SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES AT GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

- Southern Labor Archives
- Popular Music and Culture Collections
- Women and Gender Collections
- University Archives
- Rare Books
- Social Change Collections
- Photographic Collections
- Georgia Government Documentation Project
ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ARCHIVES

- Labor unions (MANY!)
- Domestic violence
- Reproductive rights
- Arts
- Education
- Environment
- Philanthropy
- Prison system
- Refugees
WHAT DO ARCHIVISTS KEEP?

- Manuscript collections
- Records of organizations
- Papers of individuals
- Photographs and A/V
- Artifacts and textiles
- Publications
- Oral Histories
WHY ARE ARCHIVES IMPORTANT?

- Ensure that historically significant records are preserved and made accessible
- Serve as society’s collective memory
  - Provide evidence of the past
  - Promote accountability and transparency
- Help societies and communities understand their history
  - Role in shaping the past
  - Fosters sense of community and identity
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SAVE AND HONOR YOUR ORGANIZATION’S HISTORY?

• Ensure that historically significant records are preserved and made accessible
• Serve as the organization’s collective memory
  • Provide evidence of the past
  • Promote accountability and transparency
• Help people and organizations understand their history
  • Role in shaping the past
  • Fosters sense of community and identity
WHAT YOUR RECORDS WILL REVEAL

Why and how your organization was formed

• What its priorities were / are
• How the organization’s focus changed over time
• Who guided / led the organization
• The role the organization played in the community
• The impact the organization had
HOW YOUR HISTORY CAN HELP YOU MOVE FORWARD: PRACTICAL

- Strategic planning – helpful to know what happened before: what was successful / not successful – why?
- Public relations / publicity / advertising / anniversaries
- Highlighting past can emphasize credibility moving into future
- Proving your worth and track record may lead to support and financial donations
- There may be litigation. Archives are generally unbiased, accurate and readily available.
HOW YOUR HISTORY CAN HELP YOU MOVE FORWARD: THE LESS TANGIBLE

• For donors / past members. As organization modernizes, celebrating the past allows older folks to feel relevant and connected.

• Contribute to organization’s sense of pride / morale.

• In times of organizational change, highlighting joint history helps to motivate and create buy-in for staff.

• Contributes to the goal of social responsibility: if you exists to benefit to the community, simply saving your history is an act of social responsibility.

• If you open your records to researchers, others can benefit from learning about how you function.
WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP?

- Articles of incorporation
- By-laws
- Annual reports
- Correspondence
- Meeting minutes
- Legal documents
WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP?

- Financial documents
- Planning documents
- Press releases
- Publications
- Scrapbooks
- Photographs and A/V
- Event swag
HOW SERIOUS ARE YOU ABOUT SAVING YOUR HISTORY?

- Create a plan
- Appoint a leader
- Do a records survey
- Create a retention schedule
HOW SHOULD YOU KEEP IT?

• Supplies
• Space
• Environment
WHO GETS TO ACCESS IT?

• Members of organization
• Outside Researchers
HOW/WHERE WILL IT BE ACCESSED?

- Safe, secure area
- Monitored?
- Rules for use?
- Descriptive tools
- Users need to know what you have so they can request it.
DONATE YOUR RECORDS TO A REPOSITORY

- Selecting a repository
  - University special collections
  - Historical society
  - Local archives

- Discussions with the archivist
  - Concerns
    - Privacy and confidentiality
    - Legal issues
    - Copyright
  - Restrictions

- The Deed of Gift
WHAT HAPPENS POST-DONATION?

- Preliminary inventory
- Arrangement
- Description
- Preservation
- Select Digitization
- Use
ORAL HISTORIES: WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

- Human perspective
- Fill in the gaps
- Show different perspectives
- Sometimes challenge the official narrative
ORAL HISTORIES: CREATED OR HELD BY REPOSITORIES

- Equipment
  - Audio recorder
  - Video recorder

- Paperwork
  - Informed consent materials
  - Release form

- Location of interview
  - Quiet
  - No interruptions

- Storage
  - Audio / video / transcript

- Access
  - Who / where / how?
ORAL HISTORIES: IN-HOUSE

- **Equipment**
  - Audio recorder
  - Video recorder

- **Paperwork**
  - Informed consent materials
  - Release form

- **Location of interview**
  - Quiet
  - No interruptions

- **Storage**
  - Audio / video / transcript

- **Access**
  - Who / where / how?
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SHARE YOUR HISTORY?

- Newsletters
- Events that celebrate your history or highlight milestones
- Exhibits
- Digitization projects
- Organization history
- Social media
NEW LETTERS

- Print
- Digital
- The Nexus: Where the past Inspires the Future
EVENTS AND EXHIBITS:
TAKING BACK OUR LIVES, 2012
FUNDRAISING EVENTS:
SHERO OF THE YEAR CELEBRATIONS
EXHIBITS

• Physical Exhibits
  • How long do you want the exhibit up?
  • Where will it be?
  • Will you use originals or surrogates?
  • Who will do the work?

• Online exhibits
• Digitization
• Software (GSU uses Omeka)
• Platform
DIGITIZING YOUR RECORDS

• Importance of planning
• Staffing
• Description / Standardized language
• Storage
• Access
SOCIAL MEDIA

- Blog (internal / external)
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
THE POWER OF STORY-TELLING

Kay Scott, previous CEO, Planned Parenthood Southeast, Inc.
CONTACT INFORMATION

Morna Gerrard, Archivist
Women and Gender Collections
@ Georgia State University
404.413.2888
mgerrard@gsu.edu