The Non-textual Record

Content and Objectives of the Lecture and Group Work on the Lecture Topic:

Increasing archival attention has been paid in recent years to forms of documentation that do not take on the traditional textual forms of records and manuscripts. Reasons for this include growing awareness of gaps in the documentary record relating to communities where the transmission of knowledge, memory and culture predominantly take on intangible forms; the proliferation of new media, especially those being developed through social networking; difficulties in describing and providing access to visual and aural materials; rights management for non-textual heritage materials; supporting visual literacy; and new efforts to capture individual and community experiences, particularly those relating to particular events or movements. This lecture will discuss the ways in which non-textual and intangible media challenge traditional archival ideas and practices and look at emerging research and development trends.

Objectives:

- Understand differing constructions of record, work, text and document and how these have an impact upon ideas about archives and memory.
- Understand some of the major issues that non-textual and intangible records pose for archival capture, appraisal, description, policy and use.
- Identify research and professional trends relating to non-textual and intangible records.

Assignment:
Prepare a review of the literature that addresses any aspect of the definition, identification, appraisal, description, policy concerns, or use of non-textual or intangible records (you may find it easier to focus either on one format or genre, or on the kinds of non-textual or intangible materials generated by a specific community). When you have identified a corpus of relevant and useful literature, write up your review in whatever organizational structure would be most appropriate for your topic – for example, you might arrange it thematically, chronologically, or by discipline. Try to focus on relevancy, coherency, and the most salient points in the works when you are putting together your review. Also, include a statement that documents your search process so that your readers will know where you looked, and why.

Readings: