

Rachel Deblinger, PhD
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RELATED EMPLOYMENT

UCLA Library, Los Angeles, CA

2019 - **Director, [Modern Endangered Archives Program \(MEAP\)](#)**

Key Achievements:

Leads global initiative to digitize and document at-risk cultural heritage. Solicit and review proposals from over 126 countries in 8 funding cycles. Manages grants exceeding \$1M annually.

Secured two additional grants from Arcadia to extend and expand MEAP's global work, including a \$13 million grant to add 8 additional years of programmatic work and a \$2 million grant to pilot AV specific granting.

Oversees hiring, legal, financial, and technical aspects of international archival work.

Stewards an international board of scholars, librarians, and archivists that advance the program mission and make annual funding recommendations.

Launched program website and corresponding digital open access repository to publish and contextualize digital archival material, including print, video, and audio collections. Continues to refine digital infrastructure to improve discoverability, user experience, and interoperability for collections materials.

Creates opportunities for teaching, learning, and engagement with digital primary sources.

Represents the Library on UCLA's Global Advisors Council, a campus-wide strategic planning committee focused on raising the global impact of UCLA.

Humanities Division, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA

2018 - 2019 **Research Program Manager, [The Humanities Institute of UC Santa Cruz](#)**
Managing the *Mellon-Funded Expanding Humanities Impact and Publics project*

Key Achievements:

Facilitated research and programming related to public humanities and a reimagined graduate student experience, including a public scholarship fellowship and intensive workshop focused on skill building and community for underrepresented graduate students.

University Library, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA

2016 – 2018 **Inaugural Director of [Digital Scholarship Commons](#)**

2014 – 2016 **CLIR Post-Doctoral Fellow, Digital Humanities Specialist**

Key Achievements:

Envisioned and established new Digital Scholarship Commons unit within the Library; Secured funding and institutional support from multiple units across campus to define and launch DSC; hired and managed full time, part time, and student staff. Expanded space and services to include large scale visualization wall and VR lab.

Built campus wide community focused on Digital Humanities and Digital Scholarship. Hosted regular community conversations and opportunities to share works in progress; hosted regular events with national and international Digital Humanities scholars.

Created opportunities for faculty and students to engage in new forms of teaching and learning, including pedagogy fellowships and student research fellowships that integrated new methods and fostered new forms of classroom work in courses across all divisions. A campus wide digital scholarship symposium continues to allow students to showcase class-based digital work to full campus community.

EDUCATION

- 2014 **Ph.D. in History, University of California Los Angeles**, Los Angeles, CA
Dissertation: “‘In a World Still Trembling’: American Jewish Philanthropy and the Shaping of Holocaust Survivor Narratives in Postwar America (1945-1953)” [Available on escholarship](#) >
Committee Members: David N. Myers (Chair), Sarah Abrevaya Stein, Hasia Diner, Todd Presner, Peter Baldwin
- 2009 - 2010 **M.A. and C. Phil in History, University of California Los Angeles**, Los Angeles, CA
- 2005 **M.A. in Comparative History, Brandeis University**, Waltham, MA
Thesis: “Czechoslovak Holocaust Commemoration: Constructions of Memory”
- 2002 **B.A. in English, Minor in Computer Science, Colgate University**, Hamilton, NY
Magna Cum Laude; Degree awarded with High Honors; Phi Beta Kappa

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS + PRESENTATIONS

Books

Saving Our Survivors: How American Jews Learned about the Holocaust, Indiana University Press (May 2025)

Essays and Book Chapters

"From proposals to finished projects: How the Modern Endangered Archives Program has evolved to meet grantee needs," *Comma*. Co-authored with Elizabeth Lhost and Savannah Dawson. *Forthcoming

"The Holocaust in American History and Memory," in *The Oxford Handbook of American Jewish History*, edited by Shari Rabin and Michael R. Cohen (Oxford University Press, 2025).

"Cultural Memory Machines and the Futures of Testimony," co-authored with Todd Presner in Todd Presner, *Ethics of the Algorithm: Digital Humanities and Holocaust Memory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2024).

"[Building International Partnerships for Digitization and Preservation](#)," *Journal of Digital Media Management*. Volume (10, 2). Co-authored with Jennifer Osorio, Sharon E Farb, Todd Grappone.

"Purim, Passover, & Pilgrims: Symbols of Survival and Sacrifice in American postwar Holocaust survivor narratives," in [Reconstructing the Old Country: American Jewry in the Post Holocaust Decades](#), ed. Sheila Elana Jelen and Eleana Adler (Wayne State University Press, 2017)

Podcasts

2026 [New Books Network, Jewish Studies – May 20, 2026: Saving our Survivors](#). Hosted by Ran Zwigenberg.

Conference Presentations and Participation

- 2026 Panel Discussant, "[Endangered Archives: Practical Preservation Strategies for Faith-Based and Community Archives](#)." Webinar sponsored by the [International Council on Archives, Section for Archives of Faith Traditions \(SAFT\)](#). (May 28, 2026)
- Presenter, "[Evaluating Rights Before You Scan: Modern Endangered Archives Program](#)." Part of the Digital Library of the Caribbean series on Copyright & Ethical Reuse in Digital Libraries. (January 2026)
- 2025 Panel Discussant, "Ethics of Data" at "[Dealing with Difficult Pasts: Ethics, Collections, and Public Spaces](#)," University of Virginia, March 2025.
- Panel Discussant, "[Ethics of the Algorithm: Digital Humanities and Holocaust Memory](#)," with Todd Presner (UCLA), Anna Bonazzi (UCLA), and Moderator, Tim Cole (University of Bristol). UCLA Leve Center for Jewish Studies, February 2025.
- Panel Moderator, "Modern Endangered Archives Program in Latin America," American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Council on Latin American History, January 2025.
- 2024 Panel Discussant, "Digital Humanities and Holocaust Memory: Advancing the Field of Testimony Studies," Association for Jewish Studies Conference, December 2025.
- Panel Chair, "Protecting Culture during Conflict," *Timeless Archives, Timely Connections: Preserving Endangered Documentary Heritage and Inspiring Collaboration* Conference, October 2024.
- "Modern Endangered Archives Program: Funding the Preservation and Access of African Cultural Heritage" University of Michigan African Studies Center 15th Anniversary Conference, April 2024.
- 2023 Panel Discussant, "Archiving the American Jewish Left in the Digital Age: Engaged Scholarship & the Urgency of Preservation," Association for Jewish Studies Conference, December 2023.
- Modern Endangered Archives Program, "*Preserving Community Heritage: Hopes, Progress, and Challenges*" at Middle East Library Association conference, Montreal, Canada, October 2023
- "Memory and Meaning Making," Japanese American National Museum Conference, Los Angeles, CA, September 2023.
- Panel Participant, "The importance of African archives: how African archives strengthen research," [European Congress of African Studies conference](#), Cologne, Germany May 2023
- 2022 [Digital Archiving for a Volatile Planet: An Update on the Modern Endangered Archives Program](#) | CNI Spring 2022
- "Archiving Communities," Digital Humanities Speaker Series, The Ohio State University (Virtual, March 2022)
- 2021 "Preserving Cultural Heritage in a time of Displacement and Social Change: Building the Modern Endangered Archives Program at the UCLA Library," AHA 2021 (Virtual, Poster Session)
- 2020 "Sustaining International Partnerships and Building Open Access Collections during COVID-19: Two case studies from the UCLA Library," with Todd Grappone, CNI Fall Meeting (Virtual,

December 2020)

“Navigating Communal Rights for Digital Preservation and Open Access,” with Todd Grappone and Sharon Farb at CNI Spring Meeting (Virtual, May 2020)

GRANT ACTIVITY

2026 – 2030	\$2 Million Grant Writer, Program Lead AV Add On for Modern Endangered Archives Program, Arcadia Fund, Cultural Programs awarded to UCLA Library, PI: Athena Jackson
2023 – 2031	\$13 Million Grant Writer, Program Lead Modern Endangered Archives Program, Arcadia Fund, Cultural Programs awarded to UCLA Library, PI: Virginia Steel
2019 – 2023	\$5.5 Million Program Lead Modern Endangered Archives Program, Arcadia Fund, Cultural Programs awarded to UCLA Library, PI: Virginia Steel
2019 – 2022	\$1 Million Program Lead Modern Endangered Archives Program support for Latin American Projects, Whiting Foundation awarded to UCLA Library, PI: Virginia Steel
2019	\$34,586 Community Partner “Cleveland Divided: Rust Belt Revival,” NEH Humanities Connections awarded to Ursuline College, PI: Katherine Trostel Learn More >
2017 – 2020	\$75,000 Co-PI “Digital Jewish Studies,” Taube Foundation
2015 – 2016	\$25,000 Grant Writer, Project Manager “Supporting Digital Exhibit Building,” Institute of Museum and Library Services, Sparks! Ignition Grant awarded to UCSC University Library, PI: Elizabeth Cowell
2015 – 2018	\$150,000 Grant Contributor, Project Team Member “Jewish Peoplehood in the Digital Age,” Koret Philanthropies awarded to Center for Jewish Studies UCSC, PI: Nathaniel Deutsch

CURRENT RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

Research Team Member, Difficult Histories Research Initiative
PIs: Olwen Purdue (University College Belfast), Robert Ehrenreich (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

Research Team Member, Holocaust Lab Team, UCLA
PI: Todd Presner (UCLA)

ACADEMIC SERVICE + PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2026-	Advisory Board Member, Documenting Ukraine
2025-	Conference Organizer, Difficult Histories Research Initiative, Belfast Convening (2026) Advisory Board Member, American Jewish Archive of the Left in the Digital Age (NYU)
2025	Application Review Panel Member, University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities Faculty Fellowships
2024-	UCLA Global Advisors Council (Library Representative) Research Subcommittee Chair, UCLA Global Advisors Council
2023	Member, dLOC Rights Advisory Network

- 2021 Participant, UCLA Management Development Certificate Program
- Advisory Board Member, Examining American Responses to the Holocaust: Digital Possibilities, FDR Presidential Library and Museum (Virtual, October 2021)
- 2020 Member, Digital Jewish Studies Conference Planning Committee (University of Luxembourg)
- Leve Center Affiliate, Leve Center for Jewish Studies at UCLA | See [2020 UCLA CJS Newsletter](#), "Surviving 'the Season'," 15.
- External Reviewer, NEH Cares (2020); USHMM's Associate Fellowship in Digital Humanities Program (2019); NEH Office of Digital Humanities Start up Grant (2014)
- 2019 Participant, Empowering Communities in the Face of Hate Crimes (Stanford University)
- 2018 Co-Director (with Nathaniel Deutsch), [Digital Jewish Studies Initiative](#), UC Santa Cruz Jewish Studies Center
- Manager, [THI Public Fellows Initiative](#), UC Santa Cruz
- Participant, SHARE Workshop, Association of Research Libraries, "[Integrating digital humanities into the web of scholarship with SHARE](#)" project, (Denver, CO)
- 2014 – 2016 CLIR Post-Doctoral Fellow, UC Santa Cruz