Archival research is not a monolith; it is composed by a diversity of methods, theories, concepts, and practices. Our goal is to trace the history of the archives field and the archival multiverse by analyzing published archival scholarship.

Background

“The archival multiverse [encompasses the] pluralism of evidentiary texts, memory-keeping practices and institutions, bureaucratic and personal motivations, community perspectives and needs, and cultural and legal constructs with which archival professionals and academics must be prepared, through graduate education, to engage.” (McKemmish & Piggott, 2013, p.113)

Archival research is not a monolith; it is composed by a diversity of methods, theories, concepts, and practices. Our goal is to trace the history of the archives field and the archival multiverse by analyzing published archival scholarship.

Methods

Journals were collected in the archival science field which were searched in different bibliometric data sources including Web of Science (WoS), Microsoft Academic Graph (MAG), Dimensions, CrossRef, and Library and Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA).

Bibliometric coupling, direct citations, and co-citations were used to create a network of archival literature that was as complete as possible.

The Louvain community detection algorithm (Blondel et al., 2008) was used to cluster the 532 archival papers in different research sub-communities within the field.

Results

Most frequent words
archival, data, records, digital, research, curation, approach, community, recordkeeping, services
study, resins, corrosion, fading, humidity, relative, adhesives, bronze, chemical, deteriorated, pest, soluble
preservation, investigation, records, solvents, strategies, biochemical, combination, tance, gallery, gowns, ground, ladies, silk
dyes, fibers, identification, pigments, blue, mordant, textile, chromatographic, gas, microscopy
archives, disaster, plan, fire, libraries, recovery, royal, Saskatchewan, time, war

Zooming in on the largest (purple) community

Most frequent words
archives, memory, identity, personal, rights, decolonizing, provenance, colonial, continuum, justice
archival, south, user, Africa, aids, finding, genre, Botswana, controlled, generic, keeping, subject, world
data, digital, curation, research, management, education, standards, sharing, designing, lifecycle
Egyptian, deterioration, limestone, overview, adhesive, American, book, Boston, Canada, determining, en, global, interview, inventory, mutilation, porous, problems, region, retrieval, salts, silicone, stone, structural
conservation, treatment, intent, artists, examination, fine, lacquer, preventive, technology, workflows

References
