

AMIA at 13

Surviving our Teenage Years

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SUMMARY

"AMIA at 13: Surviving our Teenage Years" was held as a closing plenary session at the 2004 AMIA conference in Minneapolis, MN. The session was chaired by Sarah Ziebell Mann and Rick Prelinger.

AMIA at 13: Surviving our Teenage Years

It was a relatively small group that founded AMIA in 1991. Unlike previous organizations in the field, AMIA's members were mostly individuals, not institutions. AMIA brought together many moving image archivists who hadn't previously had the chance to exchange information and insights, and has played a major role in professionalizing the field. After thirteen years, AMIA has compiled an impressive record of achievement: 750 members from around the world, active and productive committees and interest groups, and a continuing series of vibrant conferences.

But with growth come new challenges. We are no longer a couple of hundred friends and long-time colleagues. We are numerous, with varying experiences and trajectories, thus we experience AMIA differently and interact with it in disparate ways. If AMIA is to remain a strong and cohesive organization, we need to encourage communication, information sharing, and initiatives between all members.

This closing session was intended to provoke a frank exchange of ideas on AMIA today and its future directions. It was not a Board-sponsored session and was not focused on specific issues of AMIA's management and governance. Panelists representing different "constituencies" within AMIA shared very brief thoughts, but most of the time was reserved for free and open discussion. The organizers hoped that this discussion would help to encourage members to participate in a continuing dialogue that would strengthen our organization and help prepare it for the future.

Sarah Ziebell Mann, Rick Prelinger, Ray Edmondson, Lewanne Jones, Karan Sheldon, Rick Prelinger, Snowden Becker, Oksana Dykyj, Brian Graney, Paolo Cherchi Usai, and Greg Lukow provided opening remarks, and then the audience was invited to join the conversation. The session was videotaped, and from that videotape, this transcript was produced.

"AMIA at 13" was filled to capacity, and members discussed such issues affecting our Association and profession as:

- Whether AMIA is a professional association or a group of interested people.
- Challenges of preserving intimacy of AMIA as it grows.
- Need to better understand our past membership trends and future membership goals.
- Coming to terms with the full implications of AMIA's international status.
- Generational shift due to the influx of students and new professionals and need for substantive interchange between the seasoned and the initiates.
- Succession planning within the Association and within the profession—nurturing AMIA volunteers and leaders and AMIA's role in career development.
- Didactic paradigm within AMIA—research facilitation versus direct education.
- Resource gaps and how they affect everything from events to employment.
- Ascendancy of grassroots efforts and how they are redefining what archivists and archives can do.
- Mainstreaming of materials and methods of work formally on the fringe of the field.
- Public perception of our profession and purpose of archives—need for further outreach not only on behalf of our materials but also on behalf of ourselves and our jobs—developing new access mechanisms and assuming a more central decision-making role in the public sphere, especially as it concerns funding and political impact.

Sarah Ziebell Mann: Welcome to "AMIA at 13: Surviving Our Teenage Years!" My name is Sarah Ziebell Mann, and I am honored to be co-hosting with Rick Prelinger this historic session, the first to examine our Association and its incredible growth over the past decade and a half. Joining Rick and me in facilitating our discussion of AMIA are a group of dedicated members: Ray Edmondson, Lewanne Jones, Karan Sheldon, Rick Prelinger, Snowden Becker, Oksana Dykyj, Brian Graney, Paolo Cherchi Usai, and Greg Lukow. Each speaker is going to offer a few words regarding their experiences in AMIA to stimulate discussion, but the bulk of this session is meant to be reserved for your comments. So let us be clear. We hope to elicit a frank exchange of ideas of AMIA today and its future directions. Each member is speaking her own opinions and not the opinions of her institution or role within AMIA.

Today you'll be likely to hear some comments about the generational shift within AMIA brought on by the influx of students and new professionals who have joined our field in recent years. Due in large part to the work of AMIA and its members, there's been an incredible surge in educational opportunities in the area of moving image archival work, and in funding to support education through the AMIA scholarship program. I am myself both a member of this new generation and a beneficiary of the largess of my AMIA elders: a scholarship recipient, a participant in the first mentoring program, a student encouraged to present my research at an AMIA conference. This inclusiveness within AMIA, this desire to mentor successors, is, in my opinion, foremost among its strengths as an organization.

Education is the reason that our field has moved away from an apprenticeship model fostered by the industry and large archives to a self-directed academic model that allows for a more full exploration of the depth and breadth of archival moving images, including those created by non-professional, non-industry makers. This academicization of moving image archival work and the worlds of possibilities opened by specialized study have engendered a different type of moving image archival professional with different concerns and interests that she brings to AMIA. This challenges our Association to continue to evolve, but this process of evolution is not necessarily a painless one.

Notwithstanding my recognition of a certain sort of generation gap, I would argue that the issue is increasingly more that of a resource gap, or the difference between the "milk and the meat" as Rick Utley put it yesterday. As a member since 1998 and a conference organizer over the past four years, I have met head on the varied roles of practice, scale and personalities within our

moving image archival community. I have witnessed delicate interplay between large and small institutions, urban and rural archives, commercial and non-commercial interests, and North American and international members and feel that one of AMIA's future challenges is in ensuring that these groups are treated equitably.

AMIA differs from other archival and library associations in its inclusion of vendors and archival service providers. In my opinion, this makes us a stronger group, yet sometimes this very diversity of interests makes it difficult for us to unite on issues of resource allocation. By way of example, I offer some observations of the two enormously successful AMIA related events held this past summer, the Joint Technical Symposium and Home Movie Day.

Both events were brilliantly organized and executed by highly motivated AMIA volunteers. Each focused on educating people about moving image technologies, was international in scope, and had a broad base of enthusiastic supporters. However, the Joint Technical Symposium and Home Movie Day diverged significantly in their audience (industry versus public); method of organizing, (institutionalized versus grassroots); budget; and perhaps most importantly, profile within AMIA. The JTS was touted as the AMIA event while Home Movie Day was not. And I think our question is: why? Because of the subject matter? Because of the organizers? Because of the level of resources involved? I don't know, but I can tell you that we need to think about these decisions as we move forward with the Association.

The final thing I want to say is I want to offer you my own metaphor of AMIA today (building on what Rick Utley was saying yesterday) is that of an expectant teen mom putting on additional meat and milk in preparation for the birth of her child who requires both to survive. And my question to you is: Will that child be adequately nourished?

Rick Prelinger: There are seats in the front if anybody would like to come in. I also wanted to mention the idea behind this session is we would all speak extremely briefly and then open up the majority of the session to the floor. So everybody's going to speak max three to three and a half minutes.

So, this is the one place that I go, the one time of the year that I feel completely understood and at home. For a week, I'm here with people who don't have uninformed or bizarre ideas about what I do and why I do it, so this is a very important weekend. I first attended AMIA back in 1986 when it was still F/TAAC. I walked in an extremely shy guy with major trepidations.

How would people from such awe-inspiring institutions as UCLA or Eastman House or the Library of Congress react to a lowly commercial stock footage huckster? As it turned out, I was welcomed. I found F/TAAC to be one of the incredible organizations that gave me the knowledge and the support to pursue my own work and to pursue it much better. I was on the Board for a couple of terms and came to have great respect for the hard work it does to steer this organization. And many of the people whom I've met here have played major roles in my life. I'd like AMIA to continue to be this important to everyone else, regardless of who you are. In the past several years, I've started to feel some concern about where we are and where we're going. This came to a head for me after last year's conference and after Orphans this spring. I'm hearing that many of you folk are having some similar thoughts.

Here are just a few of mine. First and most important, I'm feeling that a generational divide of sorts is developing. We're really lucky that many new people have been entering the field in the past few years. This so-called younger archivist—you have to forgive the term, I should maybe say emerging archivist, like they say emerging artist—come to see our archival practice in new and different ways and is beginning to redefine what moving image archives can do and what to take on. I'm thinking of outreach and populist projects, like Home Movie Day; or quantitative archival activities with local and regional organizations; new access initiatives; and much, much more. Newer archivists are contributing energy, commitment and new ideas. I'm sensing that we need to try to make a better home for you. I don't see the interchange that I used to see. I see many younger members doing much of the heavy lifting that makes things like our conference happen, but they're just starting to be represented on our Board. We all joined for the same reasons. And though we're always going to cluster into various groups, I'm really hoping that these clusters can mix it up within the organization. By the way, I think this isn't just a generational issue—it's something that affects newer members, regardless of age.

AMIA also isn't the only game in town anymore. I'm worried that we're losing people's attention. Many people value the familial feel and the intimacy of Orphans. Many digital archivists don't even know about us. Big commercial stock footage people don't come to the conferences as often as they used to. I would like AMIA to continue to be an important meeting place and a catalytic organization. Why catalytic? This is my personal feeling. I think archives are at risk, and the risk is becoming culturally irrelevant. If we don't work extremely hard to provide access to our

annual meetings, and if we don't think in an imaginative and expansive way about access, everyone but a few specialists will begin to pass us by. When you think of undergrads who start and stop their research on the Web, for instance: if it isn't Googleable, it doesn't exist. If this tendency propagates throughout the culture, we have a big problem.

And I think we need to advocate for access, and AMIA is a perfect mechanism for us to do so and to do many other such things. Finally, most archivists don't wield the power that we deserve to. No matter how much we know or how profoundly we manage it, we generally don't control the agenda or the budgets of the organizations where we work. But there's room for all of us to innovate and to be leaders at AMIA. And from there it's a short step to being advocates for archives and archivists out in the real world. These are a few of my thoughts, and we all hope to hear yours.

Oksana Dykyj: I wanted to bring us back to a little bit of a history, and personal history as well, so my statement will have to do with the educational side of AMIA. And it's very heartening for me to look around this room and see one of the chairs here today, as Sarah has already mentioned, be a recipient of a scholarship. Our scholarship and fellowship program is really one of the most important things that we do, in my opinion. It's a drawing card for people who are not in the organization to come to this organization to seek our help and then to come back, as Sarah and others have done, and to work very hard as they are. They're in this room. Also, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank aloud an individual, Eddie Richmond, who is one of the founding individuals of the scholarship program. His vision and dedication was what started this program.

Now, I'd also like to place these programs within the context of the development of the organization. Administratively, the organization has support, and we need to talk about this support. It's not just ideas but how we get these ideas going. We had secretarial support in the AFI for a number of years until about 1997 when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences very kindly donated space for us to set up an office and we hired our first full-time staff person. That helped. That came sort of in the middle of our thirteen to fourteen years together. And the Office helped us administer these programs.

The evolution of the Association can be seen, I think, as a shift in a didactic paradigm. What I mean is that for many members in the earliest days of the Association, coming to a conference and getting the newsletter was essentially a way of looking at getting professional

development. That we didn't have, that we didn't get. The people of my generation were in different graduate programs where we had to make our own curriculum to integrate moving images. Now that we have graduate programs that deal with moving image archiving, I think we're headed in another direction.

Let me just quickly go through what I want to say because I only have thirty seconds left. In my mind, I view one part of our evolution as shifting from education, to formal channels of disseminating shared experience, to now facilitating the exploration of ideas leading to research, (and that research coming back to us in a way that we can all use it) and facilitating projects coming out of the Association. I'm curious to hear what your views are after we're done talking. Thank you.

Greg Lukow: They're really serious about this three-minute deal, so I'm going to talk fast, if you don't mind. I was asked to give a perspective since I was around since before the beginning – a perspective on how AMIA has grown and changed over the years. And, like Sarah, I couldn't resist the temptation of invoking the age metaphor in my remarks, so you're going to hear that in here as well. But I'm also going to try to provide a bit of historical thinking, which I tend to do. So maybe some of what follows are historic coordinates—not only how we can look back and think about how we have written a history to date, but how we can think of writing a history in our future as well.

First, the history past. Well, as all parents like to know if it a boy or a girl at birth, it's important to remember that at birth, we had three choices. We had a committee that was charged with investigating three choices. One, whether we were to continue as an informal group that was meeting around a table forty or fifty strong, getting a little unwieldy; two, whether we should become a subset of SAA, the Society of American Archivists; or three, whether we should formalize. And obviously we probably chose the only viable option. We formalized and became AMIA.

Our growth has had spurts. Some of those spurts are in the membership because of factors in the field. I mean, in the late 1980s there was a tremendous influx of archivists into our field, even before AMIA, from the local television news field. There was a very specific historical reason for that, but that continued in the '90s with the advent of more and more regional and local

archives that fleshed out, in many ways, our member roster. The second such growth spurt was due to the tremendous interest, academically at first, but then archivally as well, in the cluster of amateur film, home movies, and ephemeral film, so there are now a number of archives dedicated to them. It's not just Rick Prelinger anymore that we think of in terms of that. He had the market cornered fifteen to twenty years ago; now there's a tremendous constituency in that regard. Certainly the international archives within AMIA have represented an influx of membership, and finally, of course, students, which you'll hear from and certainly have before.

In addition to the growth spurts in the membership, there are also transformative dimensions taking place within the field that have impacted AMIA and how we're going to change. Picking up on my last point on students, certainly one of those is the fact that we went from zero to coming close to ten advanced certificate or graduate degree programs around the world right now. The national film and television plans, the national film and television boards and foundations, the funding foundations have made a significant impact. The penetration of the digital has impacted all aspects of our lives, certainly, and is one thing that we continue to have to react to in legal and copyright dimensions.

So now we're thirteen. It's a matter of puberty as Rick Utley rather oddly suggested yesterday. But is that a matter of raging hormones or responsible maturation? That's what we have to decide to write our history from here on. Some of the perhaps provocative either/ors, if you will, that we'll have to navigate. Hollywood or the world? A few years ago, thirty to forty percent of our membership lived within the greater Los Angeles area. I haven't checked up on those statistics in recent time, but that dichotomy will continue to impact us. Generation gap or rational succession planning? Which one are we actually in the midst of right now? People will refer to balkanization. Is it really a matter of 100 flowers blooming or circling the wagons? These are some of the considerations that I'm sure other AMIA members will pick up on as well. Technology-driven or content-driven? A key aspect into organizing our annual conferences. Strategic planning or paradigm shift? We have the strategic plan. I think anybody who's thinking about the future of the organization should go back and make sure they read it in this kind of a context. Remember, paradigm shift is actually an unplanned change. It's when enough things change that suddenly you have a new reality and you go, "Oh, my god, that's different." Maybe you don't accept my categories. Maybe either/or is not really your thing. I like to think dialectically; it's not just a matter

of the truth lying somewhere in between. I like to think that what we become is what we can shape of the decisions that we make. So, thank you.

Paolo Cherchi Usai: Yes, AMIA has fulfilled a field gap. We needed a place where individuals could talk about preservation issues, the kind of forum that FIAF could not fill for institutional reasons. Now the question is, "what kind of audience are we willing or we would like to serve?" Enrolling in the AMIA conference is expensive, and a lot of talented colleagues in the field cannot afford to come. Hence the question is: do we need this kind of venue? Do we need to meet the way we are meeting now? I understand that there will be a need to further increase the enrollment fees. Is this necessary? Are there alternatives?

A second point: so far, my feeling is that AMIA has grown in terms of an organization dealing with screen content. Sometimes, in my discussion with colleagues, I have had the feeling that we maybe need a second AMIA or AMIA II, something dealing with the screen as an experience. I would very much like to be in a group where the experience of looking at moving images is given the same attention as the way images are being created or preserved, and I begin to feel frustrated about the lack of this kind of debate.

Third: the issue of succession and generational change has been mentioned, and I do think this is becoming a dramatic problem for the Association and for the field in general. It has become harder to recruit new curators and directors with substantive experience with moving images, managers with a vision for the field. We have been raising a new generation of archivists with our training programs, but what do we mean by "new generation?" Have we just raised a new generation of low level staff without a future? Or people who are going to do film splices or digitizing and copying but are not allowed to make decisions at a curatorial level? Whenever administrations are in the need of recruiting new managers and new curators, we often realize they don't have much to share with the kind of screen culture we believe in. Is this a problem that AMIA can address?

Finally, a few words about our own constituency, about people attending the AMIA meetings. We have found this forum called AMIA. It is a wonderful forum, however, it is also a forum made of people who by and large are already in touch with each other through other means, such as the Internet. Where are our real counterparts? Where are the politicians? Where are the donors? Where are the funders who could really help us do more and better of what we are doing

now? Despite all of the progress achieved, thanks to AMIA, I am not sure that the public has a better awareness of why we are doing things the way we do. Is our profession perceived as something important or influential? Do people care whether or not archives exist? Do they think that our images exist simply because they are there somewhere or because archives are making them accessible according to a coherent set of cultural principles?

Snowden Becker: Hi. I don't even need a show of hands because I know I'm not the only person whose dad really doesn't understand what I do. And, in fact, you know, my dad is somebody who we've always joked about getting business cards printed up that say Peter Becker: expert in your field. And yet he still introduced me to strangers as a tape librarian.

So, when we were working on getting this all put together and talking about what each of us individually would address, one of the questions Rick Prelinger asked me was whether fringe groups or groups that had been outside of the industry of movie image preservation can find community within the organization. Speaking for myself, I can say that not only have I found community, but I've found family. I feel that I have grandparents within this organization that I revere and adore. I feel like I have siblings, and as in any family, maybe I have a few crazy cousins that you don't talk about for the best image of everyone and maybe an aunt and uncle as well. That's okay, because, like Rick, I came to my AMIA meeting with a sense of awe about who I was meeting and the work that people were carrying on here. And also as a person who was involved with materials and methods that had initially been at the fringe of this field and were rapidly moving towards the mainstream. To extend the metaphor, if we think of AMIA every year as family reunions, the small gauge and home movie and amateur materials kids aren't sitting at the kids' table anymore. In fact, as Rick pointed out, we're increasingly working in the kitchen. I think that we can expect this process to continue and that some, if not all, of the groups and individuals who are sitting at the kids' table this year will be taking their place with the grown-ups next year, if not eventually at the head of the table.

My question, and the question that I and my peers and any number of any constituencies within AMIA I think should be asking, is whether AMIA as a group is truly comfortable with that process. And whether we are openly engaging in nurturing young professionals, people new to the field, and people who have been working in the same field for a long time that have only recently married into the AMIA clan or been adopted by groups that have gained some supremacy here. I

think that we have a process of maturation going on as an organization and as a field. My thought is that we will not only include people from outside but include the entire outside to such a degree that maybe my dad will finally understand what it is that I do and that, in fact, he really will be an expert in my field.

I think that we cannot reach an effective number of people that do engage in the kind of work that we do if we're working in a vacuum and we see ourselves as only relating to one another. I think that AMIA obviously has been a grassroots effort, which I've been involved in. But a priority for us has to be to involve people that don't start out as AMIA members but may end up as AMIA members or working with AMIA members for the rest of their careers.

Unidentified Speaker: This is a really large crowd. Can everyone really speak up because there are many standing up?

Unidentified Speaker: Sit on the floor.

Brian Graney: Well, I just wanted to talk about volunteerism within AMIA, and AMIA as a volunteer-run organization and how it's been adapting to changes in the membership. In thinking about the generation gap issue, I have had a hard time seeing it as really a gap between generations of archivists because it does seem that AMIA, in its early stages, recognized the need to develop a new generation of archivists. And so I think that there's been some continuity in this generational shift through AMIA's planning for education and scholarships and fellowships and increasing the membership. Where I do see a gap as a result of that is in the way that affected the organization.

My first AMIA conference was in 1997 as a member of the second class of the Selznick school, the first one being 1996. And while I wasn't here as part of AMIA prior to that to say for sure, I would imagine that once the programs that AMIA nurtured started producing a lot of students, they made it a priority to join the Association and come to the annual conference. But there's been a big gap in the kind of an organization that AMIA is. Rick Prelinger talked about missing the informality and the collegiality of the smaller AMIA that existed pre-1996. And I think that the volunteer structure that existed at that time was fairly informal and because of that kind of environment, things like accountability, communication, and collaboration between committees and

between the Board and different areas of the membership occurred more naturally than they do now. I think that we really need to take a look at the volunteer structure that's in place to run the organization. We need to make sure that it's meeting the needs of a larger membership and to put formal structures in place to meet those same needs that we have for accountability, communication, collaboration to ensure that we are still the same kind of organization in essence, but on a different scale.

Also, I've been thinking about the generation gap in terms of volunteerism. The increase in the younger generation of archivists within the organization in the membership doesn't seem to be reflected yet in the leadership, and there's a lot of concern about nurturing the next generation of leaders within AMIA. But it does seem that at present there are some obstacles to new volunteers coming into active roles. I think there needs to be—this is part a of formalizing it again—more of not just a concern to see new members taking on active roles, but an active effort to bring them in. In my early experience as a volunteer within AMIA, I expressed interest without really knowing what this organization was or how it worked by coming to the meetings that interested me and just making a vague statement of my interest to participate. And it was a couple of years before there was any follow-up on that expression of interest. I think there will be more time to talk about these kinds of issues as we open up for discussion.

Lewanne Jones: I've been coming to AMIA conferences since AMIA was about a carload, I guess, and that was about ten years ago in Boston. And my participation in AMIA is evidence of the Association's interest in diversity since, as many of you know, I am neither an archivist nor an employee of any archival institution. I am an audio-visual researcher (to use market speak), a consumer of the products and services that AMIA members supply, so I've had the good fortune to work with and visit many of the AMIA archives. Attending annual conferences and working with the Diversity Task Force over the last few years and making friends with fellow AMIA colleagues has given me an understanding of archival issues, practices, and policies that I never, ever, would have had from a mere user's perspective. Over the years, some of us have brought our experiences as users of archives to AMIA and have opened up a dialogue within the archival community. And AMIA has always been very receptive to hearing about how things are from our perspective.

Over the past few years, however, I have noticed a serious decline in participation by other audio-visual researchers in AMIA and at the conferences. And having just done a very brief survey amongst my colleagues in New York, I'm quite confident that it's primarily economic considerations that are the reason for that. Few of us have really steady employment that allows us any time off, and almost none of us have anybody who pays our way to come here, so that's a significant factor. However, over other years, people did make it here. So that's something I'd be interested to see AMIA do something about, if that's something the organization can do.

As everyone knows, the recent season's crop of excellent independent documentaries with a lot of archival footage in them like *Fahrenheit 911*, *The Corporation*, or *Outfoxed* attest to a wide fraternity of researchers/producers for whom archives are a critical component of the production process. As media production is democratized, many new people are coming into the field and becoming users of already existing archival media and producers of materials that will, hopefully, be archived and accessible at some point in the future. So, it's my hope that these people can benefit from AMIA.

Well, I'm going to skip some of what I was going to say since I only have a minute. I would just like to conclude by saying that the very first film that I worked on was an independent production that repatriated and re-contextualized images of colonial experience in Latin America. I was very moved to hear here the stories from people from Jamaica and Nicaragua about the obstacles and efforts that they face. I worked on a Civil Rights Movement series, "Eyes on the Prize," and that series demonstrated the significance of archival film in revealing one of the country's most important freedom struggles. So, as my participation in AMIA goes forward, I'd like to see the organization make greater strides in its commitment to the historical record of all peoples and communities of the country and the world. And as Co-Chair of the Diversity Task Force, I'd like to ask for help from AMIA members committed to this goal and for ways the organization can help realize it. Thanks.

Karan Sheldon: As many of you did, I attended the general meeting yesterday, and it made a very deep impression on me. The energy in the room from those seated was remarkable. And I have a great sense that this organization is doing very, very well. I want to commend Janice and her staff and the Board in particular, for reporting on having done something quite profound, which is reaching out to a very large number of outside organizations on our behalf. And this, I think, is a

signal step. So, I'm going to talk about AMIA as a body and as one that's outward looking. And I'm going to talk about that in the context of who we are as individuals, because this is an organization of individuals and one of the characteristics—something I didn't know before yesterday—Andrew Blahnik characterized us as being humble. And that's a wonderful thing, but I think it is also inhibiting in claiming some of the force we can have in the world. We've got to get over being humble.

I want to know how you feel about that. We're very idealistic, and that came up in a lunch meeting we had before this session. And we're committed. A dear friend, Barbara Humphrys said, "You know, the most important thing is to do your job the best you know how." And I answer that by saying you also have to have a commitment to offering to the world what you believe to be true. I really think that it is time for AMIA in its growing up to now claim that and to recognize, in some formal way in AMIA, that we must know that life is short and that there are many things that are not known and that need to be understood. And we need to become a clearinghouse for the big questions. How do we pass on the knowledge that we have acquired? It's very hard won, all the things that we do on a daily basis.

These are the intellectual questions; and so I'm going to challenge you to think about the role within AMIA of a philosophy department. We haven't had one before, and so I'd like to think about that quite seriously. Because we have commitment, we have energy and we're here because we need to find meaning and vision. We do that in a collective way, and I think it's really important. We have the opportunity to do this in a meaningful, intellectual way. Here is a very short quote from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who asks us in the context of moving images, perhaps, "In what sense the visible landscape under our eyes is not exterior to other moments of time and the past, but has them really behind itself in simultaneity, inside itself, and not it and they side by side 'in' time." Hard work.

Ray Edmondson: For those standing in the back, there is still room on the floor if you'd like to come down and sit. It's more comfortable than standing up around the back.

AMIA now officially styles itself and acts as an international organization. Milt Shefter did an editorial in the latest newsletter on internationalization, and he reiterated some of those things yesterday. AMIA's membership outside North America has steadily grown. In Europe, we've got a

large membership, and AMIA runs the largest and most diverse conferences and the most active international listserv. Its awards and scholarships, its committee memberships, its hosting of the Joint Technical Symposium and the international range of its conference presenters now demonstrate AMIA's international perspective and role. It actively encourages awareness and it's raising a dialog between archivists in developed and developing countries.

Yet its conferences, events, and Board membership have so far been confined to North America. And it does limit participation for members that are further afield. There's little participation south of the border, from Latin America and the Caribbean. Why? Maybe it's the membership fee and the cost of attending conferences that are too high for many potential members overseas. AMIA is monolingual. Everything is in English.

The fact is that we are still coming to terms with the full implications of AMIA's international status. AMIA's membership basis is inclusive and democratic. It is founded on personal membership. This is its great distinctive strength and appeal. Most of us attend and participate as individuals, not organizational representatives. Our prime concerns are those of the individual professional such as knowledge growth, networking, mutual support, standards, principles, ethics, training, accreditation, advocacy --- and hence the health and strength of our profession's practices and structures.

So, I'm going to just pose several questions that occurred to me. First, is our field needing one truly global, individually based, professional association? If so, does AMIA aim to be that body? If yes, what is its plan? If no, where does it stop? And how else will the vacuum be filled? Second, is AMIA a professional association, for example like the Society of American Archivists, or just a group of interested people? What are the membership implications of moving to credentialing standards and having everything professionally defined? Three, is AMIA passive or activist, a private forum for the initiated or a public advocate? What will it promote, defend or protest? Is it being silent when it should be speaking out? Fourth, what will AMIA do to change the divide between archives and archivists in the first world and the third world? How can it work to permanently improve the situation of many colleagues? Fifth, what is AMIA's critique of the international structures of our profession? Their configuration and effectiveness? Does it see a better way? And if so, what will it do at this time to achieve it? Sixth, what can we learn from the history and structures of relevant professional forums such ICA, the International Council on Archives; ICOM, the International Council of Museums; IFLA, the International Federation of

Library Associations; SAA and others? Seventh, will AMIA expand to embrace sound as well as moving images?

Sarah Ziebell Mann: Thank you. Okay, so now it's your time. So, please, we welcome questions and comments. Carey has the mic, so raise your hand and she'll come over to you.

John Tariot: Hi. I've been coming to AMIA conferences, I guess, since the mid-90s, and it's my once-a-year opportunity to run into the once-a-year instant experts on AMIA, how AMIA should be run. Whether it's how the newsletter should look or what the website should do or what the conference should be doing. And I just want to encourage anybody who's an AMIA member who's in here who's not on an interest group or committee to get on one because this is an entirely volunteer organization and without you, nothing will happen. So please find a way to make it work.

Kelly Chisholm: Hi, I'm Kelly Chisholm. I'm from the Academy Film Archive. You already talked about a generational gap, and I think we touched on this in the Education Committee this morning. Mentoring is so important in this field. You know, all of us that went through schooling have a story of someone who helped us find the place where we needed to be and helped us out. And most of us have six, seven people that have helped us out. And it's getting to the point where those of us that are two to five years out of schooling are becoming mentors for people that are in school. And it's really hard. You know, it feels kind of ridiculous for us that are just entering the field and still feel so lost to become the leaders for these people. So, the challenge for us is to figure out a way to bridge that gap and to really find a way to connect the people that are at the senior levels of their places to the students and to really reach out, beyond even AMIA. And to find the people who are interested in getting into this field and really help them. Because you still need help to get into this, and it's really all about whom you know. And I think mentoring is the only way to get people here.

Geoff Alexander: I'm Geoff Alexander from the Academic Film Archive of North America in San Jose. This is my fifth AMIA conference, and one of the things I thought was really interesting about this one is how many archivists I've run into here who have their own small archives, became archivists by accident, didn't go to archival university programs, and all of a sudden these films arrived at their doorstep. They might have begun by asking: what are these films? Who collects

them? How do we do research them? It's pretty tough when you've got to bootstrap. So, I think we're going to see more and more of these kinds of archives developing that don't come from the traditional archival world. What I'd like to see AMIA consider doing in the future is to provide some additional resources for people like this who come into it by accident and need to know the things pertaining to bootstrapping an archive. Some ideas might include developing some cookbook ideas that could also be put up on the AMIA website and figuring out some different fee structure for people who are operating in an environment where they're not going to get institutional assistance to attend the conference.

Kara Van Malssen: Hi, my name is Kara. I'm a student at NYU, and I wanted to follow up on what Kelly Chisholm said because there are a lot of students here. And we're trying really hard to integrate ourselves, but we don't quite know what to do or how to do that. And, speaking for myself, I haven't been approached by many of you. You're expressing a concern about a generational gap, and we are here for you to shape our ideas of what AMIA can be and what the whole field can be. And, you know, I think a lot of students might agree with me that we'd like you to approach us if you can, if you have something you want to say or if you have ideas on how to bridge that gap. Please, talk to us. Because we're scared and we don't know and it's hard for me to stand up and say this—

Unidentified Speaker: Do you have ideas or questions for us that we can answer right now?

Kara Van Malssen: Particularly? I mean that's quite huge, but I just wanted to address this issue, because it was quite frustrating to hear a lot of you talking about the generational gap and how can we work that out—

Unidentified Speaker: Do you think there is a gap?

Kara Van Malssen: Yes. Absolutely. It's been great to be here and I've really enjoyed it, but at the same time I definitely don't feel comfortable here yet. It's my first one, and I'm sure I will, but, but we do need some guidance and, and that's just really all I wanted to—

Unidentified Speaker: I'd actually like to respond to that really quickly by focusing on an important question of asking whether established members of AMIA (the older generation, whether that's older in terms of experience or older in terms of number of gray hairs), whether you feel uncomfortable approaching the younger members and the less experienced members. I think it's important.

Barbara Humphrys: First my name, Barbara Humphrys. I work at the Library of Congress. I don't represent the Library of Congress. This is an amazing coincidence, and the reason is, I was just going to stand up and say that it feels very awkward to go up to a bunch of younger, emerging archivists and say, "Hi, kids, what would you like to know?" because you just don't do that. You know, go up to young folks. I've always believed that we need more formal programs. I'll give a plug to Wendy Shay, developer of the mentoring program. And she just said (kind of whispered) a solution is actually to get on a committee because that's where you have small groups of people interested in the same things, and there's really much more opportunity for one-on-one. I just want to say it's difficult in the other direction too, and we need to work on that.

Wendy Shay: If you're on a committee and working on a specific project, then the older people do have to talk to you.

Unidentified Speaker: We have to understand there's fear on both sides. None of us bites, but it is sometimes difficult to find an opening. The involvement within AMIA on a group or committee or project level is a way to have some common turf where there isn't as much of a gap. The interest gap is closed, and the age gap at that point doesn't matter.

Jennifer Matz: I'm Jennifer Matz. This is my first conference. I totally understand what you're saying about initially finding it hard to do. But I just wanted to take a moment and thank everyone who has made themselves really accessible to me at this conference as a new member. And I did have a suggestion for AMIA. I'm getting my Library Science degree at Simmons College, and it's not just NYU and UCLA. There's a lot of footage, by accident or otherwise, in archives these days. A lot of archivists coming new into the profession have to deal with moving images, and I'm

wondering if regional chapters could be something that we do as an outreach program to try and set regional chapters at Library Science schools as well as with trained archivists. I think that there's definitely an interest at my school.

Janice Simpson: I'm the Managing Director of AMIA. One of the services the AMIA Office provides is to help new members, younger archivists, people who are just coming into the profession. We're there. So if there's an area that you're interested in, if there's someone in particular you weren't able to meet at the conference, if you have an idea, give us a call. I've been here long enough that I know quite a few people, so sometimes it's putting members in touch with someone in their area. I've done that before. We can offer suggestions based on interests of certain members to get involved in certain committees, specific projects. So, please, we're a resource—use us.

Bill O'Farrell: Hi, Bill O'Farrell, and don't ask me who I work for. I was in Portland at the last F/TAAC meeting and couldn't get my institution to get me to the first couple of conferences. Got to Chicago, and I knew if I actually put my hand up and offered to show up with a paper, that might get me there. So, I did two papers in the conference. I wound up being a charter Preservation Committee member. I went, "What?" It was a lesson, and that was basically that if you just went in there, you know . . . I just felt like it was time somebody had to step up because nobody was talking to us.

I'm not good at public speaking, in spite of sometimes evidence to the contrary. I have a fear of talking to all you people in crowds, but you know what? You guys embraced me right from the beginning. Maybe I'm on the graying, folliclely-challenged side, but all I can say to all of the emerging archivists in the field is: bring it on. Really. Because AMIA is going to be all the better if you guys make it. And things like Home Movie Day just blew me away. I mean, I looked at you guys, and I wanted to work. I think it's really cool, and I think AMIA should get involved with Home Movie Day.

I think that we should have themed conferences maybe partway through the year. I think we should have all sorts of events. I can't see all 600-700 people at a conference. It's impossible. I heard all sorts of things this week about, ooh, there was going to be fireworks at this one and you

know what? It's turning into a love-in. I mean it. I think that's really cool. And it says something about who we all are and how much we all care about each other.

Bob Brodsky: Bob Brodsky, from north of Boston. There is a catalyst between older and younger people in the organization that we haven't even begun to exploit, I think. And that's food. If more AMIA meetings took place in a refectory style setting of long tables where people could wander in and sit down with whomever looked lonely, an awful lot of mentoring and contacting could be done at those occasions. You know, you could do it with all three meals. I've attended a lot of film festivals around the world and in the poorer ones, where you ate at long tables for a week, a tremendous amount of information that never got shared at the wealthier festivals occurred.

Deborah Steinmetz: I'm an international member who has a New York connection. And yes, indeed, it is very expensive to belong to your organization, but it is well worth it. I do go back to Israel, and the person who was before me brought back all the information that came from you. But as a new member, as someone who has only come this year, it is very frightening. People don't come over to you. And I am not a young student. So, that is a problem that you will have to address eventually. But I did want to thank all of you and I did learn an awful lot. I will be translating many things that you have given to me into Hebrew. It was also very nice to see all the faces that go with the AMIA listserv.

Lee Shoulders: I'm Lee Shoulders. I'm from New York, and I would probably say I'm smack in the middle of the generational gap. This is my tenth year with AMIA, and when I first joined it was a lot smaller and I was one of the younger members. And it was scary then, too, but it was a little easier, perhaps because I was by myself and didn't know anyone, which required me to either reach out to other members, or they noticed I was new and reached out to me. I would like to offer up myself, and I know there's a few of us here of the same generation, such as Lisa Carter, to help bridge that gap. I certainly know a lot of people—but not everyone—and I can maybe help introduce you to some of the scary ones, who I would say are not so scary. I think getting involved is absolutely correct, as John Tariot said, getting involved in committees is a great way to meet people. I would also say I think we should do something like this next year at the conference

because I don't remember a time when we have all gathered together to talk about AMIA as an organization. We need to keep our eyes on the structure of this organization and try to get a better understanding of where we're going and what we *need* to do and what we'd *like* to do. I'd like to see more of that.

Laura Jenemann: Hi. I'm Laura Jenemann from J. Walter Thompson, and I want to talk about cash flow. I want to talk about cash flow because this year I worked on the program committee, and one of the issues was how we were going to get more income into AMIA. One of the things that concerns me is that coming from a corporate end, I don't see a lot of you at these big, expensive, digital asset management things. But I also don't see anything that represents AMIA. And we can't expect them to come to us. We have to go to them. I'd like to encourage—don't know if this is the Office, or the Board—you need to go. When I ask other archivists why they're not there, they say well, that doesn't really interest me. But we have to go out and do the outreach and seduce them to come to us and give them something relevant in advance. That will also help with some of the cash flow issues that have come up.

David Rowntree: My name's David Rowntree. I'm at Washington University in St. Louis. I've been coming now since Portland, four years ago. I still feel that I fall in between this generation gap in that I've not gone full into school for training and I've not been in the Association long enough, I guess, to be a part of this panel. However, I have found that each year the different areas that I'm dealing with in my profession have brought me to the different people in the Association. So now for the first time this year, I've met Milt Shefter. I've talked to Sam Kula. I've talked to Barbara Humphrys. And every year I'm going to more and more people that I've seen around. I've seen their faces, maybe even emailed them on the listserv. But only now in my profession I'm getting to these sorts of situations and meeting them and possibly collaborating with them as well.

I'm also very encouraged by the fact that the Association sort of legitimizes my work within my own institution. I'm the only one here from my institution and because of AMIA, because of the material I'm going back with which I can use in my own work, I can get the funds from my institution to use other members in the Association: consultants and vendors. Every year, I'm creating

relationships with vendors and using their services and using the services of other members here. So I encourage students to be patient. Each year as you learn different areas in the profession, you will be meeting these people as I have met them. Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah, just one quick comment. This is mostly for the younger, emerging archivists. One of the most valuable resources you have in AMIA is the membership directory. This goes out once a year; it's got the telephone numbers and names of everyone who's a member of AMIA. When I started doing this, coming here, and didn't know anybody, I began calling people on the list when I needed various things. What I found is that every single one of those people is really friendly and had an overwhelming amount of information. I made an awful lot of friends over the telephone, and when I came to my next AMIA meeting I knew most of these people. What you'll find is that these are just the most cooperative, wonderful people you'll ever have to deal with. So, I would really encourage you to use that list and use those telephone numbers.

Susan Dalton: Hi, my name is Susan Dalton. I'm formerly of the American Film Institute. I would like to relate back to Snowden Becker's remark about that her father still didn't exactly know what she did for a living. I think as an organization so concerned with media that when we hit town with a conference we should be media blitzing that same town. The fact that we have in this room people that are literally controlling many of the world's image assets, I think we should publicize ourselves more and make people aware of what a media archivist is and what we do. There was a little bit of that last night at *The King and I*, and it was great to be mixing with the public, but there wasn't really time to actually talk with the public members of the audience. When we meet, I would like to think of ourselves as not just another conference in that city. We should try to become a major subject in the local paper and on radio and television. If we publicize ourselves more, we can make people more aware of how much film and television images are endangered and how much we as archivists can or cannot do about it.

Snowden Becker: Can I just ask a quick question of the room? How many people here were in Vancouver last year? How many of you knew that Sam Kula and I were on a local public radio talk show, the "AM Talk Show," talking about the fact that AMIA was in Vancouver? I kind of want to remind us that sometimes we're on the inside of the fishbowl here, and we don't realize how many

people are looking at what we do. But I do want to point out that AMIA does, as an organization, make an effort to reach out and make itself available and publicize its presence. You know, we may not necessarily see the results of that while we're here at the conference, but I think that more and more people are coming, not as members or not as people who are doing anything related to AMIA or moving image archiving. There's Thom Powers writing for *The Boston Globe* here who heard about AMIA via Home Movie Day and is interested in what we do and has been attending all our sessions and learning a lot about what we undertake as a profession. So, I think that process is ongoing, but I agree that it can be improved and expanded.

Sam Kula: First of all, I have a question. How many people remember that I could not get a word in edgewise with Snowden in full flow? Secondly, I would like to stress the importance of joining a committee or an interest group as a means of connecting with your peers, of all ages, and of getting productively involved with AMIA's programs.

Snowden Becker: But Sam, you got all the punch lines.

Marty Marks: I'm Marty Marks from MIT. I really enjoyed this discussion. To follow up on the last comment, it occurred to me last night (since I, too, got involved in a pre-screening discussion with members of the audience from the community) that they had no idea what this event was all about. And I have no idea what they made of the opening technical remarks, which should be fascinating to us. This relates to some of the questions that were posed by the more philosophical members of the panel, including Paolo and Karan and Ray. I'd love to see the discussion get back to some of their really deep and difficult questions; they need to be addressed by you and maybe by others in the audience.

You know, how many people have any idea of what archivists do? To have a screening of *The King and I* is an opportunity for a public reception of some kind following the screening or before it. I don't know whether you can do it at a theater like that, but if not, locate somewhere where you actually do have a chance to communicate with the public and where you can get the journalists from the local papers in. Make a media event out of it so that somebody can document it and put it in the archives. And then you could talk about it at next year's conference.

Also, I was particularly interested in the idea of outreach in a sense of joint conferences on the topic of sound. Why not at least experiment with the idea of a joint conference with the Association for Recorded Sound Collections? Perhaps this has already been discussed. I am a new member, and I apologize if I'm going over old ground. But I'd like to see things like that, especially to go back to Paolo's very appropriate question: What do people make of all these images that they're finding, and do they have any idea of how they get there?

Ray Edmondson: Well, I think Milt Shefter mentioned that doing a joint conference with IASA, the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives, is a matter of discussion, so that's already on the possible horizon.

Albert Steg: Hi, I am Albert Steg with the Selznick School at Eastman House. I have a really concrete suggestion for getting conversations started a little better between the old guard, if you will, and the newcomers. And that is that at the next AMIA conference there be one time block where the sessions are geared toward the newcomers, the current students, or those green in the profession, where the groups are defined by where the newcomers are coming from, and where the veterans are invited to attend that session that most resonates with their experience and expertise. For instance, if there are people who come from a library science background or if there are people who are in mid-career or mid-life and changing careers. You would have to do a survey of the current students and find out where they're coming from.

Rather than have a panel where there are people, you know, the gurus, who we love, speaking and expecting newcomers to saunter up afterwards, you could put the burden on the newcomers to speak anecdotally and express their interests, wishes and hopes. I think the veterans would find themselves eager to share the knowledge they have and their experience in a very natural way. What I find in a situation like AMIA where you're meeting a lot of people, we're having a whole lot of very short conversations where you don't get very far—"Oh, what school are you at? Is this your first or second year?" You have many, many varied but kind of superficial conversations.

Mike Mashon: I'm Mike Mashon, and I'm at the Library of Congress. Long time listener, first time caller. Paolo, dear friend, I want to go back to something that you mentioned in your comments about where do we find curators and managers, that we have a difficult time finding them. Because, frankly, I get the sense that there's more than a few people who'd raise their hand and say, "you've got your manager right here." I've had a lot of conversations over the last several days, and I'm thinking particularly about conversations with people who went to the presentation of our Library of Congress Culpeper facility where Greg Lukow mentioned that we're going to need fifty to eighty new people. I've had a lot of people asking me about jobs down there, and I tell them, just talk to Greg: GLUK@loc.gov.

Greg Lukow: That's me.

Mike Mashon: No, but I'm curious, Paolo, I very much respect what you have to say and what you think. I think there are places where we can find the managers and the curators, but I get the sense from talking to people around here, sometimes I feel like there's this kind of ceiling that they bump up against and they really can't get any further. Now, part of that is just dues to pay. You've got to do the grunt work and you've got to show that you're willing to do it and plug away without remuneration and without getting a lot of respect. I mean, you're not going to get a lot of respect outside your organization, and sometimes you're not going to get it within your organization. But you've got to keep doing it anyway. I think it's really self-defeating when people say: "You know what? They're not giving me a raise. They're not giving me the promotion. Screw them. I'm going to leave this place." I never see that at the Library, of course. Anyway, Paolo, back to your question: where do we find these people? Do you really think that we're having a hard time? Why are we having a hard time finding managers and curators? Did I misunderstand your comment?

Paolo Cherchi Usai: What I meant is that there are few job openings where qualified curators with an expertise that's both technical and administrative can find a way to express their potential. To think that this problem can be solved by simply giving our students a university diploma is an illusion. There are reasons for this, which are not only inherent to institutions, but have something to do with the way archival culture is perceived. And I think that AMIA should not be afraid of dealing with this. We have been very good, I think, in establishing the environment necessary for

the growth of a new generation of curators and managers, but we behave as if we are allowing this new generation to grow up to a certain point but not go beyond that point because we are afraid of losing our own privileges or authority. We have to recognize this. The question is: Are we prepared to give more power and more authority to a generation of people who have been trained in a way that is different from the way we have learned our skills? Are we ready to trust these people and tell them to go ahead and replace us? Is this a kind of mentality that AMIA is able or willing to cultivate? Because so far what I see is different. We teach, we keep teaching, but in the meantime we are maintaining the status quo.

David Pierce: I'm currently between assignments. In 1979, when I was in high school, I wanted to grow up to be a part of the American Film Institute. I wanted to be an archivist. An archivist counted off the jobs in the U.S. on the fingers on one hand and said, "Those people aren't going anywhere. So why don't you get a degree in business? You can always do film on the side." So I ended up following that advice, and I ended up going into an archive at the high-end of management. But I know that had I, say, gone to work at the Library of Congress or the Museum of Modern Art or some other place, I would have never become a curator. Never. Because I would never have had the range of experiences that are necessary to have those senior management positions. You need to know finance, you need to know fundraising, you need to know programming, you need to know digital technologies, and it's very difficult to get people who have those ranges of skills and have experience in those things. I got my job in a way because I went to the Bethesda AMIA conference and I started to know a lot of people and I learned a tremendous amount. But it was a very unusual path to get there, and it won't work for a lot of people who will serve your dues and rotate from one position to another and move from archive to archive. It's like the employees at the universities who can never find a tenure track position. So, it's a definite problem.

Unidentified Speaker: I just wanted to jump in there. Oksana pointed out that one of the real strengths of AMIA being a volunteer-run organization is that there are opportunities for people to get involved and work well beyond the scope of what they're able to do within their jobs, especially in the more entry-level area of the field.

Julie Lofthouse: I'm Julie Lofthouse, newly of the Film Reference Library, which is a division of the Toronto International Film Festival Group. I went to the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation at George Eastman House in '99, and I have found it very hard to break into the field, even though I have been coming to the conference every year since I first joined AMIA and making the contacts. I believe that part of the difficulty has to do with institutions that are sometimes doing the hiring still not understanding what we do as audio-visual archivists and not sort of changing with the times. But a lot of it has to do with what I think is one of the things we were talking about at this conference: funding difficulties. A lot of people are not able to show up at these conferences because of funding issues, and it is often because of funding issues that jobs are scarce. When people are retiring or leaving jobs, the positions are being closed in institutions or there aren't a lot of new jobs coming up, and a lot of people in general are even sort of in fear right now of losing their own jobs or not having something to move to should theirs disappear. And I just want to say that I joined AMIA in 1999, and I went to school for training in the field. I could say maybe that I've been a professional for two years because it took me two years to find employment in the field after graduation. It was very difficult to get a job, and it was not for lack of applying and trying or paying dues. So I think that's something that we need to sort of address. It is not just about paying our dues, because there are a lot of us who *want* to pay those dues, but don't even get *that* opportunity.

Wendy Shay: I'm Wendy Shay and I'm from the Archive Center of the National Museum of American History. I hate to disillusion you all, but when I leave my job, the job leaves, too. You know Pam Wintle. We're both getting up there in years. And I love what I do. I hate my co-workers, but I love what I do. You know, frankly, I hit the glass ceiling about thirteen years ago. I've got a thirteen year old. I'm big on thirteen. We just had a bat mitzvah.

I stopped running the Human Studies Film Archives thirteen years ago and became a worker-bee to take care of my family. And now I am perpetually a worker-bee. Even within the Museum, I'm not seen as management material because I made a very weird step going from management backwards. But the point is that institutions are in dire straits, and there is not a new curator position that has been opened up at the National Museum of American History in the last six or seven years. Has there been anything in Natural History, Pam?

Pam Wintle: Just only because of retirees.

Wendy Shay: Well, we, even with retirements, don't get new positions.

Pam Wintle: We have no support positions.

Wendy Shay: Right, no support positions. So, I'm sorry, folks, but don't try to push us out because the job's going too. Plus, all the entertainment you get from us. And that leads me to my other thing. For everybody who said "you should do this at the conference, you should do that at the conference." Folks, put it in panel or do an assignment. It doesn't even have to be a panel.

Unidentified Speaker: Session proposals.

Wendy Shay: Session proposals. You control it. It's your organization. You control what the conference looks like. The Conference Committee goes through these submissions. So, submit. If you want it not to be formal, it doesn't have to be formal. We started out informal. Have it in your living room. Or, make it like your living room. But submit. You can have whatever you want. You just have to step up to the plate. And, youngsters, get together with a few of you and make up an idea. Find one of the old farts and ask us for an idea, you know. But just start joining in. I know that's hard and I know that's scary but it's the only way to feel part of it and to own it.

Snowden Becker: I just want to make a like a comment. I've been sitting up here with this microphone in front of me, but I think I speak for a lot of students when I say that I don't think that they're all expecting to compete for the same position in restoring nitrate negatives and stuff like that. My current position as Public Access Coordinator of the Academy Film Archive did not have a predecessor in that position. My position as a digital and media archivist with Japanese American National Museum did not have a predecessor in that position. There are new jobs in this field. My personal feeling is that the field is infinitely expandable. The issue is that the positions don't necessarily exist yet.

I think that part of the reason that the students and the younger generation and the new professionals are feeling fearful and in need of more support than they are necessarily getting

actively from the older members is that they do recognize that in some cases they will be competing for positions that other people want. But they are also facing a very, very difficult challenge of having to go into places that moving image archivists have not existed previously. Places like police departments, county courthouses, ethnology departments in major universities, places where film and video materials are a part of the work that they have been doing but have not been cared for properly, and where somebody needs to come in and suggest that the position needs to be created. That's very hard work. I've done it before. And they deserve our support and encouragement.

Without a foundation of people standing underneath them and saying exactly what it is that we do and why it's important in fields where it exists and has existed for a long time, they can't justify to other people doing that kind of work in a newer environment. You know, we need to be working with them and not against them. And being discouraging about counting the number of available positions on one hand is not helpful. I think we need to all work and brainstorm and collectively point out and identify areas of need outside of our immediate community and institutions in which we already work.

Ray Edmondson: I want to just add to that comment. In a 33-year career in the Australian public service, in the National Library of Australia and the National Film and Sound Archive later, the only position that I occupied that existed before I arrived was the first one I occupied in 1968. And that was as the reference librarian in the National Library's Film Division. All the other positions that I occupied were eventually added later. I think institutions evolve and you may have a strong impact on creating a position that you eventually occupy, so it's not as if you're waiting for the position to appear. Such organizations are dynamic. This is a dynamic organization. It's a growing field. You will have an impact on bringing into being the positions that need to be in various organizations, that you might later occupy.

Lisa Carter: Along all these lines, I just want to go back and again thank Brian Graney for saying exactly what I was thinking, although much more succinctly than I could have said it. But you all need to—and I'm talking to everybody in this room, I'm not talking about the new people or the old people, I'm talking about everybody here—when you're thinking about career advancement, when

you're thinking about flexibility, doing your job better, being better audio-visual archivists, you need to look no further than right here. One thing we all have in common whether we're interested in the small gauge, television, 35mm film preservation, whatever, is that we're all here in AMIA and this organization needs hard work and human resources to work. If you need experience in management, organization, if you need to learn resources and networking, this is the place to do it. So I guess what I'm trying to say is AMIA needs you to actively participate and do work, and in doing that work, you will get further ahead in your career, whether you like it or not. I know it happened to me.

Andrew Blahnik: Hi, I'm Andrew Blahnik, and I come from the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. And I just want to second what was said earlier, because it related to the general plan for the conventions and the Association. This is my first conference. I have seen a tremendous amount of diversity and abilities here. I think that we need to draw on this idea that we are the creators. We have a wonderful passion for what we do, but we need to express to the rest of the country and the rest of the world that we're dealing with how valuable it is that we have these collections. Think how many times you've laughed over the last couple days because of the clips that people have organized and put together and shown of just our culture onscreen. And these are things that we can show all over the country on television and in theaters. We have all this. We are the ones caring for it. We need to express this to people who have the authority to air these different formats and let them know how important it is that we have a well-cataloged collection and a well-organized collection and have quick access to and use of it. And let's use some of that to help us see as an association how to raise money. We all have a general passion for doing the archivism. How are we also going to make it sustain us beyond our passion?

Paul Spehr: I'm Paul Spehr. I'm one of the recluses of our organization. I'm presently unemployed but busy in retirement. I have a couple of things to comment on.

One is about the future leadership of the field. I think the very size of the group in this room, as well as the variety of people, is evidence that the direction of this field is onward and upward—at the moment. And I'm not very worried about where the future leaders in the field are coming from. I think plenty of them are in this room—and there'll be more here next year. It's a

very healthy feeling. I say this as one who first started meeting when there were five of us (I think it was five) in a closet at George Eastman House. It's changed quite a bit and for the good. But there are some things that we can do to improve things.

About meeting young people in the organization, I'd very happy to meet young people but it's a little hard to tell who they are. Should I go up to somebody and say: "You're a young person, are you wet behind the ears? Would you like some experience?" I don't think that works. We can start by improving the nametags. I've been walking around being "Cineric." It does tell you very clearly that I'm Paul (on the other side), but it doesn't tell you anything else about me. It doesn't tell you what my last name is, and if you want to find out whom I work for (it says I work for Fairfield, Pennsylvania), you have to get out your glasses out and come in close. It's possible to have a tag or something that tells people that this is a student or a new member, you know, something color-coded—or give them a beanie to put on. Something like that—or, put a beanie on us old timers—or perhaps some sort of scholar's hat. There are ways of identifying status, and, in thirty-some years of meeting with people in this profession, I've never known anybody who wasn't willing to share their knowledge, experience and information.

That said, I want to talk about something that I think is more serious—this is an appeal that comes from years of observing the field. I am talking about the general public's image of what an archivist is. If you see an article in your newspaper about an archive, it usually starts with the word "dusty." I've seen that over and over again: "The dusty archives." Then they talk about the Milquetoast archivist sitting inside. (The usual image is of some old maid-ish lady.) Those of us who work in the field know this is misinformation. Nevertheless, it *is* the information that's out there—and very broadly accepted. During the last year there have been very clear indications that this stereotype is having a serious impact on the field.

I cheered when they finally brought Paolo Cherchi Usai down to Australia. But for a while it looked like very mean-spirited managers were about to sack the entire staff of ScreenSound Australia. That seems to be diverted (thank you very much, Ray Edmondson). David Pierce is a survivor of a similar action at the British Film Institute and the National Film and Television Archive in London, where serious staff losses have happened. This is a very serious problem, and it occurs because new managers coming in from outside don't respect the staff they find inside. "If these people were really smart, they wouldn't be working here." This poor image is an archives-

wide problem. It's not just film archives, it is also happening in paper archives, and the entire field needs to confront and improve the image that has been created.

Those of us who work in the field know that we are dedicated, that we believe very strongly in the material in our charge, and, in fact, work in jobs that we *like*. Too many of these new managers are incapable of understanding that. They're quite willing to lay off people from their organizations without recognizing that the organization will never function well again. I don't know and can't offer a solution, but I think we need to work with other archival organizations to create a message that tells others that we do something valuable in the world.

Thomas Bakels [?]: Hi, my name is Thomas Bakels [?]. I am from the international section also. I am now attending AMIA for the second time. I have two comments to make. One is a solution, but let me start with the other thing first. Being an archivist, working in a library will never be a hip or fancy job. And I think that maybe it's due to Hollywood. So, it will not ever be having a hip image so that one says, "Oh, you're an archivist, how hip." I think that the work that you do with the preservation of film is so rewarding, so fulfilling that if you're passionate about it, like many people in AMIA I talked to here, you don't need the fancy image. The job itself gives you all the reward for what you are.

And second, about the gap for new curators, I think there is a mistake made and I see that in most every country where I visit a film archive, and I get around pretty much. If you are waiting for a curator from the outside to fill a gap for a leaving curator or for somebody who's retiring, I think this is the wrong idea. It should become part of the job description of a curator to work and grow this plant in his own staff to be a successor or a possible one because you know your people. You know the growing seed in the archive, people who want to stick out of the crowd and say "I want to take responsibility—I'm ready for it." And of course, it needs more than just the passion or the readiness. It needs some skills in management, skills as David Pierce said. So you need to learn something. You need to go to conferences. Listen to other people. The young people who come to this community, they can forget that anything will fall in their lap. They have to go and get it if they want it. And if they go and get it, and if they make others aware of, "Hey, listen, I want it, I'm ready," then people will see. "Listen, this guy's really trying hard and I think he's got the skills.

Let me take him with me on a conference. Let me take him with me on some event where he can learn something."

So, if a curator as a director of an archive or a library would take care of growing these people out of his own staff, then it would be more like the family business. In a family business, a father will always have in mind, "what do I do with my shop when I'm old? I need to have somebody to take over the shop but not run it into the ground or against the wall." So he would think about that. And if a curator would think about that, then he will take care of it, raising his own successor out his own staff. It can happen, I know. At the university in Manila they do stuff like that very well. They see exactly who has potential, who is ready to take the responsibility, and they share their know-how that they got over ten, twenty, thirty years with these young people who are ready to take responsibility. And they won't have a gap. Excuse me for speaking so long.

Ron Bartos: Hi, my name is Ron Bartos. I have two quick points, one related to the new nametag. Maybe we could also designate first-time attendee. That's great because then you could see them, take them around and introduce them. I've met so many first-time attendees. It's just wonderful to have y'all here. And if you're not a traditional student type in appearance, then, it's harder to identify you, but if you have something on the name tag that could just say, "First-time attendee," that would be wonderful. The second thing I want to say—I just want to share my immense gratitude for AMIA. I mean, it's just amazing how much I gained and how much my mission has gained through my participation in AMIA and how much I've been able to share with the Foundation and with my employees back home. And it's just grown so much and we've come so far. It's so wonderful to get together once in a while and reflect back where we were when there weren't formal moving image archival programs training students, when we used to attend the basic training on our first day and stuff. We've just come so far, and it's through all our effort and through all the Board's effort, the people who've raised their hands and stepped forward and volunteered and put in the hours. And I'm just so grateful. Thank you very much.

Sarah Ziebell Mann: I think we are about out of time. I would like to thank all of you speakers and everyone who contributed. I think we should continue discussing this on the listserv, in the

newsletter, and if people are interested in a follow-up for next year, we should probably talk about that as well.

Unidentified Speaker: Can I just say that the Conference Committee is meeting in a few minutes? Those of you who have been fueled with energy to do something about next year or you have ideas for next year's efforts—please join us.

Rick Prelinger: Thank you, and I also think it would be really wonderful if this discussion could be continued. The listserv is a really, really good school. Thanks a lot.