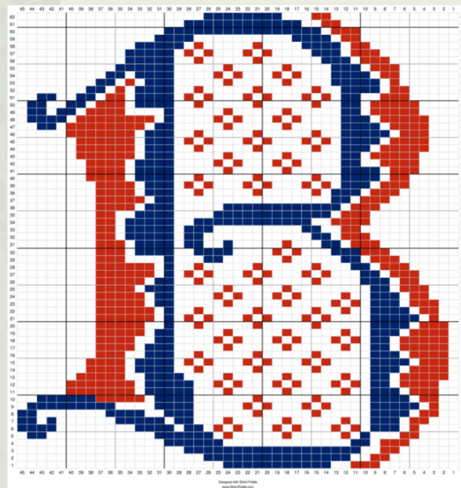
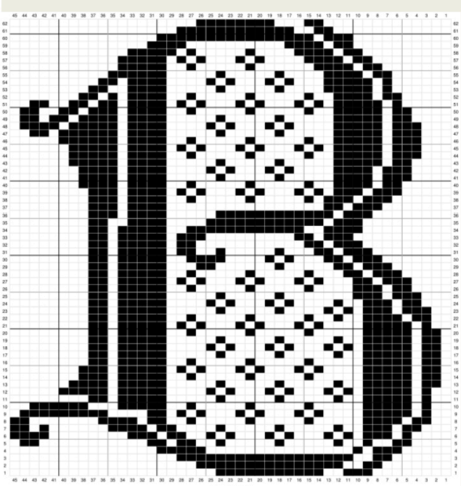
RBM:

A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage

Volume Twenty-Five, Number 1, Spring 2024





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On the Cover:
Pattern development for "Manuscript Cowl." Top left: Excised initial B, MS Medieval 074, McGill University Rare and Special Collections, used by permission. Top right and bottom left: 3-and 2-color charts developed with Stitch Fiddle. Bottom right: Test-knit of finished pattern by Kristen Howard 2021, all used by permission.

Diane Dias De Fazio

Editor's Note

The month of May. Labor. Mothers. Semester's end. Graduations. Days of Remembrance.

Spring. Beginnings. Newness. Awakening. Light. Growth.

If "May" and "Spring" conjure up other associations, kindly accept my apologies and bear with me, dear readers. Writer's block is real. Regardless, celebration is in the air, here, in the Editor's office.

For one thing, the response to *RBM* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2023) was exceptional. Applications for the Board exceeded those from the previous cycle and made my selection quite challenging. Additionally, proposals and inquiries likewise increased, and have been an absolute delight. Finally, volume 25, no. 1 (Spring 2024), marks the longest *RBM* in, well, a while. Four articles and an anthology! Seventeen contributors! Updates from the RBMS Chair and a conference preview!

But you're here for the content, not perfunctory introductions.

Even as this issue hits shelves, screens, and is in your hands, production of *RBM* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2024) marches on. Lest this recent boom prove evanescent, I renew my challenge: find anything in this issue with which you don't agree and write something. Write on your passions, your triumphs, and, yes, your spectacular failures. Write. "Write it down, on paper. It's no use to anybody in your head."*

And away we go. . . .

*Those words are Peter Shaffer's, not mine.

Manuscript Submission Guidelines

Manuscript submissions for *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage*, along with related questions, should be sent to the editor, Diane Dias De Fazio, at diane.diasdefazio@gmail.com.

Overview

RBM is a peer-reviewed journal publishing articles on the theory and practice of library special collections, archives, cultural heritage institutions, and related fields. Content in *RBM* generally assumes two forms: articles and reviews.

Deadlines

Fall Issue: July 15

Spring Issue: January 15

Submission and Publication Process

- Contact *RBM* editor via email before sending manuscript(s) to discuss topic(s), length, illustrations, or other issues prior to submission.
- Submit email attachments in MS Word (.docx) to the editor.
- Submit original, unpublished articles only. Contributions published elsewhere or under consideration by other journals are ineligible for publication in *RBM*.
- Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the statements and sources in their articles.
- If the article was presented at a conference, identify the conference by name, sponsoring organization, and date.
- If approved, authors will be asked to provide 150-word biographies for all contributing authors.
- *RBM* uses an identity-hidden peer review process to review all submissions. Two readers and a member of the *RBM* editorial board are assigned to each article. Authors receive reviewer feedback, in addition to a publication decision from the editor.
- At acceptance after peer review, authors are provided with a timeline for revision and re-submission.
- Authors are asked to sign and submit the ACRL publications agreement form, in which ACRL asks for "the non-exclusive right to print, publish, reproduce, and distribute your work both in print and online. ACRL also has the right to use your name in association with the article for advertising purposes." Additional information may be found in the ACRL Publications Agreement FAQ available at https://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/publicationsfaq.
- Authors receive a copy of the first-round page proof of their article to proofread.

Content

- Articles may take the form of theoretical or scholarly submissions, revisions of conference presentations, articles that describe specific libraries or collections, interviews, or historical articles. Articles may address membership and Section assessments, acquisition and collection development, access to and use of special collections, conservation and preservation, cataloging and technical services, protection services and loss prevention, fundraising and donor relations, digital humanities, exhibition preparation, trends in the antiquarian market and collecting; and other topics. Articles must relate to special collections librarianship, archives, or museum practice, and the writing style should be formal. Authors are asked to avoid use of the first-person voice.
- Articles should be 3,000 to 5,000 words, plus any accompanying tables, charts, or images. Maximum length for an article is 8,000 words. Average article length is 2,500 to 5,000 words.
- Copyright clearance and permission for publication for any portion of the submitted article, including images, must be obtained, *in advance*, by the author.

Style and Form

- Articles must be double-spaced.
- Each article will include an author credit consisting of the author's name, position title, institution, and email address.
- A 200-word abstract should precede the body of the article.
- Articles must follow the "Notes-Bibliography" and style guidelines provided by the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Bibliographical references should be consecutively numbered throughout the manuscript, and formatted as footnotes. Bibliographies are not included in published articles.
- Articles must be submitted in English, using American spellings, following *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (currently the eleventh edition) for preferred spellings of words.
- Articles submitted in languages other than English must also provide an English-language copy of the text.
- Submissions will be edited for content, style, spelling, grammar, and syntax. Editor makes final decisions about journal content and form.
- Acknowledgements, if any, should appear at the end of the article.

Visual Materials

- Authors are encouraged to send illustrative material with their submissions.
- Charts and tables should be submitted as separate Word files, captioned, and otherwise clearly identified. Indicate the desired placement in the text by adding an instruction in parentheses; *e.g.*: (Insert table 2).
- TIFF files are preferred for illustrations. Files should have a minimum of 300dpi.
- Full captions should be submitted for all images, including information regarding copyright permission, source of image, and photographer credit.

CONTRIBUTORS

Anastasia Armendariz (she/her) is the Rare Books & Special Collections Librarian at the University of California, Irvine. She previously worked as the Librarian for Special Collections & the Malibu Historical Collection at Pepperdine University. Anastasia holds an MLIS from the University of Maryland, College Park and an AB/MA in English from Georgetown University. She currently serves as an editor for the TPS (Teaching with Primary Sources) Collective's blog *Notes from the Field* and as a member of the RBMS Publications and Communications Committee. Her research focuses include affect in primary source instruction, and community-engaged collecting.

Courtney Becks is rooting for everybody Black.

Sarah Carter is Art, Architecture and Design Librarian at Indiana University, Bloomington. She was previously Director of the Bridwell Art Library at the University of Louisville and Instruction and Research Services Librarian at Ringling College of Art + Design. Carter's research interests revolve around increasing access to art information through a various methods, including the use of controlled vocabularies in providing access to digital surrogates of special collections materials, investigations into the research needs of artists in relationship to the ACRL Framework, and equity in art library circulation policies. Carter also directs Indiana University's art librarianship specialization program.

Elizabeth Hobart is the Special Collections Cataloging Librarian, and Interim Head of Cataloging and Metadata Services at the Pennsylvania State University. She has previously held roles at Indiana University's Lilly Library and UNC-Chapel Hill. She is a former member of the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee and served as chief editor for *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (RDA Edition)* from 2019 through 2022. Her research interests include cataloging ethics and improving discovery of rare materials.

Dr. Kristen Howard is Liaison Librarian for History at the McGill University Library. Her interests include library ethics, humanities researchers' use of digital surrogates, and the creative use of special collections. She earned a Master of Information Studies degree from McGill University, and a PhD in History from the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies at the University of Arizona.

Hafsah Hujaleh is the Preservation Resident Librarian at the University of Toronto. She obtained her Master of Information Science at the University of Ottawa and has worked as a Library Assistant at Saint Paul University.

Ruth Kramer (she/her) is the John A. Lowe III '73 Fellow in Special Collections at Williams College. She has a BA in History and French from Williams College and will obtain her MLIS. with a concentration in Archival Management from Simmons University in May of 2024. Her research interests include 20th Century American social movements, print and material culture, lesbian and queer literary communities, and "the library" as a location of historical—and continued—exclusion.

Louise LoBello (she/her) is the Digital & Special Collections Librarian at Franklin & Marshall College where she works in the Archives & Special Collections department of the College Library. Louise supports the preservation of, and access to, the college archives and special collections material, manages the development of its digital collections repository, and instructs library and archival workshops for students. She has a master's degree in information from Rutgers University.

Anna Opryszko is the Assistant Curator at the University of Minnesota's Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine, a special collections library with rare books, artifacts, and archival holdings covering five hundred years of the history of health and medicine. Prior to the Wangensteen, Anna worked in academic library access services, private collection cataloging, and special collections reading rooms. She holds an MLIS from St. Catherine University with a specialization in Archives & Special Collections, an MA in American Studies from Columbia University, and a BA in Liberal Arts from Sarah Lawrence College. Anna's professional experience includes special collections public services, instruction, student worker supervision, exhibit development, outreach, and reference services.

Sam Regal is the Instruction and Exhibitions Librarian in Special Collections and Archives at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she develops experiential learning opportunities designed to connect her community with rare and distinctive primary source materials. She holds an MLIS with a specialization in rare books and visual culture from UCLA, an MFA in poetry from Hunter College, and a BA in English and American literature from NYU. Her writing has most recently appeared in *East of Borneo, Art Documentation*, and *Women Talk Money: Breaking the Taboo* (Simon & Schuster, 2022). Sam is interested in the ways the material qualities of books and book-like objects shape knowledge representation and transmission, and she has special research interests in artists' books and play-based critical pedagogy. She is currently a member of the UCLA Radical Librarianship Institute's inaugural cohort.

Jacquelyn Sundberg is Outreach librarian for the Rare and Special Collections department at the McGill University Library. Combining experience in both public and academic libraries, she uses her skillset to make library collections accessible to a broader audience. She curates the Rare Children's collections, and the Cookbook and

Menu collections. Her work includes instruction, grant projects, publications, multimedia projects, websites, and public programming. She earned her Master of Arts in English literature and Master of Information studies degrees from McGill University.

Lia Warner is a Reference and Instruction Associate at New York University's Bobst Library. She is interested in archival labor practices, especially the ways that archivists can work with community members to create meaning and foster historical memory. Currently, she works closely with undergraduate students and is passionate about critical information literacy, teaching with primary sources, and community engagement.

Jess Whyte is the Digital Assets Librarian at the University of Toronto, where she previously held the position of Digital Preservation Intake Coordinator, obtained her MI, and worked with the Digital Curation Institute as a Research Assistant.

Jacquelyn Sundberg and Kristen Howard

Crafting Connections: Bridging Collections and Communities with Knitting

This paper introduces a novel collections-based outreach model for special collections, underscoring the vital role of outreach in linking unique and distinctive collections (UDCs) with existing interest groups. Drawing from a series of successful events, focused on knitting, held at the McGill University Library between 2021 and 2023, the model recommends the use of creative initiatives to engage pre-existing communities. These initiatives attracted a global audience, extending far beyond the university campus, and fostered connections between cultural heritage collections and specialized communities.

Introduction

Library outreach rooted in special collections can form the basis for meaningful engagement with existing interest groups. Rare, special, and archival collections are particularly fertile sources of inspiration, research, and community engagement. Increasingly, it is the unique and distinctive collections that distinguish a library. In a 2014 report for Research Libraries UK (RLUK), the authors used the term “unique and distinctive collections” (UDCs) to include not only rare, unique, or valuable items, but also to include new kinds of digital assets and other materials that may be found not only in the climate-controlled halls of special collections divisions. The RLUK report highlighted the potential for such collections to support “research, learning and public engagement.”[1] While rare collections are sometimes called and indeed treated like a library’s crown jewels, in truth, they belong to the community. These cultural heritage collections are preserved by the library for the community; for every book and item in the collections, there is a community that would benefit from exploring its contents. There may be an artist seeking inspiration, or a scholar looking for connections, and connecting collections with those who can use and be inspired by them is the ongoing purpose of outreach librarianship. Broader public

1. Research Libraries UK, “Unique and Distinctive Collections: Opportunities for Research Libraries,” *RLUK UDC* (2014), https://www.rluk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/RLUK-UDC-Report.pdf.

engagement with collections benefits the parent library as well, boosting visibility of library holdings, raising the profile of the collections and staff, and building new connections with community groups. There are, however, significant barriers to access that sometimes prevent the broader public from using rare and special collections. Outreach programming is therefore crucial to building bridges between the interested public, and the rich collections available to them. Creative and craft-based outreach approaches are effective in reaching both new and established communities, as shown in our efforts with knitting events, resources, and patterns in the past three years at the McGill University Library.

Planning and running collections-based outreach programming requires four essential ingredients: time, knowledge of collections, a creative intervention, and community connection. Rare, archival, and special collections contain the raw materials for endless programming. Over the past few years, we have refined a collections-based outreach model that can be reproduced with any collection, and which works well to connect collections with existing community groups. In this paper, we discuss the methods that informed this model, the reasons this model is effective exemplified by three case studies, and survey a selection of library and collections-based projects that craft connection between collections and community. In addition, we developed an online toolkit that can be used by libraries, archives, academic institutions, and museums to plan workshops and events inspired by their own collections following our model, and allowing for the crafting of connections with new communities.

Literature Review

Public outreach has not always been considered an important part of special collections librarianship. In 2003, Daniel Traister noted the shift in practice of not only acquiring, cataloging, and preserving collections, but also promoting them.[2] Despite this shift towards instruction, engagement with exhibitions, and a less-than-enthusiastic nod towards "the public," Traister opened his paper by acknowledging that "rare book, manuscripts, and special collections libraries remain both more difficult and more forbidding to use than any other parts of most libraries."[3] Five years later, Meredith Torre built on that premise, noting that special collections are perceived as resources primarily relevant for researchers, rather than undergraduate students.[4] In her reply to Traister, she highlighted a crucial point: "A rare book, no matter how intrinsically valuable or monetarily priceless, signifies little until a human being

2. Daniel Traister, "Public Services and Outreach in Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Libraries," *Library Trends* 52, no. 1 (Summer 2003): 87–108.
3. Traister, 87.
4. Meredith E. Torre, "Why Should Not They Benefit from Rare Books?: Special Collections and Shaping the Learning Experience in Higher Education," *Library Review* 57, no. 1 (2008): 36–41, https://doi.org/10.1108/00242530810845044.

engages with it."[5] A recent retrospective on trends in library outreach in the United States from 1958–2020 provided a useful summary of the shifts in thought and language—from "cooperation" in the 1950s, through "instruction" and "orientation," to "engagement," "communication," and finally "outreach."[6]

Although the greater portion of literature on library outreach focuses on teaching,[7] special collections librarians are increasingly interested in outreach beyond students and researchers, such as through partnerships with public libraries[8] and civic initiatives.[9] As heritage collections, these rich resources belong to the public, and our institutions preserve them for use. However, no one can use materials of which they are unaware, or that they perceive as inaccessible.

In an informal survey about archives and rare collections conducted at McGill's McLennan Library in 2019, students demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the rare book collection, and expressed generalized library anxiety about approaching the rare books room, as well as an unawareness that these items were open to university users and the public.[10] Even within our own building, the survey showed we needed to address perceptions of inaccessibility. Outreach and greater awareness of the collections was clearly needed, both on campus and beyond. The greater challenge was to reach out: to community members, the interested public, artists, crafters, and the generally curious. However, as noted in Alison Cullingford's *Special Collections Handbook,* "outreach initiatives typically focus on attracting . . . communities living nearby" as compared to a farther dispersed community.[11] This may have changed in the wake of the pandemic, as can be seen in the growing body of scholarship discussing the structure and feasibility of virtual and hybrid library outreach.[12]

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5. Torre, 38.
6. Jamie White-Farnham and Carolyn Caffrey, "Examining Our Roots: The Origins and Evolution of Outreach in Academic Libraries, 1958-2020," *Journal of Library Outreach and Engagement* 3 (September 7, 2023): 106–18, https://doi.org/10.21900/j.jloe.v3.1105.
7. Teresa Gray, "Special Collections in the Classroom: Embedding Special Collections in an Undergraduate History Writing Class," *Public Services Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (April 2, 2020): 139–45, https://doi.org/10.1080/15228959.2020.1723461.
8. Ruthann Mowry et al., "Practical Witchcraft: A Collaboration between a Special Collections Library and a Public Library," *Journal of Library Outreach and Engagement* 3 (September 7, 2023): 2–9, https://doi.org/10.21900/j.jloe.v3.1209.
9. Valerie A. Harris and Ann C. Weller, "Use of Special Collections as an Opportunity for Outreach in the Academic Library," *Journal of Library Administration* 52, no. 3–4 (April 1, 2012): 294–303, https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2012.684508.
10. Internal Survey Report, Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University Library, July 2, 2019.
11. Alison Cullingford, *The Special Collections Handbook*, 3rd ed. (London: Facet Publishing, 2022), 250.
12. See, e.g., Sarah Rice and Jennifer Robertson, "Libraries Share Hybrid Programming Experiences," *The Illinois Library Association Reporter* 40, no. 2 (June 2022): 14–16; and Tess Colwell and Alex O'Keefe, "Streamlining Support: Improving Outreach by Creating a Sustainable Events Framework," *Journal of Library Outreach and Engagement* 1, no. 2 (September 13, 2021): 40–57.

An increasing number of libraries, archives, academic institutions, and museums seek to creatively connect with and instruct a public audience. In many libraries, both public and academic, programming of this type often takes place in makerspaces or comparable creative laboratories.[13] For museums, galleries, and special collections, which often have very different audiences and space constraints, many take a more pedagogical approach, developing events, workshops, and outreach projects to teach participants about a period or facet of history through creative expression. For example, in 2021 the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center (HBSC, Hartford, Connecticut) held a Sewing and Learning Workshop titled: "Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Politics of Pocket Purses." Described as a "virtual sewing circle," participants were mailed a sewing pattern and materials to create their own reticule—a pocket purse—to learn about the gender and racial history of pockets and small bags.[14] In 2023, Ordsall Hall, a historic house in the United Kingdom, partnered with the Wellcome Trust-funded project, Sleeping Well in the Early Modern World, to offer craft and recipe workshops based on early modern interpretations of sleep hygiene.[15] Literary scholars Marissa Nicosia and Alyssa Connell's website, Cooking in the Archives, features more than one hundred modernized recipes from early modern Europe, and they have collaborated with organizations such as the Folger Shakespeare Library to bring these recipes and food history to a wider audience.[16]

Perhaps the best-known example of library and archival creative outreach is the Color Our Collections initiative, launched by the New York Academy of Medicine in 2016, that now features dozens of institutions across the world annually.[17] Participating institutions select items from their collections to create black-and-white coloring pages that can be downloaded for free. Few institutions, however, have developed their own craft patterns as a method to showcase their unique holdings. One notable outlier is the University of Glasgow, which appointed a "knitter-in-residence" and commissioned Scottish knitwear designers to create knitting patterns for a pattern

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13. Soo Hyeon Kim, Yong Ju Jung, and Gi Woong Choi, "A Systematic Review of Library Makerspaces Research," *Library & Information Science Research* 44, no. 4 (October 1, 2022): 101202, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2022.101202; Julie Carmen, "Makerspaces: Combining Information Literacy with Pattern Design for Fiber Art through Digital Images," *Library Trends* 69, no. 3 (2021): 585–611, https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2021.0005; Erin Passehl-Stoddart et al., "History in the Making: Outreach and Collaboration between Special Collections and Makerspaces," *Collaborative Librarianship* 10, no. 2 (September 12, 2018), https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol10/iss2/8.

14. Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, "Sewing and Learning Workshop: Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Politics of Pocket Purses," virtual event, December 11, 2021. https://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org/programs-learning/salons-at-stowe/sewing-and-learning-workshop-harriet-beecher-stowe-and-the-politics-of-pocket-purses/

15. For example, the "Make a Sleep Bag" events held in February 2023, https://ordsallhall.com/event/sleep-feb23/.

16. Marissa Nicosia and Alyssa Connell, "Cooking in the Archives," Cooking in the Archives, June 27, 2023, https://rarecooking.com/.

17. https://library.nyam.org/colourourcollections/

book, *Glasgow University Knits*.[18] Some of the patterns were inspired by the university's architecture, and some designers conducted research in the University Archives to connect their designs with the original plans.[19]

Several institutions, including libraries, have developed creative outreach projects of various kinds. For example, the National Quilt Museum (Paducah, Kentucky) organizes an annual quilting contest called "New Quilts from an Old Favorite" in which quiltmakers are challenged to "create an innovative quilt based on a specific traditional pattern" and according to a specified theme.[20] Sometimes creative projects are developed for a specific purpose. In 2016, the Canadian War Museum (Ottawa, Ontario) developed a knitting challenge in honor of its exhibition "World War Women," which highlighted the efforts of Canadian women in knitting items to donate to the troops during World War II. The challenge led to the donation of 1,841 handknit and crocheted hats, mittens, scarves, and socks to the Imperial Order of the Daughters of Empire.[21] A creative project might also shed light on an important cultural moment: librarians at the University of Alberta developed a data physicalization project titled *Stitching the Curve* in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. Eleven library staffers volunteered to knit the COVID-19 case data from each Canadian province and the combined territories, for one year (March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021), which were eventually sewn together to create a tapestry.[22]

Crafts and creative projects, such as these selected examples, can productively form the basis for instruction, public history, and outreach, especially for institutions seeking to connect with new audiences. Libraries, archives, academic institutions, and museums should pay special attention to the example of the University of Glasgow. Note that using institutional collections to develop patterns, tutorials, and workshops—ranging from knitting to cross stitch to biscuit art—will delight and inspire the public, and bring our unique materials to a much wider audience. To reframe one

18. Lynn Abrams and Marina Moskowitz, "History, Sustainability and Communities of Practice," *The Scottish Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (August 1, 2023): 324, https://doi.org/10.3366/shr.2023.0617; Lynn Abrams, Christelle Le Riguer, and Marina Moskowitz, *Glasgow University Knits* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Publicity Services, 2022).

19. Fleece to Fashion, "Glasgow University Knits – Pattern Book – Fleece To Fashion," *Fleece to Fashion: Economies and Cultures of Knitting in Modern Scotland* (blog), https://fleecetofashion.gla.ac.uk/glasgow-university-knits-pattern-book/.

20. National Quilt Museum, "New Quilts from an Old Favorite," National Quilt Museum, accessed December 13, 2023, https://quiltmuseum.org/nqof/.

21. Canadian War Museum, "Canadian War Museum Challenge Inspires Knitters across Canada," *Media Releases - Canadian War Museum* (blog), February 9, 2016, https://www.warmuseum.ca/media/canadian-war-museum-challenge-inspires-knitters-across-canada/.

22. Hannah Pearce, "Stitching the Curve: The Final Chapter," *Library News* (blog), August 16, 2022, https://news.library.ualberta.ca/blog/2022/08/16/stitching-the-curve-the-final-chapter/.

of S.R. Ranganathan's five "laws" of library science:[23] for every unique and distinctive item in our collections, there is a curious reader, crafter, or community member waiting to be connected with it for inspiration.

Collections-Based Outreach Model

1. Collections

Collections-based outreach begins and ends with the collections. This is not as simple a statement as it appears. Items in the collections inspire ideas, which prompt creative interventions, which fuel community interaction through events and exhibitions, which, in turn, allow new audiences to engage with the collections.

The first task for any collections-based project, whether an individual creative project or an outreach-focused event, is to identify and find keystone items in your collection. The first step in this model is, therefore, getting to know not only your collections, but also the experts in your library. For catalogued library collections, become familiar with your discovery tool; for archival collections, consult finding aids and online collections platforms. The knowledge of the expert—a curator, subject-area or liaison librarian—cannot be overstated, especially for uncatalogued materials. Therefore, identifying items of interest often requires talking with the curator, or with researchers who are working in the field. This groundwork is invaluable later as ideas develop from this early inspiration. For example, the Outreach Librarian at McGill University, who worked with the rare collections for a number of years, was able to find useful items in the collections to animate a series of successful events focused on knitting held between 2021 and 2023; details of those projects are discussed in the case studies section below.

2. Creative Intervention

Having identified items of interest, the next step is a creative intervention. The type of the intervention will depend on what craft or activity will form the basis of the programming. We experimented with knitting, a craft we both enjoy. However, creative interventions do not necessarily depend on the crafting knowledge or abilities of specific librarians; this can present an opportunity to collaborate with the very community you are targeting.

In our case, we created knitting patterns by first using the online knitting, cross-stitch, and crochet pattern design tool Stitch Fiddle.[24] This tool allows for the creation of knitting charts from scratch, but also for the importation of images that the program can then use to autogenerate a multicolored chart—although in practice we found

23. S.R. Ranganathan, *The Five Laws of Library Science* (Madras, India: Madras Library Association, 1931).

24. https://www.stitchfiddle.com/en

drafting charts ourselves to be more useful. From charts, we then developed full knitting patterns and created sample projects, allowing for images of a finished project to accompany the pattern and be used in promotion. In addition to knitting instructions, the patterns included a one-page description of the inspiration behind the pattern, providing historical and bibliographical context, as well as direct links to the collections that inspired them.

3. Community Engagement

Developing a creative intervention is a fun and fulfilling task, but it does little good if the program is not promoted, or connected with an interested community of practice. In our experience, identifying an online community with a related interest creates a ready-made public audience outside of the university. We benefitted heavily from promoting the event on Ravelry, a social network and online marketplace dedicated to the fiber arts, and, in particular, knitting and crochet. With over nine million registered users, and over three million of those users active in 2023,[25] Ravelry represented an active and eager online community where users access and purchase patterns and engage with other crafters near and far. Users also regularly use Ravelry in search of inspiration for their crafting, such as by browsing the "Hot Right Now" patterns; patterns with the most visits in the last twenty-four hours; and "Debut Patterns," where the first pattern added to Ravelry by a designer is spotlighted.[26] Some crafters consider browsing Ravelry even more inspiring than visiting a yarn or craft store, as the virtual space features no physical limitations and caters primarily to independent designers.[27]

Scholars have already investigated how Ravelry's online platform enhances or even replaces in-person gatherings for a devoted community.[28] Similar pre-existing online communities with devoted followers and contributors provide an excellent starting point for outreach. Such communities are already delocalized and used to interacting virtually over their shared passion, and can generate grassroots discussion of an outreach project. According to Kate Orton-Johnson, web technologies and online

25. User Statistics, Ravelry, https://www.ravelry.com/statistics/users, accessed December 14, 2023 (constantly updated).

26. Linda Polin, Sheila Pisa, Bonnie Nardi, Sylvie Noel, and Dev Sen., "Community-Mediated Search for Information: Finding Information and Help Inside and Outside Ravelry.com" (American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, April 17, 2015) 26, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Linda-Polin-2/publication/277020943_Learning_Inside_and_Outside_Practice_Communities_Community---Mediated_Search_for_Information_Finding_Information_and_Help_Inside_and_Outside_Ravelrycom/links/555f83b908ae9963a118b372/Learning-Inside-and-Outside-Practice-Communities-Community---Mediated-Search-for-Information-Finding-Information-and-Help-Inside-and-Outside-Ravelrycom.pdf.

27. Polin et al., 26.

28. Kate Orton-Johnson, "Knit, Purl and Upload: New Technologies, Digital Mediations and the Experience of Leisure," *Leisure Studies* 33, no. 3 (May 4, 2014): 305–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2012.723730; Hannah R. Thome, "Ravelry.Com: Augmenting Fiber Craft Communities and Social Making with Web 2.0" (master's thesis, Ohio University, 2018), 16-36, http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=ohiou1524488670252085.

communities have become an "embedded part" of the enjoyment of hobbyist communities.[29] As key places where communities already congregate both locally and globally, tapping into online communities is a powerful place for outreach to occur.

Case Studies

We began experimenting with this collections-based outreach model in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of McGill University Library's Strategic Priorities is to enhance access to, and engagement with, collections.[30] The conglomerate of rare and special collections at McGill University, therefore, has an established public events program running an average of twenty-five to thirty annual public events, as well as a dedicated Outreach Librarian. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, offerings moved online with an entirely virtual Fall term in September 2020. COVID-19 lockdown protocols were particularly strict in Montreal, as compared to many other major North American cities. Consequently, creative virtual outreach events and digitized resources were the only ways to allow our community to engage with our collections. Public distancing was still in effect in February 2021 when we held the first event in this model, "Rare Stitches: Knitting Inspired by Illuminated Manuscripts," so, we initially planned it to be held over Zoom and were surprised when the number of RSVPs soared to over seven hundred. As this was well past the standard Zoom limit of three hundred attendees, we had to livestream the event on YouTube to accommodate what was, by far, the largest number of respondents to any event, either in-person or online, to that date.

This was also the first University Library event to follow the collections-based outreach model by combining a created product—a knitting pattern—with a presentation and a conversation between librarians and knitters. Beginning in early fall 2020, we planned the creation of a knitting pattern based on library collections. Outreach Librarian Jacquleyn Sundberg's suggestion of medieval illuminated initials or music notation proved useful, and in consultation with the Medieval Manuscript curator, they identified images from the many bound manuscripts and individual leaves, some of which were already digitized as part of the digital collection *Horae: Collection of Books of Hours,* that could be translated into a two-color colorwork knitting pattern. Final selections included a fifteenth-century Italian antiphonal (MS Medieval 073) and several excised initials (figure 1).

Kristen Howard developed colorwork charts for a knitted cowl for every letter of the Latin alphabet, and published the pattern for free on Ravelry the week before the event. The pattern, entitled *Manuscript Cowl*, also included an information page that provided a brief description of medieval manuscript culture and the Library's me-

29. Orton-Johnson, "Knit, Purl and Upload," 306.
30. McGill Library, "Strategic Priorities 2022-2025," https://www.mcgill.ca/library/about/planning.

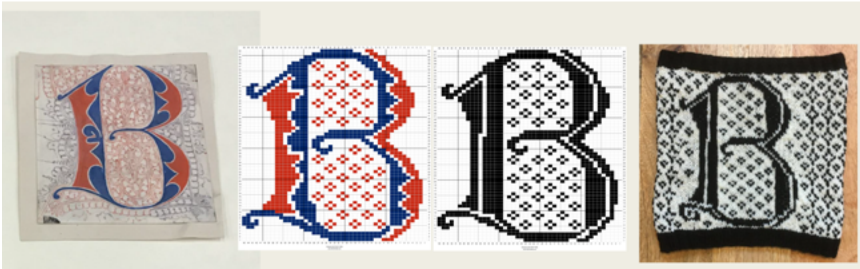

Figure 1. Pattern development for "Manuscript Cowl." Left: Excised initial B, MS Medieval 074, McGill University Rare and Special Collections, used by permission. Center: 3-and 2-color charts developed with Stitch Fiddle. Right: Test-knit of finished pattern by Kristen Howard 2021, all used by permission.

dieval manuscript collections.[31] Before the event, the pattern was downloaded more than 550 times within the first twenty-four hours it was available.[32] Ravelry's "Debut Patterns" feature likely led to this strong performance, as did an eye-catching featured photograph of the finished product (figure 1). The online pattern page directed interested knitters to register for the event. The hour-long event was well received, with over three hundred simultaneous viewers tuning in via the YouTube livestream[33] and on Zoom. Both platforms featured an active moderated live chat.

Based on feedback from the 2021 event, we planned a paired virtual workshop and event for the following year: "Knitting 101" and "Knitting in Code." "Knitting 101" was a smaller, interactive workshop where librarians instructed attendees in basic knitting skills required for the new pattern created as part of "Knitting in Code." Interest in the "Knitting 101" workshop also well-exceeded our planned capacity of forty people, with over two hundred RSVPs and 142 simultaneous attendees. Using breakout rooms on Zoom, we created smaller groups around three topics: basic knitting skills, pattern questions, and a showcase of selected knitting content in the Library's rare collections.

The paired event, "Knitting in Code," again combined history lecture and a pattern presentation. Inspired by apocryphal and historical traditions of coded and ciphered knitting, Howard gave a talk on that history, and created a pattern, Secret Message Pillow Cover, based on a WWII-era pillow cover pattern, and which sampled two

31. Kristen C. Howard, Manuscript Cowl, knitting pattern, available at https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/manuscript-cowl.

32. Kristen C. Howard, "In just over 24 hours the Manuscript Cowl has been downloaded >550 times! It's been great to bring illuminated manuscripts & the holdings of @McGill_ROAAr to so many knitters across the world," X post, February 12, 2021, https://twitter.com/krchoward/status/1360315470663016449.

33. Event recording available at "Rare Stitches: Knitting Inspired by Illuminated Manuscripts," video, 58:24, February 19, 2021, https://youtu.be/DowLT0zAD48

different coded knitting techniques.[34] The pattern was again made freely available on Ravelry, where it has been downloaded more than five hundred times.[35] Like the Manuscript Cowl pattern, the Secret Message Pillow Cover pattern includes information on knitting espionage, as well as items in the Library's rare collections. Interest in "Knitting in Code" exceeded that of all other events: the event received 1,115 RSVPs from around the globe, and 602 attendees to the YouTube livestream, where a lively chat topped 550 total messages.[36] The recorded livestream has now been viewed 4,427 times (as of January 30, 2024) and earned 167 likes.[37]

In 2023, we planned two paired events to provide contrasting approaches to the same material. We first hosted scholar Dr. Tina Gianquitto for a hybrid talk on nineteenth-century women plant collectors, accompanied by an exhibition of nineteenth-century specimen books created and illustrated by women. The exhibition bridged the event with "Knitting Natural HerStory" the following month, where we presented a new knitting pattern, Halidrys Cowl, inspired by the plants, colors, and creators of those same specimen books.[38] In this case, the pattern creation process was comparable to that of the Manuscript Cowl, with Sundberg conducting initial research assisted by the collection curator. After identifying books of interest, and creating initial sketches and digital samples, Howard then created the knitting pattern for an infinity cowl with an all-over two-color pattern based on a preserved sample of *Halidrys siliquosa* (Sea Oak) from botanist Mary M. Howard's marine herbarium *Ocean Flowers and Their Teachings*.[39] The knitting-inspired event was once again well-attended with 192 online attendees and forty in-person. Attendees travelled from as far as Ottawa, a two-hour drive, to be able to attend in person, share their projects, and interact with the books and samples in real life. Even though events continue to be offered in a hybrid format, in-person attendance has slowly resumed since post-pandemic reopening in fall 2022.

Promotion, Event Follow-up, and Impact

As Outreach Librarian, Sundberg created a robust promotion plan to publicize the events to reach a wider community. We publicized all events one month in advance via internal campus channels, an external email distribution list, and the library's social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram), including paid advertise-

34. Kristen C. Howard, Secret Message Pillow Cover, knitting pattern, available at https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/secret-message-pillow-cover.
35. As of December 15, 2023. Download numbers available to pattern author (Kristen Howard) on Ravelry through features available to Ravelry Designers.
36. "Knitting in Code with Kristen Howard," LiveStream recording, 1:01:44, March 9, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/live/ubo-MnEH0LA?si=HtOEf9FUtfvLlneF
37. "Knitting in Code with Kristen Howard."
38. Kristen C. Howard, Halidrys Cowl, knitting pattern, available at https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/halidrys-cowl.
39. Mary M. Howard, *Ocean Flowers and Their Teachings* (Bath, England: Binns & Goodwin, 1846).

ments on Facebook.[40] Additionally, the knitting patterns were posted on Ravelry,[41] where we also created event postings to reach the forums and knitting groups who find connections on that platform.

We also reached out to knitting groups to promote the event, as well as to prominent knitting YouTuber Roxanne Richardson, who mentioned some of the events on her channel. Knitters created their own conversations about the knitting events, helping us to reach far beyond our own community members. For example, on Ravelry, a knitter shared the event in a forum that garnered forty-eight posts from twenty-six individuals and reached a total of 1,840 readers.[42] This demonstrates the power of reaching into an already existing online community.

"Knitting in Code" was organized in conjunction with University Advancement's twenty-four-hour fundraising day, McGill24. Advancement therefore assisted with publicity, sending out the event as part of their promotion to a wide distribution list of alumni worldwide. However, the event was exceptional for bringing in a community of viewers that had no prior association with the University: 70% were not alumni, students, staff, or faculty. Attendees hailed from Canada, the United States, Brazil, Australia, Sweden, France, Ireland, Germany, Brussels, Austria, and New Zealand. This event gave our collections truly unprecedented worldwide exposure well beyond the rare books and library community in Montreal. Although friend-raising, not fund-raising, was the principal goal, the event did boost fundraising efforts: the Library received 178% more donors during McGill24 than the previous year, which University Advancement attributed to the success of the event.

A few days after each event, we sent follow-up messages with knitting resources, pattern links and direct-download PDFs, and the event recording. The recordings links were also substituted in the knitting patterns on Ravelry where the original RSVP links had been, driving interested individuals to continue to engage with the online content.[43] Links to further information were also provided when useful; for example, a link to an earlier University Library event of a choral performance of the manuscript's

40. McGill Library, "Virtual Event, Rare Stitches: Knitting Inspired by Illuminated Manuscripts," Facebook event advertisement, in advance of February 21, 2021; https://www.facebook.com/events/228106905584989/; McGill Library, "Knitting 101 with ROAAr," Facebook event advertisement, in advance of February 14, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/events/4836706459780866/; McGill Library, "Virtual Event, Knitting in Code," Facebook event advertisement, in advance of March 9, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/events/534647334433464/; McGill Library, "Hybrid Event: Knitting Natural History," Facebook event advertisement, in advance of May 30, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/events/110529418696018/.

41. Howard, Manuscript Cowl; Howard, Secret Message Pillow Cover; and Howard, Halidrys Cowl.

42 LuckyPartridge, "Knitting in Code," *Needlework News & Events* (group forum on Ravelry.com), statistics as of December 14, 2023, https://www.ravelry.com/discuss/needlework-on-the-net/4185366/1-25.

43. For example, Howard, Manuscript Cowl.

music is available on the pattern page for the Manuscript Cowl.[44] All pattern pages also include a link to make a financial gift to McGill's Rare Books and Special Collections.

Many attendees opted to receive the Library's monthly Rare Books digital newsletter, creating an ever-growing distribution list, and ensuring attendees would be aware of future events and collections of interest. General interest in the events, as shown by the number of RSVPs, attendees, messages received in advance of the event, and emails received after the fact confirm that the shared interest in rare books, manuscripts, and knitting struck a chord with attendees who tuned in from around the globe (table 1).

TABLE 1

Impact Statistics

Year	Event	No. of RSVPs	No. of simultaneous viewers/attendees	No. of views of recording	Knitting Pattern	No. of downloads	No. of "favorites"
2021	Rare Stitches: Knitting Inspired by Illuminated Manuscripts	741	342	1,300+	Manuscript Cowl	1,479	811
2022	Knitting 101	208	142	555			
2022	Knitting in Code	1,115	602	4,200+	Secret Message Pillow Cover	542	391
2023	Knitting Natural HerStory	455	232 (192 online and 40 in person)	1,000+	Halidrys Cowl	175	139

Statistics as of December 1, 2023.

Additionally, there have been an increased number of reference questions on the subject of knitting and fiber arts in the collections the past two years. We have also had individuals visit the Rare Books reading room with crochet and embroidery projects of their own to share, and to explore the collections for their own inspiration. While not a significant number, these in-person visits are the fruit of the online initiatives started during pandemic closures. Increasing in-person attendance and occasional visits show that the goals of community-building and broader exposure of the collections are being met by continued outreach projects in this series.

44. Howard, Manuscript Cowl.

Discussion and Conclusion

Existing communities of practice built on shared interests can foster fruitful engagement with library collections, as demonstrated by the series of knitting events discussed here. Pandemic-related closures and physical isolation proved to many that there is power in handcrafts to quiet our minds, busy our hands, and connect with others. There is likewise power in connecting with others around those shared interests, which can happen in meaningful ways via online communities of practice. Virtual platforms like Ravelry provide international reach beyond the usual special collections user base of scholars and students. Such communities have an established mode of communication, and members are used to interacting virtually over their shared passion in a delocalized way. This was useful during the pandemic, but that utility continues, as shown by the events discussed above.

These events were effective for several reasons, not least of which was the fact that they aligned not only with institutional goals of engaging broader communities with library collections, but also with the interests of an established community. We therefore had the institutional support required to plan these events, and to invest the time required to create patterns demonstrating an alternative way of accessing and engaging with library collections. We found the overlap between those who knit and those who enjoy rare books is large. We built on that audience strategically, ensuring continued success and assessing our communications methods and events format with each new iteration. Some topics, like knitting espionage, proved of greater interest than the related pattern, whereas some patterns proved much more popular than the accompanying lecture. Striking images of finished knits and stark color contrast in those knits also drove user engagement. Combining the two features of the collections-based outreach program—a creative intervention and a scholarly lecture—allowed us to reach a wider interested audience.

We hope that the success of this series of creative programs can provide an argument and foundation upon which other interested institutions can build. The model of creative, collections-based outreach that formed the backbone for these programs is useful not only with fiber crafts, but as a basis for any form of creative outreach. The potential for rich, engaging activities in all sorts of domains and topics lies waiting in the stacks of the library collections. In our experience so far, we used our domain-specific skills and focused on a shared crafting passion. This model can, however, be driven by the collections themselves as well as the skills and interests of your team. For instance, if your institution has an astronomy collection, there is potential for a creative event engaging local astronomy groups, or broader online communities of stargazers. If your collection is strong in music history, why not use this model and bring life to that collection by pairing musicians and artists with historical manuscripts? Perhaps pottery, poetry, or coloring and sketching could be the craft your team might employ.

To further support others who might be interested in a creative intervention, but benefit from a more structured starting point, we created a Creative Outreach Toolkit which is now freely available online.[45] This guide provides tools and resources to equip librarians to create and host their own collections-based creative projects and outreach events. It is organized into four parts, following the workflow of planning a creative project from idea through to follow-up and assessment. This guide could be used by librarians looking to use our existing patterns and webinars and host a local event using that material, or it can provide the foundation for others looking to create their own creative reinterpretation of items in their collections.

Many institutions may not have a designated outreach librarian, but rather share those responsibilities between a number of individuals. Regardless of how outreach responsibilities are divided, a common understanding of the importance of increasing accessibility and visibility of rare and special collections to broader public audiences is absolutely necessary for creative initiatives like this to succeed. Creative outreach programs can help libraries transition from gate keepers to bridge builders by crafting connections with new communities. We look forward to seeing all of the ways libraries will knit new connections between their cultural heritage collections and special interest communities.

45. Jacquelyn Sundberg and Kristen Howard, "Creative Outreach Toolkit," December 2023, https://libraryguides.mcgill.ca/creative-outreach-toolkit.

Courtney Becks, Sarah Carter, and Vaughan Hennen

“But I Believe Survival Is Based upon the Many and Not the Few:” Connecting Librarians and Artists to Build Special Connections

This paper examines the significance of social relationships between artists and special collections librarians in the acquisitions process, especially regarding ephemeral works. The ways the authors observed printer Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr. interacting with librarians are both inspiration and case study in this paper. Interviews with librarians who worked with Kennedy reveal that some artists or makers are not aware of the value that their ephemeral materials hold for future research, teaching, and scholarship.

Introduction

Letterpress printer Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr. (Kennedy) is known for his dedication to wood type and chipboard. Though his impressive career spans some three decades, he has been in passionate conversation with the printed word almost his entire life. Kennedy has made paper, studied calligraphy, bound books, printed, and he completed an MFA in Graphic Design at the UW–Madison. At one point, he was even an aspiring archivist! A peerless “book builder” with sterling credentials, Kennedy is internationally known as the purveyor of colorful, didactic letterpress posters collected by cultural heritage institutions (like the Library of Congress) and consumers alike.

Perhaps this is a reason peer-reviewed research that engages with his oeuvre is scarce. Posters, after all, are ephemera—a category of whose importance librarians and other cultural heritage workers may have a vexed understanding. Kennedy sees this category—ephemera—as central to his work: “I want to stress the importance of ephemera. Ephemera is the stuff that gets away. This gives so much information about everyday life, etc.”[1] Examples of ephemera Kennedy has produced include postcards, pamphlets, and business cards.

1. Amos Paul Kennedy Jr., interviewed by Courtney Becks, April 21, 2019.

The Importance of Being Ephemeral

The authors first considered Kennedy's work through the lens of material culture.[2] Researchers, scholars, and librarians may tussle over ephemera's definition. As defined by Rickards, it is a key component of many social and historical research methods used across various humanistic disciplines.[3] In "The Long-Term Significance of Printed Ephemera," the redoubtable Michael Twyman wrote that ephemera referred to "documents that have relevance only for a short time, normally the day or days of the event or situation they relate to." Furthermore, he imparted the Ephemera Society of Britain's definition: "'the minor transient documents of everyday life.'"[4]

To support these research methods, cultural institutions have long engaged in the challenges of prioritizing collection areas, organizing, and documenting these collections.[5] Librarians are urged both to establish collection development policies that address ephemera as well as coordinate with colleagues to understand the wider distribution of collecting priorities.[6] Information professionals have emphasized the importance of descriptive standards that enhance user access to collections.[7] The authors' most gripping concern is that educators also prioritize teaching and learning activities that include ephemeral collections, which have been shown to be beneficial for students.[8]

Methodology

Kennedy has maintained long-term professional relationships with at least three major academic research institutions throughout his printing career. Special collections at University of Wisconsin–Madison, (UW–Madison) University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC RBML), and Indiana University Bloomington (IU Bloomington) hold significant examples of Kennedy's work. These are institutions at which the authors attended library school, worked, and encountered Kennedy's work.

2. This research was initiated for a workshop held at the Center for Material Culture Studies (CMCS) biennial conference at the University of Delaware in 2019.

3. Maurice Rickards, *Collecting Printed Ephemera*, 1st American ed. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988); Martin Andrews, "The Importance of Ephemera," in *A Companion to the History of the Book* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2008), 434–50, https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470690949.ch32.

4. Michael Twyman, "The Long-Term Significance of Printed Ephemera," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 19.

5. Hermina G. B. Anghelescu and John H. Slate, "Visual Ephemera," Collection Management 25, no. 4 (July 30, 2001): 77–80, https://doi.org/10.1300/J105v25n04_08; Jim Burant, "Ephemera, Archives, and Another View of History," *Archivaria* 40 (1995).

6. Michael Launder, "Saving Printed Ephemera: Setting Priorities in Preserving Evidence of the Everyday," *Current Studies in Librarianship* 26, no. 1/2 (Spring/Fall 2002): 67–76.

7. Elizabeth Holcombe, "Difficult to Find and Keep: Providing Access to Ephemera Collections," *Australian Law Librarian* 10, no. 2 (2002): 113–24.

8. Margaret Schaus, "Hands-on History," *College & Research Libraries News* 51, no. 9 (October 1, 1990), https://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/23260/30359; Shan Sutton and Lorrie Knight, "Beyond the Reading Room: Integrating Primary and Secondary Sources in the Library Classroom," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 32, no. 3 (May 1, 2006): 320–25, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2006.03.001.

This article investigates special collections acquisition methods, and excavates the role of social relationships in collecting artists' books and related ephemeral print material by interviewing Kennedy and several art and special collections librarians. Specifically, the authors will address methods librarians can use to create connections with artists throughout the various stages of their careers in order to establish and support ephemeral collections. The librarians interviewed for this paper include Lyn Korenic, former director of the Kohler Art Library (the Kohler) at UW–Madison; Valerie Hotchkiss, University Librarian at Vanderbilt and former director of UIUC RBML; UIUC RBML director Lynne Thomas; and Betty Jo "B.J." Irvine, retired head of the Fine Arts Library at IU Bloomington.[9]

Forming Connections

The Artists' Book Collection is among the Kohler's most popular holdings. Korenic previously worked at the University of California-Santa Barbara and IU Bloomington—two institutions whose art book collections are enviable in their own right.[10] "And I will say that one of the great influences on me was Bill Bunce, the former librarian at the Kohler," Kennedy said in a UW–Madison oral history interview. "I would have long conversations with him about books and about life."[11] Bunce was a generous mentor and tremendous resource for all the book arts students, Korenic said: "When I came on board, Amos had already left town for a couple of years, and, again, I only saw him sporadically when he was visiting. So, I would say the relationship really was already built up with [Bunce.]"[12]

At IU Bloomington, Irvine engaged faculty strategically during her tenure. She remembered consistently reaching out to all newly-hired faculty, as well as attending faculty meetings. This was her attempt to stay in contact with faculty research interests, as well as their evolving bibliographic and pedagogic needs. Irvine was particularly interested in Kennedy's work because he had been hired in 1998 to establish a book arts program at Indiana. Irvine discussed the Fine Arts Library's existing artists' books collection, and described how she was able to give lectures for his future students. She remembered that she and Kennedy had, "an immediate affinity for each other's interests and expertise," and that, "Amos was just in and out of my office all the time. I loved it!"[13]

Irvine reported that Kennedy also brought works in progress to her office to review and comment on. In general, she said,

9. This research follows on from an ephemera workshop the authors presented to scholars, researchers, and students from various disciplines at the 2019 CMCS biennial.
10. Lyn Korenic, interviewed by Courtney Becks, July 1, 2019.
11. Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr., interviewed by Sarah Lange, September 4, 2018, OH #1764, transcript, University Archives and Records Management Services, Madison, WI.
12. Korenic, interview.
13. Betty Jo "B.J." Irvine interviewed by Sarah Carter, April 9, 2019.

> Accessibility and flexibility were always important in all my work with faculty and students—whenever Amos or other faculty or students took time to come to my office to talk about their interests, I stopped whatever I was doing because I always felt their interests were paramount to the collections and services of the Fine Arts Library.[14]

Throughout their working relationship, Irvine recalled, Kennedy carried small books with him throughout the day and would show them to her. One chance encounter highlighted the importance of their close relationship and coincidence of timing. Irvine said:

> The last collection which I purchased from Amos was the [Amos P. Kennedy, Jr. poster collection from the Kentucky Museum Association exhibit], acquired in the parking lot on the side of the Fine Arts Building. I was coming into work on a Saturday morning and spotted Amos getting into his car. I ran over to talk with him and asked him if he had any work with him. He humbly mentioned the posters which were in his trunk. Of course, I had to see them. He had created them to keep working while living in Alabama. I loved them and told him I wanted to buy all of them for FAL [the Fine Arts Library]. He asked how I could do that because they were not artist's books or a "collection." But I said they were a "portfolio" of his work and I would have them added to our artists' books collection as such. I asked him to sign each one and had him make out an invoice on a slip of paper in the car. It was an exciting moment to be able to add these beautiful works to the Fine Arts Library artists' books collection.[15]

After Kennedy's departure from Indiana, he stayed in touch with Irvine by sending her postcards from his *NappygRam*[16] series, which she added to the artists' files, the uncatalogued folders of ephemeral materials related to artists' careers and practice.

Collecting Kennedy's Work

Each librarian the authors interviewed indicated that Kennedy's work is valued by different collections for different reasons: geographic representation, aesthetic brilliance, or alumni affiliation. Kennedy's work is valued both as a UW–Madison alumnus, as well as a light in the book arts firmament. Under the tutelage of eminent artist faculty like Walter Hamady, Kennedy and many of his contemporaries became graphic and book arts luminaries in their own right; for this reason, the student work of many UW–Madison alumni is found in the Kohler's Artists' Book Collection. "We were

14. Irvine, interview.
15. Irvine, interview.
16. This article applies internal capitalization as presented in Kennedy's work.

collecting the works of the students, you know, over a large period of time," Korenic said, "so, that was an immediate interest of ours."[17] Kennedy was prominent enough that he was one of the approximately twenty "faculty and students . . . connected to the book arts here at UW" chosen to participate in the 2018 oral history.[18] Also, his work featured prominently in the 2020 artists' book exhibition at the Chazen Museum of Art that resulted directly from that project. Korenic spoke of her collecting philosophy and priorities in terms of geography, noting the Kohler's special collections holdings are comprised of materials from Wisconsin artists, global artists, and work by current students and alumni, resulting in a rich collection of many artists' earlier works. Furthermore, Kennedy's voice as a printer is unique for its political import. His work unflinchingly confronts injustice. "His interest was in making art more democratic," Korenic said, "Amos has kind of brought back sort of a democratic idea of sharing art through his ephemera. I think that most artists today aren't necessarily doing [that]."[19] It could be said there is a throughline between UW–Madison and Indiana's holdings of Kennedy's work. Shortly after completing his MFA at the former, he was employed by the latter where, in 1998, as Irvine noted, Kennedy became the first Black American faculty member in the Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts. There is a symmetry in UW–Madison's holdings of his student work, and in Indiana's that he did as a professor.

Additionally, in the late 1990s Kennedy was also the only Black American book artist from whom Irvine could directly buy books. Kennedy's work was notable to Irvine because it addressed African proverbs and American Civil Rights issues, which was singular at that time in Indiana's Fine Arts Library artists' book collection. Irvine noted Kennedy's artists' book *Strange Fruit* as an important work for the collection at the time it was produced. She believed that interpretive information about lynching in a visual medium was extremely important to document, in that era and particular geographic location. Moreover, Irvine "acquired his work primarily because I felt, and continue to do so, that he is an important American book artist."[20] Irvine concluded that Kennedy's work made a cultural, political, and social contribution through the book arts medium.

At UIUC RBML, Thomas noted that two types of printmaking—community-based and fine printmaking—are both a part of her collecting philosophy. She observed that the two don't always "work together."[21] Thomas saw Kennedy's influence primarily as the zone of possibility, created by the interface of audiences and his work, which:

17. Korenic, interview.
18. Korenic, interview.
19. Korenic, interview.
20. Irvine, interview.
21. Lynne Thomas, interviewed by Courtney Becks, April 10, 2019.

> makes white people uncomfortable. It is easy to become comfortable as a white person in fine printing. The viewer is required to confront [things] in a way that is disruptive, important, and deeply valuable. His work doesn't sanitize. He doesn't allow us to ignore our complicity in these structures [of oppression].[22]

Hotchkiss understood Kennedy's contribution to be in both the visual aesthetic of overprinting, and in his ability to "agitat[e] society with simple quotes."[23] She also commended Kennedy as a printmaker "more akin to fifteenth-century originators of printing, because [his work is] inventive." Hotchkiss took a comprehensive approach, asking that the library at UIUC RBML become a depository for Kennedy's work.

Kennedy's Impact on the Field

Kennedy is one of the few Black Americans in the printing field. He has said: "I sincerely believe that my only purpose in what I do—outside of the gratification, outside of the growth that printing gives to me—is to say 'Black people are here.'"[24] The truth is that infinitely fewer people will ever see an artists' book than, for example, a poster that retails for $20. Kennedy realized this, and it factored into his decision to move his production to signs, cards, and posters in the early 2000s.

As the interviews with librarians illustrate, Kennedy is remarkably open to forming and maintaining long-lasting relationships with libraries and library-adjacent persons, which he formed early in his student and professional career, and sustained after departing individual institutions.[25] All told, his relational tendencies are perhaps best illustrated by his ongoing connection to UW–Madison. Korenic pointed out:

> A lot of the ephemeral stuff that we have in our collection were actually from Bill Bunce's, the former director's, personal collection. He passed away in 2002, and I was able to go to his house and go through his books and his personal collection. And he had collected a lot of things from Amos, and/or Amos had sent him things over the years.[26]

Moreover, UW–Madison is happy to claim Kennedy as one of its own. He designed the cover of *Against a Sharp White Background: Infrastructures of African American*

22. Thomas, interview.
23. Valerie Hotchkiss, interviewed by Courtney Becks, June 17, 2019.
24. Kennedy, interview.
25. Another example: in 2018, Kennedy undertook a printing project to honor African American collections curator Randall Burkett upon his retirement from Emory University.
26. Korenic, interview.

Print, which was published by the University of Wisconsin Press.[27] The unused project design drafts were added to Kennedy's artist's file at the Kohler.[28]

The appeal of the Kennedy's work lays in his connection to particular institutions, as well as its singular sociopolitical message. Kennedy's output was initially of significance in the late twentieth century because of its unflinching focus on race, lived experience of Black Americans, and engagement with African traditions.

Collecting Ephemera: Conference Presentations and Workshop

The authors led a workshop at the Black Bibliographia: Print/Culture/Art conference hosted by the University of Delaware's Center for Material Culture Studies in April 2019. Presentation topics ranged from digital exhibits of a wide array of hand-held church fans, to creating a Black bibliography, to print laborers. Conference attendees and presenters included academics from various areas and disciplines interested in material culture. Co-authors Carter and Becks gave a presentation about their interviews, and co-author Hennen guided the workshop.

The authors used examples of both process-oriented ephemera and completed ephemera to show that both types could be used as learning objects (Appendix 1). Using prints produced in a class taught by Kennedy the day before as one of the learning objects helped shed light on using ephemera in new ways. The fact that those print artifacts had not existed before the previous day gestures to the emphasis that definitions of ephemera place on its inextricable link between temporality and materiality. These samples were distributed throughout the room, and participants were divided into small groups to answer seven questions (Appendix 2). The workshop was well attended, and all participants were engaged in conversation. Each small group was absorbed in discussion of their experiences and needs as researchers, and gained new insight into librarians collecting ephemera and establishing relationships with faculty and community artists. Participants left energized by new ideas for using ephemera as learning objects to talk about issues of materiality.

The workshop yielded three major conclusions:

1. Communicate the value of ephemera as a tool for contextualizing cultural production
2. Model the productive exchange of ideas between professors/community artists and libraries, in order to encourage others to do the same

27. Brigitte Fielder and Jonathan Senchyne, eds., *Against a Sharp White Background: Infrastructures of African American Print*, History of Print and Digital Culture Series (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019).
28. Korenic explained that *Against a Sharp Background*'s co-editor Jonathan Senchyne, director of the Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture at UW–Madison and information school faculty member, gave them to her.

3. Engage with university and local community in purchasing items—bringing faculty/community artists into the library

These takeaways established a way to help bring artists and researchers into the library, and to form lasting relationships that go beyond building special collections. The session's outcomes also showed the importance of connecting artists and librarians, to grow and learn together, to cement relationships with artists in the future.

Librarians can establish an environment of worth, collecting artists' work and being active in their circles, by establishing and maintaining relationships with faculty, and building collections of their work. The authors created an integrated framework, shared below, for collections policies that connects acquisitions to establishing relationships with artists in professor, student, and community phases of their careers.

Framework

Defining Material Collection

1. Understand its context within the library's strategic plan and department curriculum
2. Scope within Special Collections collection development policy
3. Selection Criteria and uniqueness or rarity
4. Develop and collect for future research and reflection

Establishing Relationships

1. Engage and show leadership in faculty and community meetings
2. Attend internal and external art shows
3. Foster relationships by showing interest in artists and their art practice
4. Education

It is important to begin with collection development guidelines, which help shape the way connections are built. The authors hope this framework decreases anxiety, and guides librarians, both in establishing collections and in forming enduring relationships with faculty and artists over their careers. Collections in development, especially those deemed "special," need documentation and top-down guidance; in *The Special Collections Handbook*, Cullingford stressed the importance of a mission-critical collection development policy framework.[29]

The onus is on librarians to create comprehensive collections, built on institutional strategic plans, that will assist and guide current and future students and faculty. Cullingford recommended ". . . looking for gaps, opportunities and fresh ideas that

29. Cullingford, 86.

can be unique and distinctive to your institution."[30] Changes in the library—including museum shifts, change in departmental structure, or change in programs—will necessarily impact collection scope. —This is illustrated by this article's examples: librarians interviewed at UW–Madison, IU Bloomington, and UIUC RBML developed different aspects of Kennedy's portfolio.

Irvine repeatedly mentioned, during her interview, that many Black artists were missing from the collection at IU Bloomington. Thus, many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) were excluded from the collection until Kennedy's items were acquired. This begs the charge for all librarians to audit their collections and to identify voids in the collections they steward. There is another connection between identity, experience, ephemeral works, and special collections: Becks asked Kennedy, "How does your work . . . foster an ephemeral collection or culture of ephemera in a library's collection?" He responded:

> I think because . . . of the uniqueness of being Black . . . I think that fosters [that need] in a special collections because most special collections of ephemera is primarily ephemera related to the white culture . . . of the United States. And, so, to have this brief snapshot, this tiny snapshot, into the rich culture of people of color, I think, gives a boost to collections.[31]

In *Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management*, Johnson asserted, "Academic librarians obtain information about their faculty members' needs and interests through conversations with individual faculty members and by attending departmental meetings."[32] It is imperative that librarians be present; Irvine stressed how important it is that librarians attend and participate in interviews, art shows, studio events, and both student and faculty art history lectures. Library visibility—both on campus and in the community—is important.

Anticipating the future is critical for collection building. As Irvine said:

> "You have to make a decision, and to me as a librarian, I wasn't just collecting or building a library for the present. . . [W]hat would a contemporary art historian want to look at twenty years from now? Fifty years from now?"[33]

30. Cullingford, 87.
31. Amos Paul Kennedy Jr., interviewed by Courtney Becks, April 21, 2019.
32. Peggy Johnson, *Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management*, 3rd ed. (London: Facet Publishing, 2014), 268.
33. Irvine, interview.

Librarians must make decisions when developing collections, purposely thinking about future trends, new ideas, and how new faculty will fit into the library. Cullingford wrote, “Special Collections are special also because of their potential relevance to people outside the library service and long term.”[34] The authors hope that the framework included here provides guidance for constructing policies that can weather unanticipated changes.

It is important to alert art professors to the importance of their work. Sometimes, faculty do not think their work is worth collecting—as illustrated by Irvine’s discussion of Kennedy’s portfolio. The interactions Irvine, Korenic, and Bunce had with Kennedy—and the connections they created—show librarians can and must meet artists on the same plane to help ascertain what is collectible. The relationship between artist and librarian is so integral to the development of complete, well-rounded, and representative special collections. The authors hope that the framework included here provides guidance for constructing policies that can weather unanticipated changes

Conclusion

Libraries have a unique opportunity to collect ephemeral materials from artists. Research shows that strategic communication between librarians and artists is an effective method for gathering documentation of their work. The authors urge librarians to reflect on their special collections strategies and collection development policies, particularly focusing on social relationships.

Librarians are in the position of power. It is, therefore, incumbent upon them to extend themselves to various artistic communities. Information about library-specific selection criteria, development practices, and details of acquisition should be shared with artists in the community and folks at their institution. This paper highlights the centrality of personal relationships to building special collections, because relationships shape collections so fundamentally. Librarians must reflect upon who they know, “get along with,” take seriously, or otherwise interact with: these factors affect the shape of institutional collections, and represent librarians’ unacknowledged power in shaping a canon.

34. Cullingford, xiii.

Appendix 1. Interview Questions

1. What is your position? How would you characterize your relationship to the printed/graphic arts?
2. How do you define ephemeral works?
3. How did you meet Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr.? How did you become familiar with his work?
4. How did a relationship birthed from the interactions you and Mr. Kennedy have, to building a sizable collection at your library? Was there a prompt, or did the relationship grow organically?
5. Can you describe events or conversations that led to the inclusion of Mr. Kennedy's more ephemeral works from classroom teaching in institutional collections?
6. What about his work made it a desirable acquisition (for a special collection)? How did Mr. Kennedy's work differ from other printmakers at the time?
7. Is there anything about his processes that lends itself to the making of ephemeral material, pedagogically speaking?
8. How do Mr. Kennedy's artists' books foster an ephemeral collection/culture in an institution/library?
9. What impact would you say Kennedy's work has on the field? What is his place, if you will, in letterpress printing and artists' book creation?
10. Is there anything you want to tell me or a question that you think I've failed to ask?

Appendix 2. Participant Questions from the Delaware Workshop

1. How would you add these items into your collection?
2. If you were the artist, how might you create a relationship with a librarian to enter your pedagogical materials into the collection (artist files?)
3. How might you use the item, critically, in the classroom?
4. What strategies would you use to collaborate with this artist (or someone like this)?
5. How might you promote collaboration with an artist at your institution?
6. Thinking critically, how do artists think about collaborating at your institution?
7. At your own institution, what artists/librarians (depending on your situation) can you work with? Can you envision an entry point to talk to them?

Hafsah Hujaleh and Jess Whyte

Narrowing the Lens: Preservation Assessment for Digital Manuscripts

As a response to Ben Goldman's 2011 call to action in RBM *regarding born-digital manuscripts, this article revisits the topic thirteen years later. Drawing inspiration from Goldman's work at the University of Wyoming, the authors attempt to narrow the preservation lens further by focusing on specific collections and considering factors like file types, risk, and resource availability. The authors suggest further humble, but practical, steps towards preserving born-digital materials, based on their experiences and while emphasizing the importance of contextual decision-making in the face of complex challenges.*

In 2011, Ben Goldman wrote in *RBM* on bridging the gap for born-digital manuscripts by taking immediate, practical steps to secure those materials. Goldman rallied preservationists to do something, anything, to begin work while we waited for that, "one, perfect, affordable, all-encompassing solution for electronic records."[1] For Goldman, narrowing the lens was a way to find a starting point when faced with a monumental and complex task. His approach included inventorying content, getting it out of media carriers, and finding somewhere to store it. But what are the next steps for modest progress?

Inspired by Goldman's work at the University of Wyoming's American Heritage Center, we, at the University of Toronto Libraries, narrowed the lens further by focusing on specific collections, sometimes down to the file-by-file level. We completed the inventories, retrieved the files from at-risk media, and we needed to decide how to conserve them. When looking at the whole picture—disparate file types, massive aggregate sizes, sensitive personal information, competing priorities, and limited staff time—the task appeared overwhelming. However, by tackling it one collection at a time, the work grew manageable, decisions became contextual, and care became more focused. Born-digital collections aren't monolithic and shouldn't be treated as such.

1. Ben Goldman, "Bridging the Gap: Taking Practical Steps Toward Managing Born-Digital Collections in Manuscript Repositories," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 12, no. 1 (Mar. 2011): 11, https://doi.org/10.5860/rbm.12.1.343.

Conservation strategies might vary based on factors such as age, donor, formats, risk, and resource availability, but the crucial thing is to start. This article, echoing Goldman's sentiment, aims to offer practical recommendations using the University of Toronto Libraries as a case study.

Past The Fence: Navigating Greener Terrain

Goldman commented on the state of the field in 2011, noting that, despite many institutions collecting digital manuscripts, most could not estimate their size or lacked corresponding policies for working with digital materials.[2] Probable reasons included staffing shortages, lack of expertise, funding constraints, or a reluctance within the profession to, "consider any form of digital preservation as true preservation."[3]

The subsequent decade saw a surge of collection-holders beginning this work, while also documenting their workflows and processes.[4] In 2014, version 1.0 of the BitCurator environment was released. BitCurator provided a set of open-source digital forensics and data analysis tools and aimed to support the work of transferring digital content from media and documenting that process by providing functionalities for disk imaging, metadata extraction, and analysis and focusing specifically on serving libraries, archives, and museums.[5] While not the only new tool in town, BitCurator's launch and educational efforts triggered a wave of collaboration, as institutions began inventorying their digital media backlogs, managing new acquisitions, and sharing their techniques. In addition to BitCurator, other important developments

2. Goldman, "Bridging the Gap," 12–13.
3. Goldman, "Bridging the Gap," 14.
4. John Durno, "Digital archaeology and/or forensics: Working with floppy disks from the 1980s," *Code4lib Journal*, no. 34 (2016): 1, https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/11986.; Leigh Anne Gialanella, "Disk imaging for preservation: Part 1," *Bits & Pieces*, University of Michigan Library (January, 2018), https://www.lib.umich.edu/blogs/bits-and-pieces/disk-imaging-preservation-part-1.; Caralie Heinrichs and Emilie Vandal, "Digital Preservation Guide: 3.5-Inch Floppy Disks," ISI 6354, University of Ottawa Libraries documentation (Dec 2019): 1–36, https://biblio.uottawa.ca/omeka2/linking-cultures/files/original/3bed48a813ef348a3873c0c50cb066ec.pdf.; Charles Levi, "Five hundred 5.25-inch discs and one (finicky) machine: A report on a legacy e-records pilot project at the Archives of Ontario," *Archivaria*, no. 72 (2011): 239–246, https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13365/14674.; Matthew McKinley, "Imaging digital media for preservation with LAMMP," *The Electronic Media Review* 3 (2015): 89–96, https://resources.culturalheritage.org/emg-review/volume-three-2013-2014/mckinley/.; Sam Meister and Alexandra Chassanoff, "Integrating digital forensics techniques into curatorial tasks: A case study," *International Journal of Digital Curation* 9 (2014): 6–16, https://doi.org/10.2218/ijdc.v9i2.325.; Alice Prael, "Centralized Accessioning Support for Born Digital Archives," *Code4Lib Journal*, no. 40 (2018), https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/13494.; Alice Prael and Amy Wickner, "Getting to know FRED: Introducing workflows for born-digital content," *Practical Technology for Archives*, no. 4 (May 2015), https://hdl.handle.net/1813/76848.; Walker Sampson, "Guest post: Walker Sampson on disk imaging workflow," BitCurator Consortium (Nov 05 2015), https://bitcurator.net/category/use-cases/.; Jess Whyte, "Preservation Planning and Workflows for Digital Holdings at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library," in *Proceedings of the 2017 ACM/IEEE Joint Conference on Digital Libraries* (JCDL) (Toronto, ON, Canada: 2017), 1–10, https://doi.org/10.1109/JCDL.2017.7991611.
5. Christopher A. Lee, Matthew Kirschenbaum, Alexandra Chassanoff, Porter Olsen, and Kam Woods, "Bitcurator: tools and techniques for digital forensics in collecting institutions," *D-Lib Magazine* 18, no. 5/6 (2012): 14–21.

in the field include was the establishment of Library of Congress' National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA) in 2010 through an initiative of the no longer active National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP). Today, NDSA works with a range of organizations to make contributions to the field, including workflow development, peer support, and guidance materials.[6]

New ways of working brought new challenges. A 2020 post detailing the OCLC's efforts to gauge time requirements for processing born-digital collections revealed that, while many institutions now had dedicated staff for these collections, challenges persisted. These challenges included revising workflows, and figuring out how to navigate "the cognitive shift required to move back-and-forth between the granular file-level analysis . . . and the aggregate-level thinking required for the archival sense-making work."[7] Non-homogeneous collections, especially those from private donors, often proved more complex, requiring a deeper dive due to their diverse file formats and content types. The appraisal of born-digital records also necessitated a different mindset about privacy. While digital formats could offer broader access and analysis capabilities, they also posed challenges for maintaining the sort of "privacy through obscurity" a traditional reading room might ensure.[8]

Dealing with private and sensitive data in digital collections isn't easy. Many of these challenges come from the size and nature of digital collections themselves. In 2013, Goldman and Pyatt highlighted how archivists grappled with these issues in their article, "Security Without Obscurity: Managing Personally Identifiable Information in Born-Digital Archives."[9] In one example, staff with the STOP AIDS Project records team at Stanford University used digital forensic tools and keyword searches to pinpoint private and sensitive details, but remained uncertain about their findings, inundated with false positives, and lacking confidence in the adequacy of their efforts.[10] Digital collections are also typically larger than paper ones, making sensitive information harder to spot.[11] Sensitive information can pop up in unexpected areas of digital storage, like log files, system files, or even in supposedly deleted files still retrievable through forensic means. The people who donate or create these digital collections may not be aware of these hidden traces.

6. NDSA, "About the NDSA," accessed February 29, 2024, https://ndsa.org/about/
7. Chela Scott Weber, "Time Estimation for Processing Born-Digital Collections," *Hanging Together: The OCLC Research Blog*, 28 April 2020, https://hangingtogether.org/?p=7911.
8. Scott Weber, "Time Estimation for Processing Born-Digital Collections."
9. Ben Goldman and Timothy D. Pyatt, "Security Without Obscurity: Managing Personally Identifiable Information in Born-Digital Archives," *Library and Archival Security* 26, no. 1–2 (2013): 37–55.
10. Goldman and Pyatt, "Security Without Obscurity," 45.
11. Goldman and Pyatt, 41; Tim Hutchinson, "Protecting Privacy in the Archives: Preliminary Explorations of Topic Modeling for Born-Digital Collections," in *Proceedings of the 2017 IEEE International Conference on Big Data (Big Data)* (Boston, MA, December 2017), 2,251–2,255, p. 1.

Machine-learning tools for identifying sensitive information are gaining traction in archives. Tim Hutchinson, at the University of Saskatchewan, has written on their use since 2017.[12] This work is promising, but just as Goldman warned in 2011 in "Bridging the Gap," we should perhaps not wait for, "one perfect, affordable, all-encompassing solution,"[13] as there is "merit to the notion that technology alone cannot solve problems associated with digital preservation," since "waiting for high-end solutions has only led to neglect."[14]

The Narrow Path: Delving into the Minute

Goldman's steps to begin engaging with born-digital manuscripts were to separate out the digital materials, inventory them, find somewhere to store them, transfer digital content to storage, document your work, and then formulate policies and methods for future acquisitions.[15] Over the last eight years, the University of Toronto Libraries has been acting on Goldman's advice to get the bits off the failing media. Disks in manuscript collections were inventoried and imaged, and this work provided a baseline of bit-level preservation for content, by protecting the information encoded from the risk of single-copy failure.[16] However, more needed to be done to assess the content and its renderability. We knew what we had, but we didn't really know its condition, or how to approach assessing it.

This next way forward confirms we can read the bits in a meaningful way and identify any potential risks. The steps proposed here can be pursued to varying degrees by most organizations, including those with limited resources:

- Retrieve a working copy of the collection from preservation storage.
- Identify duplicate files.
- Identify empty files and system files.
- Identify files that require intervention to access and recommend an appropriate preservation action (e.g., creating a migrated copy in a more stable file format).
- Identify files that are not "of interest."
- Share these recommendations and discuss them with peers to determine the best approach.
- Document the decisions and work.
- Act on the chosen recommendations and rewrite the collection to preservation storage. (figure 1).

12. Hutchinson, "Protecting Privacy in the Archives."
13. Goldman, "Bridging the Gap," 11.
14. Goldman, "Bridging the Gap," 15.
15. Goldman, "Bridging the Gap," 16–20.
16. Whyte, "Preservation Planning and Workflows," 2017.

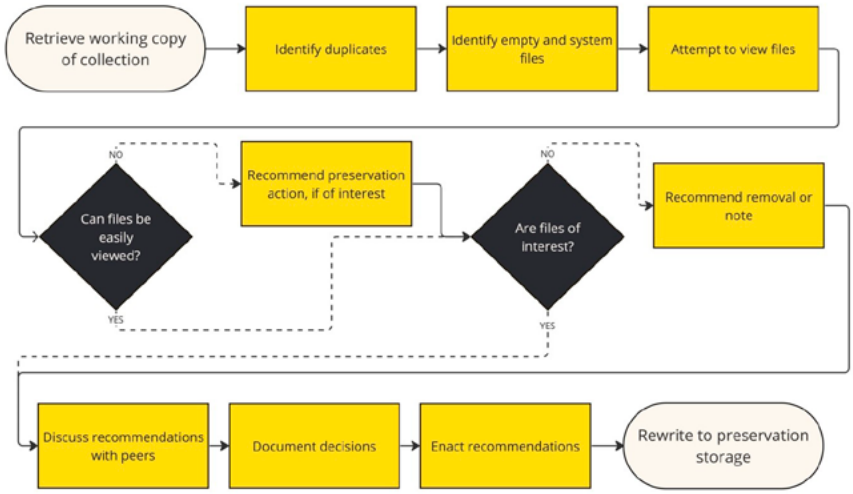

Figure 1. Example preservation assessment workflow

Retrieve a working copy of the collection from preservation storage

Assuming content has already transferred from the donor and/or off the original media to your institution's storage, pull back a working copy of those files, a "use" copy. This copy should be distinct from your primary preservation copy. You can always revert to your preservation copy in case an inadvertent alteration occurs while you are working.

Identify duplicate files

Don't do your work twice. Begin by identifying duplicate files. We use a tool called brünnhilde by Tessa Walsh[17] to compare file checksums and list duplicate files, but other tools—like Forensic Toolkit[18] or FSlint/Czkawka[19]—can also do this work. Then, we consider moving subsequent instances of duplicate files to a Duplicates directory, or deleting them, while logging that work. This reduces workload, mental clutter, and storage use. Deletion or moving may be contentious for those who wish to retain originals as-is. For those who wish to retain their duplicates, consider creating a list of duplicate files to avoid duplicating your preservation assessment work.

A challenge here are close duplicates—files that are essentially duplicates, but that would not be identified as such by a checksum comparison. Examples of this might

17. Tessa Walsh, Brunnhilde 1.9.6 (Mar 31, 2023), https://github.com/tw4l/brunnhilde.
18. Exterro, Forensic Toolkit FTK 7.6 (Exterro, 2023), https://www.exterro.com/ftk-product-downloads.
19. Czkawka is an updated and expanded upon version of FSlint. The two tools have different creators, but both make a point of referencing and acknowledging the other. Rafal Mikrut, Czkawka 7.0 (2020–), https://qarmin.github.io/czkawka; Padraig Brady, FSLint (2004–), https://github.com/pixelb/fslint.

be two copies of the same manuscript in two different file formats, or two copies, but one version includes a cover page. A similar challenge is digitization duplicates. Identifying these and deciding on an appropriate action requires familiarity with the collection, access to both the analog and digital materials, time, and ideally, internal guidelines on how to proceed.

Identify empty files and system files

Empty files are files that are zero bytes. They contain nothing. We use the command-line tool 'find' to locate empty files or directories. For example, the command 'find . -empty' will list all empty directories or files. To limit this search to just files, add '-type f.' You may have a reason for keeping empty files and directories. We typically do not, and find they create visual clutter for the preservationist. Moving them to an 'Excluded' directory or deleting them reduces that clutter.

While handling born-digital manuscripts, it is common to come across numerous system files, which often serve vital functions for software and operating systems, but may not be significant to the collection. Our typical approach relies on our intuition about what constitutes a system or software file, based on file types and locations, and we generally exclude these from our attention. This intuitive approach has served us well, but there are more structured and systematic ways to weed such files. Dalhousie University, for example, uses specialized tools that draw from the National Software Reference Library's (NSRL) Reference Data Set.[20] This dataset allows them to compare the checksums of the files in their collections against known system files. This method offers a robust and automated way of excluding recognized system files from further scrutiny or archival action. The benefit of using the NSRL's Reference Data Set is its extensive database, ensuring that a wide variety of system files, across many versions and variations of software, are effectively identified and can be set aside.[21] It's also worth noting that certain digital forensics tools come pre-integrated with such filtering features. For example, the Forensic Toolkit (FTK) incorporates "Known File Filter" capabilities.[22] These tools can automatically identify and flag system files, simplifying the process and reducing the chance of manual oversight.

20. "National Software Reference Library," National Institute of Standards and Technology (U.S.), https://www.nist.gov/itl/ssd/software-quality-group/national-software-reference-library-nsrl; Creighton Barret, "Tools for identifying duplicate files and known software files" (presentation, BitCurator Users Forum April 2017), http://hdl.handle.net/10222/72878.

21. Creighton Barret, "Digital Forensics Tools and methodologies in archival repositories" (presentation, Faculty of Computer Science, research seminar, Dalhousie University May 16 2017), http://hdl.handle.net/10222/72923.

22. Exterro, Forensic Toolkit FTK 7.6 (Exterro, 2023), https://www.exterro.com/ftk-product-downloads.

Identify files that require intervention to access and recommend an appropriate preservation action (e.g., creating a migrated copy in a more stable file format).

After identifying our primary files of interest, our next significant steps evaluate the files' accessibility.

1. Using Tools for File Identification

Our starting point is file format identification (if this hasn't already been done). For this, we use Siegfried,[23] an instrumental tool that assists us in pinpointing file formats—whether it's a WordPerfect document, a JPEG image, or a PDF. Siegfried works by using file format signatures, a unique sequence of bytes at the beginning of a file used to identify the file's format and type and comparing these signatures to existing databases such as the National Archives UK's PRONOM technical registry.[24] Siegfried fits well into our workflows and is easily automated because it is a command-line tool. We can run it on a whole collection without clicking on each file, and the output is also machine-readable. Siegfried is also built into the aforementioned brunnhilde tool. However, not every file can be precisely identified, particularly older formats that don't have a discernible signature. Yet, in these circumstances, we employ our instincts to deduce a file's type. Insights from the file's age, its contextual environment, or even its naming convention often guide our judgment.

2. Determining File Renderability

Then we ask: can the file be opened and experienced without hurdles? If the process of accessing a file is anything but straightforward, migration typically emerges as our recommended solution. Consider older documents made in software like WordPerfect or MacWrite that involve a tedious importing phase; our preference in such instances is to produce a PDF replica of the original and to identify it as a migrated version, while ensuring the original file remains untouched.

3. Tackling Complex Textual Files

Occasionally, we encounter textual files that resist access. In these scenarios, we use LibreOffice[25] and Quick View Plus[26] for viewing a diverse range of text-based file formats. If these fail, we usually turn to using hexadecimal code-to-ASCII-text converters like the "strings" tool.[27]

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23. Richard Lehane, Siegfried v. 1.11.0 (Dec 2023), https://github.com/richardlehane/siegfried.
24. The National Archives UK, PRONOM Technical Registry (2002–), http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom.
25. The Document Foundation, LibreOffice 7.0 (Berlin, Germany: The Document Foundation, 2020), https://www.libreoffice.org/download/download/.
26. Avanstar Software, Quick View Plus 2020 (2020), https://www.avantstar.com/quick-view-plus-2020.
27. The Open Group, "Strings," in *The Single Unix Specification* (2018), https://pubs.opengroup.org/onlinepubs/9699919799/utilities/strings.html.

4. Deciding on Preservation Actions

Once the files are opened, discussions can take place with the necessary parties to decide if further preservation actions should be taken to reduce overall risk. The goal is longevity and accessibility. Example preservation actions might involve creating PDF versions of an outdated WordStar document, or making a recording of a Flash animation that is difficult to play on contemporary computers.

Identify files that are not "of interest"

As we delve into individual files, our goal also includes sifting out content that may not be of particular interest or relevance to our collection's goals. Three primary criteria shape this process: relevance to the author or collection, presence of sensitive personal information, and third-party content.

Relevance largely hinges on the file's ties to the author's work or personal life. Prime examples of high-interest materials include novel drafts, personal correspondence, introspective writings, and other creative works. While the "irrelevant" category is typically system, or empty files and superfluous duplicates, there are also ambiguous cases. Take, for instance, an innocuous recipe penned by the author. Though initially brushed off as trivial, internal deliberations deemed it noteworthy, tying the recipe back to the author's lived experiences. Relevance is subjective, often shaped by human judgment and necessitating collective discussions. These discussions occur on an ad hoc basis between the preservationist and collecting archivist and throughout the assessment process.

We also use this opportunity to look for sensitive information. When a donor bequeaths their materials, the contents might be as much a mystery to them as to us. From taxes and banking details to personal contact information, the reservoir of sensitive information can be vast. Our stance: highly confidential content, such as taxes and bank statements, warrants exclusion. Meanwhile, materials like files that include an author's personal contact details are merely highlighted, serving as red flags for caution when providing external access. Finally, materials sometimes contain content unrelated to the author, or not by the author. Recognizable identifiers, like the family member's name, help us identify these and exclude them.

Share these recommendations and discuss them with peers to determine the best approach

Once the assessments are complete, we conduct a collaborative review with the preservation assessor, collecting archivist, and a preservation librarian, discussing the recommendations together. Most are blanket recommendations, applying to large swathes of file types, so the conversations can go quickly. We then enact the selected recommendations, such as migrating to other formats or deletion, before re-depositing the collection into storage with the changes and a copy of the preservation assessment. This process aims to maintain the balance of integrity, privacy, and relevance in our collections.

Document the decisions and work

Documentation ensures that the decisions made today can be understood and followed by future conservators, scholars, and the public. By recording our choices and actions, we provide a clear trail of our thought processes, which aids in maintaining transparency, consistency, and accountability in the preservation workflow. This is especially crucial in a field where standards and best practices continue to evolve, and where the context of a collection might change over time. Proper documentation serves as a guidepost for those who will manage and use these collections in the future, ensuring that our work is comprehensible and reproducible.

Drawing from this understanding of the significance of documentation, we found inspiration in the Software-Based Art Preservation project at Tate Modern. Their thorough conservation report templates demonstrate the value of detailed record keeping. Designed to holistically document software-based artwork, these reports covered every facet from production and conservation history to intricate technical specifics, software dependencies, and more. All these were framed with a focus on the artworks' significant properties, and the intended audience.[28] While these templates were crafted for artworks, we recognized the adaptability of their approach and tailored it to suit our manuscript collections.[29] Currently, our assessments are held in a shared drive and deposited into preservation storage with the collection.

Act on the chosen recommendations and re-write the collection to preservation storage

In this last step, we enact our decisions and then rewrite a new preservation copy to our preservation storage, typically replacing the original. It's important to note here that every institution or individual may approach preservation with their own unique set of principles and comfort levels. While some might be hesitant to let go of original files or disk images in all cases, we found that maintaining multiple versions of an item or collection can introduce confusion and, in some cases, increase risk. We still maintain original manifests from acquisitions that include file modification dates and checksums, and we take care not to modify files when working with them at this stage. However, we respect the varied approaches in the community. Whatever your choice, it should reflect your best judgment and the specific needs of your collection.

28. Tom Ensom, Patricia Falcão, and Chris King, "Software-Based Art Preservation – Project | Tate," 2021, accessed March 15, 2023, https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/software-based-art-preservation.

29. Hafsah Hujaleh, "Using Innovative Methods to Rethink Preservation Assessments," (presentation, BitCurator Forum, March 27–30 2023), https://bitcuratorconsortium.org/bcf23-session-2-using-innovative-methods-to-rethink-preservation-assessments.

Limitations

There are limitations to this type of work. It is labor-intensive and requires human review, not only for file format accessibility and renderability, but also for content suitability. This means that we must prioritize collections, and the work does not scale well. Additionally, it is labor-intensive for large-scale, data-dump-style donations, where an entire hard drive is donated and accessioned.

Much of the assessment relies on judgement. Therefore, errors may occur. This could be reduced by consistently seeking clarification from colleagues, but that, in turn, may increase the time it takes to complete the assessment. Another limitation related to human error is the fear of deletion. The subjective nature of the work will at times give rise to moments of hesitation and/or uncertainty when deciding whether a file should be deleted or excluded. This most commonly occurs in collections of authors that are more well known, where there is an assumption that everything they provide could be of interest. In these cases, there is a fear that holding institutions cannot delete or discard any files, solely because of who they are.

If We Do Nothing, Most of it Will Probably Be Fine

In 2011, Goldman wrote, "leaving unattended the born-digital materials already entrusted to us—leaving disks in boxes—is guaranteed failure. If we were going to ignore the material, we might as well not have acquired it,"[17] while warning that the approach he proposed would not be sufficient in the long run. We have tried here to meet Goldman's challenge, inspire another step on the road, and to achieve progress even when it is modest. Goldman got us to a point where if we do nothing, we'd probably be fine, but it's still nice to go a little further.

The journey of preservation is not a solitary one. By sharing our methodologies and insights, we hope to foster a spirit of collaboration and collective growth within the community.[30] As we emphasized, each organization and individual will have its unique approach, reflecting their context and constraints, and those approaches may change with each unique collection. What remains consistent is the passion for safeguarding our digital heritage and ensuring its accessibility for future generations. For those looking for inspiration and peers, we also recommend the Digital Preservation Coalition, whose *Handbook* includes an interactive decision tree for the selection of digital materials,[31] and the BitCurator Consortium, whose annual and accessible Forum brings together colleagues from all levels of experience. Moving forward, we're exploring the potential of e-discovery tools and AI/ML tools to bolster our work.

30. Hujaleh, "Using Innovative Methods."
31. Digital Preservation Coalition, *Digital Preservation Handbook, 2nd Edition*—Interactive Assessment: Selection of Digital Materials for Long-term Retention (2015), https://www.dpconline.org/handbook/organisational-activities/decision-tree/interactive-assessment.

We are also developing scripts to test the opening and conversion of common file formats, like detecting and automating PDF conversions with a headless LibreOffice converter. Another key recommendation we see progress on is to encourage donors to be more selective in their donations. Instead of entire hard drives, we prefer donors to curate and organize specific files, making our tasks as preservationists more manageable and focused.

The essence of our message in this article is about action and progress. By sharing our approach, we also invite others to share their techniques. Preservation is a collective effort, and by pooling our knowledge, we can navigate its challenges more effectively.

Elizabeth Hobart

Describing Games for Special Collections Libraries

Special collections libraries sometimes include games among their collections. However, games pose a challenge to catalogers, who are typically trained in printed formats. There is no single standard for cataloging games for special collections libraries. "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," published by Online Audiovisual Catalogers, focuses on circulating collections. The Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials manuals provide guidance on describing resources as artifacts but do not provide instructions for cataloging three-dimensional objects. As a result, special collections catalogers describing games at the item level draw instructions from multiple standards. This article describes the process of cataloging a game collection. Using two items from the collection as illustrative examples, the article shows how instructions from RDA, the OLAC Best Practices, and the DCRM manuals were used together to provide users with information to identify resources and to improve discovery of games in the library's catalog.

Special collections libraries sometimes include games among their collections. However, games pose a challenge to catalogers, who are typically trained in printed formats, leading catalogers to sometimes view games as "overly complex" bibliographic entities.[1] Further, there is no single standard for cataloging games for special collections libraries. *Resource Description and Access* (RDA) provides general guidance on cataloging library materials in all formats. For cataloging three-dimensional objects, the "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," published by Online Audiovisual Catalogers, Inc. (OLAC) in 2020, is an excellent starting point but focuses on circulating collections.[2] Special collections libraries have different descriptive needs, summarized by the *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials* (DCRM) manuals as the "ready identification of copies of a resource," and, "a

1. Diane Robson, Catherine Sassen, Jason Thomale, and Kevin Yanowski, "Enhancing the Discovery of Tabletop Games," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 63.3 (July 2019): 199.
2. Objects Best Practices Task Force, Cataloging Policy Committee, "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," Online Audiovisual Catalogers, Inc. (2020), available online at https://www.olacinc.org/sites/default/files/OLAC_Objects_BestPractices_22Jan2020.pdf [accessed October 25, 2021].

more exact description of the resource as an artifact."[3] However, while the DCRM manuals provide guidance on describing resources as artifacts, they do not provide instructions for cataloging three-dimensional objects. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (RDA Edition)* (DCRMR) currently contains instructions for books only. Of the six earlier, format-specific DCRM manuals (books, serials, graphics, cartographic, music, and manuscripts), *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)* (DCRM(G)) is the closest, but still only defines "graphic material" as, "generally, a two-dimensional pictorial representation."[4] As a result, special collections catalogers describing games at the item level often draw instructions from multiple standards.

This article describes the process of cataloging a game collection at Pennsylvania State University (Penn State). It highlights decisions made, including selecting standards and information included in the catalog records. Using two items from the Eberly Family Special Collections Library—a paper toy and a deck of cards—as illustrative examples, the article shows how instructions from RDA, the OLAC Best Practices, and the DCRM manuals were used together to provide users with information to identify resources in the collection and to improve discovery of games in the library's catalog.

Toys and Games in Eberly Family Special Collections Library

The collection of toys and games in the Eberly Family Special Collections Library (the "game collection") at Penn State consists of sixty-four cataloged items, chiefly from the nineteenth century, with a few from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The first games entered the library's collections in the 1970s as part of a collection of German materials donated by Philip Allison Shelley, a professor of German and comparative literature. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the library expanded this collection with the purchase of additional German games. In the 2010s, due to curatorial interest in games, more were acquired, albeit with a broader collecting scope. The collection expanded to include dance history, education, women's studies, and Pennsylvania Amish. The most common formats in the collection are toys (twenty items), card games (fourteen items), board games (twelve items), and puzzles (eight items). Additional formats include blocks, toy books, and construction games.

Choice of Descriptive Standards

First, a decision needed to be made as to whether to catalog the games at the item level, or to describe them archivally at the collection level. Margaret Nichols compared archival description and bibliographic cataloging as the difference between summariz-

3. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)* (Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, 2007), 12.

4. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)* (Chicago: Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, 2013), 8, 217.

ing and differentiating.[5] Archival collections are described at the collection level and include information on context, custodial history, and structure of the collection—in other words, "hit[ting] the highlights," without, "minute detail or with extensive transcription." On the other hand, catalogers, "precisely identify a manifestation and *distinguish* it from other manifestations of the same work."[6] Some major game collections use archival description, including the game collection in the Browne Popular Culture Library at Bowling Green State University, and the Edwin and Terry Murray Collection of Role-Playing Games at Duke University.[7] The finding aids begin with collection-level information, including scope and content, biographical and historical information, arrangement, and restrictions. From there, they narrow to series (such as card games or board games) and then to items, giving researchers a high-level overview and facilitating browsing. However, details are harder to capture. For example, Bowling Green's scope and contents note states that some of the games are in their original packaging, while others are "incomplete and worn down," but it is difficult to determine which games are in which condition.

Cataloging games at the item level provides greater detail. As an example of item level cataloging, Duke University's Rubenstein Library catalogs games outside of the Murray Role-Playing Game collection. These records include transcription of title and publication information, descriptions of boxes and the game boards, detailed physical descriptions enumerating the games' contents, and item-level notes to describe the games' custodial history and provenance. By cataloging at the item level, the context of each game within the larger collection is less clear than it is for the Murray Role-Playing Games, but other aspects are described in much more detail. Item-level cataloging requires significant time, however. Copy cataloging (i.e., editing and reusing an existing catalog record, usually from a shared bibliographic database such as OCLC WorldCat) can save time, if records are available, but there is no guarantee there will be such records—especially for a highly specialized collection. Of the sixty-four games in Eberly Family Special Collections Library, only three had cataloging available. The remaining games all needed original records.

Additionally, appendix B of DCRM(G) provides instructions for creating group-level records, which allows catalogers to create, "collective bibliographic descriptions for groups of graphic materials that were not originally conceived of or published as a finite set," including both previously-assembled collections, and those

5. Margaret F. Nichols, "The Cataloger and the Archivist Should Be Friends: Or, Herding vs. Milking Special Collections," *RBM* 12.1 (Spring 2011): 27.
6. Nichols, "The Cataloger," 26 (emphasis in original).
7. "SpColl 8: Games Collection," Browne Popular Culture Library, Bowling Green State University, available online at (https://www.bgsu.edu/library/pcl/Collections/games.html) [accessed October 25, 2021]; "Edwin and Terry Murray Collection of Role-Playing Games, 1972–2017," Duke University Library, available online at (https://archives.lib.duke.edu/catalog/murrayrpg) [accessed October 25, 2021].

assembled by the library.[8] DCRM(G) suggests group-level records are appropriate for materials that can be "understood collectively," such as items that share provenance or format, materials that share a collective set of access points, or materials that "are judged not to merit item-level cataloging."[9] In addition, collection-level description (either archival description or group-level cataloging) can be used in conjunction with item-level cataloging, with the collection record linking to the individual records.

In the case of the historic game collection in Eberly Family Special Collections Library, a decision was made to catalog at the item level using the MARC 21 format. Summation provided by archival description—or a high-level overview provided by group-level cataloging—would not benefit this collection, as the games have little in common: they do not have a shared provenance (like the Murray Role-Playing Games do), they cover a wide range of subjects, they were published in different countries at different times, and they represent a variety of genres. As a result, they do not fit the suggested criteria in DCRM(G): they are not understood collectively and do not share collective access points. Since the games in the collection showcase a variety of printers, techniques, materials, and formats, the greater detail provided by item-level cataloging was deemed to be essential, even though a single collection-level record would require less labor. In addition, contributing the original records to OCLC permits other libraries to use the records for copy cataloging.

Full-Record Examples

Bal d'enfants: travesti

Bal d'enfants: travesti (*Bal d'enfants*) is a paper toy of the mid-nineteenth century, published by the French firm of *Marchands de nouveautés*. The toy, housed in an octagonal box, includes a floor and a backdrop depicting a ballroom (figure 1). The toy includes free-standing pieces backed with wooden supports depicting furniture and dancers (figure 2). Also included are dancers with hinged limbs, which may be suspended from strings threaded through the backdrop (figure 3). Players arrange the furniture and dancers as they please, creating a ballroom scene.

Figure 1. Box for *Bal d'enfants*. (Source: Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University.)

8. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 145.
9. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 147–148.

Figure 2. *Bal d'enfants* decorated with furniture and dancers. (Source: Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University.)

Figure 3. Detail of *Bal d'enfants* with dancers suspended from string. (Source: Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University.)

Below is the content of the catalog record for *Bal d'enfants.*

Title	Bal d'enfants : travesti.
Publication information	À Paris : Chez les Marchands de Nouveautés, [between 1860 and 1869?]
Manufacture information	[Paris] : Lemercier, Benard et Cie
Physical description	1 toy (1 floor, 1 backdrop, 18 pieces) : paper, wood, color ; in box 28 x 19 x 4 cm
Content type	three-dimensional form
Media type	unmediated
Carrier type	object
Material	paper wood
Color content	color
Form of work	Toys (recreational artifacts)
Source of title	Title from container.
Note	Lithographed by Lemercier, Benard et Cie.
Note	Date of publication from Whitton, cited below.
Citation	Whitton, B. Paper toys of the world, page 31
Summary	Housed in an octagonal box with label mounted to cover. Label includes a hand-colored lithograph illustration of a ballroom. Contents includes a floor, backed with wood, and paper backdrop painted in color. Backdrop is strung with a pair of strings attached to a weight behind the backdrop. Includes 4 hinged paper figures of dancers, which may be balanced on the string. When the weight is moved, the figures appear to dance. Also includes various paper pieces with wood backing to decorate the scene, including six decorative chairs, a sofa with a sleeping child, a trio of musicians, and a waiter serving drinks to children.
Local note	Rare Books copy: From the collection of Blair Whitton.
Subject	Paper toys -- Specimens.
Subject	Balls (Parties) -- France -- 19th century.
Genre	Paper toys.
Added entry	Whitton, Blair, former owner.
Added entry	Marchands de nouveautés, publisher.
Added entry	Lemercier, Benard et cie, printer.
Place name added entry	France -- Paris.

Musikalische Zauber-Karten

Musikalische Zauber-Karten is a set of playing cards printed and distributed in Germany during the mid-nineteenth century. Each card is printed with four bars of music: two from a galop and two from a polka (figure 4). Players arrange eight cards by number to create unique musical compositions (figure 5).

Figure 4. Container for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten*. (Source: Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University.)

Figure 5. Sample playing card for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten*. (Source: Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University.)

Below is the content of the catalog record for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten.*

Title	Musikalische Zauber-Karten, oder, die Kunst, ohne alle musikalische Vorkenntnisse die verschiedensten Tänze, Galopp, Polka : zu componiren von einem Wohlbekannten.
Variant title	At head of title: 1001 Tanz
Variant title	Kunst, ohne alle musikalische Vorkenntnisse die verschiedensten Tänze, Galopp, Polka
Variant title	Musikalische Zauberkarten
Edition	Zweite Auflage.
Publication information	Berlin : Hasselberg'sche Verlagshandlung, [1856]
Manufacture information	[Berlin] : Lith. u. Druck v. C. Ullrich
Physical description	1 game (33 cards) : color, music ; box 8 x 11 x 2 cm
Content type	notated music
Content type	still image
Media type	unmediated
Carrier type	card
Form of work	Card games.
Source of title	Title from container.
Note	"Einzige rechtmässige Ausgabe"--Container.
Note	Date of publication from vendor's description.
Language	Instructions in German and French.
Summary	Cards to teach children music and dance. Each card contains four measures of music for piano: two bars of a galop at the top of the card, and two of a polka at the bottom. Players arrange cards according to rank to create a galop and a polka. Cards may be arranged in thousands of patterns to create unique compositions. Includes 32 playing cards and one instructional card. Playing cards are stenciled and colored. Instruction card is letterpress.
Subject	Galops.
Subject	Polkas.
Subject	Piano music -- Instruction and study.
Genre	Puzzles and games.
Genre	Card games.
Added entry	Ullrich, C. (Carl Wilhelm), 1815-1875, lithographer, printer.
Added entry	Hasselberg'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, printer.
Place name added entry	Germany -- Berlin.

Details in the Catalog Record

In accordance with recommendations from the OLAC Best Practices, all games were cataloged using the visual materials workform in OCLC. The MARC leader/006 (Type of record) was set to “r” for “three-dimensional artifact or naturally occurring object,” and the MARC field 008/33 (type of visual material) was coded as either “g” for “game” or “w” for “toy,” as appropriate.[10] These codes were applied to all games in the collection, including card games. Since cards themselves are two-dimensional, institutions sometimes catalog these materials using MARC leader/006 (Type of record) “k” for “two-dimensional nonprojectable graphic.”[11] Guidance here was again drawn from the Best Practices, which treats card games as objects rather than as two-dimensional images. This consistent coding enables faceting of search results. In 2019, with the implementation of a Blacklight discovery layer, facets were added to the catalog to limit search results to library and format. A facet for “Games/Toys” was added to collocate all records with the type of visual material coded “g” (game) or “w” (toy). Examining catalogs for twenty-eight other libraries with games holdings revealed a wide variety of terms, including “three-dimensional object,” “image,” “two-dimensional object,” “other,” “realia,” and “unknown,” with “game” used by only four libraries[12] (table 1). At Penn State, the clearer terminology, “Games/Toys,” was employed to better convey meaning to users, improving discovery for this collection.

TABLE 1
Format for Games in Public Catalogs

Category	Number of libraries
3D object	11
Image/2D graphic	8
Other	5
Game/Board game	4
Kit	4
Realia	3
Visual material	3
Object	2
Manuscript/Archive	1
Non-print	1
Unknown	1

In accordance with Penn State’s policy, catalog records were created in the MARC 21 format using RDA as the

10. “Leader,” MARC 21 Format for Bibliographic Data, Library of Congress Network Development and MARC Standards Office, available online at (https://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bdleader.html) [accessed February 13, 2024]; “008 – Visual Materials,” MARC 21 Format for Bibliographic Data, Library of Congress Network Development and MARC Standards Office, available online at (https://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bd008v.html) [accessed February 13, 2024].
11. “Leader,” MARC 21 Format for Bibliographic Data.
12. Catalogs examined include: The Bodleian Library, Brown University, Bryn Mawr, Brigham Young University, Case Western Reserve University, Cornell University, DePaul University, Duke University, University of Kansas, Kent State, the Library of Congress, University of Liverpool, Louisiana State University, Miami University, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Oberlin College, Oregon State University, Princeton University, San Diego State University, Stanford University, University of Connecticut, UCLA, University of Miami, University of North Texas, University of Southern Mississippi, Vanderbilt University, and Wayne State University.

descriptive standard. RDA provides general cataloging instructions, "covering all types of content and media."[13] Its predecessor, *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (Second Edition)* (AACR2), provided general rules in an introductory chapter with format-specific chapters following, whereas RDA provides a single set of instructions for all formats, with format-specific guidance added only when needed. As a result of RDA's new approach, instructions pertaining to cataloging three-dimensional objects are integrated throughout the text.[14] Although RDA is intended to be used with all formats, the editors of the OLAC Best Practices found that the instructions in RDA were, "mainly intended for textual materials," and note that cataloging of three-dimensional objects is, "not particularly well represented in RDA."[15] The Best Practices are intended to, "work in tandem with RDA to provide best practices in cataloging objects."[16] Additionally, instructions from the DCRM manuals, particularly DCRM(G), were used for capturing copy-specific information. While the DCRM manuals were consulted, these records are not full DCRM cataloging. Instead, they represent "special collections cataloging," defined by *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)* (DCRM(B)) as "follow[ing] the spirit" of DCRM, including added notes and details, without meeting the full requirements.[17] As a result, the records are coded as RDA, but not as DCRM.

As a first step, catalogers select the source of information for transcribed information, including title, edition, and publication. RDA 2.2.2.4.1 provides several possible sources in order of preference, including, "a container or accompanying material issued with the manifestation."[18] The OLAC Best Practices instruct catalogers to, "choose a source of information that identifies the resource as a whole."[19] Both *Bal d'enfants* and *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* include a title on the label affixed to the container, which was selected as the preferred source of information. *Musikalische*

13. "About RDA," *RDA Toolkit*, available online at https://original.rdatoolkit.org [accessed October 11, 2021].

14. A new version of the RDA Toolkit was released subsequent to the cataloging project described in this article. As of this writing, this new version, referred to as the official RDA Toolkit, has not been adopted by the Library of Congress of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC). PCC will implement the official RDA Toolkit on a rolling basis, beginning in May 2024. (see "Update on the PCC's implementation of the Official RDA Toolkit," *Program for Cooperative Cataloging*, available online https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/rda/update-on-PCC-implementation-of-Official-RDA.pdf [accessed February 13, 2024]). In addition, the OLAC Best Practices are aligned with the original Toolkit. As a result, the original Toolkit will be referenced throughout. Likewise, references to the *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials* manuals will be to the original format-specific DCRM suite rather than DCRMR, which is aligned to the official RDA Toolkit.

15. Objects Best Practices Task Force, "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," 10, 12.

16. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 12.

17. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*, 152.

18. "Identifying Manifestations and Items," *RDA Toolkit*, available online at https://original.rdatoolkit.org [accessed October 11, 2021].

19. Objects Best Practices Task Force, "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," 29.

Zauber-Karten requires catalogers to decide whether "1001 Tanz" at the head of the label is part of the title. When multiple forms of the title appear in the same language, RDA 2.3.2.5 and the Best Practices instruct catalogers to select the title based on sequence, layout, or typography.[20] Because *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* is typographically larger and more prominent, this was selected as the title proper, with "1001 Tanz" added as a variant title. In addition, transcription guidelines in DCRM(G) instruct catalogers to convert early forms of symbols to the modern form, in this case, changing the symbol following "Zauber" to a hyphen.[21]

The labels also contain both publication and manufacture information. However, for both games, key pieces of information were missing, including place of manufacture and date of publication. Supplying place of manufacture was straightforward, as the location for both printers was easily ascertainable in reference sources. Supplying the date of publication was trickier but necessary, as the OLAC Best Practices instructed catalogers to supply a date of either publication, distribution, or manufacture, when a date is not present on the resource. For *Bal d'enfants*, Blair Whitton's *Paper Toys of the World* states that the publication "possibly dates in the 1860s."[22] No other sources supplied a more precise date, so date of publication was recorded as "between 1860 and 1869?" No reference sources were identified for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten*, so date of publication was supplied from the dealer's description. Place of manufacture and date of publication were both enclosed in square brackets to show that the information came from an external source.

Since these games were cataloged for special collections, the records contain a full inventory of the games' contents, including an enumeration of all playing pieces. RDA 3.4.6, "Extent of Three-Dimensional Form," instructs catalogers to record extent for objects using the number and types of units, taking a term for type of unit from a list of carrier types, which included "game," "jigsaw puzzle," "flash card," and "toy."[23] RDA and the Best Practices further instructed catalogers to record number of subunits, such as game pieces, in parentheses "when appropriate."[24] A decision was made to record all subunits, as a full record of the game's contents serves as an inventory, in case of loss. Unlike type of unit, however, RDA does not provide a list of terms to be used for subunits, allowing catalogers to apply more descriptive terminology as appropriate. For example, the subunit for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* is "cards." For *Bal d'enfants*, subunits include the floor, backdrop, and a count of the other pieces.

20. "Title," *RDA Toolkit*, available online at https://original.rdatoolkit.org [accessed October 11, 2021]; Objects Best Practices Task Force, "Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21," 32.
21. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 191–192.
22. Blair Whitton, *Paper Toys of the World* (Cumberland, MD: Hobby House Press, 1986), 31.
23. "RDA Carrier Extent Unit," *RDA Registry*, available online at http://www.rdaregistry.info/termList/RDACarrierEU/ [accessed October 25, 2021].
24. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 58.

For a board game, subunits might include "game board," "pieces," "dice," or other components.

Content type, media type, and carrier type were then recorded, using terminology drawn from the RDA value vocabularies.[25] The OLAC Best Practices noted that content type is "usually three-dimensional form," for objects, but this can vary.[26] Since *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* consists of cards—and therefore is not three-dimensional—other appropriate content terminology ("still image" and "notated music") were supplied, instead. "Media type" refers to "a categorization that reflects the general type of intermediation device required."[27] For realia, media type will almost always be "unmediated." More specific details, such as information on printing techniques, may be recorded as notes. For three-dimensional objects such as games, carrier type will most often be "object." Cards games are again an exception, using carrier type "cards" instead.

The records were then enhanced with notes. Both the Best Practices and DCRM(G) emphasize the importance of notes as, "an important way of conveying to the user information that would otherwise be difficult to distill into discrete RDA elements."[28] Summary notes were especially useful for adding details not apparent from the rest of the description. Neither the Best Practices nor DCRM(G) require summaries, but DCRM(G) does instruct catalogers to include a summary of the content, "if not apparent from the body of the description," and to include notes on the, "nature, scope, or artistic form when useful to amplify or explain," information recorded in the title.[29] For *Bal d'enfants*, a summary was added to provide additional details about materials, printing technique, and how players might engage with the toy. The summary for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* describes the physical layout of the cards, printing techniques, and summarizes gameplay.

In addition, bibliographic citations were added when applicable. The Best Practices include citations as an option, but do not address them deeply, directing catalogers only to format references as instructed in *Standard Citation Forms for Rare Materials Cataloging*. By contrast, all of the DCRM manuals recommend including citations. DCRM(G) requires citations any time information is supplied from an outside source and gives an option to include additional citations when considered impor-

25. "RDA Value Vocabularies," *RDA Registry*, available online at https://www.rdaregistry.info/termList/ [accessed April 27, 2022].
26. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 64.
27. "RDA Media Type," *RDA Registry*, available online at https://www.rdaregistry.info/termList/RDAMediaType/ [accessed April 27, 2022].
28. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 65.
29. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 126.

tant.[30] Adding citations amplifies the information in the catalog record and directs library patrons to additional resources. For *Bal d'enfants*, since the date of publication was supplied from a reference source, a citation was added to the record.

Special collections cataloging relies on local notes to provide copy-specific information, such as imperfections, provenance, custodial history, and other distinctive details.[31] Local notes allow catalogers to differentiate the copy in hand from other existing copies. The OLAC Best Practices do not give guidance on local notes, and DCRM(G) includes instructions only for provenance, source of acquisition, and exhibition history. DCRM(B) provides more complete instructions for creation of local notes, although DCRM(B) states that the instructions are not prescriptive, giving leeway to catalogers to decide which details are most important.[32] At Penn State, imperfections—such as missing pieces or damage—were always noted. When known, provenance details were also added. For instance, a local note was added to the record for *Bal d'enfants* to indicate that it was from the collection of the author of *Paper Toys of the World*.

Next, subject and genre terms were added. DCRM(G) encourages a "full complement" of subject headings and use of genre/form headings for full-level records.[33] The OLAC Best Practices provided some guidance on subject access but noted that they keep their advice "on a very practical level."[34] They recommended using the subdivision "Specimens" to indicate that the object described *was* a game or toy rather than being *about* games or toys. For *Bal d'enfants*, the subject heading "Paper toys—Specimens" was added, as well as the Library of Congress Subject Heading "Balls (parties)," since the work was about balls. For *Musikalische Zauber-Karten*, since the game contained both galops and polkas, headings were added for both. In addition, since the object of the game was to teach piano music, a heading was added for "Piano music—Instruction and study."

The Best Practices note that the Library of Congress Genre/Form Thesaurus (LCGFT) is of "limited use" for objects, although it listed a few specific terms that may be used, including "Board games," and "Puzzles and games."[35] It recommended several other possible sources of genre terms, including the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (AAT) from the Getty Research Institute, *Genre Terms for Tabletop Games*, and *Thesaurus for Graphic Materials* (TGM) from the Library of Congress. Some additional guidance is given in DCRM(G), appendix B, which provided instructions on

30. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 136.
31. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*, 145.
32. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*, 145.
33. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 20.
34. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 13.
35. Objects Best Practices Task Force, 162.

creating group-level records, encouraging catalogers to prefer terminology in TGM, and noting that other controlled vocabularies—such as AAT or the RBMS controlled vocabularies—may also be used.[36] Locally, terminology from LCGFT was preferred, when available, but was also enhanced with terms from other vocabularies as needed. The record for *Musikalische Zauber-Karten* includes the broad genre term, "Puzzles and games," and the narrower, "Card games," from LCGFT. TGM provides more specific terminology for toys than LCGFT, so, for *Bal d'enfants*, the genre term, "Paper toys" was selected from TGM.

Finally, records were enhanced with access points for publisher or printer using authorized name forms from the Library of Congress Name Authority File, when available. Supplying names from the Name Authority File ensured that name forms were consistent across records, which assisted collocation. Although these access points are optional, DCRM(G) stated that full-level records, "may contain headings for printers, publishers, former owners, etc.," in addition to headings included in catalog records for circulating items.[37] Since special collections researchers will sometimes search for items from a particular publisher or printer, adding these details potentially benefits patrons without significantly increasing catalogers' work. In addition, for *Bal d'enfants*, an added entry was made for Blair Whitton—using the RDA relationship designator "former owner"—to denote their relationship to the item.

Conclusion

As of February 2024, sixty-four games were cataloged for the Eberly Family Special Collections Library, and the collection continues to grow. Establishing descriptive practices, pulling instructions from RDA, the OLAC Best Practices, and the DCRM manuals as appropriate, ensured that the records captured detailed information about both the publication as a whole, and copy-specific details. Information important to special collections researchers—including printing techniques, names of publishers, and item-level information—all appeared in the records, when known and available. However, this project also highlights the need for "out-of-the-box" solutions for non-print formats, especially for special collections libraries. While RDA provides instructions for cataloging three-dimensional objects and realia, the instructions are dispersed throughout the text. The OLAC Best Practices conveniently pull these instructions together in a clear, workflow-based manual, but special collections catalogers still need further guidance from the DCRM manuals. In addition, discovery of these resources—many unique to Penn State—required local changes to the library's discovery layer.

An additional challenge was frequent lack of bibliographic information relating to games. All library cataloging is based on the item, in hand, and examination of a

36. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 164.
37. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, 20.

single item cannot capture the full bibliographic history of the manifestation. When describing rare books, catalogers consult descriptive bibliographies or other reference sources to learn about the printing history. However, it is unusual to find this sort of detailed reference source for games. Furthermore, bibliographic description of books has a long history, with important works by authors, such as G. Thomas Tanselle and Fredson Bowers. Similar works for bibliographic description of games do not yet exist. Cataloging is a necessary step to making games available to future researchers. When based on a single specimen with no additional information, cataloging will necessarily flatten and simplify the description of the resource. Catalogers can describe the items in their collections in detail to try to capture any potential variants, but, with only one specimen in hand, details will inevitably be missed.

The research conducted by Robson, et al., suggests that games are frequently undercataloged, noting that, "simply getting items into the catalog is a great place to start," and that enhancing the records, "further increases the likelihood that users will find those items."[38] Those enhancements, however, require understanding which information will be useful to users. Penn State's approach—combining general cataloging guidelines with rare materials guidelines—ensures that games are discoverable, with the added description and access points necessary for special collections. While other libraries will need to adapt these approaches to their local context, the practices employed at Penn State may help others develop their own local policies and guidelines for cataloging these materials.

38. Robson et al., "Enhancing the Discovery of Tabletop Games," 211–212.

Anthology: Papers from "The Power of New Voices"

Editor's Note:

> *The following essays originally appeared as lightning talk presentations during the RBMS annual conference. The Power of New Voices (PONV) is an annual conference session featuring the work of early-career individuals, defined as five years post-Master's. Developed in response to calls for broader representation and opportunity for emerging voices after the 2019 RBMS conference, and through collaboration between then-Committee Co-chairs Elspeth Healey and Katie Henningsen (Scholarships), Diane Dias De Fazio and Erika Jenns (Membership & Professional Development), and Francesca Marini (Diversity); PONV debuted in 2021 and was co-organized by Gina Nortonsmith and Meghan Constantinou, and a subcommittee comprised of former scholarship recipients Sara Schliep, Kathryn Whalen, Sarah Allison, and Rachel Makarowski. In advance of this volume, nineteen PONV panelists were contacted to submit essays to* RBM. *Essays included herein reflect the brevity of the lightning talk format, were condensed from longer scholarship (including a Master's-level thesis), and some apply first-person voice and future perfect tense intentionally.*

Practical Book History: Making an MLIS Practicum Work for Me

Anna Opryszko

Working in special collections is frequently a lesson in humility. In a profession that can cover many types of roles, with collections that cover every subject imaginable, and users from all walks of life, full mastery of every competency can't be expected and is arguably impossible. But how does one move forward with their career when there is no clear path to learn a very particular, very important set of knowledge?

For special collections librarians who work in and with collections of rare books, having a basic proficiency in the history of the book is expected. The ACRL/RBMS Competencies for Special Collections Professionals include as a fundamental competency:

> knowledge of the production and dissemination of information resources, including the history of the book and the book arts, book construction, editions and variants, binding history, illustration techniques, digital printing and publishing techniques, typefaces, paper, parchment, paleography, and scribal practices.[1]

Consider the types of materials that might be found in a rare books collection, and the role that special collections professionals hold as experts, in both content and materiality. It stands to reason, then, that gaining knowledge about materiality is necessary for early-career special collections librarians. What is less obvious is how to develop this type of knowledge when graduate programs in library science don't always offer courses in it. There are extracurricular options, but for those pursuing graduate degrees, accessing educational opportunities like Rare Book School can be difficult, costly, or simply out of the question.

This is where a practicum can play a valuable role. Practicums and internships can be essential, "not just for career exploration and future job placement, but for enhancing academic achievement, personal growth, and other positive educational outcomes."[2] Practicums are often designed to teach skills in a "learning-by-doing" format, such as reference services or archival processing, and don't teach theoretical or historical knowledge. However, I believe there is great potential for graduate students to learn "practical book history," that is, book history through a learning-by-doing process, in the structure of a practicum.

In early 2022, during my second year of my MLIS program, I discovered that I lacked a grounding in book history, a necessary requirement for the profession I saw myself pursuing. The following case study describes my experience designing a practicum to fill this gap.

I was employed full-time as Public Services Supervisor, a paraprofessional library assistant role, at the University of Minnesota's Wangensteen Historical Library, a collection with 73,000 rare books covering five centuries on the history of health and medicine. I felt lucky to be working full-time while pursuing my MLIS, and I assumed that I would never need to do a practicum. They weren't required in my program, and I thought that everything I'd need to know I could learn on the job. I had about ten years' experience working in libraries and nearly two graduate degrees:

1. "Guidelines: Competencies for Special Collections Professionals," *Association of College & Research Libraries Guidelines, Standards, and Frameworks*, last modified March 6, 2017, https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/comp4specollect.
2. Maggie Gallup Kopp, "Internships in Special Collections: Experiential Pedagogy, Intentional Design, and High-Impact Practice," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 20, no. 1 (2019): 12, https://doi.org/10.5860/rbm.20.1.12.

my first, in American Studies, taught me how to perform historical research and what types of support graduate students need; and my MLIS showed me the foundations and theory behind much of my work experience. But I had no formal education in book history, nor was there a course available. This void in my education looked bigger with each instructional session I taught.

We taught a lot of classes at the Wangensteen: about seventy sessions every year, reaching 1,700 students from all academic disciplines. When they came to us, most students had never been to a special collections library before, or worked with rare books. But no matter who we worked with, or what the class topic was, students had questions about the materiality of these books. They asked me: Why does a page, or an illustration, or the binding, look the way it does? How can we know how and why the book was used, and by whom, and when? How is it printed? Why is this page uncut? Why is this word crossed out? And instructors weren't the ones initiating these questions, either: the students sincerely wanted to know. I started to realize how big that gap in my knowledge really was.

I designed a practicum with a specific and practical goal: I wanted to learn book history in a way that would be immediately applicable to our instructional program. I arranged to spend summer 2022 completing a practicum at the Wangensteen, my place of work, with the curator as the site supervisor. I decided to split my practicum into three "units." First, I focused on the scholarly side. I made a reading list for myself and absorbed as much as I could through books alone. I had already planned to attend a course at Rare Book School, so I used that to round off my "studying" unit. Next, I sought out new connections. I wanted to know how current rare books professionals applied their knowledge of book history to their professional practice; I wanted to see it in use. I explored digital exhibits, read Twitter threads, and reached out to a handful of people for informational interviews. Finally, I wanted to create some kind of public-facing output—an educational tool that we could provide students with, to wrap up this project, to get a good overview of what I had learned.

I developed a digital resource using ArcGIS StoryMaps that walked the user through major features of early printed books from Europe. The platform allows for an immersive experience that mimics the anticipation that comes from turning a page, so I found it effective as a digital surrogate. The process of creating the StoryMap developed resource-creation skills and reinforced my theoretical knowledge; by the end of my practicum I had created a tangible and accessible resource that could be freely shared.[3]

3. Anna Opryszko. "The Wagensteen Unbound: a Book History Primer," https://z.umn.edu/WangensteenUnbound, August 21, 2022. My reading list for this project can be found at the end of the StoryMap, under the "Further Resources" heading.

Many early-career special collections professionals and paraprofessionals would benefit from dedicated time to learn or reinforce prior knowledge of book history, as well as MLIS students without immediate access to rare books or professional development opportunities. There are two main takeaways from my practicum that I think are achievable, and I hope are useful, for all.

First, there are many accessible introductory texts to bibliography and book history. If you're hoping to establish a solid baseline of knowledge, don't jump straight to Bowers or Gaskell: start with blog posts from your favorite rare books librarians, an overview like Sarah Werner's *Studying Early Printed Books 1450–1800: a Practical Guide*, or a very visual text like David Pearson's *Books as History: the Importance of Books Beyond their Texts*. Rare Book School's website includes advance reading lists from many of their classes, so find the topics that resonate most with your educational and professional goals, and explore the texts listed for relevant classes. If possible, advocate for building in time to read and learn. After all, as the ACRL/RBMS Competencies lay out, this knowledge is a fundamental part of being a special collections professional.

Second, this field is packed with expertise and so many of these experts are very generous with their time. Participating in formal mentorship programs, or building professional relationships at conferences, or in committees, can open opportunities to learn from others. I found it meaningful to connect with rare books professionals who were willing to share recommendations for books or lectures, who contextualized ways of incorporating book history into pedagogical practice, and who offered to foster further connections down the road.

I was in a unique position to do this practicum. I had the benefit of working full-time in a rare books collection, with a supervisor who allowed me free reign for this project, and who encouraged me to apply for a Rare Book School scholarship—well before creating this practicum—which allowed me to incorporate that experience into it. But it took being in a job that required new skills and that challenged me every day to see exactly what my formal education was missing. It's inevitable to have gaps in education, and, I think, it's inevitable to feel restricted within institutional expectations, but, in this instance, advocating for what I knew I needed to know, and expanding the bounds of what a practicum could be, allowed me to gain a truly practical set of skills.

Overnight College Historian: Historical Whiplash and the Flexibility of New Archivists

by Louise LoBello

Introduction[4]

No one said it was easy to start a job, and the archival field makes sure of that. In 2020, I started my first full-time permanent position. That first year, the constant anxiety of a pandemic, and the pressure to learn as much as I could about the history of the institution I represented, compounded into complicated feelings of being exposed as an intellectual fraud. The "imposter" phenomenon was worsened when one considers the scarcity of permanent, full-time entry-level work in the archival field.

Newness and Illness

I graduated with my Masters of Information in spring 2019 from Rutgers University. After months of interviews and part-time work processing the historic library of a family in Piscataway, New Jersey, I accepted a role as a full-time collections management specialist at Franklin & Marshall College (F&M) in the Archives & Special Collections (A&SC), in January 2020.

Franklin College was founded in 1787 and, in 1853, merged with Marshall College to form Franklin & Marshall College, a small liberal arts college in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The F&M College Library's A&SC documents that 200-year history, which comprises fifteen record groups in the College Archives, and over seventy manuscript collections in Special Collections. Additionally, A&SC houses miscellaneous collections of prints, newspapers, local maps and photographs, and an ever-growing rare book collection with over 8,000 volumes.

In March 2020, I moved to a new city at the very same time coronavirus was rolling through the United States. By the time I began working, F&M had shut down its campus and my colleagues were already working remotely. I jumped into my new position from behind a computer screen in my unfurnished studio apartment. As an added challenge, I was almost immediately diagnosed with COVID-19. With many unknowns about the virus, I navigated a mixture of "new job" and "mysterious illness" anxieties simultaneously.

4. Author's note: throughout, I use the word "archivist" to broadly refer to the many titles for library, special collections, and archives workers.

Sickness aside, I was extremely excited to start this new adventure. My understanding was that about half of my responsibilities were to focus on collections management, and I was thrilled to dive into rare book cataloging, something I hadn't had the opportunity to fully explore. With limited access to my office, this part of my job was greatly neglected, and in-person training with colleagues was minimal. Work-from-home tasks instead focused on metadata cleanup for a migration project, which translated very well in a virtual environment.[5] The librarian who spearheaded the project and I met frequently, which provided a welcome structure to my days when it was often hard to find my footing otherwise. Though I felt useful, I was still unfamiliar with a lot of essential institution history and organizational knowledge. Working in the archives, I knew that I accepted the responsibility of digesting this history. However, I am a tactile learner, and I knew that simply reading books on campus history wouldn't make it all stick.

In summer 2020, protests around police violence increased around the country. F&M started to reckon with its own history and initiate intentional conversations on campus. Part of that process began when faculty members asked A&SC to develop virtual presentations on the history of underrepresented groups on campus. Interested, I took on this hugely important task.

There's an Imposter in the Archives (and It's Me)

Already feeling like I wasn't fulfilling my primary job duties, "imposter syndrome" really set in when I realized I was to be the "voice of college history," though I was first exposed to it mere months prior. The imposter phenomenon, or, the experience of self-doubt and feeling like an intellectual fraud despite one's achievements, has been widely discussed in the psychological field, and was first associated with high-achieving women in a 1978 clinical study.[6] Subsequent studies revealed that the imposter phenomenon affects people of all genders, races, and geographic areas.[7] It is also not limited to folks who have achieved career successes; imposter phenomenon is also not a new topic in the library profession.[8] Studies have pointed to various stressors that can lead to "imposter syndrome" in library professionals, including a lack of guidance and preparation in library school, for the difference in organizational politics and culture, minimal orientation and on-the-job training resulting in isolation, and unclear

5. Brianna Gormly and Louise LoBello. "Collaboration in Isolation: Migrating Legacy Finding Aids during a Pandemic," *Journal of Digital Media Management* 11, no. 2 (2022): 121–30. https://digital.fandm.edu/islandora/collaboration-isolation-migrating-legacy-finding-aids-during-pandemic

6. Pauline Rose Clance and Suzanne Ament Imes. "The Imposter Phenomenon in High Achieving Women: Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention," *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice* 15, no. 3 (1978): 241–47, https://doi-org.fandm.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/h0086006.

7. Jaruwan Sakulku and James Alexander, "The Impostor Phenomenon," *International Journal of Behavioral Science* 6 no. 1 (2011): 73–97, https://doi.org/10.14456/ijbs.2011.6.

8. Sakulku and Alexander, "The Imposter," 73.

expectations in terms of one's scope of work responsibilities.[9]

Though this feeling of fraudulence was not necessarily new to me, the simple fact that I had, literally, barely stepped a foot into F&M's archives that year was intimidating enough. I almost rejected the faculty request, but, after talking to my supervisor, I was met with calm trust that helped me confidently prepare a presentation. Despite the encouragement, I was still overwhelmed by the reality that I was to reckon with a 200-year-old, predominantly white institution's relationship with Black history. On top of being acutely aware of the presentation's sensitive nature, and the care I needed to take with the material, I simply lacked confidence in my ability to speak on much of campus history.

The Whiplash of Absorbing New Institutional History

There is something to be said about the sudden insertion into an institution's history when one starts a new archival position, which I do not think is addressed enough in the archival profession. I won't list the reasons why archival work is so rewarding—ask any archivist what they love about their job and most will say something about the gratification from making history accessible. And yet, deep historical knowledge takes time to accumulate and crystallize. It takes years to solidify these stories to memory. This experience of "historical whiplash" is all too prevalent in a field in which early-career professionals accept contract-based work—out of necessity—and jump from position to position.

Over the last two decades, entry-level archival positions have been increasingly contract-based. The 2004 SAA-sponsored A*CENSUS survey—the first wide-scale survey of the archival profession in the United States—did not include questions asking if the respondents were in permanent or temporary positions, only part-time or full-time.[10] In contrast, 2022's A*CENSUS II went further and asked if full-time, part-time, or retired respondents held a contract position, and found that 11% indicated they held contract positions. These kinds of positions can last anywhere from a few months to multiple years, often depending on institutional funding. A*CENSUS II also found that, of the 11% of respondents in full-time contract positions since 2017, only 30% eventually secured full-time permanent positions.[11]

For new-career archivists who periodically switch institutions due to temporary contracts, this feeling of starting over is jarring. Archives and library workers through-

9. Lacy Sajni and Melanie Parlette-Stewart, "Jumping into the Deep: Imposter Syndrome, Defining Success, and the New Librarian," *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research* 12 (1): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v12i1.3979.

10. "A*CENSUS: Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States," *The American Archivist* 69, no. 2 (2006): 326.

11. Makala Skinner and Ioana Hulbert, "A*CENSUS II All Archivists Survey Report," Ithaka S+R, Last Modified August 22, 2022. https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.317224.

out the United States have started to analyze this growing phenomenon, and the toll it takes on health, morale, and commitment to the profession. A 2019 survey from the SAA Issues & Advocacy Section on Temporary Labor found that temporary positions affected respondent's anxiety, stress, financial insecurities, and feelings of self-worth.[12] Similarly, the New England Archivists Contingent Employment Study Task Force report from 2022 found that over 60% of survey respondents' mental or physical health was affected by contingent positions, and over a third had experienced periods of unemployment.[13] It is also essential to acknowledge how race, class, and gender reveal even more demographic inequities in the results of these studies.[14]

This is further contextualized by on-the-job stressors mentioned in the previous section that can lead to feelings of "imposter syndrome." I am aware I speak broadly when I say that many archivists do not consider themselves historians, but that does not remove the fact that other people often do. And, in a small institution, like F&M, one might play every role in the archive—that is, campus historian, cataloger, processor, reference librarian, digital archivist, social media manager, and more.

Prior to F&M, I held a number of internship positions at a variety of institutions. From corporate archives of one of the nation's first telecommunications companies, to government records of federal conservation programs, to twentieth-century family records—every few months I dove deep into a new, riveting area of history. It was a blast, developed my resume, and I think every new professional should be as lucky to experience such historical diversity. But, each time I left a position, I felt I was just starting to feel comfortable and familiarize myself with important dates, people, and events. For those of us who want to dive deeply into these stories, temporary positions impede this process.

This complicated experience—veneration for archives and a sense of dread that accompanies being pulled away from finally sinking our feet into a position—echoes Fobazi Ettarh's 2018 discussion of vocational awe, where the belief of libraries (and, in this case, archives) as inherently good and sacred places affects our ability to criticize issues in the field.[15] A supervisor once told me, "You probably won't really start to feel comfortable with the collection until three to five years on the job." This, though scary, was honest, and actually comforting. Yes, I can't expect to suddenly

12. Courtney Dean et al. "Survey on Temporary Labor: A Quick Look," *Issues and Advocacy Section Meeting, Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting*, 2019. Accessed February 28th, 2024. https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wF78rJ3LJTf-vmhzyRBWJsIQNuiNb5U7.
13. Kimberly Barzola et al. "'Nothing About it Was Better Than a Permanent Job': Report of the New England Archivists Contingent Employment Study Task Force," Report, 2022.
14. This is beyond the scope of a lightning talk, but worth investigating in further scholarship.
15. Fobazi Ettarh, "Vocational Awe and Librarianship: the Lies We Tell Ourselves," *In the Library With The Lead Pipe,* (2018): https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/vocational-awe/.

have an encyclopedic knowledge of this institution's history—but it sure would've made things easier! This is especially relevant and hard to reconcile when one considers the increase in temporary positions for new professionals. It is evident that the "imposter syndrome" experienced by many librarians and archivists is enhanced and exaggerated by the precarious nature of so many archival positions.

I feel I emerged from the multiyear swamp of COVID confusion and I am finally getting my land legs. That first F&M presentation in 2020 ended up going well, and I have since tackled additional projects on the subject. I still feel I over-prepared, and I attribute my success to that hard work—which cleanly falls into the imposter cycle described by Clance, where people experiencing this phenomenon tend to point to the fact that they only achieved their successes through hard work, not ability.[16] Four years into this position, I still constantly learn new things about F&M and all the collections we steward, and I still need to reference our Comprehensive Historical Timeline[17] for reminders on major dates and figures.

However, we all deserve a bit of grace—for ourselves, and for our colleagues. I am grateful to my supervisor and colleagues, who went out of their way to make me feel welcome and empowered during a time where the closest thing we could get to "on-the-job training" was a three-hour Zoom call. A question that lingers is how much is the current state of the field—with the increase in short-term contract positions—putting new professionals at a legitimate disadvantage, and how much is just "imposter syndrome?" I would argue it's quite a bit of both, with the former enhancing the latter.

Archiving Against Professionalism

by Lia Warner

I. Defining Professionalism

This article addresses how historical and moral notions of professionalism in the archival context artificially constrict workers' understanding of their roles with regard to interpretive power and intellectual production, and thus hinder communication of the value and potentiality of the archival endeavor to outsiders. Based on historical analysis of grounding texts of archival theory, engagement with critical theory and the literature of the "archival turn," and recent critiques of professionalism by working

16. Pauline Rose Clance, *The Impostor Phenomenon: Overcoming the fear that haunts your success* (Atlanta: Peachtree, 1985).
17. "Franklin and Marshall College Historical Timeline," Franklin & Marshall College Library - Archives & Special Collections, last modified 2021, https://library.fandm.edu/ld.php?content_id=48242896.

archivists and librarians, I urge archival workers to focus on building collective power in order to redefine the terms of our work and to develop a liberatory archival practice.

My discussion posits professionalism as the dominant framework that archival workers use to make sense of the moral and ethical responsibilities of their work, as well as their collective role within society. I argue that professionalism is just one way of understanding and defining archival work and workers' history, significance, and role. Professionalism in modern archives is a construct that has direct lineage to the original cleavage of archival science from the discipline of history, the intellectual context of which many theorists have identified as the source of positivist archival values such as neutrality, passivity, and formality. In 2002, Tom Nesmith identified these traditional values as "archiving ideology," which is "so deeply ingrained that it has been treated by some archivists as if it were part of the natural order of human recording and communication."[18]

Since then, although the possibility of archival neutrality has been widely refuted in the literature, archival labor and subjectivity is still subsumed beneath professional practices and systems of archival institutions. Ciaran Trace discusses archival process through the lens of maintenance work, integral to a service-based professional practice, but uniquely manifested within the contours of the aforementioned values. Obscured maintenance labor—whether self-effaced or externally-overlooked—is often made visible through processes of repair, when gaps or breakdowns expose unmet needs.[19]

Jennifer Douglas illustrates how self-effacing descriptive practices stem from deeply ingrained professional values haunting modern practice, which include the overuse of passive voice, and the lack of transparency around decision-making or intellectual process. Finding aids, she argues, "mostly fail to convey precisely how these archives came into being."[20] Far from any fault of the archivist, Douglas instead cites, "conventions in archival theory and practice," that encourage presentation of "a more perfect picture . . . consistent with traditional notions of archives as impartial and natural and of archivists as objective and neutral."[21]

By analyzing foundational treatises of archival theory, we identify ideological throughlines that preserve professionalism. The Dutch Manual emphasizes technolo-

18. Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," *The American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 27.
19. Ciaran B. Trace, "Archives, Information Infrastructure, and Maintenance Work," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (2022): para. 39, https://www.proquest.com/docview/2662413907/abstract/C9257A582E234310PQ/7.
20. Jennifer Douglas, "Toward More Honest Description," *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (June 1, 2016): 50, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.79.1.26.
21 Douglas, "Toward," 50.

gy, scientific method, objectivity, and standardization; Erik Ketelaar argues that these attributes also "kept Dutch archival theory petrified for a very long time."[22] Despite pioneering archival theory as a realm of inquiry, the Dutch Manual authors avoided "more philosophical and theoretical questions of objectivity in their new conception of the archive," by focusing on the standardization of practices.[23]

Hilary Jenkinson largely reaffirms the Dutch Manual's values. Ridener argues that Jenkinson understood archives as "an artificial memory, paper replacements for memorization and oral transmission of evidence."[24] To that end, archivists were prescribed a narrow, passive role as custodians and protectors of collections; Jenkinson's characterization, "merely to save Archives so important for local history by offering them asylum is a work of piety and usefulness," situated archivists almost righteously.[25] Arguing the gap in public appreciation and understanding of archives could close through creating "an understanding of and support for *archival care of our irreplaceable documentary heritage,*" David Gracy—a major architect of the modern image of archivists in society—espoused Jenkinson's sentiment in a Society of American Archivists (SAA) Presidential Address.[26] I argue that a moral throughline can be drawn from Jenkinson to the present in the stories we tell about ourselves and our work.

Spurred by the uncertainty of "archival futures," and perceived "self-flagellation" in the literature, some archivists urge a return to positivist values, declaring the postmodern branch of archival thought to be spent:

> we need to stop being sheepish and reach a professional consensus that recognises and understands that what we do as guardians of the evidence on which an individual's or societal truth can be established is a valid statement of professional practice and is of substantial value . . . Therefore, our core professional tenets and competencies . . . have a place in the 21st century.[27]

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22. Eric Ketelaar, "Archival Theory and the Dutch Manual," *Archivaria*, April 1, 1996, 35. https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/dutch-manual.html.
23. John Ridener, *From Polders to Postmodernism: A Concise History of Archival Theory* (Duluth, Minn.: Litwin Books, 2009), 28, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3328219.
24. Ridener, *From Polders*, 52.
25. Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (London: P. Lund, Humphries & Co., 1937), http://archive.org/details/manualofarchivea00iljenk.
26. David Gracy II, "Archives and Society: The First Archival Revolution," *The American Archivist* 47, no. 1 (January 1, 1984): 10, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.47.1.k1637u657v841227; Eira Tansey, "Archives without Archivists," *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 16, no. 1 (2016), https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A484096660/AONE?u=anon~7653593a&sid=googleScholar&xid=1300ce86 (emphasis added).
27. Caroline Brown, *Archival Futures* (London: Facet Publishing, 2018), 149, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5627874.

These arguments constitute a pattern of neglect for archivists, subjects, and records that are not and have never been adequately served by values and notions fundamentally tied to a narrow, white, Western documentary tradition.

Fobazi Ettarh's "vocational awe" speaks to the calcifying impact of the moral professional identity of librarians upon individuals, who thus feel compelled to "absolute obedience to a prescribed set of rules and behaviors, regardless of any negative effect on librarians' own lives."[28] Archiving against professionalism includes addressing and deconstructing vocational awe, but identifies the crux of the problem at a different temporal stage. Specifically, this paper drives at the problem of professionalism with the recognition that archival theory and practice continue to be misaligned. We know that archives are not neutral, yet archivists have been unable to meaningfully document and communicate their interventions and assumptions that are integral to archives' formation. Professionalism, thus, commits the future of the archival endeavor to a self-destructive trajectory. Archiving against professionalism—a creative archival paradigm—calls for orienting ourselves to the work with a collective spirit of facilitation and participation in democratic historical consciousness, but more importantly, centering material conditions and labor power as the primary site of struggle for instantiating a just archival praxis.

Looking at the archival endeavor as a project of harnessing worker power, the power of records, and community knowledge towards collective liberation helps us recognize the centrality of archival labor(s) operating outside institutional boundaries and established best practices. Archiving against professionalism and for liberation calls for redefining the scope of archival work, acknowledge and amplify how archival workers drive the intellectual production of archives, and directly and indirectly shape the knowledge that historians and others draw out of the collections. This is important in realizing the democratic struggle for making, "historical consciousness a reality" in our collective life.[29]

II. Since the Archival Turn

The "archival turn," or the turning of critical scholarship from perceiving archives as a source to archives as a subject of inquiry, unfolded as a significant moment in archival studies. It is worth comparing the focus of archival literature and critical scholarship as it relates to archivists' stated mission and labor. Literature emblematic of the archival turn focuses on questions and philosophy of communication, mediation, and understanding.

28. Fobazi Ettarh, "Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves," January 10, 2018, https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/vocational-awe/.
29. Ronald J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What Is the Goal of a Public Historian?," *The Public Historian* 3, no. 1 (1981): 48, https://doi.org/10.2307/3377160.

As Kate Eichhorn delineates in *The Archival Turn in Feminism*, texts within this set have vastly different foci, but are drawn together through the way they treat the archive "not as a place to recover the past but rather as a way to engage with some of the legacies, epistemes, and traumas pressing down on the present."[30] Terry Cook argues that, in order to engage the questions that postmodernism has provoked, archivists need an intellectual history of their profession, specifically addressing upon "what basis, reflecting what shifting values, have archivists decided who should be admitted into their houses of memory, and who excluded?"[31] To act upon this question would require archival workers to explicate their role in the construction of the archive, rather than insist upon minimizing it.

Nesmith, Cook, Harris, MacNeil, and many others working in postmodern archival theory have successfully drawn archival theory toward issues of mediation and constructed-ness, and have troubled core principles such as original order, creatorship, and provenance. Jimerson, Caswell, Cifor, Brilmyer, Ramirez, and Berry have further opened critical archival studies that address responsibilities to marginalized patrons and archival subjects. Still, it is imperative that we investigate the reasons for the persistent dissonance between theory and practice.

Addressing this gap, we can turn to Berry's scholarship, which identifies several theoretical and practical factors of "archival stasis." Archival stasis describes "mechanisms of objectivity and uniformity" that normalize and perpetuate practices that obscure or interfere with access and use, yet remain technically compliant with standards. Overcoming archival stasis requires that a practitioner recognize and utilize their agency.[32] Exemplifying this, Berry's *Umbra Search African American History* project uses the new structural possibilities of digital archives to shift the descriptive narrative and framing of African American records away from traditional structures of, "historically privileged White memory-keeping." She notes that this required "descriptive labor that is out of the scope of regular processing."[33] Without a strong base of labor power, or sense of solidarity with other archival workers or subjects, this work can feel impractical. In addition, working within and experiencing the oppressive structures of the untroubled archive places tremendous burden on practitioners who want to do

30. Kate Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order* (Namur, Belgium: Temple University Press, 2013), 5, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1332616.

31. Terry Cook, "What Is Past Is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria* 43 (February 12, 1997): 19.

32. Dorothy Berry, "The House Archives Built," *Up//Root* (June 22, 2021): 8, https://www.uproot.space/features/the-house-archives-built.

33. Dorothy Berry, "Digitizing and Enhancing Description Across Collections to Make African American Materials More Discoverable on Umbra Search African American History," *The Design for Diversity Learning Toolkit* (blog), August 2, 2018, https://des4div.library.northeastern.edu/digitizing-and-enhancing-description-across-collections-to-make-african-american-materials-more-discoverable-on-umbra-search-african-american-history/.

this work. As Berry notes, "there is little space for actually acknowledging and understanding the personal harm and alienation our professional standards have inflicted on both patrons and staff."[34]

Indeed, this repressive climate for intellectual production is a product of the self-preserving, pragmatic, institutional tendencies of professionalism that we deal with in our day-to-day. In "The Whiteness of Practicality," Hudson explores how the "imperative to be practical extends beyond the daily implementation of user services and organizational workflows," and observes that "positivist social science research, reflective case studies, standards, best practices, how-to guides and 'cookbooks'" dominate the literature, permeating archivists' intellectual lives as well.[35] The impact of this hegemonic mode of intellectual production is the foreclosure of opportunities for critical reflection:

> it is difficult to undertake the slow, messy practice of unpacking foundational assumptions—and their material implication in the dispossessive violence of existing social, political, and economic arrangements—when one's environment is governed by expectations of efficiency, directness, brevity, speed.[36]

Within the ongoing execution of unquestioned best practices, whiteness as "the production of shared norms underwritten by physical and epistemological violence, a violence invisibilized as a condition of governance," is ingrained into the existential conditions of professional archival and library work, particularly through language.[37] Thus, in order to meaningfully work towards an archival practice that rejects white supremacy, and that recognizes the wholeness of ourselves and the records we hold, we must resist the unspoken and spoken imperative for practicality, unending efficiency, and simple answers to complex issues.

III. Towards Labor

What does the perspective of labor offer archival workers who seek an alternative to professionalism? How can attending to archival labor galvanize the development of our archival practice to be more unified with the theoretical goals of liberatory and democratic archival consciousness? A labor perspective encourages practitioners to think of the archival endeavor outside of the constraints of the institution. Furthermore, replacing professionalism with solidarity severs the moral ties that bind archival

34. Berry, "The House," 10.
35. David James Hudson, "The Whiteness of Practicality," in *Topographies of Whiteness: Mapping Whiteness in Library and Information Science*, ed. Gina Schlesselman-Tarango, Series on Critical Race Studies and Multiculturalism in LIS, number 2 (Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2017), 207.
36. Hudson, "The Whiteness," 212.
37. Hudson, "The Whiteness," 214–16.

practice to counterproductive ideology. Individualized struggle against outdated practices and concepts is ineffective, especially when done within the self-preserving framework of professionalism, where sense of self and sense of disciplinary duty are elided.

One meaningful way to advance this project is to collectively organize and build power as workers. If the pressures of practicality at our institutions are both moral and material, then we must attend to the power that we hold as workers—the power to withhold our labor, to stop the unending churn of the professional machine, and to look beyond our institutions' walls for strategic sites where our work can drive change. As the history of archival labor within large institutions is marred by patterns of worker isolation, contingency, and high turnover, which Eira Tansey traces in her essay "Archives without Archivists," it's clear that any attempt to transform the archival endeavor is connected to the struggle for worker power and control over working conditions.[38]

Caswell, Drake, and Tansey separately urge readers to refocus their attention on the power that they already have. Caswell reflects, "as community-based archival practitioners, we harness our power as archival activists to build liberatory archival imaginaries."[39] While these liberatory imaginaries are certainly directed at collections and users, they can also support archival workers. Indeed, in "Archivists without Archives," an inversion of the title of Tansey's earlier piece, Drake posed:

> Imagine a field of archivists without archives. Imagine owning your labor. Imagine making archives about freedom. Imagine distributing these freedom-driven archives to the public to access free of charge. Imagine a liberated archive. Imagine a liberated future. Give your imagination a Chance.[40]

Recognizing that we have choices and power over where, when, and how we do archival work is at the core of archiving against professionalism. Not only does this concept open our imaginations, but it connects the archival struggle to a wider societal one in an empowering way.

38. Tansey, "Archives without Archivists," (2016).
39. Michelle Caswell, "Inventing New Archival Imaginaries: Theoretical Foundations for Identity-Based Community Archives," in *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada*, by Dominique Daniel and Amalia Levi (Sacramento, CA: Litwin Books, 2014), 51, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3328245.
40. Jarrett M. Drake, "Archivists without Archives: A Labor Day Reflection," *On Archivy* (blog), September 2, 2016, https://medium.com/on-archivy/archivists-without-archives-a-labor-day-reflection-e120038848e.

Archival workers co-create knowledge and value with the collections, subjects, creators, donors, users, and communities with which they work. Archival labor thus becomes a tool in people's historical "process of ongoing change, be it incremental or structural."[41] Once the baggage of professionalism is released, I believe we can advance the methods and ideas that make archives a crucial apparatus of democracy, public history, and public memory, and attend to the importance of archival labor and archival workers within processes of knowledge creation.

Feeling What We Teach: Mitigating the Emotional Labor Slide in Affect-Based Instruction

by Anastasia Armendariz

One of my major and most cherished responsibilities in my work with rare books, community archives, and other facets of special collections is teaching primary-source-centered classes for undergraduate students. This piece centers the emotional needs of special collections practitioners who serve as instructors with primary sources, especially as we work to support affective learner responses to the historic materials in our care. To ground us in our terms, "affect theory" as defined by Marika Cifor is a relational "force" that supports fully felt reactions to materials, ideas, or experiences.[42] This is prioritized in the context of the tendency to frame intellectual mastery of content as the primary metric for learning.

Cifor applied affect theory to archival practice. I initially explored how affect theory might serve primary source instruction in a spring 2022 poster session, "The Personal is Primary: Affect Theory in Primary Source Instruction." I found that "the perspectives and positions represented in primary sources are ideal entry points to the relationship building that affect theory invites."[43] Primary source instruction through the lens of affect theory lends itself to reflective practice. Special collections instructors are ready to adapt classroom activities or connect their examples in response to student interests and projects.[44] From planning to presentations to shepherding direct

41. Grele, "Whose Public?," 47.
42. Marika Cifor, "Affecting Relations: Introducing Affect theory to Archival Discourse," *Archival Science* 16 (2016): 8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-015-9261-5.
43. Anastasia Armendariz, "The Personal is Primary: Affect Theory in Primary Source Instruction" (Poster, Innovations in Teaching and Learning Conference, University of Maryland, College Park, May 11, 2022).
44. Elizabeth Galoozis, "Affective Aspects of Instruction Librarians' Decisions to Adopt New Teaching Practices: Laying the Groundwork for Incremental Change," *C&RL* 80, no. 7 (2019): 1042, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.7.1036.

engagement with materials to follow-up meetings with students, we often provide just as much, if not more, space for varied feelings and reactions (affect) as we do for content learned (knowledge).[45]

I taught primary-source-literacy-focused classes for first-year undergraduate students as a graduate assistant during my MLIS, and assisted with special collections instruction sessions as an undergraduate and then graduate student. The full-time role I began in summer 2022 marked my first opportunity to introduce undergraduate students to primary historic collections as lead instructor. As instructors in special collections classrooms curate historic primary source materials for these sessions, we relate materials to each other, to course learning outcomes, and to the people who encounter them.[46] We also bring our own personal and intellectual contexts into relationship with our collections. Extending beyond job descriptions that may include the preservation and security of collections materials, instructors assume affective labor as we become responsible for the curation and stewardship of the wide array of responses these materials may elicit in learners.[47] Not just the materials themselves. Collections originating from underrepresented or marginalized communities, outdated and actively harmful language, and even personal materials deserve both contextualization and crafted space for emotional processing and even separation. This preparation goes well beyond a crash course in best practices for handling archival materials as physical objects.

While I thoroughly enjoy instruction and outreach and often find sessions energizing, the number and type of instruction sessions requested do not always positively correlate to capacity for them. Given this, affective labor can turn to emotional labor as library instructors experience dissonance between stewardship of the sessions and our own internal and even physical states.[48] I use "emotional labor" to refer to managing the emotions of others, as well as one's own emotional state, as part of one's professional work.[49] This involves active adaptation of one's emotional state to serve others and/or to suit the given professional context.

For instance, there may be external, as well as internal, pressure to adapt a cheery sort of teacher persona, or to put extra energy into efforts to "spark curiosity" in

45. Melissa Wong, "The Emotional Labor of Teaching," LIS Pedagogy Chat, December 2, 2022, https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rM_Tc3JCqR33mp_9bfXaXdB6_9B6qOBFp5PwxJ9Un-w/edit.
46. Todd Samuelson and Cait Coker, "Mind the Gap: Integrating Special Collections Teaching," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 14, no. 1 (January 2014): 58., https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2013.0041.
47. Magia Krause, "Learning in the Archives: A Report on Instructional Practices," *Journal of Archival Organization* 14, no. 1 (2008): 253, https://doi.org/10.1080/15332740802533263.
48. Wong, "The Emotional Labor of Teaching."
49. Wong, "The Emotional Labor of Teaching."

undergraduate learners.[50] Even if one is on the final instruction session of a long day, is in an understaffed department, or is having a difficult time personally. In special collections settings, these efforts can be compounded with external or even internal motivation to "inculcate wonder" and "make history real" for students. In libraries where one-shot instruction sessions reign, all of this might be expected in less than an hour. Reflective practice hinges on making as much space for reactions—ranging from concern, to celebration, to indifference (affect)—as for course-related content learned (knowledge).[51] It is a disservice to our students, our profession, and ultimately ourselves if we do not fight for that same space for ourselves.

To discuss strategies to support this effort, I acknowledge that the contexts that produce the challenges to this effort also make boundary-setting extraordinarily difficult. This established, I identified five areas of focus to mitigate the emotional labor slide in special collections primary source instruction. They are: setting policy, saying no, being your own best advisor, honesty, and community.

Formulating and sharing instruction policies builds or maintains momentum in an instruction program, regardless of the age or size of the program. While requiring an initial lift in terms of compiling and sharing content, documentation provides essential boundaries I reference and enforce to limit instruction sessions . Or, to put it another way, to ensure instruction requests are manageable within limits I and any colleagues have set. And, that instruction is high quality without sacrificing the quality of our working lives. Such policies ensure that instruction remains high quality without sacrificing the quality of our working lives. Policies might include requirements for two weeks' notice for instruction sessions, or requiring input from disciplinary faculty on materials to be pulled for a new special collections class visit.[52] Documentation might live in a LibGuide or on your repository's website so that it can be readily referenced, updated, and shared amongst library colleagues and professors requesting instruction sessions.

Documentation will assist with the next action area, "Saying no." I find that it is easier for me to reference a headway policy as a reason for holding off on a session with a distinguished visiting professor until later in the academic year. As the information profession and affective labor are both historically feminized, this is by no means

50. Amy Gore and Glen Koelling, "Embodied Learning in a Digital Age: Collaborative Undergraduate Instruction in Material Archives and Special Collections." *Pedagogy* 20 no. 3 (October 2020): 456, https://doi.org/10.1215/15314200-8544521.
51. Armendariz, "The Personal is Primary: Affect Theory in Primary Source Instruction."
52. In acknowledgement that special collections practitioners hold teaching and even faculty status, I follow the phrasing of "disciplinary faculty" from McCartin and Wright-Mair's "Manifestations of Deference Behavior in Teaching-focused Academic Librarians" *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 48, no. 6 (November 2022): 2 to refer to non-special collections academics.

easy.[53] This is all too often compounded by lived factors including minimal disability accommodations, racism, and toxic work environments.

Given external and even internal pressures to take on an extra class, to accommodate a last-minute schedule date, to make an extra run to off-site storage for materials, I find perspective from community archivist and filmmaker C. Diaz helpful when a straight-up "no" feels extra difficult. Diaz encourages framing "no's" as ones for a day, a week, even a few months.[54] Not only will such a "no" allow reclamation of your necessary time and energy, but it can also align with broader intent: to engage learners in critical and even creative consideration of primary source materials, with the potential for broader personal and scholarly reflective application.

I personally am much more ready to support colleagues in honoring their boundaries, whether a "no" or a "later," than I do for myself. The next strategy centers on this: "Being your own best advisor." It demands we grant ourselves the care we prioritize practicing on behalf of others. Following that advice, taking that space for ourselves, that we remind others is good and necessary demands that we not only trust our own instincts but allow them to apply to ourselves.

Another area hinges on honesty. Honesty relates to collections content, and acknowledgement of anything from limited and exclusionary collecting scopes to biased descriptions that shape interactions with the alternately challenging and thrilling materials we share. Honesty involves sharing about our own contexts as well. With some discernment about audiences, with students honesty might look like: "I am feeling this 8:00 a.m. session, and you may be, too. I appreciate your being here, we're in this together, and I hope the line for the coffee shop isn't too long after this." With disciplinary faculty, an honest statement such as, "Hello, we are still short an instructor this semester. Thank you in advance for getting your special collections teaching requests in early," invites professors to understand your limitations, as well as allows the opportunity to support each other. This might be especially effective if you are also able to reference the instruction scheduling policies you have worked to set. This vulnerability, framed around your continued ability to support teaching and learning, can even develop advocates for you and special collections in other areas of the university.

To turn to the final area, personal communities and priorities might help with perspective on professional contexts. Connecting with professional communities, where

53. Johanna Oksala. "Affective Labor and Feminist Politics," *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 41, no. 2 (2016): 285; Lisa Sloniowski. "Affective Labor, Resistance, and the Academic Librarian," *Library Trends* 64, no. 4 (Spring 2016): 655, 659, http://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2016.0013.

54. C. Diaz, "Intentional Partnerships & Collaborations." (Workshop, Safeguarding LA Community Histories, CSU Northridge University Library, May 11, 2023).

there may be individuals on the other side of the situation you find yourself in, can also help you ideate tactical ways forward, back, or even sideways. The RBMS annual conference is one avenue for this. A more informal and regular community such as TPS (Teaching with Primary Sources) Collective is another avenue for idea-sharing and connection. Building supportive environments for affective learner responses to the materials in our care can provide frameworks for—but should never come at the cost of—our own needs as people, not simply as primary source instructors.

These five areas of communication and reflexive practice could bring a few different results. One powerful outcome is greater ability to forge the very senses of supported connection for ourselves as special collections instructors that we seek to establish for students encountering primary source materials. Such practice could also serve as a model for students to incorporate affective lenses to their own research and learning. Another possibility that might emerge is a clear recognition of one's own need to step back from the work as it stands. If the answer to the question of the work being sustainable as-is, is a "no," follow-up focuses might include finding, reestablishing, or connecting with much-needed support networks.

Artists' Books and Critical Literacy Pedagogy: Kara Walker's *Freedom: a Fable*

by Sam Regal

Introduction

Centered within library instruction, Kara Walker's *Freedom: a Fable: A Curious Interpretation of the Wit of a Negress in Troubled Times* (*Freedom: a Fable*) activates students' interdisciplinary engagement and deeply enriches their understanding and appreciation of Black American identity through an art historical lens. The artwork engages with the history of the silhouette form in America and its complex relationship to racial identity and expression, recalling the works of Auguste Edouart (1789–1861) and formerly enslaved silhouette artist Moses Williams (1777–c.1852), and functions as challenging indictment of racism, human subjugation, and flattening by intervening upon the slave narrative tradition though the work's formal elements.[55] In instruction, *Freedom: a Fable* encourages students toward critical engagement with the visual narrative form and challenges held notions about Black American history, identity, and representation.

55. The author acknowledges the work of Elissa Watters; while it ostensibly covers the same subjects, this essay predates Watters' publication on *Freedom: a Fable. See Abstracts 2024: CAA 112th Annual Conference*. New York: College Art Association, 2024: 88.

Critical Library Instruction and Artists' Books

The artist's book contains an inherent, critically generative duality: it is at once "a 'book' (written or printed pages attached and bound together, primarily to record information) and a three-dimensional artwork."[56] Because artists' books tend to engage with social, cultural, and political themes, they are valuable teaching tools in critical literacy. When librarians teach toward a critical literacy, they empower students to learn "not only how to find information, but also how to evaluate and contextualize it . . . [and] conduct research that matters to their personal experience and to the communities to which they belong."[57] By developing adaptable, participatory, and contextual instructional practice, librarians empower students to engage in innovative, socially engaged scholarship.

Object-based learning has ties to active learning, participatory engagement, and constructivism, the latter of which posits that "knowledge and meaning are generated through an interaction between experiences and ideas constructed in the mind."[58] Object-based instruction also allows for multisensory engagement, proven to promote reflective experiential learning. Centering artists' books in library instruction, instructors engage students in participatory and densely contextual critical inquiry practice, "making [the lesson] more memorable, and complex or difficult concepts easier to apprehend."[59] Artists' books serve to break down students' conceptual barriers surrounding these topics, a process reflective of the threshold concepts, or "portals to enlarged understanding or ways of thinking and practicing," as articulated in ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.[60] Artists' books can also be effectively utilized to establish critical visual literacy and visual narrative comprehension, helping students to meaningfully engage with visual information in their material, aesthetic, sociopolitical, and historical contexts.

Kara Walker's Silhouettes

Kara Walker (b. 1969) gained prominence in the 1990s for her challenging and provocative representations of the Black body through black cut-paper silhouette. Walker's artworks are relentless and complex, and her employment of the silhouette produces a negative representational space—"an anti-image, a black hole"—through which she

56. Stephen Bury, *Artists' Books: The Book as a Work of Art, 1963-1995*, Aldershot, Hants, England; Scolar Press, 1995, quoted in Gustavo Grandal Montero,"Artists' Books in HE Teaching and Learning" *The Blue Notebook* 7, no. 1 (2012): 41. Some artists' books challenge or intervene upon the traditional book form, suggesting additional layers of material and critical complexity.

57. Maria Accardi, Emily Drabinski, and Alana Kumbier, eds. *Critical Library Instruction: Theories and Methods*. Illustrated edition. Duluth, MN: Library Juice Press, 2010, xi.

58. Helen Chatterjee and Leonie Hannan. *Engaging the Senses: Object-Based Learning in Higher Education* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2015), 3.

59. Montero, 41.

60. "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education." Text. Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), February 9, 2015. https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.

explores racial stereotypes and produces grotesque visual narratives of Black American history.[61] Walker has remarked upon the silhouette's singular representational utility, noting, "[t]he silhouette says a lot with very little information, but that's also what the stereotype does. So I saw the silhouette and stereotype as linked."[62] The artist portrays visual narratives of slavery and plantation life through delicate cut-paper silhouettes, and her artworks are often life-size, spanning museum and gallery walls; the fact of these artworks' size and positioning raises challenging questions about the histories reflected within institutional spaces and suggest that her silhouetted figures may "[. . .] swallow the dismissive and trivializing way that black subjects have been represented in art history."[63]

Walker inspired critics to debate whether her approach to the silhouette "simply reiterates racist stereotypes or resignifies them."[64] Walker's silhouettes are negations of stereotype figures—they are erasures or chasms—that may allow for a regenerative potentiality that, ultimately, rests in the eye of the beholder. Walker places her silhouette figures within violent or obscene vignettes, a move theorized to "engage . . . the bodies of looking audiences, rather than straightforwardly represent[ing] the affect and embodiment of black subjects."[65] Walker's forms can be understood as refutations of the stereotypes they depict, but they ultimately "foreclose . . . the very interpretive impulses [they] invite"[66] in their inherent resistance to specificity. This move is intentional; Walker commented:

> I do love this moment of a sort of schism where you as a viewer are reminded that you're just not who you think you are. You are, in some kind of sadistic way, a character of my own devising.[67]

The viewer fills the silhouette's void with their own held knowledge, inadvertently activating the artwork's conceptual dimensions. Walker's silhouettes challenge individuals and institutions to consider historical entanglements with racial politics and representation. Ilka Saal suggested that, in Walker's hands, the silhouette:

> . . . serves as both the medium and object of inquiry, bringing into focus the historical role this art form has played in the collusion of fact and fic-

61. Philippe Vergne. "The Black Saint Is the Sinner Lady." *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2007), 14.
62. Alexander Alberro. "Kara Walker," *Index* 1, no. 1. (2006): 25-26, quoted in Vergne, "Kara Walker: My Complement," 1.
63. Vergne, "The Black Saint," 14.
64. Amy Tang. "Postmodern Repetitions: Parody, Trauma, and the Case of Kara Walker." *Differences* 21, no. 2 (September 1, 2010): 144, https://doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2010-006.
65. Anna Ioanes. "Disgust in Silhouette: Toni Morrison, Kara Walker, and the Aesthetics of Violence," *Journal of Modern Literature* 42, no. 3 (2019): 113.
66. Ioanes, "Disgust in Silhouette," 110–28.
67. Olga Gambari et al. *Kara Walker: A Negress of Noteworthy Talent* (Torino: Fondazione Merz, 2012), 184.

> tion that has informed perceptions of Blackness from the late eighteenth century onward. At the same time, the silhouette also becomes a potent means for intervening in this long history of constructions of Blackness.[68]

Walker's silhouetted figures are performative mediations of historical racial stereotypes, but their function as narrative objects is ambiguous.

Race and the Silhouette in America

Kara Walker explicitly engaged with the silhouette tradition by opening her 2007 visual essay, *After the Deluge*,[69] with *The Magic Lantern* (ca. 1835), a work by French-born silhouettist Auguste Edouart. Before the emergence of photography, the cut-paper or painted silhouette was considered an accessible means of portraiture, enjoying peak popularity in the American republic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[70] Gilles-Louis Chrétien's 1786 invention of the physiognotrace revolutionized the process of cutting outlines and effectively democratized the tech-

Figure 1. Auguste Edouart (French, 1789–1861), *The Magic Lantern*, ca. 1835, cut paper and wash, image: 9 1/2 x 13 3/8 in. (24.2 x 33.9 cm), sheet: 10 1/4 x 13 1/2 in. (26 x 34.3 cm), bequest of Mary Martin, 1938, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/365307.

68. Ilka Saal. "A Sidelong Glance at History: Unreliable Narration and the Silhouette as Blickmaschine in Kara Walker," in *Collusions of Fact and Fiction: Performing Slavery in the Works of Suzan-Lori Parks and Kara Walker* (University of Iowa Press, 2021), 96.

69. Kara Elizabeth Walker. *Kara Walker: After the Deluge* (New York: Rizzoli, 2007).

70. Karen Chernick. "How Cut-Paper Silhouettes Ensured Portraiture Wasn't Just for the Rich," *Artsy*, May 22, 2018. https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-cut-paper-silhouettes-ensured-portraiture-rich.

nology.[71] The silhouette also served to reinforce racialization and racial stereotypes, as demonstrated by Edouart's *The Magic Lantern*[72] (figure 1).

This work depicts a domestic scene featuring a projectionist, people of all ages, and a playful dog. One figure stands apart from the group: a silhouette in a tenuous attitude hovering at the threshold of the parlor. Saal interpreted this figure as a Black house servant:

> Clearly not part of the intimate family/business triangle, he nonetheless seems to be crucial to it. [. . .] He is, furthermore, also set apart from the people inside the room by his distinctive facial features (rounded nose, full upper lip) and hair (short and wavy)—visual clues that invite a racial reading.[73]

Edouart's piece encapsulated the nineteenth century racial economy, served as its own mechanism of racialization, and enforced stereotypes. Saal noted that, "[n]ot unlike the projection screen on the right-hand side of the image, [the figure at left] too serves as a surface for phantasmagoric projections."[74] Using silhouette, Edouart enacted a mode of racial fabulism, reinforcing racist hierarchies through erasure, abbreviation, and flattening.

A similarly complex mode of racial codification is evident in the portrait of Moses Williams (figure 2). Williams was a talented silhouette cutter, born into slavery, and "instructed in taxidermy, animal husbandry, . . . [and] the use of a silhouette-making machine."[75] Williams is depicted in the 1803 silhouette *Moses Williams, Cutter of Profiles.*[76] Commonly attributed to Raphaelle Peale (1774–1825), the work has also been convincingly theorized to have been completed by Williams himself.

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71. Chernick. Given the artform's relative accessibility, silhouettes from this period represent people of marginalized identities, including, "the first Hispanic U.S. congressman [. . .] dwarves, the handicapped, enslaved African-Americans, and same-sex couples."

72. Emma Rutherford and Lulu Guinness. *Silhouette: The Art of the Shadow*. (New York: Rizzoli, 2009), 213. Edouart came to America after serving as the court silhouettist to King Charles X, and he was known to have produced over 3,800 silhouettes during the years of his American residency (1839-1848).

73. Saal, "Sidelong Glance," 96.

74. Saal, "Sidelong Glance," 126.

75. Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw. "'Moses Williams, Cutter of Profiles': Silhouettes and African American Identity in the Early Republic," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 149, no. 1 (2005): 25. He was taught to cut profiles rather than engage in the "higher art" of painting, which was reserved for the Peale children. Freed in 1802, Williams cut silhouettes within Charles Wilson Peale's Philadelphia museum, "earning approximately eight cents per silhouette." For more on Williams, see Allison C. Meier, "The Former Slave Who Became a Master Silhouette Artist," JSTOR Daily, June 7, 2018. https://daily.jstor.org/the-former-slave-who-became-a-master-silhouette-artist/; Ellen Sacco. "Racial Theory, Museum Practice: The Colored World of Charles Willson Peale," *Museum Anthropology* 20, no. 2 (1996): 26. https://doi.org/10.1525/mua.1996.20.2.25.

76. Shaw, "Moses Williams," 25.

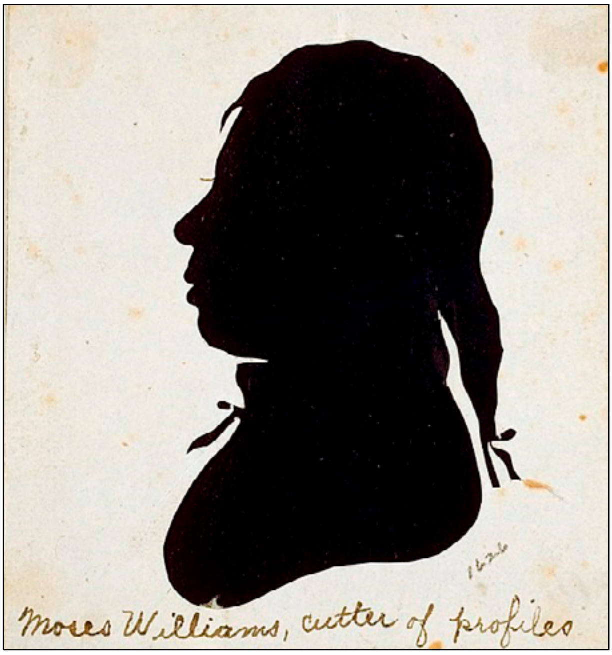

Figure 2. Raphaelle Peale (1774–1825), Moses Williams (1777–1825), *Moses Williams, cutter of profiles*, ca. 1803, cut paper, sheet: 3.5 x 3.25 in. (9 x 8 cm), McAllister Collection gift, 1886, Library Company of Philadelphia, Flickr.com, https://flic.kr/p/5s1VDk.

Through close study of the artwork, Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw noted:

> . . . certain discrepancies reveal both what was ignored and what was embellished during this artistic process. . . . Although the rounded nose and full lips of Williams's African blood remain to dominate his facial features, the European part of his 'Molatto' identity crowns him in the form of long, straight hair . . . it is decidedly anglicized. By deviating from the original form line, I believe that Moses Williams purposely created an image in which his own features would connote tropes of whiteness rather than blackness.[77]

If this was Williams' self-portrait, he literally cut and reinforced a fabulation of his racial identity. This cutting can be read as an act of reclamation or resistance—a self-determinist impulse toward defining his own racial identity and value within his social milieu. Williams used the act of cutting as a weapon of agency, carving out his own image in an act of powerfully resonant mythmaking.

77. Shaw, 36-37.

Freedom: a Fable

Freedom: a Fable[78] draws upon the American silhouette tradition to intervene upon stereotypical modes of racialization, establishing authorial agency—albeit nuanced and ambiguous in nature—through erasure (figure 3). Walker's cut-paper silhouettes[79] force viewers to participate in the silhouettes' racialization and definition, filling the expansive figures with their own held knowledge and racial impulses. In teaching this artist's book, instructors can follow many rich and generative threads: they can explicate the cut-paper silhouette form in an art historical context and its concomitant racial implications, setting the work against that of Edouart and Williams; they can provide an analysis of Walker's silhouette as a negative representation space opening to chasms of grotesquerie; and they can provide a formal analysis of the book as an aesthetic object.[80] Each of these zones of inquiry has the capacity to productively challenge students toward a critical literacy , and their learning will be catalyzed by centering the artists' book in object-based instruction.

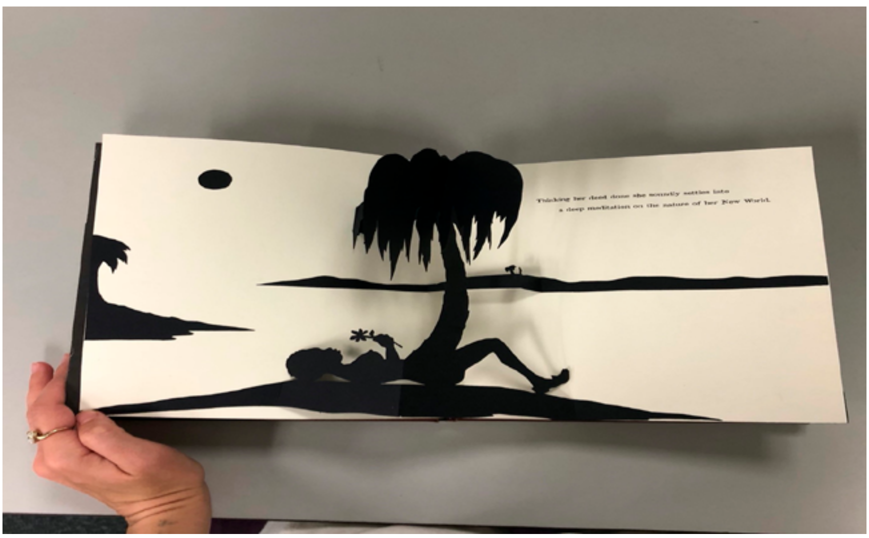

Figure 3. Kara Elizabeth Walker (b. 1969). Opening, "Thinking her deed done . . .," (unpaginated) from *Freedom: a Fable: A Curious Interpretation of the Wit of a Negress in Troubled Times*, 1997, pop-up book, 9 3/8 × 8 3/8 in. (23.8 × 21.3 cm). Image Source: Author

78. Kara Elizabeth Walker. *Freedom: a Fable* (Pasadena, Calif: Typecraft, 1997). Created in collaboration with paper designer David Eisen, *Freedom: a Fable* was sponsored by the Peter Norton Family Christmas Art Project (1988–2018) for circulation among friends and colleagues.

79. Printed in an edition of 4,000, *Freedom: a Fable*'s silhouettes were, in contrast to Williams and Edouart, laser cut.

80. Contributors to the production of *Freedom: a Fable* include David Eisen, Eisen Architects, Inc., Boston, MA (pop-up design); Lasercraft, Inc., Santa Rosa, CA (laser cutting); Timothy Silverlake, Valencia, CA (text design); Typecraft, Inc., Pasadena, CA (printing); Roswell Book Binders, Phoenix, AZ (binding); Marketing Techniques Inc., Carlsbad, CA (assembly and fulfillment).

Freedom: a Fable is a pop-up book, and this formal choice produces its own rich thematic tensions. Movable books have existed as early as the thirteenth century, when they were primarily used as scientific objects for adults. In the 1850s, British publisher Dean and Son created what is credited as the first "pop-up" book as an amusement for children, and movable books enjoyed a "golden age" in the late nineteenth century.[81] The pop-up book form's renaissance meaningfully overlapped with the explosion of the silhouette as a populist artform, and Walker's choice of this particular book form demonstrates thoughtful historical parallels. The pop-up form is also commonly associated with children's books, which are often crafted centering pedagogical objectives. While Walker's book holds gestural parallels to the fairytales of children's literature, it is overtly sexually suggestive, depicts crude racial stereotypes, and is decidedly not for children. *Freedom: a Fable* subverts the pop-up form through destabilizing and outwardly offensive content, and it also intervenes upon expectations.

In opposition to books with clear and traceable narratives, *Freedom: a Fable*'s pop-up silhouettes have little relationship to the book's text: "what the reader views has little correlation with the ensuing storyline."[82] *Freedom: a Fable* is a tale of attempted African repatriation. In a complication of novels like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the tale's narrator, N— takes the role of colonizer: she is "culturally divided and full of well-meaning condescension towards the blacks she intends to civilize in/on the way to the African homeland."[83] She intends to claim ownership of the Black people she encounters, "But not with papers or deeds or laws or such-like, but with undying devotion, and when I've earned myself that then I'll work on the White people as well!"[84] N— boards a ship to Africa that never sails, spews words of illogic and ideology, and irritates her shipmates, and the reader is left with the understanding that N— was thrown overboard or cannibalized. The tensions produced by this unstable tale, set against its diachronic illustrations, expand upon the impulses found throughout Walker's oeuvre, which demonstrate, "the existence of a shared visual memory of slavery each time [they reference], yet [refuse] to fully deliver, a familiar story."[85]

On its face, the nonsensical book forces the reader to reflect on their held racial biases and senses of historicity in this midst of absurdist narrative. Under closer

81. Eric Faden. "Movables, Movies, Mobility: Nineteenth-century Looking and Reading," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5, no. 1 (April 2007): 74-75. https://doi.org/10.1080/17460650701269820. The term first appeared in 1926. See Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "pop-up (adj.), sense 1," July 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/9589062222.
82. Brown, 193.
83. Faden, "Moveables," 192.
84. Walker, *Freedom: a Fable*.
85. Rebecca Peabody. *Consuming Stories: Kara Walker and the Imagining of American Race* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 20.

analysis, Walker's text is also understood as a meditation on freedom. N—'s pontifications directly reference Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech,[86] and the work serves as a "complex interrogation of freedom and futurity suggesting that each or both is fable or fabulation."[87] Despite its fabulism, the book is an enactment of freedom that involves the reader in its storytelling. N— suggests that liberty can be articulated as an extension of the body: "[this] woman's body is like our history, starting from places of darkest mystery and capable of bringing to light New Worlds."[88] Freedom, in this case, is posited as a sensorial or erotic experience. The book also demonstrates a conceptual freedom tale: "the text seems to insist on an emancipation of word from image, of narrator from N—, of reader from viewer, and of any from artist."[89] In *Freedom: a Fable*, Walker raises questions about the meaning—or viability—of freedom in post-Civil Rights generations, and the artist articulates gestures toward liberty through complex conceptual frameworks of race and gender.[90]

Conclusion

Kara Walker's *Freedom: a Fable* is an effective teaching tool in its embeddedness within multiple, complex sociocultural, political, and art historical traditions.[91] Library instructors invested in teaching toward a critical literacy can use the text to productively challenge students to consider the complex systemic issues that determine their social milieus. The text's nuance and ambivalence toward its racialized figures is of great potential use in an instructional setting, as it forces students to reflect upon their own held knowledge, perspectives, and biases. Library instructors can use *Freedom: a Fable* to expand upon the history of the silhouette in America, to point to silhouettes' racial implications, to investigate Walker's artworks' representational resonances, and to interrogate an innovative intervention on the pop-up book form. *Freedom: a Fable* exists within a complex web of historicity, and its focused examination can raise constructive questions about race representation in America.

Issues of race and racism must be raised in classroom spaces to encourage students toward critical, empathic, and socially responsive research practices. The utilization of artists' books and object-based learning can prove to be useful mechanisms in approaching these sensitive subjects. Instructors may encounter student resistance in teaching toward these themes, and they should be prepared to encounter unsympa-

86. Tang, "Postmodern Repetitions," 161.
87. Hazel V. Carby. "Black Futurities: Shape-Shifting beyond the Limits of the Human" *In Visible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture*, November 15, 2020. Accessed February 2, 2022. https://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/black-futurities/.
88. Walker, *Freedom: a Fable*.
89. Brown, 196.
90. Brown.
91. A longer version of this paper would include instructional examples and assessment data.

thetic audiences. This resistance should not be framed as the fault of the student. In *Teaching About Race and Racism in the College Classroom,* Cyndi Kernahan offered,

> . . . many Americans (especially Whites, but not only Whites) believe in the notion of colorblindness, rejecting the notion of widespread institutional discrimination. Similarly, there is little understanding of our history and the racist ideas that shaped the United States from the beginning. . . . Given this, it is not surprising that our students struggle to make sense of what we are teaching them and that they slip back just as we push forward.[92]

Educating students about issues of race is reflective of threshold learning concepts in that, ". . . learning about race involves seeing oneself in a new way and in a way that can be hard to 'unsee.'"[93] Though taking on this subject matter in library instruction may prove challenging, it is critical to engage students in these fundamental issues—they govern the worlds in which students live and learn.

Artists' books have the potential to break difficult conceptual barriers and facilitate meaningful engagement with the material in its social, cultural, political, and art historical contexts. Kara Walker's *Freedom: a Fable* can challenge and inspire students toward similarly rigorous critical engagement. The book's richness, resonance, and complexity may productively discomfit students and encourage self-reflective and responsive scholarly practice.

The Necessity of Embracing Collection Gaps: Moving Towards Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Collecting

by Ruth Kramer

Many special collections and rare book departments within American academic libraries are changing their collection development policies to reflect the need and call for diverse collections. However, many of these altered policies do not adequately address what a diverse collection is, and how to achieve this. Moreover, while institutions look to diversify their collections, they are also filling "collection gaps," or, acquiring items in areas of weakness, to better strengthen the overall research and instruction value of the entire collection. To better understand these policy changes, we can look at a variety of academic institutions that differ in size, geographic location,

92. Cyndi Kernahan. *Teaching about Race and Racism in the College Classroom: Notes from a White Professor* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2019), 48.
93. Kernahan, 49.

and collection priorities. We must begin by investigating what constitutes a diverse collection in these locations, and how many genuine efforts towards diverse collection acquisitions have failed, by looking solely to acquire items of identity-based trauma.

A "collection gap" refers to a lack of materials in relation to a specific theme, event, or historical idea at an institution. Many institutions identify these gaps, or weaknesses, in their collection development policies. At the University of Virginia, the collection development policy stated:

> [W]e address imbalances in our collections. Despite our success in building a collection with nationally and internationally recognized strengths, our holdings remain imbalanced in significant ways. . . . It is a high priority to address these imbalances by collecting creatively and proactively.[94]

At Smith College, the College Archives Collection Development Policy read:

> The College Archives has a strong base of materials documenting traditional white, heteronormative stories centering on Smith's policies, teaching, and activities. The College Archives recognizes the gaps this collection strategy produced, and seeks now to expand the story of Smith College to include the College's multi-faceted, and varied communities."[95]

A collection gap can concern any subject, but it has become increasingly apparent that the gaps at academic libraries most often concern materials created in, by, or about historically excluded and marginalized groups, including Black, Indigenous, and additional communities of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and disabled persons. Due to these gaps, many institutions' collection development policies explicitly state that they look to collect materials representative of "underrepresented networks,"[96] or "traditionally marginalized and/or non-canonical voices and cultures,"[97] or the "archives of traditionally underrepresented individuals and groups."[98] Though these are academic libraries, all differ in who and how they seek to

94. "Special Collections: Collection Development Strategy | UVA Library." University of Virginia. 2023, https://www.library.virginia.edu/special-collections/collections/collection-development-policy#:~:text=We%20avoid %20replicating%20the%20research,every%20part%20of%20our%20operation.
95. "Collection Development Strategy, Smith College Special Collections." Smith College. 2019. https://libraries.smith.edu/special-collections/about/collection-development-strategy.
96. "Collection Development Policy." Special Collections, Williams College. 2023. https://specialcollections.williams.edu/collection-development-policies/.
97. Indiana University Libraries. "Moving The Center In Library Collections: Principles And Actions For IUB Libraries." Indiana University. September 12, 2022. https://libraries.indiana.edu/moving-center-library-collections.
98. "Special Collections Collection Development Policy - University Libraries | Washington University In St. Louis." University Libraries - Washington University In St. Louis. May 2022. https://library.wustl.edu/about/policies/spec-collection-development-policy/.

serve, even while each is looking for "diverse" collections.

To further contextualize these changes in collection development nationwide, we must also look at why these changes are occurring only now, rather than earlier. The library profession is overwhelmingly and dominantly white at 82%.[99] Not even thirty years ago, 96% of the Rare Books and Manuscript Section (RBMS) of the American Library Association (ALA) identified as white.[100] Beyond this contemporary domination, white supremacy and exclusivity defined many library histories; David James Hudson argued there is little space left for genuine engagement due to "diversity's preoccupation with demographic inclusion and individual behavioral competence," [101] and Isabel Espinal emphasized the negative impacts of centered whiteness in librarianship, stating "adherence to whiteness in libraries has had deleterious affective and career implications for librarians of color."[102] It would be incorrect to think this does not inform previous and ongoing acquisition decisions, in regards to what we collect and prioritize, but also what collections are about and whose voices are a part of them. White supremacy demands the silence, erasure, and suffering of marginalized people, something from which libraries, museums, and academic institutions are not immune, and to which they have actively contributed.[103]

The experiences and voices of people of color, of LGBTQ+ individuals, of disabled persons, and so on, were not only dismissed from widely accepted understandings of American history, but also actively silenced. Author Kellee E. Warren criticized, "calls for diversity and minority participation in library and information science and archival science"[104] by aligning the lack of Black women's presence in the field with the misrepresentation, or complete lack of representation, of Black women throughout history. Warren posed: "if Black women are not recognized as worthwhile subjects in the archives, and presently not valued as knowers, how can they be accepted as library and archive professionals?"[105] Warren cited how representations of Black women in

99. "Library Professionals: Facts, Figures, And Union Membership — Department For Professional Employees, AFL-CIO." Department For Professional Employees. April 16, 2023. https://www.dpeaflcio.org/factsheets/library-professionals-facts-and-figures.
100. Grob, Julie. "RBMS, Special Collections, and the Challenge of Diversity: The Road to the Diversity Action Plan." *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 4, no. 2 (2003): 74-107, https://rbm.acrl.org/index.php/rbm/article/view/219.
101. David James Hudson, "On 'Diversity' as Anti-Racism in Library and Information Studies: A Critique." *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 1 (2017), https://doi.org/10.24242/jclis.v1i1.6.
102. Isabel Espinal, Tonia Sutherland, and Charlotte Roh. "A Holistic Approach for Inclusive Librarianship: Decentering Whiteness in Our Profession," *Library Trends* 67, no. 1 (2018): 147–162, https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2018.0030.
103. Daryl Fischer, Swarupa Anila, and Porchia Moore, "Coming Together to Address Systemic Racism in Museums," *Curator* 60 (2017): 23–31, https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12191
104. Kellee E. Warren, "We Need These Bodies, But Not Their Knowledge: Black Women in the Archival Science Professions and Their Connection to the Archives of Enslaved Black Women in the French Antilles," *Library Trends* 64 no. 4 (2016): 776–794, *Project MUSE*, https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2016.0012.
105. Warren, "We Need," 776.

history have been "often neglected or destroyed," and how this continues to harm Black women's presence in the archives today:

> the archives of enslaved Black people are a collection of bodies as numbers, violence and death. As a result, Black women as archivists would be speaking back, or resisting, the official narrative and taking part in shaping their own identities.[106]

Warren's conclusion encouraged the question, "how can archives, which have historically suppressed records, now convince Black women to join and stay in the profession?"[107] Similarly, how can archivists and librarians work to end barriers of entry, distrust of the profession and of industry professionals, and faulty attempts of increasing diversity?

This is not to say that academic libraries should not look to be more representative of lived human experience, but, in the desire to be more representative of these experiences, I recommend two collection processes to prioritize in acquisition: collect items that do not mainly concern a group's collective trauma, and acquire materials that showcase the variety of experiences within a group, rather than reducing people to a monolith. For example, claiming a diverse collection of LGBTQ+ experiences would mean that acquiring materials solely relating to HIV/AIDS epidemic (collective trauma), or the experiences of cisgender gay white men (monolithic experience) would be inaccurate, and wrong; the importance of LGBTQ+ histories does not begin and end with epidemic nor with the experiences of a single demographic. One must include multiple dimensions of experiences—creative expressions, voices, and, perhaps most importantly, the joy of individuals and their communities. When we reduce people and communities to the trauma and suffering they and their ancestors have endured, or to a single identity, we reduce their personhood, especially within the historical record.

What I argue instead, is that it is better to embrace collection gaps and be transparent about why they exist, rather than to fill them with materials rooted solely or primarily in identity-based trauma. It is better to be truthful about our gaps and why they are there, than to fill them with resources that do not reflect commitments to and values of academic development, advocacy and dismantlement of oppressive structures, or of intellectual joy. Academic libraries can look inward for work that can be done in or around our institutions. Possibilities include using funds for: student research opportunities relating to institutional histories; honoraria for scholars willing to share their knowledge of institutional, land, or community histories; or for transportation expenses of local patrons, alumni, and other community members who will provide

106. Warren, "We Need," 777.
107. Warren, "We Need," 792.

oral histories. And if our acquisition budgets must remain solely in purchasing acquisitions, then, perhaps, progress looks like fewer purchases, with regard for the totality of experience, not just the trauma or single elements of it.

Embracing and addressing our collection gaps, as well as the transparency and commitments to justice they require, is key to developing not only diverse collections, but also equitable and inclusive ones. Libraries, museums, and academic institutions are places of advocacy, in addition to learning. Our professional standards and ethics urge us to not be neutral, and to advance justice through our work:

> Archivists collectively seek to document and preserve the record of the broadest possible range of individuals, communities, governance, and organizations. . . . It is not enough to collect the history of diverse peoples– the archives profession must constantly work towards creating anti-oppressive environments that encourage participation from people across the spectrum of experience.[108]

The overarching institutions of academic libraries and special collections actively voice their dedications to tenets of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in addition to advocacy and justice. In Fall 2020, at the University of Virginia, "the University's Board of Visitors (BOV) endorsed long-term goals tied to specific actions to advance racial equity."[109] In Williams College's Strategic Plan of 2021, the College outlined its commitment to "substantially increasing commitments to Sustainability and to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility as fundamental societal challenges," and further stated that this will be made possible by "transforming values into shared commitments by weaving them throughout all aspects of the college's program and operations."[110] With this in mind, it can be argued that our archives and special collections departments should illustrate collection diversity and strength, but institutional commitments to equity and justice must permeate all aspects of academic and extracurricular life. These efforts ask for work in the archives that not only meets professional standards of excellence, but also demonstrates commitments to justice and integrity. One cannot exist without the other. We should not be collecting additional identity-based trauma for the sake of cost or status, when our institutional histories still beg to be addressed. There is much learning to be done where we all stand.

108. "SAA Core Values Statement And Code Of Ethics | Society Of American Archivists." Society of American Archivists. August 2020. https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics.
109. "Racial Equity | Division For Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion." University of Virginia. 2020. https://dei.virginia.edu/racial-equity.
110. "Williams College Strategic Plan." Office Of The President. 2021. https://president.williams.edu/strategic-plan-2021/.

Sarah M. Horowitz

Chair's Note

It is a privilege to serve as the chair of RBMS. As we move toward a conference focused around "Momentum," I have been thinking about the ways RBMS has changed over the fifteen years I have been a member of this community, as well as the amount of work undertaken by this all-volunteer organization. RBMS writes guidelines and best practices, provides cataloging resources, hosts webinars, and organizes a national conference each year, all of which is a truly massive amount of work. I'm lucky and grateful to step into my role as chair following behind many wonderful people who have held it in recent years, and who have inspired me in my work in RBMS and beyond.

Like much of the library and archives profession, RBMS has been in a state of transition since 2020, and we are working to make sure that our goals, events, documentation, and practices align with what our members want and need. Sometimes we have made changes to practices but not yet documented them, and sometimes we need to change our procedures so that we can make needed changes to our practices. In that vein, I want to share a bit about a number of initiatives which are currently ongoing in RBMS.

The Documentation Task Force is working to transfer old conference presentations, committee minutes, and other documents from the rbms.info website to the ALA Institutional Repository. This will allow RBMS to continue to provide access to these important documents, while making our website more flexible and easier to maintain. We will also have the benefit of long-term preservation for these materials.

RBMS will hold its second hybrid conference this June, in Costa Mesa, California. The Conference Development Committee is working to revise how we think about conference hosting, in order to allow for virtual conference proposals, ensure we ask the right questions about support for hybrid conferences, and think more expansively—geographically—about host sites since we have updated the RBMS Manual (at the winter 2024 Executive Committee meeting) to indicate that the default for RBMS business and committee meetings will now be virtual.

Work on a new Diversity Action Plan continues, growing out of the call to action by former RBMS chairs Verónica Reyes-Escudero and Petrina Jackson. The Controlled Vocabularies Editorial Group is wrapping up the work of their Prejudicial Materials Working Group and upgrading their software to allow for better and more frequent updates to the vocabularies they maintain. The Instruction and Outreach Committee is conducting a review of the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy*; like all guidelines issued by ACRL, they are periodically reviewed to make sure they are up to date.

One of the roles of the Executive Committee is to answer questions about RBMS and to help members do their work. If there are questions you have, or projects you want to undertake, I encourage you to reach out to us at exec@rbms.info. I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming RBMS conference in Costa Mesa, the summer Executive Committee meeting, or some other event in the future.

Editor's note: the author is Curator of Rare Books & Manuscripts and Head of Quaker & Special Collections at Haverford College. Horowitz is RBMS Chair for 2023–2024 and, as such, also serves as Chair of Nominating Committee for the RBMS Executive Committee 2025/2026. While the Editor requested this update, the content remains solely the author's; no influence or suggestions were made regarding subject matter, nor was the content revised, except for punctuation.

Alison Fraser and Rachel Makarowski

RBMS 2024 Conference Preview

We are just a month away from RBMS 2024 and we hope you are as excited as we are! The Conference Program Planning Committee received an overwhelming response to our call for proposals on the theme of *momentum*, and we are thrilled to bring you the second hybrid RBMS conference with the help of our host sponsor University of California, Irvine. Whether you are joining us in sunny southern California or online from your favorite chair, we hope you have a transformative, informative, and collaborative experience at RBMS's sixty-fourth annual conference.

We are gratified that members from the Community Archives Lab at UCLA will give the opening plenary. Co-director Dr. Thuy Vo Dong and graduate student researchers Sadaf Ahmadbeigi and James Epps will discuss their work supporting identity-based memory organizations throughout Southern California and beyond, such as La Historia Historical Society and Museum in El Monte and the Texas After Violence Project.

We are equally excited for our closing plenary, led by Holly A. Smith, College Archivist of Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, who will be joined in conversation by Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez, a digital archivist at UC–Irvine. They will discuss the theoretical and practical applications of stewardship and social justice and their relationship with community, capacity, and intentionality. Both plenaries will be livestreamed and available for both in-person and virtual-only attendees.

The RBMS community submitted a staggering number of exceptionally strong proposals to our call for papers. While the selection process was incredibly difficult, we are proud of the richness and depth of the lineup, which will include in-person, livestreamed, and virtual-only panels, discussion sessions, seminars, workshops, and posters. Attendees can expect topics ranging from preserving gay cowboy archives, to diversity and inclusion hiring practices, to cataloging bound-withs in Alma. We hope that this program reflects the needs and interests of the community, whether you work in public services or technical services, are new to the profession or have been a member for decades. A full schedule can be found on the RBMS 2024 website. We look forward to the productive conversations and information-sharing these sessions will initiate, and we thank everyone who submitted a proposal.

The RBMS conference is not all work, however: we have also planned a schedule of in-person and virtual social and casual gatherings. If you are joining us in Costa Mesa, the conference will be held at the Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa, a fifteen-minute drive or less from UC–Irvine, the John Wayne Airport, and Pacific Coast beaches. From the conference hotel, walk to the anti-mall, the LAB ("Little American Business") Anti-Mall and the CAMP, two alternative retail developments with public art, independent stores, and plenty of great restaurants. If you are participating virtually, join us for a lively discussion of the weirdest objects you have in your collection and for post-plenary discussions with other virtual members. However you attend RBMS 2024, we look forward to seeing you soon!

Editor's note: The authors served as Co-chairs for the 2024 RBMS Conference Program Planning Committee. While this contribution was solicited, the content remains solely that of the authors. Other than adjustments made to conform with house style, the Co-chairs' statement is presented here without revision, except to correctly name two Costa Mesa locations.

Book Reviews

RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage reviews books, reports, new periodicals, databases, websites, blogs, and other electronic resources, as well as exhibition, book, and auction catalogs pertaining directly and indirectly to the fields of rare book librarianship, manuscripts curatorship, archives management, and special collections administration. Publishers, librarians, and archivists are asked to send appropriate publications for review or notice to the Reviews Editor.

It may not be possible for all books received to be reviewed in *RBM*, but the reviews appearing in the print journal are supplemented by a larger number of reviews published digitally on the *RBM* digital platform at https://rbm.acrl.org/index.php/rbm/pages/view/reviews. Books or publication announcements should be sent to the Reviews Editor: John Henry Adams, j.adams@missouri.edu, Research and Instruction Librarian, University of Missouri, Columbia MO, 65201.

Eliasof, Jane Mitchell. *Rebranding: A Guide for Historic Houses, Museums, Sites, and Organizations*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield/AASLH, 2022. Hardcover/Paperback/eBook, 184p. $85/$36/$34. (ISBN: 978-1-5381-4889-1/978-1-5381-4890-7/978-1-5381-4891-4).

In recent years, many museums and history organizations have been contemplating the need for a refresh to appeal to younger and more diverse audiences. While some have already made considerable changes and updates to their content and programming, names like "historic house" and "historical society" often carry dry or stuffy connotations that can mislead potential visitors. These names and brands may no longer reflect the audience's experience. Rebranding the organization with a new name and look can help both to improve clarity, and to better showcase these more modern and inclusive offerings. It can even increase visibility and attract new visitors to the site. However, rebranding a history organization can come with unique challenges. How do you reassure your dedicated donors and members that you will continue to honor the institutional history and legacy of the founders? Will you lose existing brand equity with the change? Using real examples from thirteen case studies, Jane Mitchell Eliasof's *Rebranding: A Guide for Historic Houses, Museums, Sites, and Organizations* highlights this growing trend and shows how other organizations were able to acknowledge their past, while making an important change for their institutional trajectory.

Rebranding is part of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Book Series, edited by Rebecca K. Shrum of Indiana University-Purdue

University Indianapolis. Co-published with Rowman & Littlefield, this series spotlights current issues, trends, and best practices in the field through inspiring, informative, and practical texts written by, and for, practitioners in the history community. Though *Rebranding* is categorized as an administration and marketing text, it is not overly technical. The author encourages readers to share the book as a resource with whomever seems appropriate, particularly at smaller organizations where staff tend to take on various job responsibilities, or "wear many hats," as the phrase goes.

Eliasof markets the book as an essential step-by-step guide for any history organization considering rebranding. Though numerous books have been written about logos and branding from the marketing perspective, very few focus entirely on branding for cultural heritage and history organizations. What makes this book even more distinctive is that Eliasof looks specifically at organizations who sought to change their existing branding. Across the case studies, *Rebranding* follows the who, what, when, where, why, and how for each museum or historical society's rebranding process. Perhaps even more importantly, the book includes insights from representatives of the featured organizations, who reflect on whether they thought their rebranding was successful or not, and acknowledge what they might have done differently in retrospect.

The shorter length of *Rebranding* enhances its approachability. Working professionals will not be daunted by picking this book up during a busy calendar year. The writing is clear and practical, and the book is arranged into sections that make it easy to reference by topic. The preface sets the stage well and establishes the need for this book. The reader is presented with more background on the concept of rebranding and its value to the museum field. The preface also introduces the author and describes Eliasof's qualifications. Drawing on over two decades of designing and writing marketing, educational, and training programs for the health care industry, Eliasof was well positioned to lead the Montclair Historical Society through a rebranding and reinterpretation process, serving as Executive Director when the organization became the Montclair History Center. This firsthand experience demonstrates her expertise on the topic. The first chapter gives an overview of each of the thirteen different organizations featured as case studies. Those organizations are the Ames History Center (Ames, Iowa); the First Americans Museum (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma); Five Oaks Museum (Portland, Oregon); HistoryMiami Museum (Miami, Florida); the Moab Museum (Moab, Utah); the Montclair History Center (Montclair, New Jersey); the Northwest Montana History Museum (Kalispell, Montana); Ohio History Connection (Columbus, Ohio); the Pejepscot History Center (Brunswick, Maine); the Society for History and Racial Equality (Kalamazoo, Michigan); the Southern California Railway Museum (Perris, California); Two Mississippi Museums (Jackson, Mississippi); and the Virginia Museum of History and Culture (Richmond, Virginia). By including representative organizations of varied sizes and budgets located across the contiguous United States, Eliasof provides a wealth of perspectives. All the organizations followed a similar rebranding process and faced many of the same issues.

The subsequent eight chapters walk the reader through the rebranding process using examples from the case study organizations. At this point, the book becomes a topical guide on why and how to rebrand. The chapters cover the importance of data collection, legal name change options, logo and brand design, launch timelines, budgets, and funding. Here, the author emphasizes that a brand is just as much about the name and logo as it is about the overall experience. All three of these elements must support each other and work together for the organization to thrive. In addition, Eliasof asked representatives of the thirteen organizations to share advice on how they approached planning hiccups, handled negative feedback, and measured success. While this advice is important, the reader would also have benefited from the inclusion of an author critique regarding whether or not each rebranding was successful. While Eliasof may not have wanted to criticize colleagues in the field, it would be helpful for an impartial party to analyze the pros and cons of each case study example.

The handbook portion of the book is structured to allow time for reflection. At the end of each chapter, the author provides "Ask Yourself" guided questions to help prompt discussion with your team or organization. There are also useful tips and tools throughout the chapters, including real examples of audience surveys, "before" and "after" logos, brand guidelines, and press releases from the case study organizations. The book relies heavily on these images and examples, which is especially appealing for visual learners. However, several figures were particularly difficult to read or distinguish due to blurriness or small, illegible font. This made it challenging for the reader to glean the full message of those sections. Though color printing may have been more costly, color images would have been particularly helpful in the section discussing logo design and color choices. Eliasof relied on written descriptions and black-and-white images, but the reader may feel compelled to do quick internet searches to fully visualize the design choices for each organization.

One key element lacking in the book is a nuanced discussion of budget. Eliasof tries to emphasize the need to look for hidden costs and does provide overall rebranding budgets for each organization, if available. However, the spending in the case studies ranged anywhere from $5,000 to $100,000, and many of the interviewees noted that they underestimated the total cost of rebranding. Because money is always a major consideration for any organizational undertaking, readers will undoubtedly seek guidance in this book. Eliasof could have incorporated a table with cost estimates for each potential element of rebranding to give a more specific idea of what to expect. A list of additional grant and funding opportunities would also have been helpful, rather than simply encouraging pro bono work from generous community businesses and university students.

This book is chock-full of information, but the structure is difficult to follow at times. Organizing the book by topic, rather than by case study, allows readers to refer back to specific points in the rebranding process going forward. However, this made the initial readthrough slightly convoluted. The reader may have a tough time keeping the details of each of the thirteen organizations straight. Eliasof tried to combat this by providing introductions of the case study organizations in the first chapter, as well as in an Appendix, which includes an alphabetical listing of each organization, noting their mission, former name(s), institutional overview, reason for rebranding, rebranding costs (if available), and staff interviewees. The reader may find themselves flipping back to one of these sections for quick reminders while reading the rest of the book.

Overall, *Rebranding: A Guide for Historic Houses, Museums, Sites, and Organizations* is a useful resource that walks readers through the steps of, and reasons for, rebranding. It stresses the importance of considering your goals, audience, timing, qualitative and quantitative research, as well as the need to document and analyze your results and feedback throughout the process. Eliasof uses pre- and post-COVID-19 examples from statewide organizations, local historical societies, and regional museums across the country to create an engaging how-to guide for museum practitioners. *Rebranding* fills an information gap in the field and makes the rebranding process seem less daunting by providing a pathway for success. — *Mindy Price, Minnetrista Museum & Gardens*

Fox, Adam. *The Press and the People: Cheap Print & Society in Scotland, 1500–1785*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. (electronic book)

Early modern book history in Scotland has focused primarily on the publication of texts by and for Scotland's intellectual élite. Scotland eventually emerged, as it is often argued, as the most literate society in Europe at the time. Such an accomplishment is remarkable considering how relatively late the printing press was introduced in Scotland: Walter Chapman and Androw Myllar established the first press in 1507 at the instruction of James IV. Although cheap prints and popular literature were the "bread and butter" of Scottish printers in the early modern era, no study of their survival and impact on Scottish book trade had previously been published. Adam Fox's *The Press and the People* fills this lacuna in an admirable manner, being the only large-scale survey of Scottish popular and ephemeral literature production to date.

Fox's main goal is to create a survey of cheap print and popular literature in early modern Scotland, examining the relationships between increased book production and circulation and mass communication and popular culture (1). Part bibliographical study, part textual analysis, and part social history, *The Press and People* highlights the book as an agent for higher social inclusion and diversity in Scotland due to the low cost, as well as the portability of the material printed and sold. Fox's erudite, judicious monograph is an authoritative bibliographical, sociocultural, and socioeconomic study of the subject.

Easily accessible print supported the increase in literacy in the kingdom as the Scottish Reformation of 1560 introduced new educational reforms that increased access to reading and writing instruction. According to Fox, three preconditions were necessary to create a literate society in Scotland: access to domestically printed literature; a book economy affordable to various social groups; and a public literate enough (at least in the vernacular) to buy and read cheap prints. These cheap prints were mostly broadsides, handbills, and pamphlets printed on poor-quality paper and sold unbound for rapid distribution. A healthy supply of vernacular popular literature printed in Scotland secured the emergence of Scots vernacular literature in print; the revival of the Scots language, was, as Fox argues, directly linked to "the social reach of cheap print" (8). Fox demonstrates the symbiotic relationship between domestic print production in the Scots language, a book trade focused on supplying cheap prints as its main business model, and the development of a literate public in Scotland across several social strata.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I: Establishing the Market describes the preconditions for the existence of a book publishing industry, as well as an avid reader base to support it. According to Fox, these preconditions were in place by 1560, the date of the Scottish Reformation, and 1760, the accession of George III (18). The first chapter provides an overview of both the emergence of a book trade and a literate public in Scotland; it includes an examination of printing outputs and prices, Scottish education, and average wages in Scotland in the early modern period. Chapters 2 and 3 explore Edinburgh's book trade, with chapter 2 dedicated to the trade and vernacular literature between 1500 and 1660, and chapter 3 analyzing the trade and cheaper print production between 1660 and 1785. Chapter 4 examines the emergence of other print centers in Scotland—namely Aberdeen, Glasgow, and smaller burghs like St. Andrews and Dumfries—markets characterized by smaller outputs

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and low-quality prints. Printing in the small burghs occurred, Fox argues, not to compete with Edinburgh's book trade, but to supply local readers with cheaper, affordable alternatives to the higher-quality books produced in the capital. Chapter 5 focuses on street literature; Fox contextualizes the symbiotic relationships between cheap print production, street literature, and the sellers who interacted directly with readers from all walks of life. By examining how geography, socio-economic class, book production and trade, and social history entwined to elucidate the importance of cheap print in Scotland, chapter 5 brings to life the characters and conditions that sustained book trade and printing production in early modern Scotland. It is, for this reviewer, the most accomplished chapter of an already highly accomplished book.

Part II examines the varieties of cheap print in terms of both format and genre. Chapter 6 is dedicated to analyzing the production of handbills and placards, including advertisements, notices, and elegies. Chapter 7, titled "Last Words and Dying Speeches," includes analyses on the printing of last speeches and confessions from those who were publicly executed, which Fox argues "[. . .] shed [light] on the processes and rituals of public execution in early modern Scotland" (291). Chapter 8 explores the popular Scottish genre of ballads and songs—often published as broadsides—and sold by hawkers and ballad singers. Chapter 9 examines the production and popularity of almanacs and prognostications, one of the most affordable and read popular literature in Scotland. The popularity of prognostic literature was at odds with the Presbyterian establishment, creating tensions between the power and reach of the kirk and the seemingly superstitious literary interests of the populace. Finally, Chapter 10 examines little pamphlets and story books, a type of literature that edified audiences through entertainment.

Brimming with vivid details about the production of cheap print in Scotland, *The Press and the People* leaves no stone unturned when examining the extant evidence on early modern cheap print production in Scotland. Fox not only used source materials such as extant bibliographical evidence and records, but also consulted legal materials, such as town council and burgh records, testaments, and inventories that provide a richness of fiscal details. In these sources, Fox has found the voices of women printers and booksellers, whose role in the book trade was instrumental (13). Agnes Campbell, Lady Roseburn, for example, was a printing powerhouse, becoming Scotland's most successful printer of the early modern period of any gender. She married printer Andrew Anderson—who became King's Printer in 1671—and ran Anderson's press as King's Printer after his death in 1676. Fox credits Campbell with a prominent role in the expansion of book trade in Scotland, as well as the dominance of Edinburgh as Scotland's printing production center in the eighteenth century. Campbell actively litigated against other printers to retain her role as the King's Printer (until her death in 1716), and as printer to both the University of Edinburgh and to the city until

1708 (99). Other prominent women printers include Margaret Reid in Edinburgh, daughter of John Reid, junior; Catherine Norwell, wife of Thomas Bassandyne and later of Robert Smyth; Margaret Wallace, wife of Robert Charteris, once King's Printer; Jonet Reid, wife of Andro Hart; and Margaret Cuthbert, widow to John Forbes, junior, who became Aberdeen's first woman appointed town printer in 1705. *The Press and the People* highlights the stories of those women who became business partners—and business owners in their own right—and emphasizes how their successes contributed to propelling the Scottish book trade to greater strengths.

Similarly, this book reveals the fundamental roles that seemingly minor historical characters played in the establishment, and success, of popular literature and print in Scotland. Fox reveals how important caddies (porters who ran errands for a fee), and paper criers (boys who sold papers on the street) were in sustaining the book trade in Scotland, even when town and privy council records often depicted them as public nuisances, and as the subject of numerous public complaints. Towns and the public had a complex relationship with caddies. Despite numerous complaints against their behavior being filed to the Edinburgh Town Council in the eighteenth century, caddies were unequivocally trusted by locals and outsiders as a valuable, trusted resource for hire. Paper criers were also a familiar sight in Edinburgh—they sold papers and other ephemeral materials off the stationeries and printers directly to the public. The format and affordable prices of ephemera were perfectly suited for paper criers as a source of income. These young men often sold pamphlets, broadsheets, and other portable prints, and their itinerant business model contributed to the fast dissemination of cheap prints among the townsfolk. Often, printers distributed materials to paper criers before they stocked them at stationers. The names of some caddies and criers survive in records; for example, David Buttle was a crier from whom people could buy the *Edinburgh Courant,* or other newspapers, in the early eighteenth century. The Scottish book trade depended extensively on well-established networks of sale and distribution, of which paper criers became a crucial, trusted part.

Although the accessibility of Fox's prose is undeniable, the abundance of details might limit the book's audience, and can occasionally be challenging to follow. The impressive volume and breadth of the evidence that Fox incorporates in his monograph can feel overwhelming at times. Scholars will find that the electronic version of the book lacks a bibliography or list of references, despite the inclusion of endnotes in each chapter. This omission does reduce some of the value of having an electronic version of this book, especially as the author showed tremendous care in crafting thorough notes. However, these are mere quibbles compared to the caliber of the scholarship and prose found in Fox's *The Press and the People*. This monograph is required reading for book historians of early modern Scotland specifically, and Britain and Europe in general. — *Marian Toledo Candelaria, University of Virginia*