An ocean of information: labour, commodification, and the culture of indexes in modern transatlantic genealogy

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the modern history of genealogy through the lens of keyword indexes – an essential resource for access to genealogical information. Empirically, the article studies the role of indexes in Euro-American genealogy from the nineteenth century to today. Particular attention is paid to the 1960s–2010s, when genealogy changed through growing popular engagement, new technologies, rising and falling academic interest, and increased commercialisation. Focusing on a set of grassroots cases from Sweden that have been crucial to the subfield of Swedish-American genealogy, the article explores the work of local Swedish heritage societies and the dream of empirical 'totality'; the cooperation between heritage societies and academic historians; the impact of microfilm and digital technologies in creating a sense of information overload; the economy of unpaid volunteer and state-subsidised labour; and how paper-based indexes, created largely through grassroots initiatives, have been transformed into digital commodities on an international genealogical market. While this is an important enquiry for understanding the history of genealogy – one of the most widespread popular pursuits in modern history – it also addresses the intricate relations between grassroots initiatives, academic research, and capitalism in modern archive history.

Introduction

Genealogy and family history are consummate pursuits that require considerable effort.[1] In addition to skills and stamina, they rely on access to necessary information. To be sure, the amount of effort – measured in time invested or money spent – has shifted noticeably over time, depending on the techniques, resources, and financial means available. A century ago, a search for information that today takes seconds could take months or even years. This development, though, came about not only through technological innovation and the advent of the Internet, but also through paid and unpaid labour, combined with the efforts of heterogenous interest groups that in various ways have invested in genealogy – local heritage societies, academic scholars, religious organisations, state agencies, and big businesses. This article investigates the modern development of genealogy by studying an essential but hitherto overlooked resource for enabling and facilitating information access, namely keyword indexes. While this is an important enquiry for understanding the history of genealogy – one of the most widespread popular pursuits in modern history – it also addresses the intricate relations between grassroots initiatives, academic research, and

capitalism in archive history, and thus connects to ongoing conversations about the nature of digital crowdsourcing and participatory heritage.

A keyword index is a tool for access. It is a fine-grained organisational system that, by establishing relations between various words and numbers, can lead you to specific pieces of information.[2] Indexes are used to gather, classify, organise, transform, store, retrieve, and communicate information.[3] They come in different forms and contain different sets of data, but a common feature of genealogical indexes is that they all cross-reference information of value to the researcher, including names, birth dates, and birthplaces. Like genealogy in general, the history of indexes is shaped by both media and labour. Indexes are an example of a 'knowledge infrastructure', created from hybrid processes of the 'technical' and the 'social'. Rather than being formed as fixed and coherent entities, they are adaptive and continuously changing.[4] Writing about 'information infrastructures', Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Star noted that the 'easier they are to use … [and] the bigger they are, the harder they are to see'. Indexes – including what many today would call search engines – are an example of this where illusions of 'effortless ease' have been created by 'invisible' labour.[5]

For purposes of genealogical research, indexes have appeared in several forms since the late nineteenth century. Indexes have existed as lists of name or subject categories at the end of printed volumes, as index card catalogues, and as computerised databases accessible on floppy disks, CD-ROMs, or the Internet.[6] They are created through processes of extracting, registering, and (re)arranging information from original or remediated sources. A study of indexes is an analysis of the ways in which the history of genealogy is entwined with the history of media, displaying a set of tensions central to 'information management': the problems of information shortage versus overload, of efficiency versus accuracy, and of automation versus manual labour.[7]

Indexes might at first sight appear peripheral to the history of genealogy. Yet this article argues that indexes have played – and continue to play – an outsize role for popular participation in genealogical research by broad social demographics. Having been a domain of the nobility and aristocracy in Europe and North America in the medieval and early-modern eras, genealogy began to be practised by a white bourgeoisie in the nineteenth-century USA. Growing further through its appeal to a growing middle class during the early twentieth century, it expanded in the 1970s to become a tool of ancestral empowerment, especially for African Americans.[8] The histories of European colonial settlement and urban mass migrations have been credited as a significant reason for why a popular, non-aristocratic interest in genealogy first emerged in the USA.[9] For a long time, however, a perennial challenge for US genealogists was the problem of how to access resources kept at local archives overseas.[10] Transatlantic genealogy thus emerged as early as the nineteenth century as an area where infrastructures and resources were most eagerly sought after and most desperately requested.

Empirically, the article centres on a set of grassroots cases dealing with Sweden and the USA, exploring the efforts by local heritage societies and the engagement of academic scholars in the production of indexes and in their joint pursuit of knowledge about Swedish emigrants to North America and their descendants. It is based on studies of printed sources, institutional archival records, and newspaper articles from Sweden and the USA. Approximately 1.5 million settlers and migrants have moved from Sweden to North America over the centuries, creating a body of people in each country with transatlantic, cross-generational family ties.[11] In addition to its migration history, Sweden provides a

suitable case for study since it occupies a special and privileged position in the Euro-American genealogical landscape. First, its historical relationship with the USA has been amicable and unmarred by periods of totalitarian governance or warfare, ensuring that there have been few formal barriers to conducting genealogical research in either country. Second, Swedish genealogical records are uniquely complete and comprehensive, with records of vital population data collected by the Swedish state church since the seventeenth century. Together, these factors have created plenty of opportunities for and few formal obstacles to developing new resources to enable transatlantic genealogical research.

Covering the mid-nineteenth century to today, with an empirical focus on the 1960s–2010s – a period when technological advances abounded, academic interest in genealogy peaked, waned, and all but disappeared, and commercialisation came to define the genealogical landscape – the article asks how the motivations for and economy of creating indexes changed over time. By doing so, it offers a lens for studying issues of significance far beyond the Swedish-American case: the development of genealogy as local heritage work, as an academic research enquiry, and as a commodity on an international genealogical market. It is thus an investigation connected to both local and transnational scales.

Vital information and user-generated data

In a volume on the making of genealogical knowledge in early modern Europe, historians have emphasised the need to study both 'big tools of knowledge', such as museums and libraries, and 'little tools of knowledge', including 'note-taking or systematic indexing'.[12] Today, these 'little tools' include the massive databases FamilySearch.org (run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or LDS Church), the for-profit company Ancestry.com, and direct-to-consumer DNA testing businesses such as 23andMe, AncestryDNA, and MyHeritage DNA. The memory studies scholar Julia Creet writes that the 'lust for sublime genealogical completeness and individuation' reflected in these databases has been 'fostered by new twentieth- and twenty-first century technologies'. As a result of these technologies, 'We find ourselves as smaller and smaller data points in larger and larger data sets in the face of which we spin meaningful narratives'.[13]

While scholars have provided important insight into the role of indexes for digital and genetic genealogy during the twenty-first century, there are no studies to date on indexes during the long stretch of history, from the late nineteenth century to the 1980s, when popular genealogy was conducted through the media of paper (in libraries and archives and through correspondence) and microfilm, or the transitional period from the 1960s onwards when indexing became digitalised. To understand the culture of indexes, it is vital to pay particular attention to their significant variations, acknowledging that extracted sources, indexes of submitted lineages, and databases of remediated copies of sources have not been equal products.[14] By looking at one of the earliest and one of the biggest indexes supporting transatlantic genealogy produced by US institutions – the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) and the LDS Church – it is possible to tease out two strands in how indexes have been created as a response to the changing challenges of accessing genealogical sources that are relevant to the broad history of Euro-American genealogy.

The first type of keyword index consisted of original records. These included card catalogues, printed indexes, and various kinds of computerised databases. In his book *Paper*

Machines, Markus Krajewski writes that by the 1870s library card catalogues had been 'accepted as universal search engines' in the USA. The card index system came to be viewed as 'a time- and labour-saving device' in libraries and offices alike.[15] For genealogists, some of the most valuable indexes were those of names (especially surnames) and of places. This was reflected already in the early nineteenth-century work of the New England antiquarian John Farmer, whose *The Genealogical Register of the First Settlers of New England* of 1829 was, according to François Weil, 'the first genealogical volume published in America that extended beyond one person or a single family'.[16] While his book was intended to facilitate genealogical research in New England, Farmer pointed out that 'no one can reasonably expect it to contain the names of *all* who early came to New-England. To bring the names of *all* from their musty and moth-eaten concealment would be a labour beyond the power of a single individual'.[17]

The notion that indexes could be a valuable resource developed among the members of the first genealogical institution in the USA, the NEHGS, founded in Boston in 1845. In 1847, the NEHGS began publishing the *New England Genealogical and Historical Register*, a quarterly journal of family histories, biographies, lineages, source extracts, and heraldic information focusing on 'persons who came to North America, especially to New England, before Anno Domini 1700'.[18] Looking back at the early years of the NEHGS, the *Register* in 1906 noted that visitors searching their library for genealogical sources had found 'no indexes, demanded none, and needed none, for a few hours sufficed to examine page by page all the printed work on the subject'.[19]

As the volume of the library's holdings grew, the need for a more substantial index of the *Register* increased. In 1888, the NEHGS implemented new indexing guidelines, describing the journal as 'a storehouse of facts' and acknowledging that 'its usefulness increases in proportion to the ease with which it can be consulted'. The journal therefore replaced the highly impractical focus on surnames – which had, for example, resulted in the entries for 'Smith' numbering around 2,000 alone – with a new index containing both surnames and given names, as well as indexes of subjects and of places 'American and foreign'.[20] In 1896, the society decided to index all previous volumes of the *Register*. By 1900, a group of between fifteen and twenty persons had created a card catalogue of 850,000 paper slips, 'written, punched, tied and placed in 260 boxes', containing the names of an estimated 600,000 persons and 150,000 places.[21] In 1906–07, the *Register* published 1,300 pages of indexes of persons, divided into three volumes; a smaller volume with indexes of places – from 'Abagadusset' to 'Zurich' – appeared in 1911. The intention with the indexes was 'to facilitate research' and 'make accessible' information that otherwise would have been difficult and time-consuming to find.[22]

Another kind of keyword index is that containing the results of genealogical research, for instance of pedigrees or family histories. The most significant of these indexes are those developed through the LDS Church. Within Mormonism, genealogy began in the 1890s to be viewed as a religious calling, aimed at spreading the gospel to the dead and reuniting family in the afterlife.[23] As Mormon genealogical activity increased in the 1920s, it resulted in a rising number of duplications of names submitted for religious ceremonies in LDS Church temples.[24] To grapple with this problem, the LDS Church in 1922 founded the Temple Index Bureau (TIB), which was centred on a massive card index system. All names that were to be prepared for temple endowments needed to pass through the TIB, where typists transferred names to index cards. By 1959, the bureau housed close to twenty-two million index cards.[25]

In the 1960s, these processes began to be computerised. The LDS Church developed computer systems of names submitted for temple ordinances (as well as of names 'extracted' from historical records), the most significant of which was the International Genealogical Index (IGI, founded as the Computer File Index in 1973). At the time of its discontinuation in 2008, the IGI contained 430 million user-generated names (in addition to 460 million names transcribed from historical sources).[26] These massive card systems and computerised databases created by the LDS Church constitute what Donald Harman Akenson has called 'a massive intellectual engine'.[27]

The activities of these two major US institutions indicate the most significant ways in which genealogical keyword indexes have come about and functioned since the nineteenth century. They have been indexes of institutionally generated vital information from sources produced by states, churches, or organisations, and user-generated indexes of data from pedigrees and family histories produced by genealogists. Indexes have been created because few accessible sources existed or because accessible sources were abundant.

The local heritage movement and the dream of totality

A crucial task in transatlantic genealogical research is to track the life and movement of the ancestor who made the Atlantic crossing. It is imperative (from a US perspective) to locate the dates of immigration and emigration, to locate the emigrant's home and birth parish, and (from a European perspective) to find information on where the emigrant settled in the USA. In Sweden, the projects to first produce this sort of information through the compilation of indexes were the Långasjö Emigrant Study Circle, founded in 1959, and the Emigrant Register of Värmland (ERV), established in 1960. These projects had two common features: a will to understand the Swedish emigration to the USA through the history of the individual emigrant, and the goal of indexing a specific historical population in its entirety. They resonated with a 'euphoria of totality' and the aim of completeness that evolved among European librarians in the late nineteenth century, vested in the endless possibilities of index card systems to organise and retrieve information.[28]

Both the Långasjö project and the ERV were grounded in the popular movement of local heritage societies (hembygdsföreningar). Sprung from a national romantic historical revival, common in countries that in the late nineteenth century had experienced rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, local heritage societies began to be organised throughout Sweden in the early 1900s. The growth of such societies continued throughout the century. Although reliable statistics are lacking before the 1970s, they probably engaged a few hundred thousand individuals in the 1950s and 1960s.[29] For these groups, the will to contribute to the history of emigration was channelled through the effort of creating a new resource for emigration research. They did not simply conduct these research endeavours for their own personal sake or, like academic historians, solicit primary sources in efforts to write synthesising histories of emigration. For local heritage groups, the very production of new resources was a goal in itself.[30]

The fate of the emigrants from the small parish of Långasjö in the region of Småland in southern Sweden had been of interest to members of the local chapter of the heritage movement since the 1930s.[31] The study circle was organised in 1959 through the Långasjö heritage society (hembygdsförening) and, while stimulated by a general desire to learn more

about the emigration, the project aimed to 'register all Långasjö residents that have emigrated to the United States and Canada'. In addition, the group also wanted to get in touch with '[persons] who have been in America and [with] relatives of the emigrants', and thus to 'increase interest in the *hembygd*[32] among Långasjö residents in America'. The group researched the local parish records and relocation books (*utflyttningsböcker*) and extracted names, which were transferred to pre-printed forms. They conducted interviews in the parish, collected letters and photographs, and invited returned migrants to circle meetings. The group also ventured outside the local community, researching archives and libraries in Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Lund for information on the destinations of the emigrants, and travelling to the USA to trace the migrants' life in their adopted homeland.[33]

In 1967, the results of the study were published in the 900-page book *En smålandssocken emigrerar* ('A Småland Parish Emigrates'), which contained lengthy discussions about the history of the parish and the history of Swedish emigration to America. The core of the book was a 500-page list of more than 1,400 emigrants from 1853 to 1948, presented chronologically together with an index of names. The list contained names, birth dates, information on parents and children, dates of emigration, and, where known, destinations in the USA, with ample references to the primary sources consulted for each emigrant. Over the years, the group had amassed a small archival collection and a sizeable card catalogue. When the investigation was complete, the collection and the catalogue were placed in the local bank, which also donated 'a filing cabinet to the register of emigrants'.[34] The card catalogue was intended to be available to 'each and every one who wishes to obtain information on Swedish Americans from Långasjö'.[35] At the end of the day, the Långasjö index never developed into a physical meeting site for local, genealogical, or academic researchers, probably because of its remote geographical location. Except for the published book, the Långasjö project was first and foremost made for the benefit of the people involved in its making and the individuals related to the Långasjö emigrants.

For the ERV, however, the index constituted its public core and existential *raison d'être*. The ERV was founded in Karlstad in 1960 by Sigurd Gustavson, an elementary school teacher and the secretary of the local heritage society. It was a cooperative effort between the regional Värmland Heritage Society (*Värmlands hembygdsförbund*) and the local lodge of the fraternal society, the Vasa Order of America.[36] The goal of the ERV was to register all individuals who had emigrated from Värmland to the USA and Canada, in total about 100,000 people.[37] The register would 'map the individual destinies of the emigrants' and 'connect the emigrant descendants with their fathers' homeland'.[38] The centre of its activity was the index card catalogue.[39] The number of indexed emigrants grew steadily, adding 10,000 names per year in 1965–68 before slowing to a pace of 5,000 names per year after 1969. By the end of the 1970s, the processing of all 100,000 individuals had been completed.[40]

The index consisted of two main parts. First, the ERV made so-called 'emigrant rolls' (*utvandrarlängder*). These were chronological excerpts from records of individuals emigrating to North America, gathered primarily from the parish records' relocation books (*utflyttningsböcker*) and household examination books (*husförhörsböcker*), containing information on each emigrant's given name, surname, date of emigration, address, profession, birth date, birthplace, gender, parents, and children. The emigrants were then entered into the 'emigrant rolls', of which there was one for each year, arranged by year in the order in which the emigrant appeared in the sources. Each emigrant received a personal

identification number based on their order in the list. The rolls were then used to create index cards, one for each emigrant, with information about their name, civil status, children, parish of residence, and date of emigration.[41] These index cards constituted the 'central register' of the ERV and the core resource around which the group sought to consolidate their institution.[42] The fundamental purpose of the index was to help with (re-)establishing an awareness and friendship between Americans of Värmland descent and people in Värmland who had US emigrant ancestors. American genealogists were thus an important target group for the ERV, and they provided their research assistance free of charge.[43]

The indexes produced by the Långasjö and Värmland groups might seem quaint in comparison to the massive indexes from the genealogical eras of microfilm and digital technology, but it is important to acknowledge that they were regarded by contemporaries as major accomplishments and a form of resources thus far unheard of. The Långasjö and ERV indexes traced a selected totality of emigrants from place of origin to place of settlement, and located information on the emigrants' ocean crossings. For individuals to rely on these indexes, however, genealogists needed to have a certain level of trust in their correctness. The indexes were, after all, the products of manual labour, and thus naturally carried a certain level of error. They were, moreover, not mere tabulations of records (e.g. transcriptions of item A from source B), but complex attempts at handling vast amounts of information from a varied set of primary sources. Partly because of these two projects' claims of totality, and partly because of their methodological intricacies, they both attracted interest from academic scholars.

Methodological accuracy and academic interest

The production of indexes among genealogical enthusiasts and the local heritage movement coincided with an increased interest among academic historians in social history, statistical methodologies, and the hitherto heavily understudied topic of the Swedish emigration to North America. With the exception of a few important but scattered studies, by the mid-twentieth century no comprehensive efforts had been made to understand the European background and transatlantic pattern of the Swedish mass emigration. As part of a broader trend in European historiography, Swedish historians began to take an interest in the subject in the 1960s, most prominently through the establishment of the Emigration Research Project at Uppsala University. Between 1962 and 1976, the Uppsala project engaged thirty scholars and produced a great number of books and articles grounded in demographic studies and social science methodologies.[44]

With the rise of social history in the 1960s and 1970s, the barriers that had been instituted in the late nineteenth century between academic history, genealogy, and local history began to break down. In 1986, the historians Robert Taylor and Ralph Crandall edited a volume that called for closer cooperation between genealogists and academic historians, arguing for the many ways in which it would benefit both communities. Taylor and Crandall observed that historians increasingly had 'turned to localized data, converted into machine-readable form, as a means of defining society's behavioral pattern'. For scholars of social history, this meant that genealogists and the sources that they worked with had finally received 'fresh consideration'.[45] In the same volume, the historian Samuel P. Hays argued that genealogists and historians – and especially those academics interested in demographics, migration, and

social mobility – 'rely on the same records and could benefit from a common approach to preserving and organizing historical sources and to making them accessible'.[46]

Rather than being a development spearheaded by scholars, however, the academic interest in genealogical indexes were in fact predated by the interest in academic research among local heritage societies. Although representatives of the Långasjö group reported that they did not themselves conduct academic research, they publicly stated an ambition to put the materials they had collected 'at the disposal of scholarship'.[47] Their attention to 'source criticism and methodological accuracy' had created a model for future research that was deemed important for academic scholars and the heritage movement alike.[48] The ERV for its part explained that 'to the degree that our register can serve other higher interests, e.g. academic scholarship, that would be pleasing'.[49] In the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*, the genealogist and editor Nils William Olsson – himself the author of an acclaimed substantial index of Swedish early passenger arrivals to US ports[50] – mused, a little dreamily, that if the ERV's idea was to spread to other parts of Sweden, and if these indexes then could be deposited at an institution in the USA, 'a vast reservoir of information would be available for the student of family history and for the scholar doing research on various aspects of Swedish emigration to the United States'.[51]

After a few years of operation, the ERV intensified its links with academic historians at the universities of Lund and Uppsala, forming particularly important contacts with Birgitta Odén of Lund University and Sten Carlsson of Uppsala University (the leader of the Emigration Research Project), who reportedly had given the ERV 'fertilising impulses'.[52] By the late 1960s, the academic dimension of the ERV had been firmly established. In the words of the director of the section for American history at Uppsala, the 'exceptionally good cooperation' between the two institutions had 'taken the shape of a comprehensive review of the scholarly value' of certain sources.[53] As a token of appreciation for creating a much valued and 'frequently used source of information', Uppsala University awarded Sigurd Gustavson an honorary doctorate in 1971.[54]

The amalgamation of genealogical and academic interests centred on the dual significance of population totality and accuracy of registration, but it also relied on an ostensibly shared idea about the value of objectivity in research, where – in a way antithetical to genealogical practice – the subjective individual was ostensibly removed from the research enquiry.[55] In a 1969 lecture in Salt Lake City on methodologies of researching older Swedish records, held during the World Conference on Records organised by the LDS Church, Sten Carlsson made a point about objectivity by differentiating 'the real genealogist from the pure dilettante'. The most important characteristic of a 'real' genealogist was her '*exact*' and carefully documented research. 'The real genealogist is very anxious to point out the difference *between the certain and the uncertain*', Carlsson argued.[56] While he noted that some might have concerns with the LDS Church's practice of proxy baptism, it was clear to him that 'the cause of science has received a great boost through the genealogical activities, which the followers of Joseph Smith have started'.[57]

The academic interest in the indexes constructed by the Swedish heritage movement stemmed from a lack of information necessary for quantitative social historical analysis. The will to create new knowledge about the emigration – on individual, local, national, and international levels – converged around the idea of collecting major amounts of information in index card catalogues. It was an example of a new knowledge infrastructure that not only answered old enquiries, but made it possible to think of novel questions.[58] As the social

historical and quantitative focus in the 1980s gave way to the 'cultural turn' and a greater interest in qualitative analysis, migration scholars increasingly focused their enquiries on issues of ethnicity and identity. Consequently, the academic interest in genealogical research and population data decreased.

Parallel with this development, the popular interest in genealogy grew considerably. The rise of genealogical interest has been credited to social factors (such as immigration and urbanisation) and cultural factors (most noticeably the impact of Alex Haley's 1976 book and blockbuster miniseries *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*). To a significant degree, though, the heightened interest in genealogy was also due to the wealth of resources that by the 1970s had been created through a massive quantity of microfilming. The enormous growth of accessible genealogical records created a new problem for genealogists and local heritage enthusiasts, and one for which they did not find the same support from academic historians. This was not a problem of a lack of readily accessible information, but a problem of abundance.

Microfilm, digital technologies, and information overload

The necessity of sorting and accessing large amounts of genealogical information in a practical manner reached an unprecedented scale in the eras of microfilm and digital technologies. The problem of information overload was in itself certainly not new in the genealogical landscape, nor was it unique to genealogy. For example, in the 1970s the enumeration and computerisation of population data was a major endeavour of state bureaucracies.[59] As early as 1913, faced with growing library collections and sizeable printed volumes of excerpts and registers, the prominent LDS Church genealogist Susa Young Gates had argued that indexes were 'indispensable', asserting that 'maledictions innumerable are heaped upon the careless publisher who puts upon the market one of those labyrinthian Parish Registers, without an index, and with page after page of crowded names and dates provided to each weary pilgrim along the genealogical road'.[60] But while indexes were valuable for negotiating printed volumes, the microfilming and eventual digitisation of genealogical records increased their usefulness even further.

The LDS Church had commenced its microfilm programme in 1938. After a hiatus during the Second World War, it expanded rapidly after 1945. By the end of the 1970s, the church owned over a million rolls of microfilm covering records from every US state and over forty nations; twenty years later, it had secured microfilms from 101 countries.[61] The LDS Church's ambitious ideas and substantial economic investments had a profound influence on the genealogical landscape. As a consequence of the sudden concentration of microfilmed records, by the late 1960s Salt Lake City had turned into an international hub for genealogical research.

Beyond the material resources themselves, the LDS Church's microfilm programme also became an international inspiration, providing a model for others to follow. An organisation that copied the microfilm scheme of the LDS Church was the Swedish Emigrant Institute (SEI), founded in 1965 in Växjö in southern Sweden to function as an archive, library, and museum of the mass emigration to North America. Between 1966 and 1978, the institute microfilmed church records from Swedish congregations in the USA. It followed the same formula as the LDS Church: one copy of each film was donated to the local US church, and

another copy was sent to Sweden and deposited at the SEI.[62] The Swedish-American Church Records provided a rich and rare source of information about Swedish immigrants, their families, and their descendants, and turned Växjö into the primary centre for Swedish-American genealogy – thus, once again, following the trajectory of Salt Lake City on a miniature scale. However, if the SEI was to 'live up to the ambition to function as a general service institution' for emigration research, the institute noted in 1971, it also needed proper indexes.[63] It was indexes that, according to the SEI director Ulf Beijbom, 'open the doors to the fascinating world described in [so-called] America letters, diaries, photographs and membership rolls'. Without such indexes, the SEI would be 'a quiet mausoleum over the emigration' – a mere record repository, used by none.[64] The indexes would be a time-saving resource, would serve record preservation by minimising the wear and tear on original materials, would offer new ways of accessing and searching information, and would thus combine to further stimulate research.[65]

When indexing its records, the SEI relied on the work of volunteers, one of the most ardent of whom was Bertil Grundström (born 1929), the director of a furniture factory in Tranås (150 km north of Växjö) and a member of the local heritage movement. Grundström's modus operandi was to order copies of microfilms from various institutions, primarily the SEI and the ERV, and to use his own microfilm reading machine and desktop computer to transcribe genealogical information, saving his indexes on floppy disks. His most voluminous work was the so-called SAKA Registers – an index of the Swedish-American Church Records at the SEI. When Grundström ended his indexing in 1996, he had created 275,000 entries of approximately 175,000 individuals. The index existed in three copies: one in the possession of Grundström himself, and one each at the SEI and the ERV.[66] When the index was finished in 2001, it contained 556,000 entries, the majority of which had been made by Grundström himself.[67]

Although the LDS Church had started to invest in computer technology in the early 1960s, the widespread adoption of digital tools for genealogical research grew in the late 1970s with the introduction of so-called home computers.[68] Compact eight-bit computers with a combined keyboard and screen that could be easily fitted on a desktop, such as the Apple II, TRS-80, and Commodore PET, were launched in 1977 and became increasingly popular during the 1980s. The relative affordability of digital technology was quickly being put to use in the service of data management, making indexing a considerably faster and more efficient operation. The SEI announced in 1979 that it intended to transfer its indexes, covering several hundred thousand individuals, to computers.[69] After some years of planning and searching for financing, the SEI installed its first computer in 1987 and began the work of making its paper-based indexes digital.[70] In comparison to card catalogues, computerised indexes 'made registration simpler, removed a laborious operation, [namely] sorting [of data], and gave decidedly more search options as a result'.[71]

As an effect of the new technology, the volume of indexes grew rapidly. Taking stock of this change, the SEI in the early 1990s was a driving force in the development of Emibas, a digital index of emigrants traced mainly in Swedish church records. This database was targeted at 'emigration [researchers] and genealogical researchers in exchange for their registers being connected to the institute's data bank'.[72] Emibas quickly increased in volume, covering 33,000 individual emigrants in 1993, over 100,000 in 1994, 480,000 in 1996, and 620,000 in 1997. In 2001, more than one million out of an estimated total of 1.3 million Swedish emigrants had been indexed (the estimate presumably referring to the total number of emigrants for the

period 1840–1930).[73] A parallel project was the indexing of Swedish passenger lists at the ERV, which during the late 1980s and early 1990s similarly grew to encompass over one million individuals.[74] In 1993 when the SEI acquired nine CD-ROM disks of US Social Security Register information on some forty million Americans who had died between 1962 and 1992, it was described as 'an information ocean that data processing [will] conquer at the speed of light', making it easier to locate information about Swedish Americans.[75]

The indexes created during the era of digital genealogy were made publicly available in three different ways: through on-site computers, CD-ROM disks, and the Internet. On-site access dominated until the early 1990s, with computerised indexes being made available to researchers at libraries and institutions. Initially, for example, Emibas could be accessed through the main computer at the SEI. In the 1980s and increasingly in the 1990s, the development of the CD-ROM made indexes portable and thus an attractive commercial product. In 1996, a conglomerate of institutions in Sweden, including the ERV and the SEI, released *CD Emigranten* (literally translated as 'The CD Emigrant') – from 2006 called *Emigranten populär* ('The Emigrant Popular') – a CD-ROM disk containing the institutions' combined indexes. Originally published in Swedish, it began to be offered to US markets in an English edition in 2001.[76]

This development followed an international trajectory playing out on a much larger scale. Dan Taggart and Paul B. Allen founded Infobases Inc. in 1990, which sold genealogical resources on floppy disk to LDS Church members. In 1995, Taggart and Allen bought the Salt Lake City-based company Ancestry, which published genealogical reference books, and began to make them available on CD-ROM. That same year, they created the CD-ROM box 'LDS Family History Suite' containing genealogical databases, software, and reference material. It was promoted to Mormons in Utah and became a major retail success. The breakthrough of what would become Ancestry.com, first launched in 1996, thus also came via CD-ROM indexes.[77] In the 2000s, CD-ROMs were increasingly replaced by the Internet, enabling individuals to connect through email lists, genealogical forums, and social media, as well as allowing organisations and businesses to develop new online resources. While Ancestry.com initially offered online genealogical databases, FamilySearch – the renamed incarnation of the Genealogical Society of Utah – launched its website in 1999, offering digital images of the LDS Church's trove of microfilmed records.[78]

The SEI and the ERV have continued to follow in the footsteps of the Utah-based international genealogical giants. Together with a group of organisations and societies engaged in Swedish emigration history, in 2007 they founded EmiWeb, a non-profit organisation and website promoted as a 'whole new database system for migration research'. Their ultimate goal was to 'collect all source materials concerning our emi[grants] and immigrants in one [data]base', for the benefit of 'genealogical, biographical, and local heritage researchers'.[79] Beyond the distinct social context and advanced technology, it was a goal echoed many times in the modern history of transatlantic genealogy.

Volunteer labour, state subsidies, and corporate commodification

There is a curious and mostly invisible economy ingrained in the making of indexes. For them to save time for researchers, it is necessary that others spend a considerable amount of time making them. In the current age, where optical character recognition (OCR) can be

done by standard computer software, it may be difficult to acknowledge the labour that indexing often necessitates, especially when it comes to the arduous process of indexing handwritten sources. The construction of indexes has so far not been automated (though that could certainly change with improved artificial intelligence (AI) for handwriting recognition). Today, indexes are still generally produced through individual labour.

Attesting to how genealogy evolved into a leisure activity of a broader public, volunteerism was central to the making of indexes in the era of paper-based genealogical research. When the Långasjö project and the ERV began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, both were study circles focused on the volunteer work of their members. The completion of the emigrant register, Sigurd Gustavson explained in 1961, 'requires good access to volunteer, unpaid labour'. Although the process had to be coordinated by the ERV office staff, the actual work was carried out in at least two dozen parishes around Värmland. By 1961, it was already estimated that some 2,000 individuals had contributed unpaid work.[80]

Although volunteerism was the core of the indexes in the 1950s and 1960s, these initiatives existed alongside a substantial share of paid labour. The municipality of Karlstad and the county of Värmland provided continuous and direct funding for the ERV – and so also, for a while, would the Swedish state – but the most important financial support was arguably the indirect funding that was received from the Swedish Labour Market Administration (*Arbetsmarknadsverket*) starting in 1961. Through its local branches, called the County Labour Boards (*Länsarbetsnämnden*), the state administration supplied the ERV with a growing number of 'archive workers'. The ERV was staffed by eight such workers in 1963, one of whom was stationed at the National Library in Stockholm. The number grew to fifteen by 1966 and to twenty by 1971, providing 'invaluable help in research endeavours'.[81] In addition to these workers, who were paid by the state but were under the supervision of the ERV, the ERV also outsourced work to several 'office work centres' (*kontorsarbetscentraler*) in the county, providing the ERV with additional state-subsidised work.[82] These workers delivered essential labour for the ERV, but the arrangement was also important for the workers themselves, some of whom, because of disability or criminal records, had difficulty in (re)gaining a foothold in the labour market.[83] Sigurd Gustavson claimed in 1970 that unemployed workers had been crucial to the success of the ERV, stating that 'It is no exaggeration to say that the Emigrant Register for Värmland largely has been built through the contribution of the County Labour Board'.[84]

The state-subsidised labour programmes continued in a scaled-down version during the 1980s, forcing the ERV – and also the SEI – to rely less on these workers and instead, once again, revert to a greater reliance on volunteers.[85] By then, however, indexing had been significantly facilitated through the combined technologies of microfilm and desktop computers. At the ERV in the late 1980s, eight state-subsidised workers were tasked with transferring paper-based registers to computers.[86] However, in the 1980s most of the indexing of the Swedish emigration was still being done by volunteers – either by local study circles or by individual enthusiasts, such as Bertil Grundström, who estimated that he had spent 'the equivalent of four years of full-time work' doing unpaid indexing.[87]

The situation changed as the unemployment rate in Sweden increased after 1991. As a consequence, in the mid-1990s the SEI was able to acquire more state-funded workers and thus to significantly increase the volume of its indexes.[88] In 1996, the SEI reported that its Emibas database had grown 'significantly due to the many external labour market projects' that had been launched during that year. Registration had been carried out in seven locations

around the country, engaging around ten workers in each location. In total, 140 individuals had been paid through Swedish state or European Union funding.[89] This expansion would continue in the 2010s. In 2015, the successor of the ERV – Svenska Migrationscentret (the Swedish Migration Centre) – employed 154 people full-time, largely funded by taxpayers.[90]

The massive amounts of volunteer and state-subsidised labour that have gone into creating genealogical keyword indexes since the 1960s have developed in close relationship to the increasingly commercialised genealogical market. Indexes became a marketable commodity in the genealogical landscape during the digital era, and specifically with the introduction of the CD-ROM. This trend increased significantly when indexes moved to the Internet. In reference to a 1997 *Newsweek* survey which indicated that forty-two million Americans were doing genealogy, the chairman of the ERV remarked that 'There is money' in genealogical research.[91] Although it was a rather obvious statement, as genealogy had been vastly popular since the 1970s and has been a commercial market since the nineteenth century, the acknowledgement marked a major departure from the local heritage roots of the ERV. The ERV tapped into a sense that the US interest, and thus US dollars, would eventually trickle down to its own organisation. This sense was echoed by a local newspaper, which wrote that the reason why EmiWeb created genealogical indexes was the 'big market for this data' and that 'everyone in the whole world' could access the database through paid subscriptions.[92] Indexes became an agent in the broader economic aspirations of local communities.

Similar to major companies such as Ancestry.com, the ERV and EmiWeb also tapped into 'the data-consumption desire' that has been driving the industry of genealogy.[93] In 2008, a deal was reached with Ancestry.com to make the Emigranten populär CD-ROM available on their website. At the time, the database contained 1.7 million entries.[94] In 2010, the stated purpose of EmiWeb was 'to sell to the general public the right to use the material' contained in the database.[95] By then, the database had grown to ten million entries. Data growth was at this point no longer primarily a matter of aggregated knowledge production, but rather a means of increasing sales.

The volunteer and state-subsidised work in the 1990s conflicted with the increasingly commercialised market of genealogy in general and genealogical indexes in particular. An example of how this played out was Bertil Grundström. In Grundström's mind, the indexes that he created were 'my property according to the copyright act'. Although he emphasised that 'copying from them [the indexes] whole or in part is thus not allowed without my written consent', he intended to – and eventually did – transfer his indexes to the SEI and the ERV. Grundström, however, turned down invitations from several other organisations including the LDS Church, which had 'shown a strong interest' in acquiring them.[96] While he acknowledged that the indexes would be valuable 'for genealogists who visit Karlstad [the ERV] and Växjö [the SEI]', he thought that 'Commercial sale of [the indexes on] CD-ROM would complicate the picture'.[97]

Indexes are a good example of a genealogical commodification process, in which the capitalist market is 'disguising the social relations and fundamental antagonisms of production (between worker and capitalists) as shiny, magical goods and services that appear to come out of nowhere'.[98] The disconnect between end product and production process is pervasive in the genealogical landscape, but perhaps most significantly so when it comes to keyword indexes of original sources. The hours and efforts – paid or unpaid – that have gone into making the indexes appear to the average user as what Susan Stewart has called 'a labor of total magic', supported by the 'estrangement' and 'erasure' of its mode of

production.[99] It is a kind of hidden labour that today also includes various forms of crowdsourcing, obscured by digital technology.[100] A further complicating dimension of the indexes of Swedish-American genealogical sources is the fact that many of the indexes, those that today are made available for a fee on Ancestry.com and EmiWeb, were created by workers paid for by Swedish taxpayers. Indeed, the commodification of volunteer-produced indexes has been a staple of the genealogical industry since the 1990s.[101] From an international perspective, the hybrid taxpayer, volunteer, and for-profit economy of the Swedish-American genealogical indexes thus appears unusual only because of the state subsidies.

Conclusions

Keyword indexes provide a new lens through which to view the modern history of genealogy, highlighting the significant role played by grassroots organisations in making genealogical research possible on a transatlantic scale. They show how genealogy in the 1950s and 1960s developed in relation to the academic pursuit of knowledge about nineteenth-century mass migration to North America, grounded in dreams of empirical totality. The prospect of indexing all individuals within a defined boundary (of a selected area, time period, or source category) had been realised through card catalogue systems since the late nineteenth century. While scholars of social history in the 1960s may have been attracted by the dream of totality, it was also feasible for them to work with samples. This did not satisfy genealogists, however, for whom 'a sample is meaningless', as Samuel Hays pointed out.[102] For genealogists working in the era of paper, an index did not merely serve as a road map of where to locate a specific set of information in a huge volume of primary sources, but rather formed the ultimate resource in itself.

The question of why indexes were important for genealogical research received different answers during different genealogical eras. During the era of paper, defined by the lack of readily available archive materials and sources, the production of indexes was geared towards a communal and academically-oriented knowledge production. With the growing impact of microfilm from the 1960s, and with digital technologies beginning in earnest in the 1980s, the problem became how to handle an abundance of genealogical information. Again, an answer was through keyword indexes. The introduction of desktop computers in libraries, archives, and genealogical institutions in the 1980s accelerated the production of indexes in the form of massive databases. As grassroots genealogical interest continued to grow, these indexes became central elements of the founding of genealogical societies and institutions, as well as prized commodities on the growing Internet-based genealogical market.

Today, the ability to keyword search in digital and online databases is a basic feature of archival research, including that for genealogical purposes. Thanks to the major state and private funding of massive digitisation projects in recent years and the rapid growth of university- and library-based digital humanities centres, it is increasingly easy and fast to perform simple (and complex) searches within vast troves of indexed data. While many of these efforts have been supported by state-funded institutions – national libraries, national archives, and public universities and research councils – numerous businesses have also digitised sources, such as newspapers, which are no longer covered by copyright laws, thus capitalising from artefacts in the public domain. An example is Ancestry.com. Immediately

upon the US National Archives' release of the 1950 US Census in April 2022, Ancestry announced that it was 'turning it into a fully searchable collection, available to everyone for free', and that it was 'working around the clock to index records state-by-state'. While they reportedly were assisted by AI handwriting recognition software, Ancestry is also, through its so-called World Archives Project, soliciting 'volunteers from around the world [in] creating record indexes from digitized records'.[103]

Although commodification has been a central feature of the culture of indexes since the 1990s, the history of indexes is still overwhelmingly one of volunteerism. Genealogical indexes did not initially come about through efforts of capitalism. They have rather been made through volunteer labour, driven by individual enthusiasm, the pursuit of genealogical and historical knowledge, and the dream of reaching aggregated totalities of information. In the process, they have enabled and empowered individuals to do research themselves. Indexes made it possible for people without much previous knowledge about primary sources, specific (often foreign) historical contexts, or foreign languages, to conduct genealogical research themselves instead of hiring professional genealogists. There is thus a significant social and economic geography at play in the history of genealogical indexes. They were produced by local efforts and local labour, but have had international impact. In the case of Swedish-American genealogy, it is noteworthy that the local efforts were chiefly situated in communities in Sweden, not in the USA. They stemmed from an engagement in local heritage preservation and the considerable regional and state financial support made available to such heritage organisations. While we tend to think of the development of genealogy in terms of existential pursuits, the labour-intensive nature of indexes also unveils their connection to economic cycles and national unemployment rates.

Indexes contributed to the removal of several obstacles for genealogical research: the problems of geographical distance, privileged access to primary sources (original or remediated), the language barrier, and knowledge of historical contexts. In doing so, they brought names – of individuals and of locations – into the foreground of genealogical enquiry. The history of indexes shows that there are aspects of the genealogical landscape in which individual enthusiasts have had significant impact. Although the early era of computer technology required significant economic investments, the creation of indexes during the era of paper and the more recent digital era demanded fewer financial resources. Instead, what it relied on was a massive amount of individual labour, which was something that the genealogical and local heritage community could supply. The prospect of free labour was what attracted academic scholarship in the 1960s, and what large corporations and organisations during the last thirty years have sought to monetise.

Acknowledgements

Notes on contributor

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Notes

1. For an overview of genealogy and family history as popular pursuits, see for example Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Jackie Hogan, *Roots Quest: Inside America's Genealogy Boom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).
2. Markus Krajewski, *Paper Machines: About Cards and Catalogs, 1548–1929* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 24; Johannes F. K. Schmidt, 'Niklas Luhmann's Card Index: The Fabrication of Serendipity', *Sociologica* 7, no. 1 (2018), 53–60.
3. Daniel Headrick, *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution 1700–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4–6, at 4.
4. Paul N. Edwards et al., *Knowledge Infrastructures: Intellectual Frameworks and Research Challenges* (Ann Arbor, MI: Deep Blue, 2013), 5, 12. On the manual labour of indexes and data management, see Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 266; Johan Fredrikzon, *Kretslopp av data: Miljö, befolkning, förvaltning och den tidiga digitaliserings kulturtekniker* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2021), 183–95.
5. Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and its Consequences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 9, 33; Marion G. Crain, Winfried R. Poster, and Miriam A. Cherry (eds.), *Invisible Labor: Hidden Work in the Contemporary World* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016).
6. On the history of indexes, see Francis J. Witty, 'The Beginnings of Indexing and Abstracting: Some Notes towards a History of Indexing and Abstracting in Antiquity and the Middle Ages', *The Indexer* 8, no. 4 (October 1973), 193–98; Hans H. Wellisch, 'Incunabula Indexes', *The Indexer* 9, no. 1 (April 1994), 3–12.
7. Blair, *Too Much to Know*. As Staffan Müller-Ville and Isabelle Charmantier have pointed out, attempts at dealing with 'information overload' have themselves historically resulted in new forms of overload; see their 'Natural History and Information Overload: The Case of Linnaeus', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 43, no 1 (2012), 4.
8. François Weil, *Family Trees: A History of Genealogy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Francesca Morgan, *A Nation of Descendants: Politics and the Practice of Genealogy in U.S. History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2021); Francesca Morgan, 'Lineage as Capital: Genealogy in Antebellum New England', *New England Quarterly* 82 (2010), 250–82; Tamara K. Hareven, 'The Search for Generational Memory: Tribal Rites in Industrial Society', *Daedalus* 107 (1978), 137–49.

9. Catherine Nash, *Of Irish Descent: Origin Stories, Genealogy, and the Politics of Belonging* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 9.

10. Adam Hjorthén, 'Genealogy from a Distance: The Media of Correspondence and the Mormon Church, 1910–1945', *Historical Research* 94, no. 263 (2021), 117–35.

11. Dag Blanck and Adam Hjorthén, 'Introduction: Conceptualizing Swedish-American Borderlands', in *Swedish-American Borderlands: New Histories of Transatlantic Relations*, ed. Dag Blanck and Adam Hjorthén (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2021), 10–22. Since the early twentieth century, there have consistently been a few million individuals of Swedish descent in the USA. See for example David E. O'Connor, 'Who Are We? The Swedish Americans in the 1990 Census', *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (1997), 69–90. It is unclear how many people in Sweden have a traceable (known or unknown) genealogical connection to the USA, but it could well be a majority of the population.

12. Markus Friedrich, 'Genealogy and the History of Knowledge', in *Genealogical Knowledge in the Making: Tools, Practices, and Evidence in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jost Eickmeyer, Markus Friedrich, and Volker Bauer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 11. The concept of 'little tools of knowledge' comes from Peter Becker and William Clark, 'Introduction', in *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices*, ed. Peter Becker and William Clark (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 1.

13. Julia Creet, *The Genealogical Sublime* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020), 5–6.

14. Cf. a tendency to conflate various kinds of indexes reflected in discussions about the role of 'digital archives' in genealogical research. See for example Kevin Meethan, 'Remaking Time and Space: The Internet, Digital Archives, and Genealogy', in *Geography and Genealogy: Locating Personal Pasts*, ed. D. J. Timothy and J. Kay Guelke (London: Routledge, 2016; first published 2008), 99–114.

15. Krajewski, *Paper Machines*, 107–08.

16. François Weil, 'John Farmer and the Making of American Genealogy', *New England Quarterly* 80, no. 3 (2007), 420.

17. John Farmer, *A Genealogical Register of the First Settlers of New-England* (Lancaster, MA, 1829), iii.

18. William Cogswell, DD, 'Preface', in *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 1 (1847), iii–iv.

19. 'Introduction', in *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register: Index of Persons, Volumes 1–50*, ed. Josephine Elizabeth Rayne and Effie Louise Chapman, vol. A–G (Boston, 1906), v.

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21. 'Address of the President', *Proceedings of the New England Historic Genealogical Society at the Annual Meeting, 10 January 1900* (Boston, 1900), xiii–xiv.

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23. See for example Douglas J. Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 184–86, 209–17; Alan J. Hawkins, David C. Dollahite, and Clifford J. Rhoades, 'Turning the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children: Nurturing the Next Generation', *BYU Studies Quarterly* 33 (1993), 273–91; Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

24. Donald Harman Akenson, *Some Family: The Mormons and How Humanity Keeps Track of Itself* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 196–213.

25. James B. Allen, Jessie L. Embry, and Kahlile B. Mehr, *Hearts Turned to the Fathers: A History of the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1894–1994* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1995), 96–103.
26. Ibid., 303–26; FamilySearch, 'International Genealogical Index (IGI): FamilySearch Historical Records', https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/International_Genealogical_Index_ (IGI)_-_FamilySearch_Historical_Records (accessed 4 January 2022).
27. Akenson, *Some Family*, 204.
28. Krajewski, *Paper Machines*, 118.
29. Maria Björkroth, 'Hembygd i samtid och framtid 1890–1930: En museologisk tudie av att bevara och förnya' (PhD dissertation, Umeå University, 2000); Anna Eskilsson, 'På plats i historien: Studier av hembygdsföreningar på 2000-talet' (PhD dissertation, Linköping University, 2008), 11–13; Peter Aronsson, 'Hembygdsrörelsens frågor', in *Idéer om hembygden: Utmaningar för en folkrörelse med lokalsamhället i fokus i en glokaliserad värld*, ed. Peter Aronsson and Annika Sandén (Linköping: Linköpings universitet, 2007), 8.
30. See also Eskilsson, 'På plats i historien', 181–84.
31. 'Präst i Småland emigrantutredare', *Svenska Dagbladet* (12 September 1963); 'Emigrationscirkel i Långasjö har registrerat utvandrarna', *Svenska Dagbladet* (5 October 1964).
32. *Hembygd* is difficult to translate into English. Its literal translation is 'region that surrounds the home' ('Hembygd', in *Svenska akademiens ordlista*, 14th ed. (Stockholm: Svenska akademien, 2015)), entailing a more localised form of homeland, with a stronger emphasis on 'home' than on 'land'.
33. John Johansson, 'Inledning', in John Johansson et al., *En smålandssocken emigrerar: En bok om emigrationen till Amerika från Långasjö socken i Kronobergs län* (Långasjö: Långasjö emigrantcirkel, 1967), 11–12.
34. Ibid., 11–14.
35. John Johansson, 'Emigrationen till Amerika', in *Långasjö krönika, 1961* (Långasjö: Långasjö hembygdsförening, 1961), 37–39.
36. 'Grupper upprättar emigrantregister', *Svenska Dagbladet* (22 February 1960).
37. Kinship Center Archives, Karlstad (hereafter KC), Emigrantregistret för Värmland, uncatalogued material (hereafter ERV), folder 1966, box 'Verksamhetsberättelser, 1951–68', Sigurd Gustavson, 20 February 1961, 'PM rörande Emigrantregistret för Värmland'.
38. Herman Norling, 'Kom med oss!', *Emigranten* [*Bryggan/The Bridge*] 1 (1969), 1.
39. 'Värmländska emigranter på kort', *Dagens Nyheter* (25 February 1963).
40. Annual reports of the ERV, in KC, ERV, boxes labelled 'Verksamhetsberättelse'. The number of registered individuals was only intermittently reported after 1973, though it had reached 100,000 by 1980. See KC, ERV, box 'Brev, korrespondens, 1980–1981', Erik Gustavson, 'Information rörande arkivbestånd', 30 March 1981.
41. KC, ERV, box 'K.S. och K.U., Sverige Utlandet 1966–68', 'Instruktion för upprättande av emigrantregister', 15 August 1968; Sigurd Gustavson, 'Emigrantforskning i Värmland', *Emigranten* [*Bryggan/The Bridge*] 1 (1969), 2–6.
42. KC, ERV, box 'Verksamhetsberättelser, 1951–68', folder 1965, 'Redogörelse över Emigrantregistret för Värmlands verksamhet, 1965', December 1965.
43. KC, ERV, box 'Verksamhetsberättelse, 1965', 'Länet "säljs" i USA-kampanj' (copy), 6 October 1965. See also 'Redogörelse över Emigrantregistret för Värmlands verksamhet, 1965'.
44. Harald Runblom, 'A Brief History of a Research Project', in *From Sweden to America: A History of the Migration*, ed. Harald Runblom and Hans Norman (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 11–19.
45. Robert M. Taylor, Jr, and Ralph J. Crandall, 'Historians and Genealogists: An Emerging Community of Interest', in *Generations and Change: Genealogical Perspectives in Social History*, ed. Robert M. Taylor, Jr, and Ralph J. Crandall (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), 17.
46. Samuel P. Hays, 'History and Genealogy: Patterns of Change and Prospects for Cooperation,' in *Generations and Change*, ed. Taylor and Crandall, 30–31. For more recent arguments for the benefit of merging genealogical and academic research, see Elizabeth Shown Mills, 'Genealogy

in the "Information Age": History's New Frontier?', *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 91 (2003), 260–77; Tanya Evans, 'Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History', *History Workshop Journal* 71 (2011), 49–73.

47. '86 från en socken turisttittar på USA', *Expressen* (7 June 1962); 'Emigrationscirkel i Långasjö har registrerat utvandrarna', *Svenska Dagbladet* (5 October 1964). These grassroots initiatives were precursors to twenty-first-century 'citizen science' in data collection.

48. Gunnar Helén, 'Preface', in Johansson et al., *En smålandssocken emigrerar*, 9.

49. North Park University, F. M. Johnson Archives, MSS 4, Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, box 27, series 7, folder 'Correspondence Exec. Sec. NW Olsson April–June 1958', Sigurd Gustavsson to Nils William Olsson, 20 April 1958.

50. Nils William Olsson, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York, 1820–1850* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1967); Sten Carlsson in 'Den stora utvandringens pionjärer', *Svenska Dagbladet* (18 January 1968).

51. Nils William Olsson, 'Personal Pioneer History: Notes and Queries', *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 3 (1958), 104. Such 'dreams' were similarly invested in the technology of microfilm; see Matts Lindström, *Drömmar om det minsta: Mikrofilm, överflöd och brist, 1900–1970* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2017), 191.

52. KC, ERV, box 'Verksamhetsberättelser 1951 … 1968', folder 1968, 'Redogörelse, Emigrantregistret för Värmland, 1968'. Odén had also visited Långasjö, studied its collections, and provided 'valuable advice' on the publication of the group's final report; see Johansson, 'Inledning', in Johansson et al., *En smålandssocken emigrerar*, 13.

53. Sune Åkerman, 'Emigrantregistret och universitetet', *Emigranten* 1 (1969), 15.

54. 'Filosofiska fakulteten vid Uppsala universitet har utnämt redaktören för Emigranten, Sigurd Gustavson, till hedersdoktor …', *Emigranten* [*Bryggan/The Bridge*] 3, no. 2 (1971), 61.

55. Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2010), 17, 34.

56. Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter CHL), CR 226 72, World Conference on Records Files, 1968–70, box 2, folder 7, Sten Carlsson, 'Swedish Genealogical Research Techniques Prior to 1750'.

57. CHL, MS 507, Sten Carlsson, 'Among Mormons and Genealogists', translated article originally published in *Svenska Dagbladet* (27 August 1969).

58. Edwards et al., *Knowledge Infrastructures*, 14.

59. Fredrikzon, *Kretslopp av data*.

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