Digitization Selection Criteria as Anti-Racist Action

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LSU Libraries
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CNI Spring 2019
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Our Agenda

(Fingers Crossed)

1. My whiteness
2. Digitization prioritizations
3. Digitization as an area of concern
4. Digitization as an area of hope
5. Anti-Racism and digitization policies
6. LSU Libraries and our shaky first steps

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A Note About My Whiteness

I Am Able to Talk About Racism and Anti-Racism Because I Am White

This Is a Privilege and a Responsibility
Digitization Prioritization

Selecting Research Collections for Digitization
by Dan Hazen, Jeffrey Hornal, Jon Merrill-Cotton
August 1998

Scoping the Future of the University of Oxford’s Digital Library Collections
Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Final Report
Stuart B. Lee

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The Harvard Model

1. Preservation (creation of faithful reproductions to replace deteriorating materials or to reduce handling of fragile and/or valuable materials)
2. Improved intellectual control (e.g., creation of an electronic finding aid linked to digital images, creation of digitized tables of contents and indexes linked to bibliographic records)
3. Added functionality (e.g., ability to distribute widely, to search and manipulate text, to study disparate materials in context)
4. Cost savings (e.g., creation of virtual collections with costs and responsibilities shared by multiple institutions)

- Consider the type of scanning (bitonal, grayscale, color) and the resolution and compression required.
- Consider quality control: how thorough must it be?
- Consider cataloging and creation of metadata: what is needed to manage collections and support access?
- Consider what products must be derived from master files and metadata to meet project goals (e.g., screen displays, searchable text, paper prints, disks, archival tapes).
- Consider whether, to what extent, on what media, and where data will be archived.

Can the project be redefined to narrow scope or recast objectives? Can infrastructure needs be addressed?

Proceed to plan, implement, and evaluate project
CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION (NOT EVERY COMPONENT WILL APPLY TO EVERY PROJECT, BUT EACH CATEGORY OF CRITERIA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED)

A. Content Analysis: Quality of information within the materials to be reformatted.

1. Accessibility and Use.
   a. There is a defined set of anticipated users for these materials.
   b. There are well-defined anticipated uses for these materials.
   c. Past use of these materials in their original formats suggests that they will be used in the future.
   d. There are clear connections to research and teaching at Dartmouth.
   e. There are strong connections to the history of the institution.
   f. There are connections with other projects, including those at other institutions, offering synthesized digital collections that link geographically dispersed original documents.
   g. Digitization will include value-added enhancements such as metadata, searching, text manipulation, and/or critical apparatus that will provide transformative uses of the materials.
   h. Digitization will increase overall use.
   i. The materials to be digitized are heavily used by non-Dartmouth researchers who might benefit by their digitization.

2. Significance of Subject(s) Covered in the Materials to be Reformatted
   a. The materials represent unique holdings or subjects of existing strength at Dartmouth.
   b. The collection supports an area of long-term or emerging interest at Dartmouth.
   c. The materials are the only or best source of information in the discipline.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copyright/Donor Restrictions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
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digitization: just because you can, doesn't mean you should

I learned this week that Reveal Digital has digitized On Our Backs (OOB), a lesbian porn magazine that ran from 1984-2004. This is a part of the Independent Voices collection that "chronicles the transformative decades of the 60s, 70s and 80s through the lens of an independent alternative press." For a split second I was really excited — porn that was nostalgic for me was online! Then I quickly thought about friends who appeared in this magazine before the internet existed. I am deeply concerned that this kind of exposure could be personally or professionally harmful for them.

While Reveal Digital went through the proper steps to get permission from the copyright holder, there are ethical issues with digitizing collections like this. Consenting to a porn shoot that would be in a queer print magazine is a different thing to consenting to have your porn shoot be available online. I'm disappointed in my profession. Librarians have let down the queer community by digitizing On Our Backs.
Digitization to Counteract Historic Practice
DIVERSITY: STRATEGIES

• Strengthen the Libraries' culture related to diversity through appropriate programming, policy development, and mentoring. The Libraries will look to its Diversity Committee for guidance and help in implementation;

• Leverage the Libraries' diversity efforts through liaison with campus partners, most importantly the Office of Diversity and Human Resource Management;

• Recruit and retain highly qualified diverse faculty and staff;

• Increase diversity in our collections, especially emphasizing building historical collections that represent the whole of Louisiana history;

• Adapt or augment description of collections to expose otherwise hidden materials relating to diverse or marginalized populations;

• Increase liaison programming directed toward diverse/marginalized student groups;

• Continue to leverage exhibits and events to highlight library holdings.

2025: We celebrate our own uniqueness combined with an awareness and respect of local and global values and beliefs, which help to strengthen the intellectual environment and support our commitment to diversity and inclusion.
Anti-Racism

All policies, ideas and people are either being racist or antiracist. Racist policies yield racial inequity; antiracist policies yield racial equity.

- Ibram X. Kendi
Counteracting a Racist Past

Two Places to Start

1. Collections that contain underdocumentation of underrepresented communities

2. Reviewing internal documents to identify collections previously restricted from "non-preferred" researchers.

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Advancing the Diversity and Inclusion Goals of the Strategic Plan

The strategic plan for LSU Libraries, calls for increasing the diversity in our collections, especially emphasizing building historical collections that represent the whole of Louisiana history, and adapting or augmenting description of collections to expose otherwise hidden materials relating to diverse or marginalized populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Collection content in no way promotes the diversity and inclusion goals of LSU Libraries, no opportunity for augmenting description to promote under-represented groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Collection contains a small amount of material that promotes diversity and inclusion goals, or some possibility for augmenting description to promote under-represented groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Collection contains a significant amount of material that promotes diversity and inclusion goals, or significant possibility for augmenting description to promote under-represented groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collection contains material that offers a significant opportunity to fill descriptive gaps</td>
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KEY TO RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF MANUSCRIPT AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

1. **Scholarship** - being edited or used for publication. Can be used for general research, but not as the principal basis for a research project, and extensive quotes must not be made.

2. **Statutory** - reproduction prohibited by law. Can be used for statistical or general research; persons in document may not be mentioned by name.

3. **Time** - current and recent matters, living persons, etc.

4. **Physical condition** - fragile, damaged.

5. **Nature** - rare or unusually valuable documents. Prior approval must be secured.

6. **Acquisition conditions** - agreements or contracts with owners or custodians.

7. **Geology** - not to be used because it is printed or published.

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1, 4, 5

Brad's (J. P. and Family) Papers, 1776-1921. 957 items and 19 volumes. (Correspondence with Henry W. Allen).

1, 4

CHAMBERS, (ROSELIN) DIARIES, 1849-1863. 7 volumes. (Volumes 1 and 2 edited).

1, 4

CLAIBORNE (WILLIAM C. C.) PAPERS, 1804-1813. 3 items and 1 volume.

1

EGOLESTON ROACH PAPERS, 1825-1903. 285 items and 6 volumes. (Christmas diary 1844-50).

1, 4, 5

GATOSO DE LEMOS (MANUEL) PAPERS, 1792-1805. 39 items.

1

GUNN (LEWIS) DIARY, 1862-1863. 1 volume.

1

HILLARD (MRS. ISAAC H.) DIARY, 1828-1850. 1 volume.

1

JOHNSON (WILLIAM T. AND FAMILY) MEMORIAL PAPERS, 1933-1937.
The Radical Nature of the Routine

Standard Operating Procedures Created These Problems

Can New Standard Operating Procedures Help With Solutions?

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Links To Things I mentioned


● Scoping the Future of the University of Oxford’s Digital Library Collections: http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/scoping/report.html


● digitization: just because you can, doesn’t mean you should: http://tarrarobertson.ca/2016/oob/


● DLF Cultural Assessment Working Group: https://wiki.diglib.org/Assessment:Cultural_Assessment

● Black at Bryn Mawr: http://blackatbrynmawr.blogs.brynmawr.edu

● Umbra Search: https://www.umbrasearch.org

● In Her Own Right: http://inherownright.org


● This is what an antiracist America would look like. How do we get there? Ibram X. Kendi: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/06/antiracism-and-america-white-nationalism