will fulfill their responsibilities under the Federal Records Act.

## **2. What is the Capstone approach?**

Capstone offers agencies the option of using a more simplified and automated approach to managing email, as opposed to using either print and file systems or records management applications that require staff to file email records individually. Using this approach, an agency can categorize and schedule email based on the work and/or position of the email account owner. The Capstone approach allows for the capture of records that should be preserved as permanent from the accounts of officials at or near the top of an agency or an organizational subcomponent. An agency may designate email accounts of additional employees as Capstone when they are in positions that are likely to create or receive permanent email records. Following this approach, an agency can schedule all of the email in Capstone accounts as permanent records. The agency could then schedule the remaining email accounts in the agency or organizational unit, which are not captured as permanent, as temporary and preserve all of them for a set period of time based on the agency's needs. Alternatively, approved existing or new disposition authorities may be used for assigning disposition to email not captured as permanent.

While this approach has significant benefits, there are also risks that the agency must consider, including choosing the appropriate Capstone accounts, the possible need to meet other records management responsibilities, and the possibility of incidentally collecting personal and other non-record email. Agencies must determine whether end users may delete non-record, transitory, or personal email from their accounts. This will depend on agency technology and policy requirements.

### **3. What are the advantages of the Capstone approach?**

The Capstone approach simplifies electronic management of email records for agencies and may provide the following advantages:

1. Cuts down reliance on print-and-file, click-and-file, drag and drop, or other user-dependent policies;
2. Optimizes access to records responsive to discovery or FOIA requests;
3. Preserves permanent email records for eventual transfer to NARA;
4. Provides a practical approach to managing legacy email accounts;
5. Eases the burden of email management on the end-user;
6. Represents a simplified approach to the disposition of temporary and permanent email records;
7. Reduces the risk of unauthorized destruction of email records; and
8. Leverages technologies that exist at many agencies for other purposes – e.g., email archives/e-vaults used for e-discovery, including in cloud-based platforms.



# Why Capstone is a solid technical approach

- It is practical and cognizant of technical realities
  - No one is going to adhere to a complicated email “file plan.”
  - The “full appraisal” approach is not feasible
- It lends itself to a realistic transfer scenario.
  - “top officials” = “email system mailboxes”
- However, the process still needs to be guided by the archival framework:
  - What should be saved?
  - What are the criteria for description, preservation, etc.?

# The larger lessons

- IT and information science skills are inextricably intertwined when it comes to e-records, and by inference for the professionals who will be applying these skills in archives, libraries, etc.
- Archivists, librarians, and other information professionals cannot shy away from “mucking about” in applicable technology. It cannot be seen as a necessary evil, or as something to be approached reluctantly.
  - That said, it doesn’t mean information professionals need to be network engineers or programmers
- There is room in the profession for “moving the needle” - bringing in some “native” IT people and teaching them libraries, archives, etc.