



Introduction to Collections and Digital Collections

Digital Stewardship Curriculum

Cultural Heritage Organizations

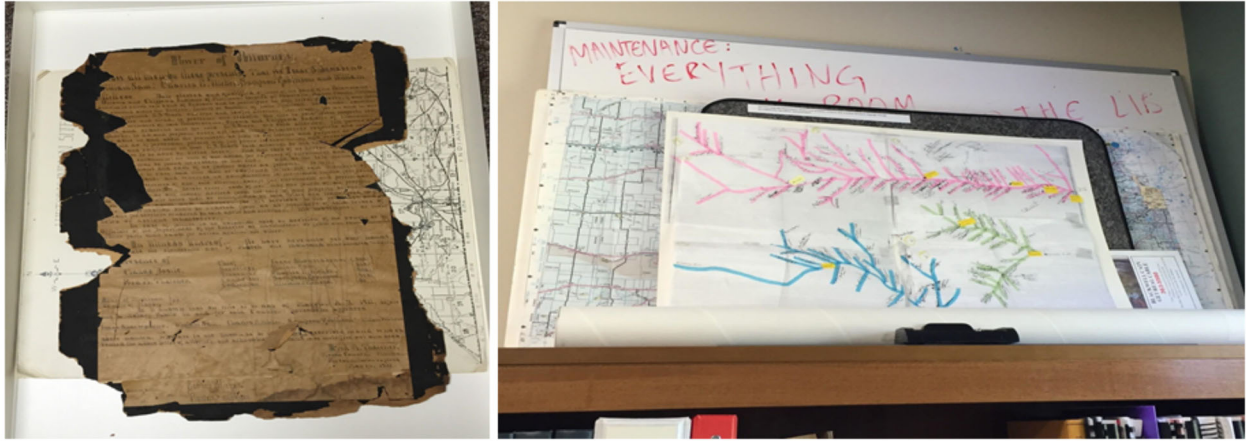
- Can look very different
- Similarities
 - Caring for collections
 - Working with your communities
 - Providing access to materials
- Example, range of Indigenous cultural heritage organizations in Tribal Digital Stewardship Cohort Program

- No-one-size-fits-all kind of institution or job title in cultural heritage organizations across the country and world.
 - Archives, Libraries, Museums, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, Cultural Preservation Office, Governor's Office, Tribal College, Language departments, Education departments
- Some differences is size, resources, staffing -
 - Ex. A lot of variety from one small room of archives, to temperature and humidity controlled vaults,
- Similarities:
 - All organizations care for collections, work with your communities, and provide access to materials
 - Can make things difficult when you have multiple kinds of collections that might fall under museum, archives, library, or language, but you want to have them in the same location and use them together
 - Digital projects and digital preservation is a challenge for everyone - in tribal institutions and everywhere
 - Everything from huge institutions like the Smithsonian or National Archives, university archives, lone-arrangers with only one staff member
- Using the example of the institutions and departments who participated in the Tribal Digital Stewardship Cohort Program, these slides explore the many different types of collections that cultural heritage organizations may hold



Images and Documents

- Photographs (prints, negatives), albums/scrapbooks, text, files, letters, etc.
- Documents: legal materials, organizational files, logbooks, journals.
- Photos - can be tricky because the negative is the original, and then you have prints, but you may use a print as the only version you have...come in many different stages.
- Many photos together in albums, odd formats, digital files...
- Images are a wonderful way to engage with the community.
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Kaw Nation



Large Format Items

- Maps, artwork, documents, newspapers, etc.
- Maps, artwork, blueprints, newspapers.
- Add extra considerations for safe storage and complete digitization/access.
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and the Kaw Nation



Audio and Moving Image

- Tapes, cartridges, open reel, film, etc.
- Lots of institutions have a/v materials - can be the hardest format to deal with.
- Preservation and digitizing (need proper storage, and playback equipment) **materials that are used to make these formats degrade fastest.** These recordings often have little or no description
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Kaw Nation



Published materials

- Books, journals, magazines, newspapers, etc.
- When thinking about digitizing published materials especially - Copyright comes into play.
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Karuk Tribe



3D items

- Art, tools, historical items, ancestor's belongings, etc.

- 3D items -- Providing access, coming up with creative ways to share digitally.
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Catawba Cultural Center



Language Materials

- Text, Audio, Video

- Language materials can include any and all of the previous formats listed.
- Images in this slides taken by Lotus Norton-Wisla at the Kaw Nation

Physical and Digital Collections

- Identifying formats
- Organizing into collections
- Understanding, organizing, and describing collections
- Provide access

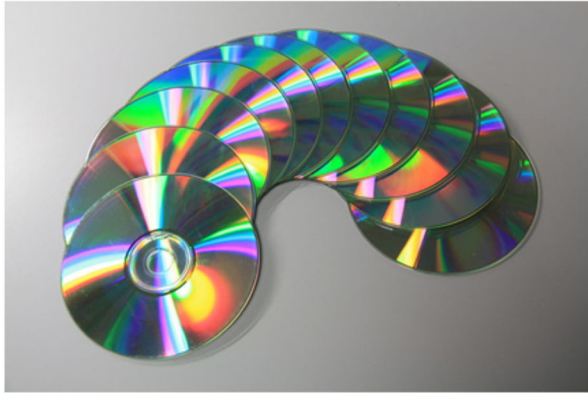
- Start with the big picture.
- Know what you have - in your department (sometimes in other departments too) -
 - Different formats = different care
 - Especially if materials in different formats have been sitting for a while, so an inventory and get to know what is there
- Getting materials organized - dividing into collections if needed, rather than having ONE large collection.
- Then, getting more specific -
 - What is in each collection, take notes, write basic descriptions
 - What collections, items, groups of items do you care for
- Providing access, you may need to create more description/context.



Digital Collections

- Digitized
- Born Digital

- May be created from outside institutions - make copies with public equipment or bring your own capture equipment.
- May be created in house from your own collections.
- May be created digitally in the first place - born digital (
 - Examples might be oral histories made on a recorder, interview transcriptions in a word document, digital photos, etc.
- There are specific planning/management steps and practices to preserve and sustain digital material
 - It is important to learn these, because preservation is not just for physical/analog materials.
- Book scanner: © Yann Forget / Wikimedia Commons CC-BY-SA-3.0
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scanner_de_la_biblioth%C3%A8que_d%27art_et_d%27arch%C3%A9ologie_2.jpg
- Flash drives/SD cards: <https://www.pikist.com/free-photo-vmpzi>
- External hard drive: Sam Frazier CC-BY-SA-4.0
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:External_portable_hard_drive.jpg



Other Media Considerations

- Optical media: cds, dvds, minidiscs, laser discs
 - Floppy disks and more
-
- Digital media has risks of PHYSICAL and DIGITAL degradation - often without warning signs.
 - Optical media, cds, dvds,
 - Any outdated digital media that is becoming obsolete
 - Digital media that is at a higher risk of failure - flash drives
 - Or even currently in use digital media that is more than 3-5 years old
 - Compact discs: Silver Spoon / CC BY
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CDs.JPG>
 - Floppy disks: George Chernilevsky / Public domain
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Floppy_disk_2009_G1.jpg

Challenges of Digital Collections

- Storage space
- Additional obstacles with donated digital collections
- Dependant on hardware and software
- Degradation

- Storage can be cheap, but you still need to account and plan for it, FILLS UP FAST (especially for audio and video).
- When getting a hard drive - (need to WORK with donors), make sure you are only getting desired content and understand organization, file names, saving strategies...easy to be disorganized and get extraneous files.
- Need to be able to access, and open digital files.
- Like all other formats, Digital materials ALSO need preservation. Can be even more of a threat since there are fewer warning signs.

Priorities for Formats and Collections

- Policies
- Preservation
- Collecting, Creating
- Organization
- Description
- Providing Access

- In the Digital Stewardship Curriculum, there are resources for creating policies for your institution - a first place to start is a collections development policy.
- Have a plan for preservation of all kinds of formats - physical and digital.
- You may want to expand your collections by seeking materials from your community or creating new collections.
- Organizing collections
 - Separating into their own collections based on who donated/when/subjects/formats, then subseries.
- Describing collections
 - Documenting all the known information about the collection - for internal purposes and for people who might want to use them.
- Providing access to collections, procedures for how people look at materials and handle them in person, or online, or copies



Discuss or Reflect

How would you like to see digital collections used in your community?

- Discuss with coworkers and colleagues, or reflect on your own:
 - Think about how you want to see digital collections used in your community.
 - How will people access materials?
 - What impact would you hope for and imagine?
 - What reasons will people want to use materials?
 - What can they do with materials?
 - What new things could they create?

Credits

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 - Flash drives/SD cards: <https://www.pikist.com/free-photo-vmpzi>
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