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Title: The Changing role of Archives through Social Media

Collectively Archivists utilize standards for archival descriptions and finding aids. These standards capture information about fonds, including administrative or biographical histories of the originator, details about the series that describe activities of the creator, and often file listings. These traditional standards allow only for brief notes about arrangement or provenance and do not capture archival interpretations, noticed themes, or the Archivists' influence on a collection. However, it is time to change the way we think about our layers of discovery and the way we traditionally provide access to holdings. Through the use of social media an additional layer of information is possible – this is the archival narrative.

In their endeavor to write history, researchers inevitably rewrite history through their interpretations. Archivists also play a role in this research as they prepare and make available documentary evidence, creating an interpretative layer as they perform appraisal, decide what to keep and not keep, describe the material, create finding aids, arrange the collection, and house it. This layer of narrative is not captured in our traditional means of providing access (descriptive record and finding aids) and facilitating research.

As a whole we must recognize that there are many layers of narrative and interpretation – that archivists can become more pro-active participants in the historical narrative rather than passive and unaware participants. By examining the Douglas Cardinal Archival Project (summer 2011 to present) you will learn how important it is to include the archival narrative and make it available through the applications available within social media, thus providing an additional way for your patrons to discover other facets of your archival collections.