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The title of this panel intrigues me in part because my research includes work on people who don't believe in evolution. Although I can't get behind the idea that all fossils were formed by Noah's Flood when the earth was created 6,000 years ago, I do find myself curiously tempted to resist the idea that television studies is "evolving." Although our field is certainly capable of learning from both its successes and its mistakes, we need to be wary of the arrogance that comes with assuming that we are (or should be) "moving forward." Instead, we should spend much time looking back over our shoulders, revisiting the historical research that we have already done and seeking to fill in the many gaps that remain.

TV Studies must naturally be concerned with the present (even as our old conceptions of liveness and the meaning of "the present" continue to mutate), but there is a danger in fetishizing the new, the current, the latest, the coolest, at the expense of ignoring historical research that should impact how we understand the present moment. In fact, I'd like to suggest that we would be well served by conceiving history as Deep Space Nine does. Not only is history never done, there is a disconcerting way in which *it writes us*, throwing us into the past and alternate universes just when we think we have advanced to a new plateau. Derek Kompare's Rerun Nation illustrates this perfectly. The history of the rerun and syndication? Before the book was written, it might have sounded like a pretty narrow, specialized topic. Only now that the book exists is it clear that we were complete idiots not to have realized there was a gaping hole in our conceptions of television all along. It's enough to make one feel like Sisko looking at his own reflection at the end of "Far Beyond the Stars" in season six of DS9.¹

At the risk of appearing a hopeless nerd, I'll add a final call to arms: TV Studies needs to retain a commitment not only to historical research but also, specifically, to archival research. Many of us draw heavily on primary documents such as trade articles; it's easy to become dependent on Lexis-Nexis, but there are more important documents that have *not* been digitized than there are digitized documents readily available. The vast majority of archives don't have the resources to digitize. Convergence helps TV studies in myriad ways—suddenly many precious clips are easy to find, and whole shows are just a few clicks away. The world is our oyster! But the easiest resources to find will always be the most profitable things (high-rated series) or the most cool and fun things (fanfic, cult programs). Captain Kangaroo is a friendly, low-concept, old-fashioned, and dull show that happens to have been the longest running network kids' show ever. There's no audience for it now, and only a few decaying VHS tapes floating around. Horrible right-wing panel discussion shows from the 1950s represent nothing less than the roots of Fox News! They are terribly important, and virtually inaccessible. I'm sure we all have our own tragic stories, so I won't belabor the point.

If I sound cranky—or bossy—I should conclude by noting that TV Studies needs *every* kind of research, not just historical, archival work. But a reminder that much of the evidence that would help us understand TV—past, present, and future—is locked away in filing cabinets, far from scanners and wireless connections, can be a useful kick in the pants. If history is not a significant part of TV Studies' future, then the future is history.

¹ In this episode, Sisko suffers from visions and imagines himself as a pulp science fiction writer in the 1950s. Or, perhaps, it is the SF writer who is "real," and he is actually the one who is writing Sisko's world. "Far Beyond the Stars" ends with Sisko seeing the reflection of his other (or possible real self) in a window.