

Curation and Conservation of Digital Art

INST745 Introduction to Digital Arts Curation
Spring 2016, Mondays, 6:00pm - 8:45pm In HBK 0105

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Course Description:

This course explores curation of digital art. The course is particularly focused on understanding the nature of digital works, and based on that, how to collect and manage born-digital and digitized works. This will include a range of art forms and media; including but not limited to video games, photography, architecture, music and sound, dance, theater, photography, film, and other web and new media art. In some of these cases, analog practices have shifted more or less entirely into digital practices (ex. digital photography, computer aided design, music, film and video). In others, digital media has enabled new kinds of works (ex. video games, flash interactives, net art, chiptunes, electronic literature, animated gifs, web comics). The course is focused just as much on vernacular art (everyday people's digital photos, memes, lolcats, etc.) as more "highbrow" art.

Frameworks for Understanding Digital Works

The course provides a series of frameworks for understanding digital art works as;

- **fixed creative works** to be conserved
- **performances or experiences** to be documented or recorded
- the result of a creative process of which produce a **trail of potential archival records**
- the **execution of an application or source code and data** which could shared for use/reuse

Key Conceptual Issues

The course focus on a set of central conceptual issues that crosscut digital media and works and are in many cases in tension with each other. These include;

- **Digital Materiality and Resistance in the Materials:** The materiality of digital objects plays a key role in understanding them.
- **Fixity:** A key concept in digital preservation used to ensure authenticity and integrity of a digital object.
- **File Formats:** File formats constrain, contain and enable digital works. In the case of digital art, the formats themselves become materials with affordances that structure experience.
- **Platform Studies:** Digital works are always created in dialog with digital platforms (operating systems, programing languages, protocols, hardware, etc.) .
- **Screen Essentialism:** Works are not simply what they appear to be on a screen, but are the result of the interaction of code, physical media, interfaces and environments.
- **Emulation & Virtualization:** It is becoming increasingly possible to emulate and virtualize digital platforms and this is becoming a key component in future access to digital art.
- **Significant Properties:** There are significant aspects of works that need to be articulated to be able to ensure they are present for future use
- **Social Memory:** The meaning of a work is embedded in a socio-cultural context and as such the tangible aspects of a work are often only a part of what one might want to conserve.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the semester students should be able:

- To articulate the cultural significance of digital arts to society and individuals
- To describe the content of art artifacts created as digital media
- To describe the content of art artifacts represented through digital media
- To understand the lifecycle of digital arts artifacts
- To demonstrate the skills necessary to appraise, collect, manage, provide access to, preserve, and promote digital art artifacts in libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural institutions
- To demonstrate professional communication skills and behaviors through blogging and presenting a poster
- To communicate issues and trends in the field as related to library, archival, and information science

Reading, Blogging and Commenting Strategy

As a graduate seminar, the expectation of this course is that we will work as a group of professionals or budding professionals to make sense of key issues and themes in our field. This course involves a significant amount of reading and writing. This section of the syllabus includes information about how to best succeed in this work.

Read Purposefully and Strategically

The seminar involves a lot of reading. If you haven't already, you are going to need to learn to read strategically. You need to get what you need out of the book or article, this often does not require reading every word in an article or a book. For some suggestions on this see, [Miriam Sweeney's How to Read for Grad School](#) or [Larry Cebula's How to Read a Book in One Hour](#). Ultimately, learning to do this kind of reading is one of the most important skills you can pick up in graduate school.

Course Blogging

One of the objectives of this seminar is to develop and demonstrate professional communication skills. At this point in the profession, that means we need to engage in public writing on the web. To this end, a significant amount of our course communication is going to happen in a public course blog. On the first day of class I will show you how to use the blog. You are expected to post assignments to the blog. We will sign up for who writes about what on the first day of class.

These are blog posts, and as such they should not be written like term papers. Part of the goal of this approach is to become familiar with the genre and format of thoughtful blogging. You need to get in, say something interesting, synthesize some thoughts and get out. Ideally briefly summarize, synthesize and comment on readings and then end with an invitation to discussion. You should think of your posts as mixing the features of a well-composed academic book review and the well conceived blog post. [Read this for a sense of the features of an academic book review](#). For notes on [how to write blog posts see this post](#). Posts for a given week must be on the web at least four days before class (yes, if you want you can post it at 11:59 PM on that day).

Do not assume your reader has detailed knowledge of the things you are writing about. One of the goals of the blog is to invite interested third parties into a conversation with our course. If we are doing this right you can expect comments and dialog with historians, humanists, librarians, archivists, curators, and bloggers who are not participating in the course as students but who are participating in the public conversation we initiate through the blog.

Your identity and the blog

This is public so one of our first considerations is going to be personal identity. While this is a practical matter it is also, very directly, part of the subject matter of the course. I would encourage you to blog with your real name, [it is a good idea for you to start building a web presence for yourself](#). It has even been suggested that in the emerging interdisciplinary field of digital humanities you can either "[be online or be irrelevant](#)." With that said, [many people have good reasons not to use their real names on the web](#). With that in mind, if you are uncomfortable with sharing your name publicly, you should feel free to use a pseudonym or a handle. If there is a reason that you do not want to share your work on the web please send me an email or meet with me after class. I feel that this public dialog is an important course goal, but I will of course understand and accommodate anyone that needs a different arrangement. If at the end of the course you would like to continue blogging I will be happy to show you how we can pull all your posts out and into a new blog of your own. We will talk about this identity decision on the first class day.

Keep the conversation going

Posting is not the end of the assignment. After posting you need to foster the discussion you are initiating. When people comment you need to give substantive responses. Try to engage everyone who comments in some fashion and try to use the comments to sustain a conversation you began at the end of your post. Do not hesitate to ask if you would like help with this process or want any advice about how to keep the conversation going.

Commenting is also an assignment

Beyond posting you are expected to contribute substantive comments to a minimum of 12 of your peers posts. Your comments should extend and contribute to the conversation. Good comments are an important genre unto themselves. [Profhacker's guidelines for comments](#) for a sense of the kind of comment ecosystem we are trying to produce. Along with that, see [this piece on how to write a great blog comment](#) for some suggestions on the format for comments. Comment early so that others have a chance to read them.

The course blog is the required reading we write ourselves

Beyond posting and commenting everyone needs to read everything on the blog before class each week. This is the part of the course readings that we write ourselves and in all honesty this is the most important springboard for our in-class discussions. The blog extends the function of classroom and it is essential that everyone follow and participate in it.

Digital Art Curation Course Project

Over the course the semester you will work on a series of assignments focused on planning for the acquiring and preserving a born digital work or a collection of born digital works.

If you can find a work that is openly licensed, or if you engage in a documentation project, you can actually end up with an archival information package that contains the preservation copies of digital materials that you can upload to the Internet Archive for them to preserve. If you chose to focus on a work for which you don't have clear rights to preserve it you can simply do the work you would otherwise do and then just not include the objects themselves.

All of the steps in the process will produce documents that you will publish to the course blog to turn in.

Works You Could Focus On:

You are free to identify the born digital work that you would like to focus on. With that noted, I have pulled together the list below as a set that you are free to work from. All of the works below were selected because of the range of kinds of work they represent and the complexity and significance they bring. That is, everything in this list would be great fodder for the sort of assignments you need to do. You are free to choose something else, but you are just going to need to clear it with me first to make sure that it is a rich enough example for it to really work with the assignments.

1. [The Wilderness Downtown](#): "The Wilderness Downtown is an interactive [multimedia](#) video coded in [HTML5](#) and was published to show off the capabilities of the new [Google Chrome](#) browser. Directed by [music video](#) director [Chris Milk](#) and involving the work of a number of Google employees led by [Aaron Koblin](#) as well as digital production company [B-Reel](#), it features the [We Used to Wait](#) song from the [Arcade Fire](#) album [The Suburbs](#). It was one of three Grand Prix winners at the 2011 Cannes advertising awards in the Cyber category." [Via Wikipedia](#)
2. [Google Poetry](#): "Google Poetry refers to the unintentionally poetic autocomplete results displayed in [Google search suggestions](#), which are often shared in the form of screenshots on the community sites [Tumblr](#) and [Reddit](#)." [Via know your meme](#)
3. [xkcd](#): "[xkcd](#), sometimes styled [XKCD](#), is a [webcomic](#) created by [Randall Munroe](#). The comic's [tagline](#) describes it as a "A webcomic of romance, sarcasm, math, and language". Munroe states on the comic's website that the name of the comic is not an [acronym](#) but "just a word with no phonetic pronunciation"." [Via Wikipedia](#)
4. [An Island](#): "An Island is an unconventional music performance film and an abstract documentary about a band and an island. The running time is 50 minutes." [Via project website](#)
5. [The Terrible Secret of Space](#): "The Terrible Secret of Space is a flash animation based on a prank ICQ conversation in which [Something Awful](#) creator Richard Kyanka convinced a stranger he was manufacturing space robots. The chat log also went onto inspire the catchphrase "Do you have stairs in your house?" which is used to identify other [Something Awful](#) users in public places." [Via know your meme](#)
6. [Thru-you](#): "In 2009, Kutiman released "Thru You," an online music video project, featuring a mixture of samples of YouTube videos, and the video project received more than 10 million views in around two weeks. [Time Magazine](#) named it one of the "50 Best Inventions of 2009"." [Via Wikipedia](#)

7. [Processing.js](#): “Processing.js is a JavaScript port of Processing, a programming language designed to write visualizations, images, and interactive content. It allows web browsers to display animations, visual applications, games and other graphical rich content without the need for a Java applet or Flash plugin.” [Via Wikipedia](#)
8. [We Feel Fine](#): “We Feel Fine is an interactive website, artwork, and book created by Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar that searches the internet every 10 minutes for expressions of human emotion on blogs and then displays the results in several visually-rich dynamic representations.” [Via Wikipedia](#)
9. [ROM TXT: ROM TXT](#) as a twitter bot “searching video game ROMs, tweeting strings of bytes from the ASCII range. Sometimes words. Every 5 minutes, for beauty.” [Via The Signal](#)
10. [Two Headlines](#): “A twitter bot that generates “near-future late-capitalist dystopian fiction but a world where there is no discernible difference between corporations, nations, sports teams, brands, and celebrities?” via [The Verge](#)
11. [The Reaction GIF Exhibit](#): The collection of materials and research that went into “ [The Reaction GIF: Moving Image as Gesture](#), which exhibits a set of GIFs he identified in consultation with [redditors](#)” via [The Signal](#).
12. [Homestuck](#): “*Homestuck* is a [webcomic](#) written, illustrated and animated by [Andrew Hussie](#). The series centers on a group of teenagers who unwittingly bring about the end of the world through the installation of a [beta](#) copy of an upcoming [computer game](#). The comic consists of a combination of static images, animated [GIFs](#) and [instant message](#)logs, as well as [animations](#) and [games](#) made with [Adobe Flash](#).” [Via Wikipedia](#)
13. [World Without Oil](#): “World Without Oil (WWO) is an [alternate reality game](#) (ARG) created to call attention to, spark dialogue about, plan for and engineer solutions to a possible near-future global oil shortage, post [peak oil](#).”
14. [P5P](#): “P5P is a collection of generative sketches that you control.” by [Beat Raess](#)
15. [The Guild](#): “*The Guild* is an American [comedy web series](#) created and written by [Felicia Day](#), who also stars as Cyd Sherman (AKA Codex). It premiered on [YouTube](#) on July 27, 2007, and ran until 2013.” [Via Wikipedia](#)

Assignments and Grading

Assignment One (Due 2/8/15) Intro Blog Post (5%): For your first post to the blog, introduce yourself and your interest in the course while also weaving in reflections on the readings of the week. Since we are not meeting face to face this week, you have until Wednesday the 3rd to post. Read everyone else’s posts and post a substantive comment on at least one other students post.

Assignment Two: (Due 4 days before the sessions you sign up for) Facilitate Discussion and Reading Blog Posts (25%): On the first day of class, everyone will sign up for two weeks for which they will facilitate discussion both in class and through the course blog. The individuals who have signed on for a given week will (1) write a 600-1000 word blog post synthesizing and discussing key themes and issues in the course. The post is due the Thursday before the class. They will then (2) come to class prepared to help facilitate the discussion of the readings.

Assignment Three (02/29/15) Born Digital Work for Project Identified (5%): Come to class having identified a digital work you plan to focus on for the rest of the assignments for the semester. Be prepared to talk about the work, what it is and a bit about why you think it is important that it be preserved or documented.

Assignment Four (3/21/15) Statement of Significance (10%): For the born digital work you have chosen to focus on for the semester, you will need to articulate what is significant about it in relationship to particular user or stakeholder communities.

Assignment Five: (4/4/15): Statement of Preservation Intent Statement and Acquisition/Preservation/Documentation Plan (10%): Based on what you have identified as significant about the given work you are focusing on, you now need to layout a preservation intent statement. In this, you will spell out 1) what you will either create or collect to capture the components identified in your

statement of significance. You will then 2) lay out a plan for how you will acquire or document and preserve those components. Be sure to consider issues around ethics and copyright.

Assignment Six (4/18/15): Actual or Model Archival Information Package for Work (15%): Assemble how you would preserve the work you are working with. This should include a zipped file (or some other way of assembling the data like posting it to Github or the Internet Archive) with the digital assets you plan to preserve, a set of metadata for it, and any curatorial materials you include to further contextualize it. Along with this, write a 1000-1500 word brief that builds on your statement of significance and preservation intent and explains why you have set up your AIP the way you have.

Assignment Seven (5/9/15) Project Poster (5%): Create a research poster for your class project. We will break our class time in half into two poster sessions. You will present your poster for half of the conference and engage with other student's posters for the other half. [Here is an example of a research poster](#). You don't need to print it out big, for the class you can just make this on a slide in PowerPoint and print out a stack of them to hand out.

Assignment Seven (5/9/15) Class and Project Reflection Blog Post (5%): Write a 600-1000 word blog post reflecting on issues or themes across the course that stuck with you the most. What do you know now that you didn't at the start? What are the big open questions for you?

Participation (throughout) (20%): Come to class each session prepared. That means you have 1) read the readings 2) read all your classmates blog posts and 3) you have commented on at least one of those posts. In class, you need to be an active part of the discussion. You can miss up to one class session before it will begin to affect your grade. If you are going to miss class contact me in advance.

Week by Week of Course

The readings are what you need to read for that week in the class. Come prepared to discuss the readings associated with the topic of the week. The course is front loaded with more reading and it tapers off as you get further into the semester and work on your project picks up.

Section One:

Background & Context for Curating and Preserving Digital Art

Week one: Course Introduction; Definitions and Concepts

1/25/15

For our first class, we will introduce ourselves to each other, talk through the course expectations and assignments. From there, we will make sure that everyone has signed up to lead discussion and blog about issues from two of the course sessions. Then we will read two short pieces of journalism that explore issues around preserving digital works and discuss them.

Read and Discuss in Class

- Koebler, J. (2015, April 10). [Gone in a Flash: The Race to Save the Internet's Least Favorite Tool](#). Motherboard
- Robertson, A. (2015, April 17). [The girl game archival project that's rewriting geek history](#)

Week Two: Perspectives on New Media Art and Digital Preservation (Asynchronous Virtual Class Session)

2/1/15

We will not meet in class this week. To demonstrate that everyone is able to use the blog for the rest of the course, everyone is going to write a blog post this week. The objective of this week is to provide a baseline framework and context for themes in the course. Rinehart and Ippolito's book covers the full range of issues involved in conservation of new media art in the context of social memory. Give it a good read, but don't sweat the details. Get the big picture and a sense of the argument and some examples. Fino-Raidin offers a complementary but in some ways more traditional approach to discussing conservation of digital works. The Smithsonian interview piece offers a series of perspectives from curators in their own words on key themes in the preservation of time-based media. The NDSA digital preservation essay offers a run through of the general issues involved in digital preservation.

Assignment Due: Intro Blog Post:

Readings:

- Rinehart, R., & Ippolito, J. (2014). *Re-collection: art, new media, and social memory*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Fino-Radin, B. (2013). [Conservation in Collections of Digital Works of Art](#). In B. Feston, J. Klinger, S. Norris, & Jeffrey Warda (Eds.), *The Electronic Media Review* (Vol. 2, pp. 101–112). Washington, D.C: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works.
- Eckert, C., Sanchez, C., & Smith, J. (2014). [The Smithsonian Interview Project: Questions on Technical Standards in the Care of Time-Based and Digital Art Ten Insights from Artists and Experts in the Field](#). Smithsonian’s Time Based Media and Digital Art Working Group and the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis.
- Phillips, M., Bailey, J., Goethals, A., & Owens, T. (2013). [The NDSA Levels of Digital Preservation: An Explanation and Uses](#). *IS&T Archiving*, Washington, USA.

Section Two:**Key Concepts for Digital Art: Materiality, Formats, Significance & Documentation****Week 3: Digital Forensics, Materiality, Fixity & is-ness****2/8/15**

Common wisdom holds that digital stuff is somehow not physical or material. We see things happen on a screen but we don’t have the same kind of tangible understanding of what is physically happening inside them. This week is about breaking that misconception up. Kirschenbaum’s book is fundamentally about the materiality of digital information. Focus on the Extreme Inscription section and then make sure you get a sense of the case study on *Mystery House* and *Agrippa* as both of these are born digital art works. The Archangel piece provides another case study of the use of the forensic techniques Kirschenbaum describes in the case of early computer based art created by Andy Warhol. Similarly, Reside’s piece explores issues with files from playwright Jonathan Larson’s archive. The blog post I wrote attempts to parse out some of the elements of identity in digital works. Of more interest than the post itself, the comments on it come from some very smart people and parse many of the issues Kirschenbaum raises.

Readings:

- Kirschenbaum, M. G. (2008). *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Arcangel, C. (2014). [The Warhol Files: Andy Warhol’s Long-Lost Computer Graphics](#). *Artforum*, (Summer).
- Reside, D. (2011, April 22). [“No Day But Today”: A look at Jonathan Larson’s Word Files](#). Posted to the *New York Public Library Blog*.
- Owens, T. (2012, October 25). [The is of the Digital Object and the is of the Artifact](#), posted to *The Signal: Digital Preservation*. Library of Congress.

Week 4. Digital Formats, Platforms and Resistance in Materials**2/15/15**

While digital objects are all material, the nature of digital formats as a kind of conceptual abstraction plays a key role in shaping digital works. Both the material affordances of digital media and of digital formats come to represent a basis for digital resistance in the materials that becomes generative for the production of art. Montfort and Bogost provide a context for understanding how the platform a digital work is based in shapes and is shaped by the production of works. Arms and Fleischhauer offer a general framework for thinking about the characteristics of digital formats and the Library of Congress Recommended Formats Statements offer a rundown of considerations for the acquisitions of digital works. Ball provides a detailed example of how issues around formats for computer aided design make it particularly challenging to preserve these works. The two videos, the Art of Glitch and the Evolution of 8-Bit Art both offer a wealth of examples of how many of the constraints of digital formats become generative and significant in the creation of works.

Readings:

- Montfort, N., & Bogost, I. (2009). *Racing the beam: the Atari Video computer system*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Arms, C., & Fleischhauer, C. (2005). [Digital formats: Factors for sustainability, functionality, and quality](#). In *Archiving Conference* (Vol. 2005, pp. 222–227). Society for Imaging Science and Technology.

- Library of Congress [Recommended Formats Statement](#) (Focus on the statements about digital formats)
- Ball, A. (2013). *Preserving Computer-Aided Design (CAD)*. Digital Curation Centre.
- PBSoffbook. (2012). *The Art of Glitch* | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.
- PBSoffbook. (2012). *The Evolution of 8-Bit Art* | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.

Week 5. Whose Significant Properties? Or, Preservation Intent & Authenticity 02/22/15

To preserve or conserve something it is essential to put a stake in the ground about what is in fact significant about that thing. If you haven't done that, you have no baseline from which to measure your success or failure. Much of the initial discussion of digital preservation focused on digitized materials. As such, considerable effort was put into defining the significant properties of works based on their mediums. Much of this thinking has changed and evolved. Dappert and Farquhar lay out how the significance is dependent on what a particular stakeholder values. Web, Pearson and Koerben move away from the concept of significant properties entirely and instead shift to a concept of making explicit statements of preservation intent. In the same vein, Espenschied demonstrates how concepts of authenticity and accessibility are in some cases at odds and are based on making judgment calls about what is particularly significant about a work in a context.

Assignment Due: Born Digital Work for Project Identified: Come to class having identified a digital work you plan to focus on for the rest of the assignments for the semester. Be prepared to talk about the work, what it is and a bit about why you think it is important that it be preserved or documented.

Readings:

- Dappert, A., & Farquhar, A. (2009). [Significance Is in the Eye of the Stakeholder](#). In M. Agosti, J. Borbinha, S. Kapidakis, C. Papatheodorou, & G. Tsakonias (Eds.), *Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries* (pp. 297–308). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Web, C., Pearson, D., & Koerben, P. (2013). [“Oh, you wanted us to preserve that?!” Statements of Preservation Intent for the National Library of Australia’s Digital Collections](#). *D-Lib Magazine*, 19(1/2).
- Espenschied, D. (2012, April 9). [Authenticity/Access](#) | One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age.
- Rowell, C. J., Dietrich, D., Kovari, J., Paolillo, M. A., & Casad, M. (Mickey). (2015) [Authenticity Amidst Change: The Preservation and Access Framework for Digital Art Objects](#). The Signal: The Library of Congress Digital Preservation Blog

Week 6: Documentation, Performance and Oral History 02/29/15

All too often we become obsessed with the “stuff” when what we really care about is meaning, intent, and interpretation. Building on longstanding traditions from performing arts preservation which focus on documentation we then consider three different pieces on preserving Massively Multiplayer Online Games which focus on the extent to which the significance of the games is not the games themselves but exists in documentation of experiences of players of the games. The DeVane and Squire piece provides a critical reminder on the role that identity plays in making meaning from a work and underscores the value of documenting how people actually make meaning from a work.

Readings:

- Manzella, C., & Watkins, A. (2011). [Performance Anxiety: Performance Art in Twenty-First Century Catalogs and Archives](#). *Art Documentation*, 28–32.
- Smigel, L., Goldstein, M., Aldrich, E., & Coalition, D. H. (2006). [Documenting Dance: A Practical Guide](#). Dance Heritage Coalition. Retrieved from
- Lowood, H. (2009). [Memento Mundi: Are Virtual Worlds History?](#) *California Digital Library*.
- Hussey, D. R. (2014, April 2). [The Preservation of Twitch Plays Pokémon](#). *Play the Past*
- Howard, J. (2015, September 3). [The Oral History of MMOs](#). *Play the Past*
- DeVane, B., & Squire, K. D. (2008). [The meaning of race and violence in Grand Theft Auto San Andreas](#). *Games and Culture*, 3(3-4), 264–285.

Section Three:

Particular Mediums, Formats and Genres: Software, Images, Sound & Folkart

Week 8: Software Art, Video Games, Source Code**3/7/15**

While digital images, audio, text and video all have analog corollaries software and video games in particular don't really have an analog equivalent. In this session we focus on issues that are essential for consideration of software based art. Chan and Cope focus our attention on the underlying source code of such works. The Preserving.exe report focuses attention on what is distinct and significant about software, focus on Kirshenbaum and Lowood's essays in this report. Kaltman et. al. provide a detailed case study on preserving a particular video game. The two videos offer insight into the range of elements of coding and composing software.

Assignment Due: Statement of Significance**Readings:**

- Chan, S., & Cope, A. (2014). [Collecting the present: digital code and collections](#). Presented at the Museums and the Web.
- National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (U.S.). (2013). [Preserving.exe: toward a national strategy for software preservation](#). Washington, D.C.: National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program at the Library of Congress
- Kaltman, E., Wardrip-Fruin, N., Lowood, H., & Caldwell, C. (2014). [A Unified Approach to Preserving Cultural Software Objects and their Development Histories](#). *eScholarship*.
- PBSoffbook. (2013). [The Art of Creative Coding](#) | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.
- PBSoffbook. (2012). [The Creativity of Indie Video Games](#) | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.

Week 7: Spring Break: No Class**3/14/15****Week 9: Digital Images: Photos, Web Comics, etc****3/21/15**

While still images and visual representations have a long analog history, there are significant new elements to consider about digital images. Tools like Photoshop and MS Paint leave significant cultural traces based on their functionality. The ubiquity of digital cameras have changed much of what it means to take and manage photos.

Readings:

- Manoich, L. [Inside Photoshop](#) : Computational Culture. (2012).
- Davison, P. (2014). Because of the Pixels: On the History, Form, and Influence of MS Paint. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 13(3), 275–297. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1470412914544539>
- Marshall, C. C. (2011). [Digital Copies and a Distributed Notion of Reference in Personal Archives](#). In M. A. Winget & W. Aspray (Eds.), *Digital media: technological and social challenges of the interactive world* (pp. 89–115). Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press.
- Good, J. (2011, September 15). [How many photos have ever been taken?](#)
- Losh, E. (2015). [Feminism Reads Big Data: "Social Physics," Atomism, and Selfiecity](#). Special Issue on Selfies *International Journal of Communication*, 9(0), 13.
- PBSoffbook. (2013). [Is Photoshop Remixing the World?](#) | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.
- PBSoffbook. (2013). [The Rise of Webcomics](#) | *Off Book* | *PBS Digital Studios*.

Week 10: Digital Sound and Moving Image**3/28/15**

Digital audio and moving images offer a range of further points of reflection on issues in their conservation and preservation. In Format Theory, Sterne offers a sophisticated review of the technical features of MP3 files that are grounded in a history of compression. The two pieces by Eppink illustrate how the affordances of the GIF enabled the development of a new genre of cultural expression in Animated GIFs. The videos on YouTube and viral videos explore how web based video has developed it's own styles based on changes in how we find and use video.

Assignment Due: Preservation Intent Statement**Readings:**

- Sterne, J. (2012). [Format Theory](#): in *MP3: the meaning of a format*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Eppink, J. (2014). A brief history of the GIF (so far). *Journal of Visual Culture*, 13(3), 298–306. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1470412914553365>

- [Exhibiting .gifs: An Interview with curator Jason Eppink](#) (2014, June 2). The Signal, The Library of Congress
- PBSoffbook. (2013). [Are YouTubers Revolutionizing Entertainment?](#) | *Off Book* | PBS Digital Studios.
- PBSoffbook. (2012). [The Worlds of Viral Video](#) | *Off Book* | PBS Digital Studios.
- PBSoffbook. (2012). [Animated GIFs: The Birth of a Medium](#) | *Off Book* | PBS Digital Studios.

Week 11: No Class**4/4/15****Week 12: Digital Folklore, Folkart and Culture at Scale****4/11/15**

Throughout the semester we have considered a range of vernacular art forms. This week we focus on some cross cutting themes in this area. Espenschied argues for thinking of digital culture as mass culture, Perkle documents how the online community deviantART developed it's own norms around works. My essay looks at how search results on a site like Flickr can be approached as a corpus of vernacular expression. Blank's interviews offer a broad view of how to approach and think about digital folklore. Lastly, the Fan fiction, art and transformative video art pieces explore the range of ways that Fan's of media are using the web to produce works in dialog with mass culture.

- ["Digital Culture is Mass Culture": An interview with Digital Conservator Dragan Espenschied](#) (2014, March 24).The Signal Blog, The Library of Congress
- Perkel, D. (2011). [Making Art, Creating Infrastructure: deviantART and the Production of the Web](#). *eScholarship*.
- Owens, T. (2015). [Lego, Handcraft, and Costumed Zombies: What Zombies do on Flickr](#). *New Directions in Folklore*, 12(2), 3–25.
- [Understanding Folk Culture in the Digital Age & Preserving Folk Cultures of the Digital Age: Interviews with Folklorist Trevor J. Blank](#). (June 2014), The Signal: Library of Congress Digital Preservation Blog
- Fraimow, R. (2013). Preserving digital remix video. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 17(0). <http://doi.org/10.3983/twc.v17i0.549>
- Johnson, S. F. (2014). Fan fiction metadata creation and utilization within fan fiction archives: Three primary models. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 17(0). <http://doi.org/10.3983/twc.v17i0.578>
- PBSoffbook. (2012). [Fan Art: An Explosion of Creativity](#) | *Off Book* | PBS Digital Studios.

Week 13: Digital Reformatting and Digital Surrogates**4/18/15**

The bulk of this course has focused on born digital works. In this session we focus on the issues involved in reformatting analog works into digital ones. The first two readings are technical works on guidelines and practices for digitization. The later three readings explore emerging technologies that have considerable potential for new approaches and tactics to digitization.

Assignment Due: Actual or Model Archival Information Package for Work:**Readings:**

- Federal Agencies Digitization Initiative -& Still Image Working Group. (2015). [Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Cultural Heritage Materials \(Technical Guidelines\)](#).
- Chase, W. (2015). [Preservation Reformatting](#). In S. Brylawski, M. Lerman, R. Pike, & K. Smith (Eds.), [ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation](#) (Vol. 164, pp. 110–125). Association for Recorded Sound Collections, the Council on Library and Information Resources, and The Library of Congress.
- Cultural Heritage Imaging. (n.d.). [Photogrammetry](#).
- Kaufman, M. (2010, July 3). [Jefferson changed "subjects" to "citizens" in Declaration of Independence](#). *The Washington Post*.
- Jeremy Eichler. (2014, April 6). [Pushing back the silence: a new technology, and the battle to save old recordings](#) - The Boston Globe.

Week 14: Make Up Day, or Time to Work on Your Project**4/25/15**

If we ended up missing a class for a snow day we will push the sessions back a week and this session will be used up. If all of the previous sessions have happened, this will be a week off where which you can use to finish your poster.

Section Four:
Synthesizing, Sharing and Reflecting on Conserving Digital Art

Week 15: No Class: Work on your Poster and Reflection Post

5/2/15

Week 16: Course Conference and Next Steps in Digital Art

5/9/15

The session will start with a course conference poster session. Half the class presents their posters to the other half of the class then we switch. After this, we revisit themes from the course and reflect on what we have learned through working on our projects. Come to class prepared to share a few of the readings and themes that you found the most important or that you think are most likely to shape your thinking going forward.

Assignment Due: Project Poster and Class and Project Reflection Blog Post

Policies and Further Information

Syllabus Change Policy:

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Academic Integrity:

What is academic dishonesty?

Academic dishonesty is a corrosive force in the academic life of a university. It jeopardizes the quality of education and depreciates the genuine achievements of others. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act. All members of the University Community - students, faculty, and staff - share the responsibility to challenge and make known acts of apparent academic dishonesty.

Students have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with violations of the Code of Academic Integrity.

Among these include:

Cheating

"Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise."

Fabrication

"Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise."

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

"Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty."

Plagiarism

"Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in an academic exercise."

For further clarification or information on the Code of Academic Integrity:

<http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html>

Students with Disabilities:

The University is legally obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Beyond that, the course and the profession of librarianship is an should always be committed to inclusion. The campus' Disability Support Services Office (DSS) works with students and faculty to address a variety of issues ranging from test anxiety to physical and psychological disabilities. If a student or instructor believes that the student may have a disability, they should consult with DSS (4-7682, email Dissup@umd.edu). Note that to receive accommodations, students must first have their disabilities documented by DSS. The office then prepares an Accommodation Letter for course instructors regarding needed accommodations. Students are responsible for presenting this letter to their instructors.

Extensions:

Unless you are facing an emergency situation AND you request an extension from me at least 48 hours in advance of the due date, late work will automatically be graded down by one step for each day that it is late. Assignments more than seven days late will not be accepted.

Emergency Preparedness:

<http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/>

CourseEvalUM:

Course evaluations are a part of the process by which the University of Maryland seeks to improve teaching and learning. The University Senate approved the implementation of a standard, online, University-wide course evaluation instrument. Each course evaluation contains a set of universal questions, and some are supplemented by questions from specific colleges. Students who leave no "Pending" evaluations in their Evaluation Dashboard each semester can view the aggregate results of a sub-set of universal items online. Across the University, course evaluations are being administered through a web-based system dubbed CourseEvalUM. All information submitted to the Evaluation System is confidential. Instructors and academic administrators can only view summarized evaluation results after final grades have been submitted. Instructors and academic administrators cannot identify which submissions belong to which students. This standardized set of evaluation results provides the University with useful information on teaching and student learning across the campus. For additional info see Student Fast Facts at: https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/CourseEval/stdt_faq.shtml