



University of Pittsburgh

The Archival Studies Program of the Department of Library
and Information Science

Presents

As part of its lecture series:

Archives & Recordkeeping in the Digital Era: Lectures and Ruminations



Joseph Newcomer
FlounderCraft, Limited

“A Case Study in Digital Document Forensics: The "Bush Guard" Memos”

Friday, December 3, 2004

Presentation - 12:00 - 2:00pm
Room 501, IS Building (135 N. Bellefield Avenue)

Abstract: The recent scandal of CBS releasing forged documents demonstrates that there is insufficient understanding of modern document production methods. The forgeries were apparent within seconds to anyone with experience in modern document production systems. Nonetheless, considerable effort was required to provide scientific validation that the documents were forgeries. Dr. Newcomer addressed the issues from the viewpoint of the font technology involved, and discusses his methodology and the aspects of both technology and technology history that were brought to bear on the case. Along the way, he demonstrates how alternative hypotheses could be refuted using proper scientific methodology. This talk is a presentation of the methodology, the need to be aware of the history of a technology in order to apply the methodology, and the use of contextual information to demonstrate that the memos are beyond any shadow of a doubt modern forgeries.

Speaker Bio: Biography: Dr. Joseph M. Newcomer received his Ph.D. in Computer Science from Carnegie-Mellon University in 1975. Since then he has been CMU faculty, key employee in a high-tech startup, a founding scientist of the Software Engineering Institute, a senior researcher at CMU, and a self-employed consultant and teacher. He is co-author of three patents on distributed information management technology. In addition to his technical expertise in computer science, he has authored a book on Microsoft Windows programming (including an entire chapter on Microsoft font technology), co-authored a book on Microsoft Windows Device Driver technology, and has been an expert witness in several legal cases involving computer technology, including patent and copyright disputes.