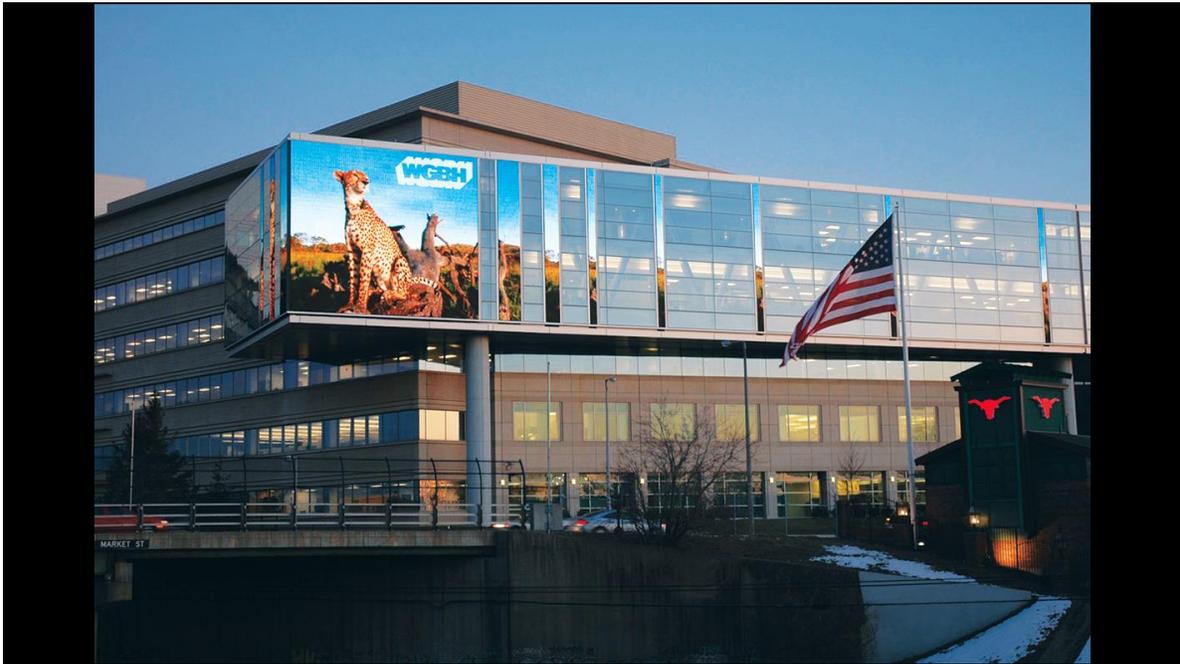


Slide 1



Let me tell you my story

Slide 2



In October 2014, my employer (WGBH) held an event called Green Media Innovation IdeaLab, where climate scientists came to speak about how and why public media producers should be focusing efforts on creating and sharing climate-related programming to bring about more awareness and understanding of climate change. I actually didn't attend the event; climate change didn't seem like a really big or important issue to me. But I didn't know much about it, either.

About a week after the event, my boss, who had attended the event, shared with me some of what she learned, specifically some of the more recent research by climate scientists on how quickly our planet and climate are changing, as well as how we will experience climate change in our lifetime. To be honest, climate change had rarely ever crossed my mind. But it got me thinking, and because I'm a worry wart, it got me to worrying. And that's an understatement.



This conversation with my boss was a life-changing event. I worried non-stop for a couple of months, and it got the best of me. But eventually I decided I needed to redirect my feelings and seek to learn as much as possible about the issue, with the goal of informing myself about how I can affect climate change on a personal level.

Slide 4

<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/> **ipcc**
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

CLIMATE CHANGE 2014:
IMPACTS, ADAPTATION, AND VULNERABILITY

A photograph showing a group of people, including children and adults, engaged in planting mangrove saplings in shallow, clear water. The scene is set in a coastal area with a line of trees in the background under a bright sky. A white rope is stretched across the water, and several small green saplings are visible in the foreground and middle ground. One person in a red shirt and a straw hat is in the foreground, holding a sapling, while another person in a yellow shirt is bent over, planting a sapling. Other people are visible further back in the water.

I read the research, and a lot of climate scientists' and activists' blogs. I read the entire [Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#), which cited more than 12,000 scholarly articles and was written by 242 lead authors and 436 contributing authors.

Key Findings

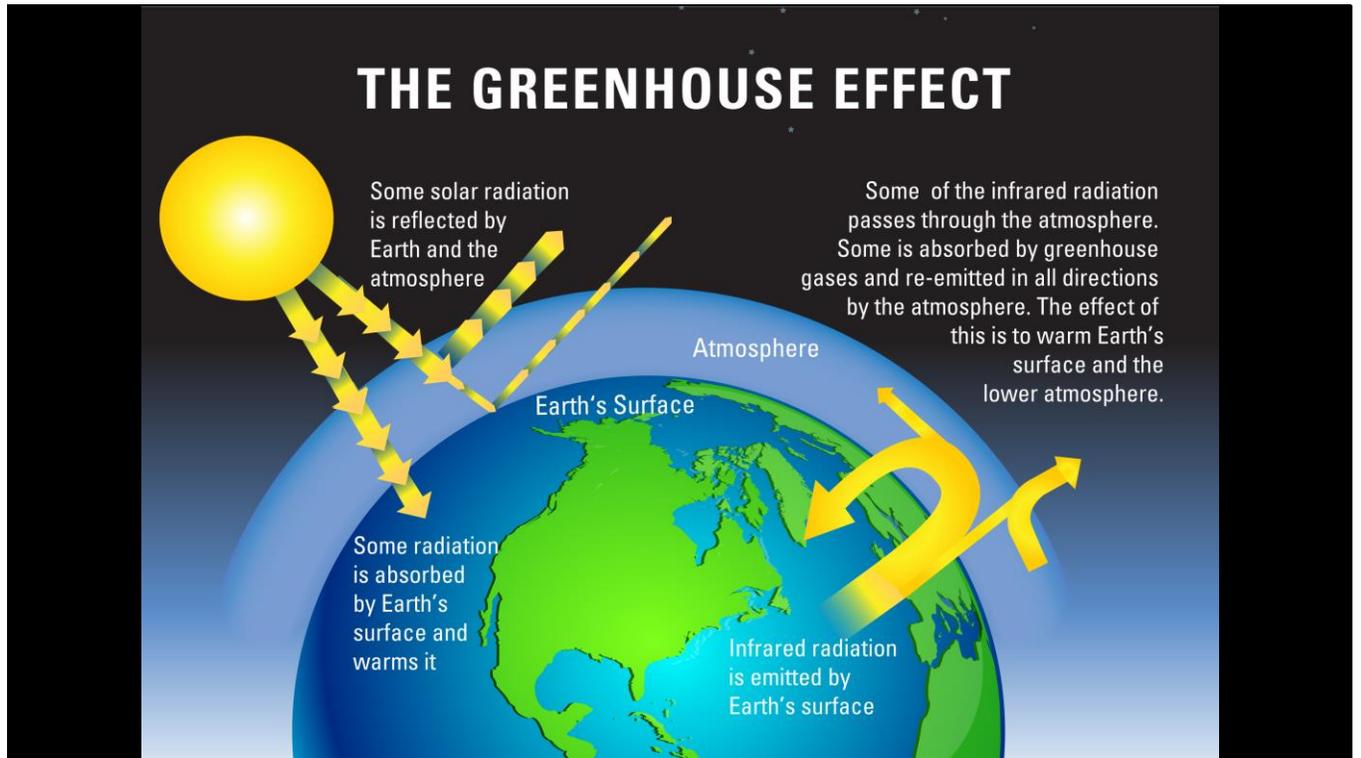
- **Human cause** of climate change is clear
- Emissions are **highest in history** and unprecedented over millenia
- Oceans and atmosphere have warmed and **sea level is rising**
- Continued emissions will have **dangerous, severe, and irreversible effects**
- Action to reduce and eliminate emissions **needs to happen now** to prevent the worst impacts

The report unequivocally determined that 1) the human cause of climate change is clear; 2) emissions are the highest in history and are unprecedented over millennia; 3) the oceans and atmosphere have warmed and sea levels are rising; 4) continued carbon emissions will cause severe, dangerous and irreversible effects; and 5) action to reduce and eliminate carbon emissions needs to happen NOW.

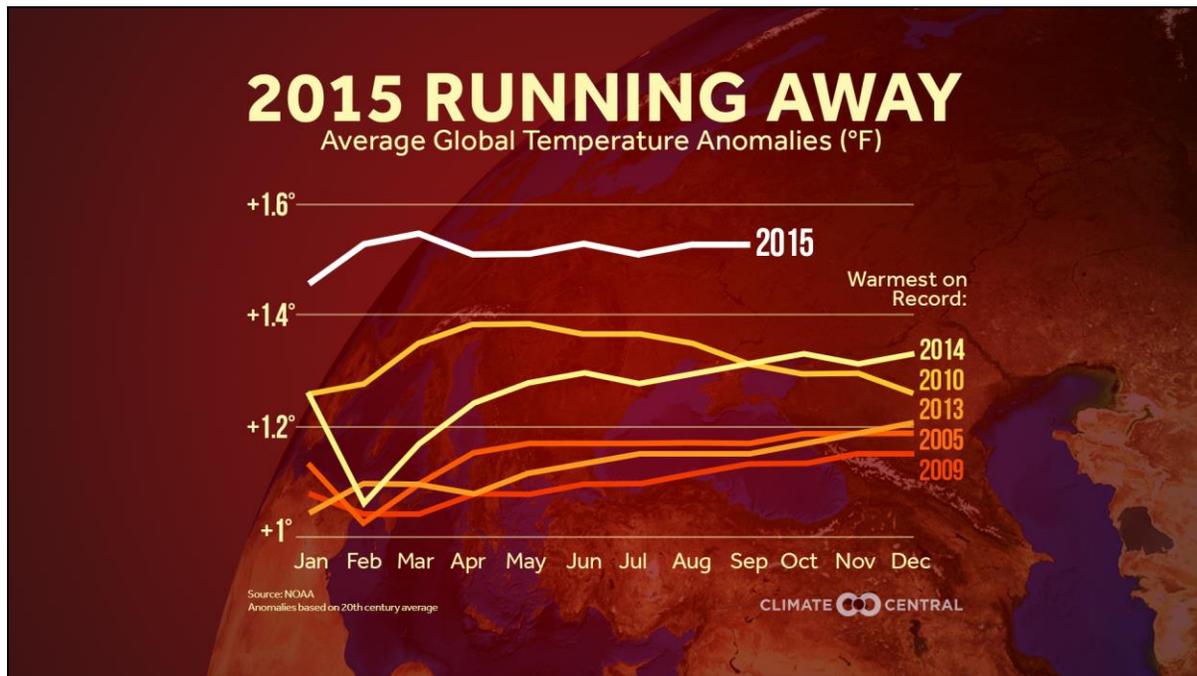
Slide 6



All the while I was reading and learning about climate change, I did so while wearing my archivist hat. I immediately wondered, “Why isn’t this a core issue of activism within the archival profession?” We are responsible for the preservation of history for future generations; we should be as concerned and involved in ensuring the preservation of our habitable planet for future generations.

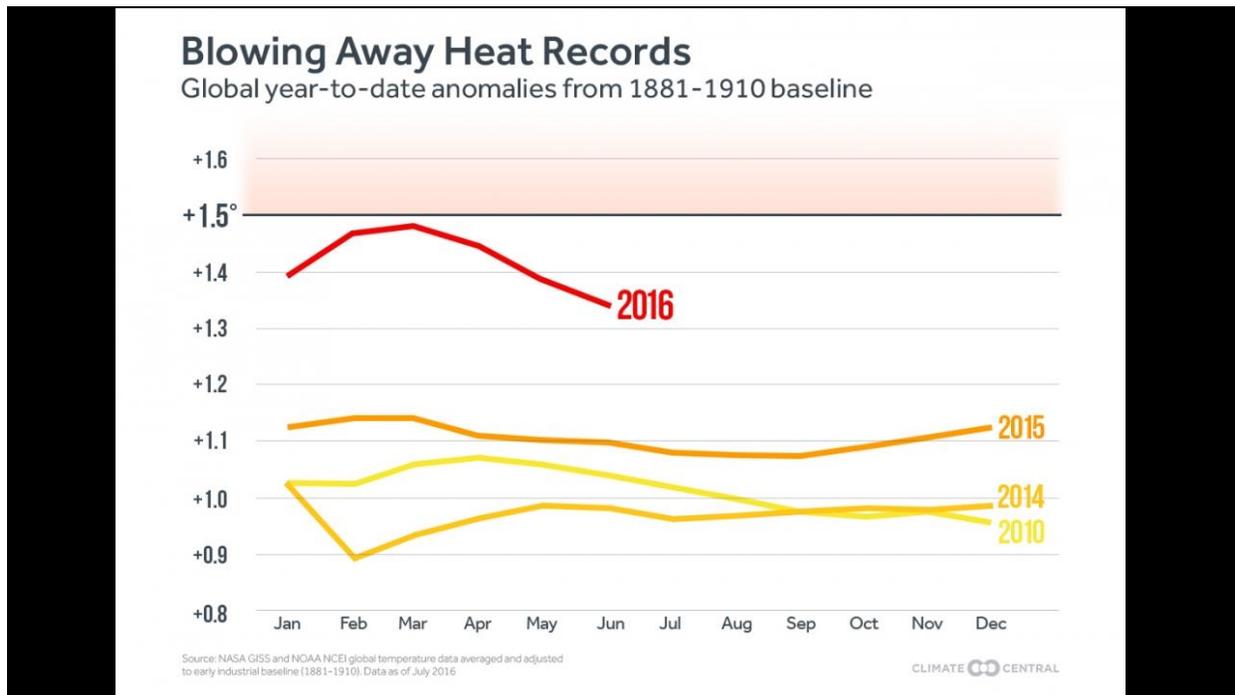


Slide 8



This is the temperature anomaly from 2015. I've heard people say "why are we getting so worried about one degree or two degrees of warming." Think about your own body temperature which is usually when you are not ill around 98.6. How do you feel when you have a 99.6 temperature? What about 100.6? The earth's atmosphere is just as sensitive to small changes in temperature as we are. The 5th assessment report of the IPCC reports that if the world continues with business as usual emissions, we could see up to 6 degrees celcius change in temperature by the end of this century.

Slide 9



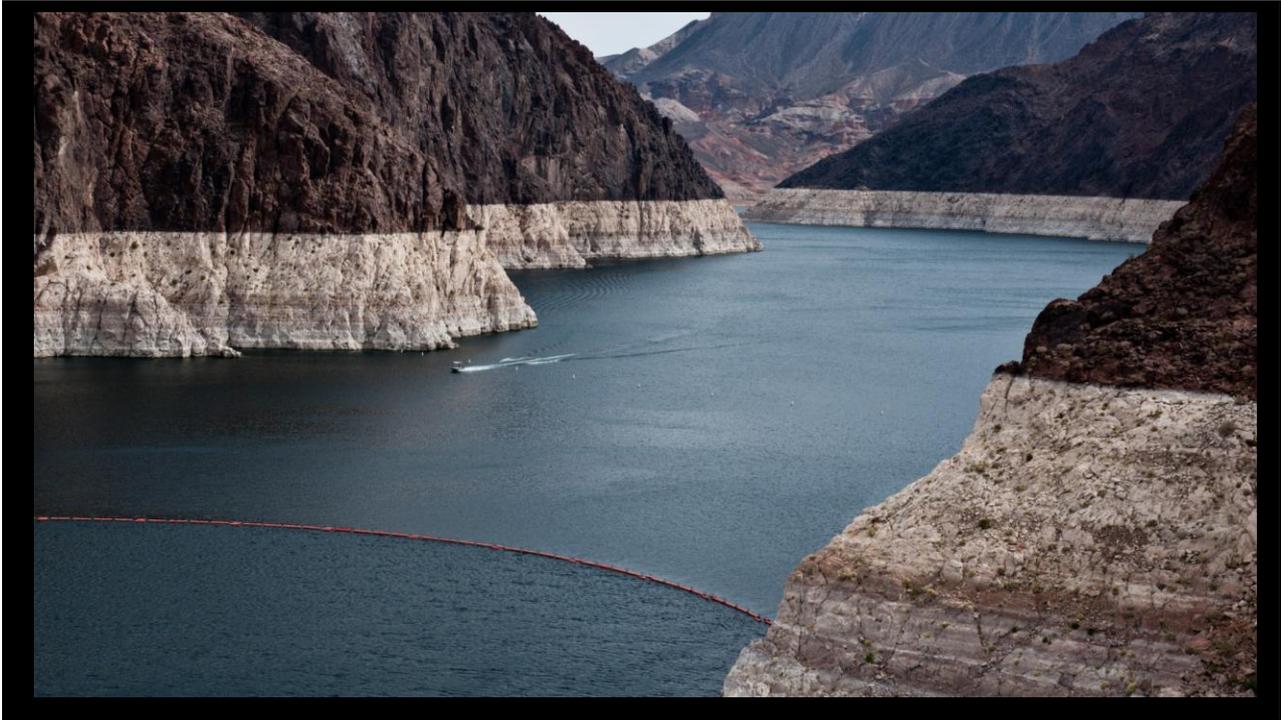
And this is 2016. At COP21 in Paris, a total of 104 countries called for the Paris agreement to limit warming below 1.5°C. As you see, we are already very close.

Slide 10



How does this impact us? Climate change will bring about more **HYDROLOGICAL EXTREMES**
flooding
blizzards

Slide 11

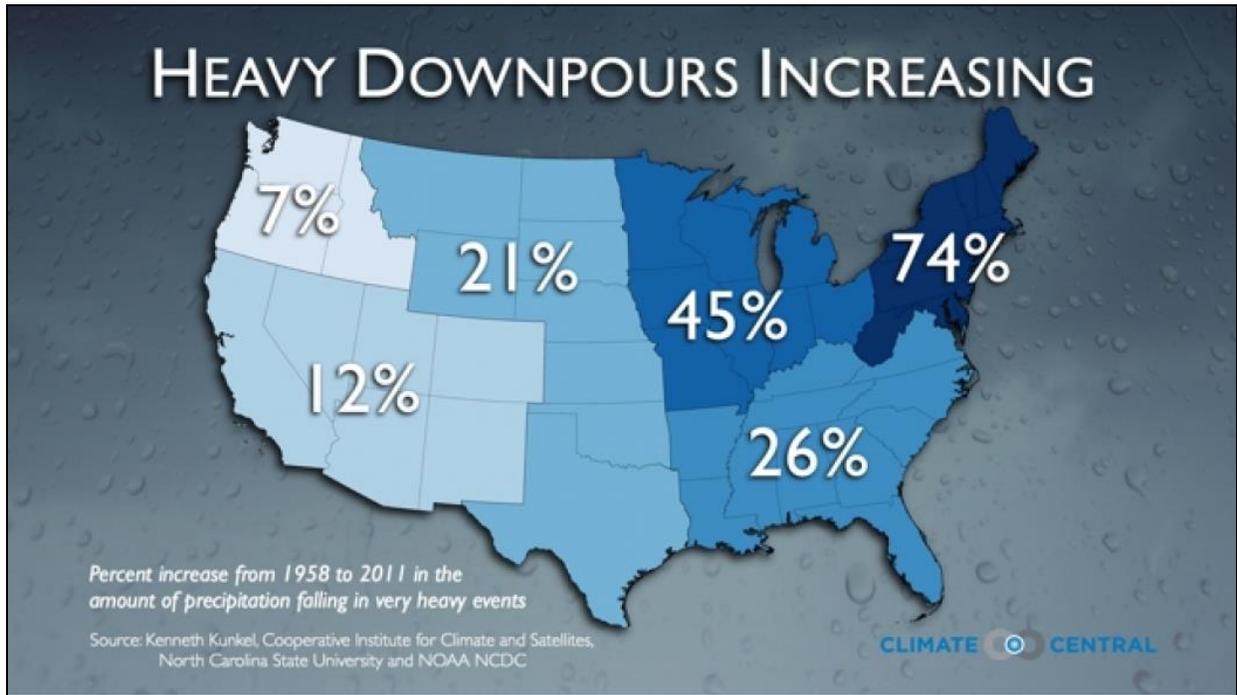


drought

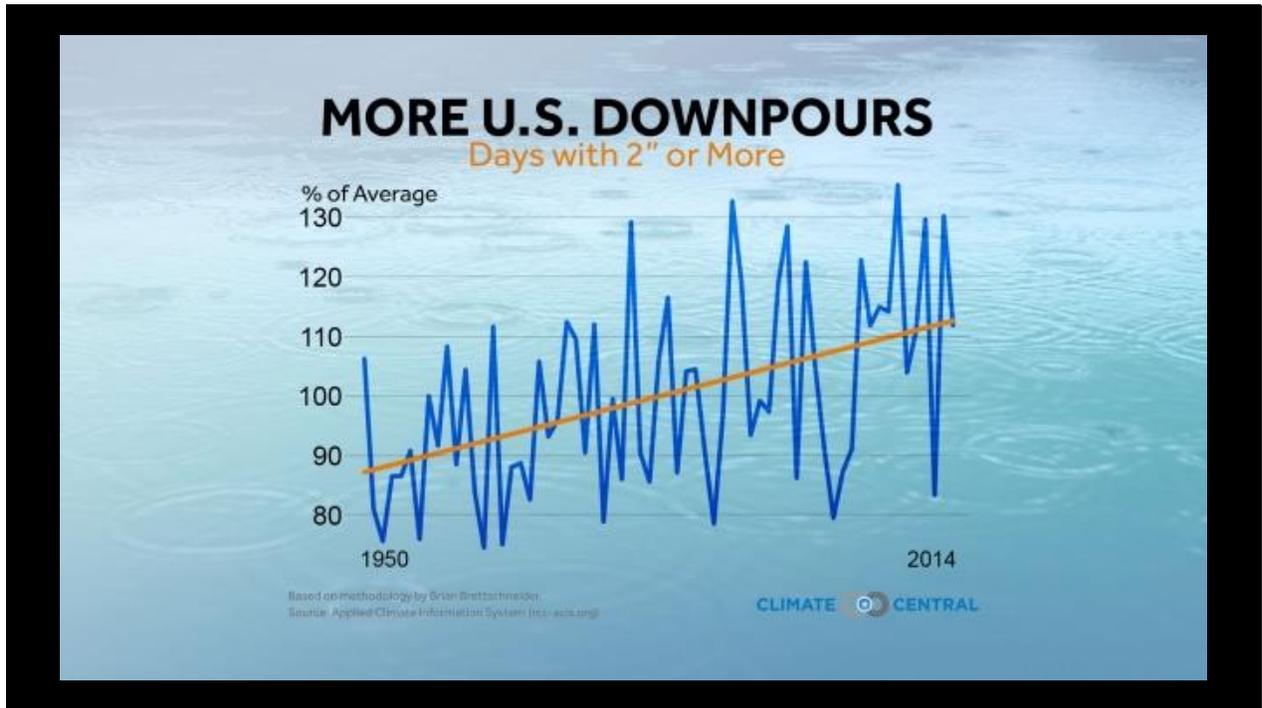
Slide 12



More extreme blizzards



Heavy downpours are increasing



And there are more frequent heavy downpours

Slide 15



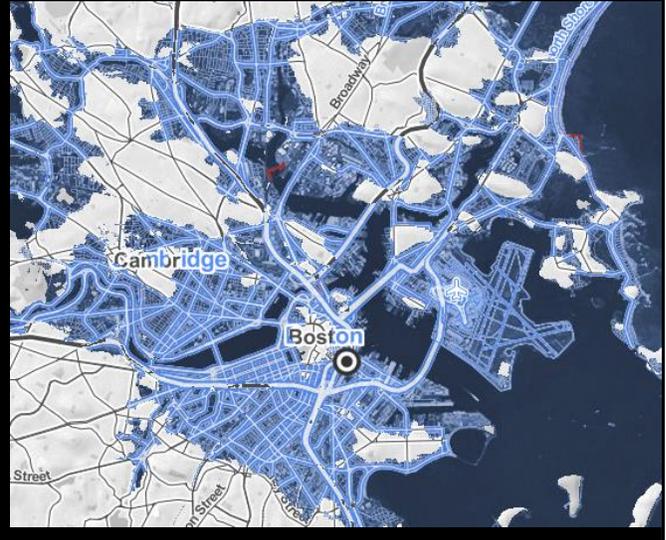
Global hurricane power is expected to increase, and the return periods of storms will decrease, meaning that there will be more frequent powerful hurricanes and storms altogether

We're making commitments now to a future.

1.5 Meters Sea Level Rise



5 Meters Sea Level Rise



The choices we make now will create different outcomes. A century isn't a long time for archivists. For the earth, it means we could possibly see one meter of sea level rise in the next 20-30 years. Since 1900, we've had about 8 inches of sea level rise already. Hurricane Sandy would have had a catastrophic outcome if it had been high tide when the hurricane hit the eastern seaboard. James Hansen reported in a recent article (that has met some critique) that we will likely see several meters of sea level rise by the end of this century. Five meters of sea level rise would have Boston underwater. Where are our climate resiliency plans?

CLIMATE CHANGE CHANGES EVERYTHING

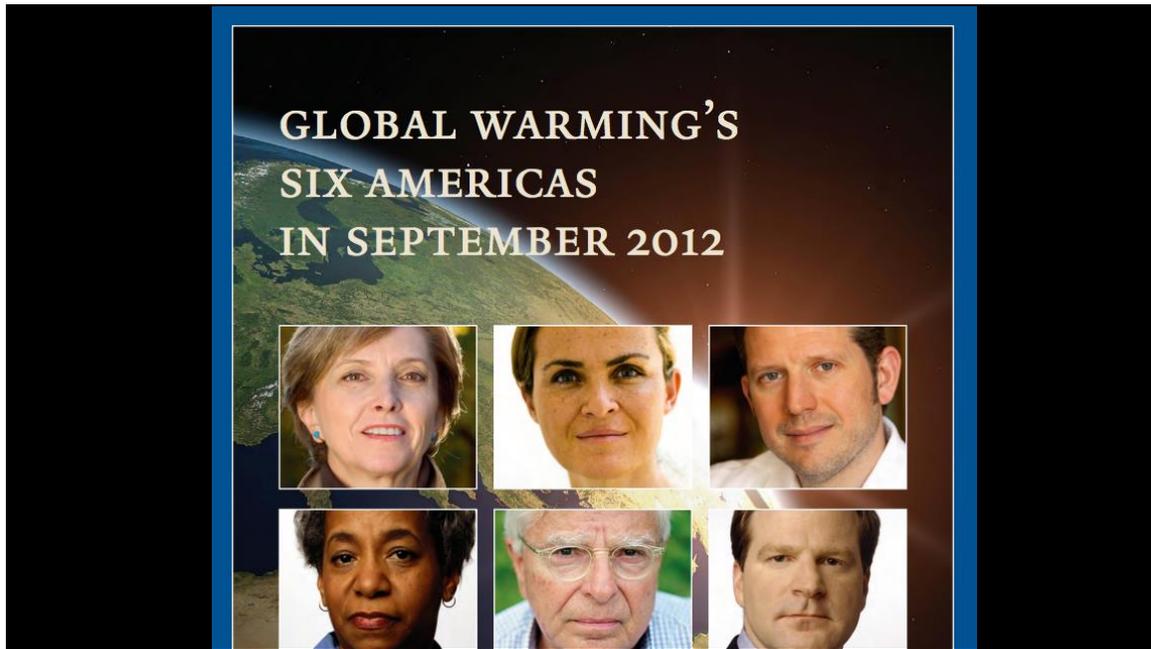
Health impacts, national security, refugee crisis, ability to grow food, has negative impacts on water resources, impacts ecosystems and leads to species extinction and the breakdown of the ecosystem.



In July 2015, John H. Richardson published an article in *Esquire* titled “When the End of Human Civilization is your Day Job.” Through an interview with climate scientist Jason Box, who studies glacier ice melt in Greenland, Richardson’s article focuses on how climate scientists have begun to deal with forms of depression after years of disturbing research findings and warnings about impending global catastrophe, which in many cases have gone unheeded by policy makers and the American public. I have only been involved in climate activism for about a year; this year it has been very difficult to not become afraid or overcome with a feeling of dread when reading the literature. I can’t imagine carrying this burden around for the last few decades.

After I read the *Esquire* article, I thought to myself, “How are archivists dealing with knowing about climate change when the history of civilization is *our* day job?”

Archivists are responsible for preserving history for future generations. It's our goal that the collections we are preserving now are accessible to researchers 100, 200, 500 years from now. I believe that it should be a professional and moral obligation for the archival community to come together and take action to ensure the preservation of a safe and habitable planet for future generations. I hate to put it bluntly, but sometimes I wonder: what’s the point in doing what we do if the future of humanity is in question?



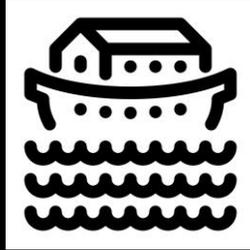
In 2012, Yale University and George Mason University published a report that categorized Americans on how they perceive the threat of global warming. Only 13% of Americans are alarmed about climate change. These people are the most concerned of all of the groups and are the most motivated to take action. Where do you fall on the spectrum?

I've become really interested in how people are dealing with knowing about climate change. I've been reading a book called "Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains are Wired to Ignore Climate Change," by George Marshall, which looks into the psychology of how people understand and deal with (or not deal with) climate change. According to Marshall, the evolution of our brains makes it difficult for us to comprehend or act on risks that are not immediate. I understand. There was a time when I didn't care about climate change. I attribute that complacency to my former belief that change wouldn't happen until after I was gone. It is hard to grasp the risk of something not happening right now — something too subtle and unclear whether and when it would affect me. But then I started reading the literature and I tuned in to the changes that are already happening. And then? I thought about how as an archivist, **the purpose of approximately third of my life for hopefully the next half century is to preserve history for the future.** I entered into sort of an existential crisis. Twenty, fifty, one hundred years from now, our world will be completely transformed. Will our collections survive? Will our efforts to preserve collections for future generations be in vain? And then I think about the children that I want to eventually have. By the time they are forty years old, Boston's sea level may have risen more than a meter. Where I currently call home, we're about 4 meters above sea level. Will my kids be able to call this place home? Will it be too hot for

them to live in Mississippi, where I grew up?

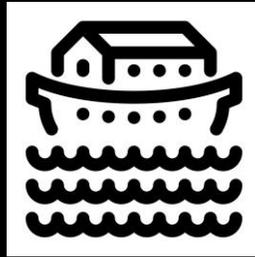
I think that in order to overcome the evolutionary problem of not reacting to the long-term risks of climate change, we need to find ways to keep climate change on our minds, even when it is scary to think about. This may seem silly, but I have decided that I need to read at least one relevant article every day so that I do not lose my drive to act on climate. If I don't, I can easily get caught up in other things. Yes, a lot of what we read can be quite scary, but I really like how Naomi Klein puts it in her book "This Changes Everything: Capitalism versus the Climate": "fear makes us run, it makes us leap... but we need somewhere to run to. Without that, fear is only paralyzing." I co-founded and continue to participate in ProjectARCC because it gives me a place to run to. ProjectARCC gives our entire profession a place to leap into action.

I recently read Columbia University's Connecting on Climate guidebook, which gives 10 recommendations on how to communicate climate change to audiences. It says people are motivated the most to act on climate within existing networks and social groups, and that people are more likely to become engaged on an issue when a group that they are part of cares about it. The guidelines recommend local groups (like churches or neighborhood associations), but I think that mobilizing with one's profession is equally as constructive. Maybe I'm biased, and I think this would be a great research topic, but I think that this is especially true for the archival profession, because I believe archivists are some of the most passionate professionals of all professions.



Founded on Earth Day in 2015, ProjectARCC is a task force of archivists striving to motivate the archival community to effect climate change. We believe that archivists, those responsible for the preservation of history for future generations, should be as passionate and concerned about preserving a habitable and safe planet for future generations.

ProjectARCC, a task force of archivists working to affect climate change, is working to make a difference. We want to ensure that archivists are aware of the risks of climate change on their collections. We want to find ways to collectively reduce our professional carbon footprint. We want to elevate relevant collections to improve public awareness and understanding of climate change. And we want to make sure that this moment in history is preserved for future research. But what is needed is collective action and contribution among our entire profession.



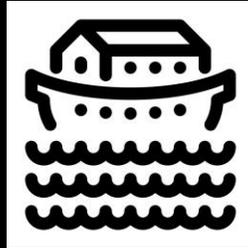
- Protect our Collections
- Reduce our Professional Carbon Footprint
- Elevate our Collections
- Preserve this Moment in History

Our initial goals were broad.

- 1. Protect our collections from the impact of climate change**
- 2. Reduce our professional carbon and ecological footprint**
- 3. Elevate our relevant collections to increase public awareness and understanding of climate change**
- 4. Preserve this epochal moment in history for future research and understanding**

Over the past year, ProjectARCC has presented at numerous conferences, including the Society of American Archivists, the Association of Moving Image Archivists, and Massachusetts COSTEP. Members recently presented at the [Keeping History Above Water](#) conference in Newport, Rhode Island. ProjectARCC has hosted several events this year, including one at ALA Midwinter in collaboration with ALA's SustainRT and "[On the Brink](#)," in collaboration with Simmons College SCoSAA. Members have contributed numerous blog posts on the ProjectARCC blog, as well as for the [SAA Issues and Advocacy](#) blog and [New England Media and Memory Coalition](#). ProjectARCC members have been interviewed by [Infotecarios](#), a publication for Latin American information professionals, and [Lost in the Stacks](#), a public radio program. ProjectARCC has also

hosted Tweet-ups in collaboration with ALA's Sustainability Roundtable. ProjectARCC member Eira Tansey recently published a peer-reviewed article on climate change risks and impacts. During COP21, ProjectARCC members marched with thousands of other activists at the Boston March for Jobs, Justice and Climate. ProjectARCC members are making impacts within their own institutions, including curating exhibits featuring historical materials documenting climate change, and creating and distributing surveys on sustainability and building efficiencies. With the SAA Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy, ProjectARCC drafted an issue brief on climate change, which was approved by SAA Council in August 2016. And finally, ProjectARCC is collaborating with Library Juice Press on a colloquium in May 2017 titled "Libraries and Archives in the Anthropocene," which will take place at New York University.



What now?

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Concerted efforts and projects organized by ProjectARCC have taken somewhat of a hiatus over the last few months. Members have continued to take action locally at their own institutions and in their communities. To be very honest, this work is pretty depressing at times, and as such a huge global problem it is always pretty overwhelming. In my own personal life over the last few months, I've actually tried not to think about climate change because I wanted to focus on happy things – like planning my wedding. This is a constant struggle for me as I am sure it is for all of you. My question for you all is where should all archivists be focusing our efforts within our own institutions, and where should the limited number of ProjectARCC members who are trying to contribute to climate action at the level of the entire profession, focus our efforts? With the limited amount of time that we all have, should we also consider it a professional responsibility to take action within our own communities? As we enter 2017, these are questions facing me as we think about the future of ProjectARCC. I very much appreciate your feedback and input on our future. Please send me your thoughts at caseydaviskaufman@gmail.com (yes, note the new name change.☺)