Appendix A: Interview Protocol

First, I want to thank you for participating in this interview today. I know you are busy and I really appreciate you taking the time to help me. Before we get started I thought I'd start by telling you a little bit about the study and what you can expect from this interview.

Just to review, the title of the study is Investigating Appraisal in Web Archives. As you may know there are many initiatives to archive parts of the Web. These can be found in libraries, archives, museums, businesses and government. Often these organizations have articulated collection development policies to help guide what Web content is collected. However the actual process for discovering websites and content that is relevant for a Web archive isn't well known. The Web is a big place, and even at the organizational level it can be difficult to know what needs to be collected and when.

In this study I'd like to talk to you about this process of selection or appraisal. The hope is that a better understanding of the decisions and mechanics of how archivists select content will help inform the design of new tools to assist archivists in their work. I'm really interested in the nitty gritty practicalities about how websites are added to an archive. I do have a short list of questions but this is going is a semi-structured interview because I would like the conversation to evolve organically. I'm pretty sure I don't have all the right questions!

I'm anticipating that the interview will take anywhere from half an hour to an hour. Feel free to say you don't know the answer to a questions, or you'd rather not answer it, and you can end the interview at any time. Please ask me to clarify any questions that aren't clear. I am recording the audio and video from the interview, which I will be transcribing and then doing content analysis to (hopefully) find patterns and themes. Your interview will be kept confidential and destroyed at the completion of my study. I will not mention you or your institution by name in my study except using a pseudonym. If I plan on quoting you at all in published material I will modify the excerpt to reduce the likelihood of identification. I will also contact you and ask for your permission to use the segment.

Do you have any questions about what I just covered or anything else?

Great, well lets get started then.

1. Could you tell me a little bit about your role at XXX? (Alt: how long have you been there? What are your responsibilities?)

2. Can you describe your work environment? (Alt: How many people do you immediately work with, what are their roles?)

3. Have you ever selected Web content to be archived? (Alt: do you do this on a regular basis?)

4. Try to recall a time when you selected content for archiving. What was it? Can you remember how you found it?

5. Can you think of another example?

6. Can you think of any other examples that seem different from these two?

7. What criteria do you think go into deciding whether a particular Web page or website is worth collecting? Can you give me examples?

8. How does the presence of the content in other Web archives factor into your decision if at all?

9. Do you consider whether it is important to collect the same web resource over time?

10. Do you record any information about why a particular website was selected? Do you think that could be useful?

11. How does the perceived size of a website factor into your decision to archive content?

12. Do you search for content to archive? How do you do it?

13. Do you consult with your peers when locating Web content? How does that work?

14. Do you talk to peers at other institutions or organizations when identifying web content?

15. Do you ever interact with the content owner/provider when selecting content for archiving?

16. Do people ever try to donate Web content? Can you describe an example of that?

17. Do researchers ever request that you archive particular Web content? How did that happen?

18. Have there been any requests to access archived content yet by internal or external people? How did that go?

19. Could an inventory of your Web archives contents be made available for a follow up study?

20. Does your organization have a collection development policy when it comes to collecting Web content? What kind of guidance does it provide? (Alt: are there any agreed on criteria for what Web content to archive?)

21. Is that policy available to the public? Can I get a copy?