Can I-Schools Fulfill Their Mission Without Archival Studies?

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If one listens in the library and archives communities to the whispers and rumors about the I-School movement, the sense one has about what is going on is that this is just another effort to move away from the traditional library school, merely another phase in the natural evolution of a portion of these schools into something far different than what the library science pioneers ever envisioned. Before the I-School movement was here, however, other aspects of these historic schools were evolving, such as can be seen in the history of graduate archival education having a place in the library and later library and information science programs. However, in this session we take a somewhat different tack, arguing that older areas of studies such as archival studies are essential to the future of I-Schools, particularly as these schools tackle the increasingly complex issues confronting a digital society. This session will consist of a preliminary paper co-written by leaders in archival studies and the concept of I-Schools (Richard J. Cox and Ron Larsen respectively) with two different commentators on the Cox-Larsen presentation who bring different perspectives to this topic. The paper will discuss the mission and history of I-Schools, the mission and history of archival studies, the basic elements and concepts of archival studies which are critical to I-Schools (curation and preservation of primary and secondary sources that are born-digital, the life cycle/continuum concept of records, the preservation imperative, cultural and humanistic perspectives, public and institutional memory, and the evolving notion of records in the digital era), and matters of the changing nature of personal and institutional archives which may be best fit into an I-School curriculum and mission (e.g., the implications of new portable digital technologies on issues such as the creation, maintenance, and use of records and information sources deemed to possess long-term archival value).

Chair and Commentator  Anne Gilliland, UCLA

Presenters  Richard J. Cox and Ron Larson, “Can I-Schools Fulfill Their Mission Without Archival Studies?”
Commentator Michelle Cloonan, Simmons