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Photographic Preservation; On Becoming A Professionalized Field

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PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESERVATION; ON BECOMING A PROFESSIONALIZED FIELD

By

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BA, Art Conservation, University of Delaware, 2010

A Thesis

Presented to Ryerson University and George Eastman House

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

In the program of

Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2012

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Master of Arts, 2012

Megan J. Kirschenbaum

Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Ryerson University/ George Eastman House

Abstract

This paper considers whether or not the occupation of photographic preservation is a professional field, discussing both its current attributes and the elements that are still missing. It includes a discussion of the histories of photographic preservation and conservation, and of the growing interest in advanced professional education. It also includes a historical account of how the only MA in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management grew into what it is now.

Drawing on the work of sociologists on the topic of professionalization, this paper asserts that a professionalized field demonstrates certain characteristics that include unified knowledge, standardized skills, and codes of ethical conduct. By comparing the field of photographic preservation to other more established professions my research shows that the field of photographic preservation and collections management is moving toward a professionalized state. This paper concludes with a proposed 'Code of Conduct' document suitable for the field of photographic preservation.

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1. Introduction

This thesis is addressed to those who care for photographic materials in North America and is intended to increase understanding of the growing profession of photographic preservation. According to the International Council of Museums' (ICOM) Key Concepts document, a profession exists through its definition of itself and through the recognition of others.¹ This is not always the case in the museum world as professional roles and positions vary by institution. Several professions have clarified their roles as the museum field has grown. For example, the position of conservator has grown to require more technical, scientific knowledge and physical treatment skills that have separated them from curatorial responsibilities.² Despite the overlapping responsibilities often assumed by workers in small institutions and private collections, there is still a general understanding of the roles each professional takes on. In this thesis I emphasize the unique values and skills that photographic preservation professionals must have which separates them from the conservation profession.

A professionalized field demonstrates certain characteristics that include unified knowledge, standardized skills, and shared codes of ethical conduct. Many museum positions are already established professions with their own defined codes of conduct, and within the area of collections care, conservation, archives, and curation manifest more of these professionalized characteristics than preservation currently does. These attributes are greatly re-enforced by professional associations such as the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) or the Society of American Archivists (SAA). Despite recent developments discussed later, the field of photographic preservation and collections management is still without such an organization.

The professional state of photographic preservation can be better defined by highlighting guidelines that are specific to the practice of photographic preservation as taught in university programs. This is very important, because currently the preservation field follows the codes of conduct of other related fields, instead of defining a distinct and recognized set of ethical guidelines for itself. This paper concludes with a proposed 'Code of Conduct' document for photographic preservation professionals. Drawing on my argument in this thesis I have devised

¹. ICOM Key Concepts of Museology.

². Ibid.

this document to include the skills, values, and ethics by which the photographic preservation professional should work. Identifying values and skills that are specific to the practice of photographic preservation, I demonstrate that preservation is currently growing professionally as its own important field, separate from its parent field of photographic conservation.

2. Methodology

This paper outlines the professional characteristics of the field of photographic preservation in North America, noting both its current state and what it lacks. A brief history of photographic conservation is outlined in the first section to explain how the field of photographic conservation gave birth to the photographic preservation field. It is important to understand how the field of photographic preservation has grown into its current concerns and practices in order to discuss its current state properly. To make clear the strong need for a common language between the overlapping fields of photographic preservation and conservation that encompass museum studies and the preservation of cultural heritage, the second section discusses definitions and concepts of common terminology of these fields. North American practices and definitions are slightly different from those in France and other countries where more established practices of conservation and preservation are prevalent in a range of institutions. Cultural and funding differences within each country underscore the fine distinctions in practice and definitions of key terms and skills. In order to keep my argument focused, this thesis emphasizes on North American practices and definitions.

In the third section, *Professionalization and the Field of Photographic Preservation*, I discuss qualities that constitute a professional field and relate these characteristics and attributes to the current state of the field of photographic preservation. Scholars, Thomas Brante and Barnard Barber, inform my analysis of professionalization. Topics relating to the education and skills of the photographic preservation professional are discussed and emphasized, as the unique skills photographic professionals acquire and require help to define the field. The core point of this thesis is to articulate the ways in which photographic preservation is currently growing into a profession. However, it is still growing, and certain elements that define a field are not yet established. To acknowledge the unique qualities of the field, I outline the skills, values, and ethical guidelines that photographic preservation professionals employ, but which have yet to

be defined. In my final sections, because the photographic preservation field still lacks certain elements, I outline the need for defining these skills, values, and ethics, as well as for the establishment of a professional organization to organize and educate its members. After discussing the values, skills and ethics from related fields that are more advanced in their professionalization, I conclude with a suggested 'Code of Conduct' document that the field of photographic preservation should incorporate into its professional practice. These values, skills, and ethical codes are influenced by my research, conversations with professionals in the field of photographic preservation, my own education in the Photographic Preservation and Collections Management MA at Ryerson University and from my undergraduate degree in Art Conservation at the University of Delaware.

Since a small amount of literature is available about the skills of a photographic preservation professional, I talked with professionals from a variety of backgrounds who work in the fields of photographic preservation and collections management about their job roles and skills. My conversations with five professionals in the field focused on their backgrounds, the history of the field and what they believe to be important skills for professionals in photographic preservation today. I chose to speak to these particular individuals because they exemplify a range of backgrounds and understanding of key knowledge about the current and historical state of the field of photographic preservation and collections management. Graduate degrees in this field are new and there are few university programs in North America dedicated to producing specialists in photographic care. Because of this, three of the five professionals I contacted were trained in the Ryerson University Photographic Preservation and Collections Management MA program (RU/PPCM).

There is also very little primary literature to survey on the topic of the emerging professionalization of photographic preservation, so I employed and explored a variety of resources. Rather than a traditional Literature Review, my discussion about the related literature and resources is embedded within each related section of the paper.

3. Historical Account of Photographic Preservation

The practice of photographic preservation can be traced to the interest of scientists trying to fix the photographic image from fading in the 1840s, but it was not until the 1970s that the institutional practice of the preservation of photographic collections emerged. My brief historical account of photographic preservation and conservation provides context on photographic preservation's growing separation from the photographic conservation field. This is a long history coming from two directions; one is technologically based and the other based upon historic value.³

The very few essays discussing conservation history influence my historical account for this paper. Referenced sources used here are the general resources used by university programs teaching conservation and preservation at a professional level.⁴ Therefore, the history section of this thesis references some of the same information that is taught in some conservation and preservation university programs. A key text is *Issues in Conservation of Photographs*, 2010, edited by Debra Hess Norris and Jae Gutierrez. This book compiles important essays on the topics of history, technique, practice, and methods of photographic conservation from the 1970s to the present. The book also covers social history and the evolutions of treatment in the photographic conservation field and features articles by well-known names in the field, including Anne Cartier-Bresson, Grant Romer and Nora Kennedy. Key historical articles in *Issues in Conservation of Photographs* and other writings by these authors question standards within the field and discuss the importance of photographic conservation and preservation. In Grant Romer's article "Some Notes on the Past, Present and Future of Photographic Preservation", he declares that no real importance has been placed on the developments in photographic conservation over time. This is still true as the historical practices and fields of photographic conservation and preservation should be explored in more depth as a key to understanding the present state of the field. The Norris and Gutierrez book is a step in the right direction for conservation, but the development of the preservation field cannot be properly discussed until we understand its historical context.

³. Grant Romer, "Some Notes on the Past, Present and Future of Photographic Preservation," 1984.

⁴. Examples of education programs using these resources are the Photographic Conservation MA at the University of Delaware/Winterthur program and the Conservation Library at George Eastman House, which once taught photographic conservation.

During the nineteenth century many photographers were experimental chemists trying to stabilize the photographic image. In the 1840s Henry Fox Talbot conducted research to understand why his salted paper prints faded so quickly and searched for new “non-deteriorating” processes to improve their stability. By 1855 the Société Française de Photographie (Paris) and the Royal Photographic Society (London) encouraged research into the fading of positive photographic prints on paper.⁵ Within sixteen years from the announcement of photography in 1839, the major factors in the deterioration of silver images were identified.⁶ These factors included the effects of residual chemicals on prints, atmospheric pollutants, and high relative humidity as causes of the deterioration of print images.⁷ Their early interest in preserving the fading photographic image can be considered some of the first developments in photographic preservation. The drive to preserve the fading photographic image was fuelled by interest in the science of making photographs, rather than by the desire to preserve the historical, aesthetic or financial importance of the object or image.

Cameras and photographic processing became faster and easier to employ by the late nineteenth century. This ease contributed to the rising use of photography which was increasingly utilized for advertising, fashion, and family photographs. While the use of the photographic medium rapidly grew in popularity, the monetary value of photographs as art was yet to be widely established.⁸ Early collectors of photographs were the early chemists and photographers themselves, collecting friends' experimental images. Gabriel Cromer's collection is an example of this. A lawyer turned photographer, he started collecting French photography late in the nineteenth century before they had any market value.⁹ Most of his collection is now held at the George Eastman House and Société Française de Photographie.

In the 1940s, before the market value of photographs had reached that of today, few scholars or recognized professionals were devoted to the study and care of photographs. Therefore, a growing number of collectors at the time often acted as conservators as well as curators by choosing which objects they would attempt to care for.¹⁰ Also at this time, a

⁵. Philip Delamotte and others, “First Report of the Committee Appointed to Take into Consideration the Question of the Fading Positive Photographic Pictures upon Paper”, 2010: 112-115.

⁶. Anne Cartier-Bresson, “A New Discipline: Preservation and Conservation of Photographs (1987),” 2010: 58-65.

⁷. Delamotte, 2010.

⁸. Cartier-Bresson, 2010.

⁹. Sheila J. Foster and Rachel Stuhlman, “Portrait of a Library,” 2007.

¹⁰. Romer, 1984: 16-23.

growing community of photographic collectors noticed that objects in their collection were fading or deteriorating in some manner. The chemists who made many of these images during the late 1800s, published 'miracle' recipes for washing dirty tintypes or daguerreotypes. Collectors in the 1940s, noticing further deterioration, attempted these treatments.¹¹ These 'miracle' recipes are now banned from conservation practices for their long-term harm, but mark a period in photographic conservation and preservation in which those outside of the field of making photographs had become concerned with preservation issues.¹²

As the market value of photographs rapidly increased through the 1960s and 1970s, institutions, such as libraries, 'rediscovered' the richness of their photographic collections. Part of this rediscovery required the creation of new terminology for describing prints and their aesthetic characteristics such as *vintage* or *amateur*. Helping to categorize photographs with these new descriptions increased their monetary value, leading to a larger interest in a print's physical state and preservation.¹³ With a fast growing market value of photographs, and a more extensive historic and artistic appreciation of museum and archive photographic collections, institutions concerned themselves more with conservation issues.

As the value of collections and the urgency to care for them grew, a greater interest in training photographic conservators and preservation professionals arose. With funding from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1974, George Eastman House was the first institution in North America to build a conservation laboratory dedicated to the care of photographic materials and their study. This lab has a long history of educating professionals in photographic conservation and the identification and care of photographs.¹⁴ A 1996 article by Nora Kennedy discusses the rising need for photographic conservation professionals at the time. She uses the example that too many institutions with curatorial departments still have the combination of "Prints and Photographs Department" as one unit, and notes that institutional positions for photographic conservators as well as the number of private photographic conservators had doubled.¹⁵ This demonstrates the growing interest in the care of photographs in the 1990s.

¹¹. Cartier-Bresson, 2010.

¹². Romer, 1984.

¹³. Cartier-Bresson, 2010.

¹⁴. Notes On Photographs, "Advance Residency Program in Photograph Conservation," George Eastman House, 2010.

¹⁵. Nora Kennedy, "Coming of Age of Photograph Conservation (1996)," 2010: 88-97.

Kennedy is the conservator for the Department of Photographs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which separated itself from the Prints and Photographs Department only in 1992. Without a distinct photographic department, paper conservators are often employed within institutions instead of photographic conservators, although they may not have the proper specialized training in the care photographs require.¹⁶ This was an issue in the 1990s, but Kennedy's article is still relevant today because even though awareness of the importance of photographic specialists is generally present, funding concerns often mitigate against best practices. Currently not enough institutions support the importance of specialists in photographic care, especially for large holdings. It would be interesting to see how much the field has grown since 1996 and tally how many professionals concern themselves with professional photographic care today.

Increasingly in the mid 1980s, the concept of preserving a whole collection rather than treating individual objects was preferred, as it is more cost efficient and less invasive in preventing the deterioration of objects.¹⁷ Today, the need for the preservation of materials has surpassed the number of professionals who are trained and qualified to practice it. Historically, the only professionals practicing preventative conservation were the conservators. Currently, those in collections care, archives, and libraries all now concern themselves with photographic preservation practices, and the difference between the field today and twenty years ago is that there is greater interest and need to teach photographic preservation knowledge than ever before. Now certain professionals are trained specifically for the issues of photograph care, and those who may not hold these skills can acquire them through certificate programs or courses through professional associations such as the Society of American Archivists (SAA) or the North East Document Conservation Center (NEDCC).

This brief history reveals that the concept and practice of photographic conservation has rapidly grown within the last twenty years in the field of museum studies and archival practice. The increasing demands of museum collections require that photographic preservation grow as a practice, and in turn we are witnessing the emergence of this young field as it separates itself from the conservation field. Despite the growing number of professional positions within the collections care field, there have been few changes in the language and definitions we use to talk about them.

¹⁶. Kennedy, 2010.

¹⁷. Cartier-Bresson, 2010.

4. Issues in defining Preservation, Conservation and Preventive Conservation

To avoid discrepancies, mitigate confusion, and ensure cooperative communication, every professional field needs a common language. Terminology in the field of conservation is not yet clearly defined because photographic preservation and conservation are new and growing professions. Scholars like Anne Cartier-Bresson¹⁸ and Barbara Applebaum¹⁹ address these issues. In separate discussions on clarifying terminology, their ideas about these professions help all fields of preservation within cultural heritage better define who they are professionally. A thesis of this length cannot address the many issues and misuses of definitions in the fields of museum studies and conservation. I discuss here the international vocabulary issues and range of definitions for the terms of *preservation*, *conservation*, and *preventive conservation*. All fields that collections care encompasses use these terms; however, each field defines these terms differently, which creates confusion and leads to misunderstanding of what roles are played in the preservation of photographs. An understanding of the vocabulary issues within the fields of conservation and preservation demonstrates that a common language is needed for the professional growth of photographic preservation as a field.

Conservators and preservationists hold different titles and definitions around the world. In Europe the term *preventive conservation* is often used in place of the North American term *preservation*. In North America, we understand that preservation involves the same responsibilities as preventative conservation and, when comparing the definitions used by the International Council of Museums- Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) and the AIC, we see that *preservation* in North America and *preventive conservation* in Europe are essentially the same thing. This is one of many examples of such vocabulary issues, and it creates complications in the discussion of preservation as a practice and as a field. Through the growing establishment

¹⁸. Anne Cartier-Bresson's book *Le vocabulaire technique de la photographie* (The technical vocabulary of photography) Divided by technique of image production and the functional use of images, Cartier-Bresson seeks to define all photographic objects, as well as identification and deterioration mechanisms. Currently only in French but there are plans for translations into English in the future.

¹⁹. Barbara Applebaum's publication *Conservation Treatment Methodology* emphasizes the physical and cultural importance in treatment decisions. This book is not just for conservators, as the treatment of objects includes housing, exhibitions, and cleaning. Applebaum also spoke about ethical codes and the state of the conservation field at the 2011 AIC Annual Meeting: *Conservation in the 21st Century; Will a 20th Century Code of Ethics Suffice?*

of the fields of photographic conservation and preservation, hopefully language changes can be initiated.

Professional associations like AIC, SAA and ICOM define *conservation* in general terms that encompass preservation. The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) is the national establishment for maintaining the professional standards of its members. Documents on the AIC website explain core values, ethical codes, and the historical amendments made to them. This definition comes from the AIC's website:

*"Conservation encompasses actions taken toward the long-term preservation of cultural property. Conservation activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventative care, supported by research and education."*²⁰

This definition uses the word *preservation* as an action and task within conservation, and includes similar tasks that preservation is concerned with. This definition is valid today, but as the *field* of preservation grows into its own profession, with the emergence of preservation as a separate field, this definition of conservation may need more clarity in the future.

When asked to define what conservation is, many professionals use a similar definition to that of the AIC, but this definition does not clarify the differences between the profession and practice of photographic conservation and preservation. Dee Psaila holds the title Senior Conservator at the Archives of Ontario in Toronto. As a preservationist with 'conservation' in her title, she is quick to make the key point that a common language is needed between those in photographic preservation and photographic conservation positions regarding the proper handling of objects. She suggests that a distinction between the two practices lies in the use of certain tools that those in preservation do not use for active treatments. Preservationists may use microscopes and spatulas to help handle and identify objects, but it is the conservators who use blades, erasers, and cotton swabs for active treatments. They are trained in hand skills needed for these treatments, which is different to the hand skills needed in preservation for moving, housing and identifying objects.²¹ This suggests that different training is needed for the

²⁰. AIC, "Resource Center," 2012.

²¹. Dee Psaila, Senior Conservator at the Archives of Ontario, in discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum in person on May 2012.

two fields and that photographic preservation is another specialization distinct from the general practice of photographic conservation.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) is a similar organization to the AIC, but for archive professionals. The mission of this association is to help maintain the core values and ethics of professionals in the field of archives. A range of material is represented in the modern archive, including photographs, films, video, sound recordings, computer tapes, and optical disks, as well as the more traditional letters, diaries, and manuscripts.²² The photographic preservation specialist acquires many of the same values and skills of cataloguing, housing, history, and an understanding of the materiality of cultural objects that an archivist has, but specifically concerning photographic material. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is an international association similar to the AIC and SAA, but for the international professional museum community. ICOM offers several approaches to reaching the range of museum professionals through other committees such as ICOM-CC for international working groups in conservation related fields, and COMCOL, an international committee for collecting. ICOM helps manage these international, national and regional committees and working groups.

Current definitions of *preservation* vary in these organizations. The ICOM definition is more introspective regarding the practice of preservation. This description includes “the operations of acquisition, entering inventory, recording in the catalogue, placing in storage, [and] conservation... [Involving] the *management of collections* and the *overseeing of collections* comprise all the operations connected with the administrative handling of museum objects.”²³ This definition defines the actions and skills of a preservationist, rather than a definition of what preservation does to objects.

The AIC defines preservation as more of an action. They declare that preservation “minimize[s] chemical and physical deterioration and damage [to] prevent loss of informational content. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the existence of cultural property.”²⁴ The SAA’s definition also mentions what preservation does, but expands upon the AIC’s general definition. In defining *preservation* as a noun, the first point to the SAA’s definition of

²². Society of American Archivists, “Introduction,” 2010.

²³. André Desvallées and François Mairesse, “ICOM Key Concepts of Museology Armand Colin,” 2009.

²⁴. AIC, “Definitions of Conservation Terminology,” 2012.

preservation is similar to the AIC's. The SAA further defines the verb, *preserve*, "to keep for some period of time; to set aside for future use."²⁵

The glossary of the SAA is extensive and very detailed. Each word defined has special notes that show historical changes in the word and action. These terms are related to archival practice, but are similar to the tasks of the photographic professional. The notes under preservation assert that, "preservation [meaning 'the act of keeping from harm, injury, decay, or destruction, especially through noninvasive treatment'] is sometimes distinguished from conservation [meaning the repair or stabilization of materials through chemical or physical treatment to ensure that they survive in their original form as long as possible]."²⁶ The three approaches to defining *preservation* outlined here are clearly different, underscoring that this is a time of change and redefinition for the activities of preservation and the field the word represents.

Another aspect of terminology muddying the definitions of conservation and preservation is the term *preventive conservation*. A definition of this term, also from the AIC, is very commonly used:

*"Preventive Conservation is the mitigation of deterioration and damage to cultural property through the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures for the following: appropriate environmental conditions; handling and maintenance procedures for storage, exhibition, packing, transport, and use; integrated pest management; emergency preparedness and response; and reformatting/duplication. Preventive conservation is an ongoing process that continues throughout the life of cultural property, and does not end with interventive treatment."*²⁷

There is some confusion surrounding this term, as a range of professionals working in an institution can be responsible for these preventive conservation tasks. It is the term itself that adds to the murky waters in which preservation and conservation lie. Preventive conservation is a term that is widely used in Europe. Although, in North America preventative conservation is utilized in both the fields of conservation and preservation, the term itself does

²⁵. SAA, "Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," 2005.

²⁶. Ibid.

²⁷. AIC, "Definitions of Conservation Terminology," 2012.

not get used as often as the specific tasks that define it, such as emergency preparedness, pest management, and environmental monitoring.

I have outlined that a broad common language is becoming widely used within the fields of photographic conservation and preservation, despite the issues and complications caused by international and national differences in terminology used by a range of professional organizations. This issue of terminology is one of the contributing factors that shows us that the fields of photographic preservation and conservation are currently still growing as professions. Though both fields of preservation and conservation are imperative to the long-term preservation of photographs, they are growing in separate directions and conservation is further along in the professionalization process. A clearly defined and agreed-upon vocabulary is one of the ways to help clarify the differences between these two fields.

5. Professionalization and the field of Photographic Preservation

The word *profession* derives from the notion of an occupation that one 'professes' to be skilled in. The Oxford Dictionary defines *profession* as a paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification. Historical and current discourse of what constitutes a professional field contributes to my outline of the field of photographic preservation's development toward a professional state. For this thesis the concept of professionalization is taken from Magali Sarfatti Larson's book: *The Rise of Professionalism A Sociological Analysis*. This book traces the historical growth of professions and designates important aspects that constitute a profession such as the standardization of knowledge, unification of skills and advancement of education. Bernard Barber's contribution to this discussion is referred to in *The Rise of Professionalism A Sociological Analysis* (1979). His attributes of professionalization can be applied to the field of photographic preservation. These four essential attributes are first, "a high degree of generalized and systematic knowledge," second, "a high degree of self-control of behaviour through codes of ethics" third, "a system of rewards... and socialization through voluntary associations organized and operated by the work specialists themselves," and finally, "a primary orientation to the community interest rather than to individual self-interest."²⁸

The characteristics of most professions are outlined in Thomas Brante's essay, "Sociological Approaches to the Professions." Brante discusses these characteristics, originally defined by Geoffrey Millerson, with other general concepts in order to define what qualifies as a profession. Millerson's nine characteristics are:

"[1] The use of skills based on theoretical knowledge; [2] education and training in these skills; [3] that the competence of professionals is ensured by examinations; [4] a code of conduct to ensure professional integrity; [5] performance of a service that is for the common good; [6] a professional activity that organizes its members; [7] members have a feeling of identity, sharing common values; [8] within the profession a common language is used which can be only partially understood by outsiders; and [9] with the selection of students, the profession is reproduced."²⁹

²⁸. Bernard Barber, "Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions," 1963.

²⁹. Thomas Brante, "Sociological Approaches to the Professions," 1988.

Brante's essay concludes with a request for more realistic definitions of a profession, and agrees with many of Magali Sarfatti Larson's theories on the historical growth of professionalization. I use Millerson's characteristics with Larson's understanding of how a profession evolves to outline the current nature of the field of photographic preservation as well as those aspects that still need definition.

Though the field of photographic preservation is still very new, there is evidence of these professional aspects within this burgeoning field. In order to discuss this, the attributes and characteristics summarized by Barber and Brante, which define a measure of professionalism within a field's performance, are outlined and compared to the field of photographic preservation to disclose the measure of professionalization within the field.

The preservation field is currently undergoing redefinition in similar ways to that of such professions as medicine and library science. As photographic preservation still requires definition for some professional attributes, it is important to note these fields went through a change in self-image and redefinition as they became professionalized. Historically the concern for ethical standards within a profession in cultural heritage has led to further definition of museum professions. Suggested values, skills and ethics for the preservation field are presented in the 'Code of Conduct' document in the final section of this thesis.

5.1 Education

Barber maintains that "a high degree of generalized and systematic knowledge is needed..."³⁰ and on this basis my discussion here focuses on the education of professionals. Brante's first two characteristics suggest that professionals need to be educated at a high level as "*the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge*"³¹ and the "*education and training in these skills*"³² are key factors. It is natural to integrate a profession with university level education programs to impart knowledge, unify standards, and increase the overall quality of professionals in the professionalized field.³³ Ryerson University, George Eastman House, and a few conservation

³⁰. Barber, 1963.

³¹. Brante, 1988.

³². Ibid.

³³. Magali Sarfatti Larson, "Standardization of Knowledge and Market Control," 1977.

graduate programs are currently providing new students with the skills and knowledge needed to preserve photographs. Before the field provided its own professional training, museum and archive associations such as the AIC, the SAA, as well as regional conservation centers such as the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) established supplemental workshops in photographic identification and current photographic preservation practices for professionals already in the field. The older generation of professionals, who learned through de facto apprenticeship, acquired values and skills handed down from their supervisors. All types of education are needed today to meet the extensive need for photographic care in a wide variety of collections throughout North America.

Despite the many paths to professional growth at all stages of careers, I choose to focus on the creation of new professionals, as this paper focuses on current trends in the field in order to point to the future. According to Larson, two things indicate the establishment of a profession: a body of knowledge and a market for the use of this knowledge.³⁴ In photographic preservation, the body of knowledge and the market already exist. There is a fast growing recognition of the need for professionals with skills in photographic preservation, as demonstrated by the supplemental courses on preventative conservation and photographic preservation referred to above. However, there is a pertinent aspect to touch on, which is the issue of how existing professions, such as archives or library science, acquire new skills for photographic preservation. This is done through certificate or supplemental programs. Certificate programs will always hold value, but not as a substitute for comprehensive training. This proves the need for more education for photographic preservation specialists. In this section I focus on the importance of university level education, because it is university education that produces the specialists needed to teach others, including staff and other professionals in museum studies, library science, etc.

A professional field is made distinct and recognizable through standardization of its knowledge.³⁵ This is evident in photographic preservation, as some university programs are beginning to teach specific skills focusing on preservation and preventive conservation as opposed to the conservation practices that were only taught in universities in the 1970s. This demonstrates the growing separation between the fields of photographic preservation and

³⁴. Larson, 1977.

³⁵. Larson, 1977.

photographic conservation and is most evident in the Master of Arts program at Ryerson University that is dedicated to teaching specific photographic preservation skills. While university programs are not the only way to achieve preservation knowledge or skills, it is through the establishment of university programs that the field becomes more visible and the larger public becomes aware of the importance of photographic preservation specialists.

Photographic preservation skills will become defined as teaching programs mature along with new professionals and trends, as standards within a profession are established, in part, by decisions about what should be taught to the next generation of professionals.³⁶ This is starting to be seen in the Photographic Preservation and Collections Management (RU/PPCM) Masters of Arts program at Ryerson University. Currently it is the only Master of Arts degree in photographic preservation in North America; however, few professionals currently working with the preservation of photographs have undertaken this program. This two-year course in PPCM has existed for only seven years. Photographic preservation is a developing field that requires instruction that evolves along with changes in technology and trends in the field. This is a challenge in creating a program for such a young field. However, it represents the ninth key characteristics of professions outlined by Brante, that "*with the selection of students, the profession is reproduced.*"³⁷

The number of institutions that teach photographic preservation skills has grown. Thus, in the article "Current Issues in the Preservation of Photographs" authors Nora Kennedy and Peter Mustardo consider that as of 1989, only one program in the United States taught photographic conservation and preservation professionals, the University of Delaware/Winterthur Museum³⁸ which still does. Since then, options for study have grown to include The Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) MS in Photographic Preservation and Archive Science (1991- 1993), Ryerson University's MA in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management (RU/PPCM) (2006- to the present), and the Andrew W. Mellon Advanced Residency Program (ARP) (1999-2009). All these programs are or were in partnership with George Eastman House. The growing number of education programs focusing

³⁶. Ibid.

³⁷. Brante, 1988.

³⁸. The Master of Science degree in Art Conservation at the University of Delaware/Winterthur Museum.

on photographic preservation indicates a divergence from photographic conservation, helping to build towards its own independent standardization of professional knowledge.

The RIT MS degree program lasted only a few years, but prompted the shape of the current joint program with Ryerson University and George Eastman House. The essence of the ARP certificate program was to teach professionals in conservation who did not hold specialized knowledge of the care and treatment of photographic materials. This underscores Brante's fourth key characteristic, the "*education and training in skills*,"³⁹ and it is through the progress of these institutional programs that a standard of professional knowledge is helped to becoming defined.

The current MA program in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management at Ryerson/George Eastman House was a response to the loss of the RIT program of the 1990s, which influenced the first program director at Ryerson, Robert Burley.⁴⁰ In the summer of 1998, Burley and some future faculty of RU/PPCM came to visit GEH to talk about current trends in the field of photography. Burley remembers Grant Romer, who was one of the directors of the RIT program as well as of the ARP, saying that as a conservator, he recognized the field was training too many 'brain surgeons' and not enough 'general practitioners'. Romer was referring to the nature of photographic collections, in that they require a lot of care due to size of collections and range of materials. At the time in the 1990s there were two kinds of programs teaching professionals about the care of collections: archive programs and conservation programs. Archivists are taught 'general practitioner' approaches for the care of general collections, with very little education on the specifics of photographs or their care. Conservation programs teach the 'brain surgeons' about photographic treatments with skills that are extremely technical and very science based. No middle ground was being covered in the case of educating professionals for photographic care at this time. This encouraged Burley, and he asked to bring the proposal for the old RIT program to Ryerson.⁴¹

Burley and his colleagues predicted that the 2000s would bring change in the technical aspects of photography, as well as changes in collections management as museums are dealing with the new flood of digital images and collections moving online. An understanding of how to

³⁹. Brante, 1988.

⁴⁰. Robert Burley—Educator for RU/PPCM MA, in discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on April 13, 2012.

⁴¹. Burley, 2012.

deal with born-digital material, what photographs are, when and how they are created and how to take care of them in the future was seen as of growing importance. These considerations for the future, and the need to include more history of photography in the curriculum, were the changes that Burley and his colleagues made for the new program to start in 2003.⁴²

The 1990s RIT Master of Science degree included more 'archive administration' and less history of photography than the current RU/PPCM program.⁴³ The structure of the RIT program was influenced by conservation and archival practices and the RIT program was taught at GEH only in the photographic conservation lab. The establishment of the RU/PPCM program by Ryerson University and Eastman House led to a natural separation from the conservation lab, which is due in part to the emergence of the ARP. With the conservation certificate program now in the conservation lab at GEH, and the new focus to add more historical components and less on science based topics to the RU/PPCM program, the move to the current location in the Department of Photographs at GEH was a better fit. Thus people from outside of the field of conservation were developers of the RU/PPCM program.⁴⁴

The current curriculum for RU/PPCM holds the first year of this two-year program at Ryerson University. This year includes education on the history of photography, a course on the history of photographic collections, a course on research skills, as well as hands on application in the practice and chemistry of photographs. This first year also includes a course on the digital management of a collection as well as the preservation and management of digital images. After a summer internship, the second year is structured to integrate a practical preservation hands-on experience within the classroom. In the past, all students undertook this experience at George Eastman House. Beginning with the class of 2012, students were given the choice of taking their second year at Eastman House or at other institutions in Toronto, among them The Art Gallery of Ontario and The Archive of Modern Conflict. With more focus on the history of photography and collections management aspects of the preservation of photographs, the RU/PPCM program now has a broader scope.

⁴². Ibid—With the SARS crisis in Toronto at the time, the program was postponed to start in the fall of 2004.

⁴³. Grant Romer, "Master of Science Degree Photographic Preservation and Archival Practice," 1991.

⁴⁴. Burley. —Among those involved, none are practicing preservationists, collections managers or archivists. They were: Roger Bruce—educator, program director, Robert Burley—educator, program director, and photographer, David Harris—educator and curator, Alison Nordström—photographic specialist, educator, cultural historian, and museum administrator, and Don Snyder—educator, program director, curator, and photographer.

5.2 Values and Skills

The third characteristic outlined by Brante is that a profession should hold "*skills based on theoretical knowledge*."⁴⁵ Miriam Clavir's article "The Social and Historical Construction of Professional Values in Conservation" is example of this. Her written work discusses the relationship between museums and preservation. As discussed in her article, science is the factor that distinguishes between conservation, restoration and curation.⁴⁶ She examines why conservation developed the way it did through the changing values within the conservation field. Clavir's approach begs the question of what are the distinguishing values between conservation and preservation in relation to photographs? Based on conversations with professionals and skills outlined in the education for RU/PPCM program, I have identified five key values and skills needed by professionals in photographic preservation. These values and skills help us to look more closely at the differences and similarities between photographic conservation and preservation. They have been identified through communicating with professionals in the field about education and skills pertaining to preservation currently taught in the established university programs outlined in this section.

When working in this field, it is imperative to understand both the concept of what photographs are⁴⁷ and the social uses of photography when working in this field. Therefore, the first value I suggest is a technical and cultural understanding of the materiality of photographs. The 2004 book *Photographs Objects Histories; On the Materiality of Images* edited by Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart⁴⁸ includes twelve essays about the vital importance of reading photographs not only as images, but also as physical objects of material cultural. Understanding why photographs are important to our cultural heritage is essential to knowing both their physicality and the information they hold.

Another skill that photographic preservation specialists need is technical and cultural knowledge of the history of photography. This includes how photography grew technologically from the use of the daguerreotype to digital cameras in creating a photographic image, as well as how these materials and image systems are used socially and culturally. Their knowledge also

⁴⁵. Brante, 1988.

⁴⁶. Miriam Clavir, "The Social and Historic Construction of Professional Values in Conservation," 1998.

⁴⁷. Grant Romer, "What is a Photograph? (2010)" 2010.

⁴⁸. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories; On the Materiality of Images*, 2004.

needs to include information about key historical figures and movements in the medium's use artistically as well as informatively. This information can be covered in any basic photographic history course, but the photographic preservation specialist should possess a deeper understanding of these historical changes within the photographic practice, including medium, artistic and technical aspects.

A photographic preservation specialist also needs to know the proper skills of collections care. Along with preserving collections, a photographic preservation specialist also must understand the importance of making the material in the collection accessible. To do this, the preservationist should know collection management methods encompassing proper cataloguing, arrangement, description standards, and best practices for the preservation of photographic collections as a whole in order to support the unique qualities of photographic collections. Employment of those who are in charge of this task has changed within the last 30-40 years. Now institutions do not employ conservators for collections care tasks, but employ archivists or collection managers who then contract for freelance conservation treatment when needed.⁴⁹

Preservation specialists also need to adapt these skills to the individual collections they work in. Knowledge of the purpose, use and contents of a collection is important in determining how to catalogue, house, describe and arrange a collection properly. For example, Dee Psaila works in a collection that is mainly used by genealogists. Statistical records and birth/death records are accessible on microfilm, but because of the demand this information is now being migrated to digital formats for greater access and improved preservation.⁵⁰

Photographic preservation specialists also need to know about preventative conservation. This encompasses environmental monitoring, storage arrangement, exhibition protocols, packing, transport, use, pest management and emergency preparedness. Since these are constantly changing practices, they also need to have the ability to become updated on new information. Preventive conservation is gaining more emphasis in the education of those caring for cultural materials in North America and is becoming an institutional standard.⁵¹ The Photographic Preservationist at the Arizona Historical Foundation, Rebekah Tabah, holds many

⁴⁹. Suzanne Keene, *Managing Conservation in Museums*, 2002.

⁵⁰. Dee Psaila—Seinor Conservator at Archives of Ontario, in discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum in person on April 2, 2012.

⁵¹. Nora Kennedy, "Coming of Age of Photograph Conservation (1996)," 2010.

of these skills. For instance she once had to find freezers for moving picture film, and to know to call the local fire department to help with the proper destruction of nitrate film. Without an understanding of preventive conservation skills, Tabah would not have the knowledge to think creatively in such a situation.⁵²

Understanding how to handle photographic objects is a simple but most important skill for the photographic preservation specialist, as improper handling puts photographs at great risk. Before the establishment of the collection management positions in museums, conservators and curators held the only positions with objects as the centre of their training.⁵³ This skill is so important for the care of photographs that at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, it is standard procedure to have conservators in the Department of Photographs instruct everyone from new staff members to research assistants on proper handling skills. This is such an important issue that Collections Manager Meredith Friedman wishes this training were a part of an annual review because she has witnessed much improper handling by people who work with collection items on a regular basis.⁵⁴

The values and skills outlined here—a cultural and technical understanding of the materiality of photographs, cultural knowledge on the history of photography, proper skills for collections care, preventative conservation, and proper handling—serve to differentiate photographic preservation professionals from other professions in photographic care. Many consider that photographic preservation is a profession of its own already, with some values and skills already in practice. But by articulating these values and skills and differentiating them from the professional worlds of curation and museum studies, rather, I demonstrate that the field is moving towards *becoming* a professionalized state in its own right.

Other professionals such as photographic conservators and curators of photographic collections will hold some of these same skills. Many professions within the field of museums and cultural heritage need similar skills, as these professions exist because museum objects exist and these professions all play roles for their care. Photographic conservators, photographic preservation professionals and curators all need to understand the history of

⁵². Rebekah Tabah—Photographic Preservationist at Arizona Historical Foundation at Arizona State University, in discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone, April 10, 2012.

⁵³. Keene, 2002.

⁵⁴. Meredith Friedman—Collections Manager at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in discussion on with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on April 18th, 2012.

photography, but it is how this knowledge is applied and emphasized within each profession where differentiating factors lie. Differences between conservation and preservation are in the application of these values and skills. The actions of a photographic conservator are very different from the actions of a photographic preservationist, but there is an overlapping of knowledge and skills pertaining to photographs because they are both working towards the care of photographic mediums.

The area that photographic preservation currently lacks—if it is to become its own professional field—is a shared ethical code. Looking again to Barber's definitions of a profession, he advises professions have "*a high degree of self-control... through codes of ethics ... and through voluntary associations organized and operated by the work specialists themselves.*"⁵⁵ An ethical code of conduct ensures that professionals meet the highest standards of best practice, transparency, trust, and avoidance of conflicts of interest. Ethical guidelines are necessary as with a high degree of knowledge comes responsibility and a needed type of self-control.⁵⁶ Though the field of photographic preservation is moving toward teaching its own set of values and skills as mentioned above, there is no defined field of preservation yet, nor is there a professional association to organize preservation professionals. A professional organization also gives members "*a feeling of identity [and the ability to] share common values*"⁵⁷ as mentioned in Brante's seventh characteristic. Professionals in the field of photographic preservation can currently look for guidance to the ethical codes of related fields, such as conservation and archives. The ethical codes for conservation and archives in North America are evaluated in the next section, *Ethical Guidelines*, to suggested ethical guidelines that pertain specifically to the field of photographic preservation.

Barber emphasizes the importance of "*a system of rewards that is primarily a set of symbols of work achievement and a primary orientation to the community interest.*"⁵⁸ This also encourages that "*members have a feeling of identity,*"⁵⁹ and "*share common values,*"⁶⁰ both of which Barber also underscore. A professional association is needed for a single profession to establish ethical

⁵⁵. Barber, 1963.

⁵⁶. Brante, 1988.

⁵⁷. Ibid.

⁵⁸. Barber, 1963.

⁵⁹. Ibid.

⁶⁰. Ibid.

codes and standardized skills. Further, associations enable the organization of professionals to evolve in their work by identifying trends and future goals for their field.⁶¹ It should be run by members of the profession, as Brante's sixth key characteristic designates, so that "*a professional activity organizes its members.*"⁶² Communication within the field is the best way to get through any misunderstanding of definitions and skills. Without information on what is happening within the profession or whether objective goals of the profession are being met, how can it be managed?⁶³ Professional associations like the AIC, which support conservators in America, initiate these definitions and facilitate communication amongst their members. Preservation specialists would benefit from a similar organization to help define themselves with terminology, define standard skills, ethical codes.

Barber maintains that a profession consists of "a system of rewards as a set of work achievement."⁶⁴ A conversation with Leslie Squyres,⁶⁵ archivist at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona, exemplifies this and the important role a professional organization can play for its professional members. To continue her archivist certification she must go through recertification every five years. Certification is not a requirement for her position, however it is in some archival institutions. Squyres decided to go through this process anyway, as she feels it helps raise professionalism and awareness for the field. She has benefited greatly from her relationship with the Society of American Archivists in that she receives a continued education in archive trends and a community to rely on. In her education as an archivist, she acquired very little specific knowledge about photographs, as archivists receive a more general education on the preservation of information. The SAA has recognized the need for many archivists to have a deeper understanding of the preservation of photographs, and Squyres has taken supplemental workshops to gain the knowledge needed to identify and preserve photographic material properly. Her conversation exemplifies two key issues presented of this paper: that there are many overlapping professions that concern themselves

⁶¹. Brante, 1988.

⁶². Ibid.

⁶³. Keene, 2002.

⁶⁴. Barber, 1963.

⁶⁵. Leslie Squyres—Archivist and Head of Research Services at the Center for Creative Photography, in discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on May 4th 2012.

with photographic care, and that there is a need for a professional organizing association dedicated to supporting its members.

Other institutions have recognized the benefits of certification as well as accreditation. *Accreditation* means that a professional body attests to the competencies of an individual, where *certification* means the professional operates within a line of set standard requirements.⁶⁶ The Canadian Association for Professional Conservators (CAPC) also offers the option of accreditation, although accreditation is not required for conservators to work professionally.⁶⁷ In 2008, discussion among AIC members about the benefits of providing the option of certification has not yet led to any determination.⁶⁸

The AIC has also recognized the need to provide supplementary information for its members and to recognize changing trends in the field. As the awareness of preservation issues grows within institutions, a new group called the Collections Care Network⁶⁹ was announced in January 2012 as an addition to the specialty groups within the AIC. "Specialty groups are subgroups within the AIC that focus on particular areas of expertise or professional interest."⁷⁰ The purpose of this group is to create an awareness of preventive care, identify and develop standards, best practices, and training to advance preventive care in institutions of all types, as well as to provide resources to support collection care and conservation professionals, and work with related groups to reach and support key collections care constituents.⁷¹ There are no updates on further development at this time, but this is exciting progress in the larger field of preservation, which includes photographic preservation and the development of professionals.

5.3 Ethical Guidelines

⁶⁶. Accreditation Services International, "About Accreditation," 2012.

⁶⁷. Karen Colby-Stothart and others, "Accreditation in Conservation: The Canadian Experience," 1996.

⁶⁸. The AIC has a webpage dedicated to questions that conservators may have about a certification process if established. The webpage alludes that nothing has been decided upon currently, but there is continued discussion about this topic within the AIC blog. (<http://www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&PageID=709&E:\ColdFusion9\verity\Data\dummy.txt>)

⁶⁹. AIC, "Blog," 2012.

⁷⁰. Ibid.

⁷¹. Ibid.

The creation of ethical guidelines for photographic preservation is a necessary next step to further the professionalization of the field of photographic preservation. One of the four attributes underscored by Barber is that "a high degree of self-control of behaviour through codes of ethics internalized in the process of work" is imperative for a field's professional growth. The importance of this field growing into a professionalized state raises the quality of care and importance of the photographic preservation specialist's unique skills. This survey of ethical guidelines embodies Brante's fourth and fifth key characteristics that "a code of conduct ensure[s] professional integrity" and that the "performance of a service is for the common good."⁷²

The AIC and SAA ethical guidelines that pertain to preservation contribute to a code of values and ethics outlined in this section. Although these associations support the professions of conservation and archives, some of these codes of ethics are very similar and relate to preservation practices. Many of the AIC ethical codes relate to the field of preservation because of the close relationship between the practices of photographic preservation and photographic conservation, but definitions and guidelines for conservation centre around the work done to objects and the role of the conservator.⁷³ Many ethical guidelines of the SAA pertain to other related fields as well, but the values and ethics I discuss centre around the role the archivist plays within an institution and the preservation and access of information.⁷⁴

Best practices and skills are taught in university programs such as the Ryerson University MA program, or through internships, by learning from current professionals. The preservation professional should follow and understand these best practices to ensure the highest quality of care. AIC ethical guidelines state, "*the conservation professional shall strive to attain the highest possible standards in all aspects of conservation, including, but not limited to, preventive conservation, examination, documentation, treatment, research, and education.*"⁷⁵ The SAA's "Authenticity" language is similar asserting "*archivists [must] ensure the authenticity and continuing usability of records in their care. They document and protect the unique archival characteristics of records and strive to protect the records' intellectual and physical integrity from tampering or corruption. Archivists may not willfully alter, manipulate, or destroy data or records to*

⁷². Brante, 1963.

⁷³. Keene, 2002.

⁷⁴. SAA, "Core Values and Codes of Ethics," 2010.

⁷⁵. AIC, "Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice," 2012.

conceal facts or distort evidence. They thoroughly document any actions that may cause changes to the records in their care or raise questions about the records' authenticity."⁷⁶ These two codes emphasize the importance of professionals understanding best practices, knowledge and goals within their respective professions.

The preservation professional needs an ethical guideline emphasizing that through the care of collections, an object's integrity is not hindered either physically or in terms of the information it conveys. The AIC ethical guideline, "*all actions of the conservation professional must be governed by an informed respect for the cultural property, its unique character and significance, and the people or person who created it,*"⁷⁷ covers this importance. This preservation ethical guideline relates to the value of understanding the materiality and use of photographs.

The preservation professional needs to understand there is great public trust put onto the caretakers of cultural material and that they serve as representatives of the collections they care for. The AIC and SAA both have ethical guidelines emphasizing professional integrity. The SSA states that professionals must "*...execute their work knowing that they must ensure proper custody for the documents and records entrusted to them. Archivists should demonstrate professional integrity and avoid potential conflicts of interest.*"⁷⁸ The importance of respecting the collection they work for is also emphasized by the AIC by reminding professionals "*while recognizing the right of society to make appropriate and respectful use of cultural property, the conservation professional shall serve as an advocate for the preservation of cultural property.*"⁷⁹

No one in preservation should attempt to treat objects unless they are trained to do so. The preservation professional may come across times when such treatments would seem most convenient, but knowing when to call a conservator is part of the preservationist's job. The AIC clearly states that the importance of knowing one's limits in that "*the conservation professional shall practice within the limits of personal competence and education as well as within the limits of the available facilities.*"⁸⁰ Such information is not germane to the RU/PPCM program, as the skills of a conservator are not taught within this program, which is another defining factor in the differences between the two fields and practices.

⁷⁶. SAA, "Core Values and Codes of Ethics," 2010.

⁷⁷. AIC, "Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice," 2012.

⁷⁸. SAA, "Core Values and Codes of Ethics," 2010.

⁷⁹. AIC, "Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice," 2012.

⁸⁰. Ibid.

The importance of understanding the historical and material value of photographic objects is key to understanding how to care for photographic material properly. Acquiring the right information needed to make educated decisions is important in order to maintain the historical and artistic meaning of cultural material. The AIC and SAA recognize these issues for their respective fields. *“The conservation professional must strive to select methods and materials that, to the best of current knowledge, do not adversely affect cultural property or its future examination, scientific investigation, treatment, or function.”*⁸¹ *“...Archivists [are encouraged to] exercise professional judgment in appraising, acquiring, and processing materials to ensure the preservation, authenticity, diversity, and lasting cultural and historical value of their collections... Archivists are [also] encouraged to consult with colleagues, relevant professionals, and communities of interest to ensure that diverse perspectives inform their actions and decisions.”*⁸² In depth courses on the history of photography grant new professionals with the understanding of this information.

Communication within a professional field creates a unified community, encourages best practices, and permits members of the field to stay informed on current trends. The AIC enforces this through the statement that *“the conservation professional shall act with honesty and respect in all professional relationships, seek to ensure the rights and opportunities of all individuals in the profession, and recognize the specialized knowledge of others.”*⁸³

The importance of this public service of preservation will not be understood if professionals within their field do not advocate for it. This is key for a field to grow. The AIC addresses this concern through the ethical code enforcing that *“the conservation professional shall promote an awareness and understanding of conservation through open communication with allied professionals and the public.”* “Advocacy” is a SAA code of conduct that is similar to this AIC ethical code. Codes of conduct can be equated to key skills professionals should practice. *“Archivists promote the use and understanding of the historical record. They serve as advocates for their own archival programs and institutional needs. They also advocate for the*

⁸¹. AIC, "Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice," 2012.

⁸². SAA, "Core Values and Codes of Ethics," 2010.

⁸³. AIC, "Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice," 2012.

application of archival values in a variety of settings including, to the extent consistent with their institutional responsibilities, the political arena.”⁸⁴

For both the AIC and SAA, a code of conduct is supplemented with their ethical codes. A code of conduct can be made for preservation when unified skills and knowledge are determined. It is through these definitions that the public learns that this is a service for the common good. ‘Public’ is used here to mean those outside of the field of preservation, which includes institutions such as museums and archives that serve the public, but also any institution that benefits from the skills professionals in photographic preservation use. These ethical guidelines are presented not to suggest that the field of photographic preservation does not have ethics to follow, but emphasizes that what is missing is a recognized need to articulate the needed distinction.

⁸⁴. SAA, “Core Values and Codes of Ethics,” 2010.

6. Code of Conduct

A summary of the important values, skills and ethics discussed in this thesis is conveyed in a 'Code of Conduct.' Derived from the Ethical Guidelines outline in the previous section of this thesis, the tasks of best practices and right actions are given. Core Values and skills discussed in the corresponding section are represented here as examples of the knowledge and practical enactment that the photographic preservation professional should emulate. This list represents the framework of behavior and knowledge the photographic preservation professional should aspire to.

6.1 Ethical Guidelines for the Photographic Preservation Professional

1. The photographic preservation professional shall work towards the highest standards possible in all actions of preservation. This includes preventive conservation, cataloguing techniques, handling, documentation, research, and education.
2. All preservation actions by the photographic professional shall be ruled by respecting the objects cared for, their materiality, cultural importance, and the people who created these objects.
3. The preservation professional must demonstrate professional integrity, and recognize that they are representatives to those outside of the field, especially in terms of the preservation of cultural property.
4. The preservation professional shall only practice within the limits of personal competence and education.
5. Preservation acts by the preservation professional shall follow best practices that are representative of current knowledge, and do not interfere with an objects cultural function, physicality, or future treatment if needed.
6. The preservation professional shall seek the guidance of colleagues in the field, as well as outside of the field of preservation, to ensure they are knowledgeable of the most current practices. In doing so, professionals shall respect all relationships and recognize the specialized knowledge of others.

7. Preservation professionals shall promote an awareness and understanding of preservation through communication with related fields and the public to ensure their expertise is used in the public interest.

6.2 Core Values and Skills for the Photographic Preservation Professional

1. *The photographic preservation professional should maintain a historical and theoretical understanding of the materiality of photographs:* Photographic preservationists hold a social responsibility to the care of photographic materials as well as the information they hold. When properly cared for, photographs hold historical and physical information about their use and social memory to serve as evidential information.

2. *The photographic preservation professional should maintain theoretical knowledge of the history of photography:* Understanding historical changes within the photographic practice, medium, artistic and technical aspects, as well as knowledge of key figures in photographic history provides photographic preservationists with the knowledge needed to identify photographic processes, a photographer's work and genre. An understanding of these historical key points provides the photographic preservationist with the knowledge of how to care for photographs based on an understanding of materials used and conditions of creation.

3. *The photographic preservation professional should be conscious of current methods concerning proper cataloguing techniques, arrangement and description standards, and best practice:* Knowledge of the purpose, use, and contents of a collection is important for the photographic preservationist to determine the proper care, housing, cataloguing description and arrangement of a collection. This is imperative in creating access to objects within a collection.

4. *The photographic professional should comprehend the actions involving preventative conservation:* This includes an understanding of environmental monitoring, storage arrangement, exhibition protocols, packing, transport, use, pest management, and emergency preparedness. Preventive conservation is the most effect in the long-term care of a collection.

5. *The photographic preservation professional should maintain the importance of proper handling procedures:* The photographic preservationist handles photographic material daily, which is part of the public's cultural heritage. Properly handling photographic objects is the first defense of object care.

7. Conclusion

This thesis considers the information we need to understand the definition of photographic preservation within the larger rubric of cultural heritage studies, and shows the growing significance of photographic preservation within institutions. I have compared the field to key characteristics and attributes of related professionalized fields such as conservation and archives. Through the exploration of the history, current state and aspects of photographic preservation, distinct values, skills, vocabulary, and ethics have been discussed and identified. In further consideration, the necessary strengths of a photographic preservation professional have been explored and discussed with a prediction of the field becoming an organized profession, of which a professional association should help to organize.

As photographic conservation is a subset of conservation, photographic preservation is a subset of the larger profession of preservation. This paper demonstrates that photographic preservation is growing much the same way that photographic conservation has, becoming a specialized genre within its larger field. This thesis is the beginning of a larger conversation, and it is my hope that my suggested 'Codes of Conduct' document aids in the initiation to this conversation of professional growth. Moving the field to a fully professionalized state will heighten the quality of care for our photographic collections, and their importance to our cultural heritage.

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Conversations with Professionals in Photographic Preservation:

- Burley, Robert—Educator for Ryerson University Photographic Preservation and Collections Management MA. In discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on April 13, 2012. [Length, 28 min]
- Friedman, Meredith—Collections Manager at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on April 18th, 2012. [Length, 28 min]
- Psaila, Dee—Senior Conservator at Archives of Ontario. In discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum in person on April 2, 2012. [Length, 1 hour 17 min]
- Squyres, Leslie—Head Archivist at the Center for Creative Photography. In discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone on May 4th 2012. [Length, 35 min]

Tabah, Rebekah—Photographic Preservationist at Arizona Historical Foundation at Arizona State University. In discussion with Megan Kirschenbaum by phone, April 10, 2012.
[Length, 22 min]