Strategies for Audiovisual Digitization Projects

Low-Cost, DIY, and Community-Based Approaches to Audiovisual Digitization

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Moderator: **Brooke Sansosti** Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh





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## Lightning talks



Lightning talks

Moderated discussion



Lightning talks

Moderated discussion

Q & A



Lauren Algee Digital Curation Librarian, DCPL Special Collections

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http://www.dclibrary.org/labs/memorylab





- Public demand for digitization, but we want to do more than provide scanners
- Partnership between Special Collections (digital preservation & archives expertise) and DCPL Labs (digital education and tools)
- National Digital Stewardship Resident Jaime Mears June 2015 to May 2016
  - (blog at jaimemears.wordpress.com)
- Result: Memory Lab digitization lab, resources, and classes

## The Place – Digitization Lab

- VHS
- VHS-C
- DV
- MiniDV
- Audiocassette
- 3.5" Floppy disk
- Photo/document/slide/ negative scanning

#### 1712

lab hours used by the public since opening February 2016

## The Resources

#### Libguides.dclibrary.org/MemoryLab



## The Programs

Classes

- Digital Preservation 101
- Digital estate planning
- Digital archiving and social media

Events

- Home Movie Day
- DC Zinefest
- Preservation workshops







# Staffing and Sustainability

- Labs staff manage appointments, troubleshoot equipment, teach classes
- Memory Lab working group
- 65 DCPL staff have participated in digital preservation professional development over 2 years



## We're growing!

- At DCPL: More and mobile Memory Labs
- Going national!
  - 2 year IMLS National Leadership Grant
  - Training, mentorship, and seed money for **7 public libraries** across the U.S.
  - Application period for in the fall
  - Expand and improve the Memory Lab model



## **Tactics for Community-Engaged Video Preservation**

### A brief intro to the XFR Collective

### by Rachel Mattson

archivist/historian core XFR collective member since 2014

DLF Webinar on Low-Cost, DIY, and Community-Based Approaches to Audiovisual Digitization June 2017 **XFR Collective** is a non-profit organization that partners with artists, activists, individuals, and groups to lower the barriers to preserving at-risk audiovisual media – especially unseen, unheard, or marginalized works – by providing low-cost digitization services and fostering a community of support for archiving and access through education, research, and cultural engagement.











### **2 WHY THE INTERNET ARCHIVE?**

The act of digitization or data recovery itself is not preservation, but only the first step in a responsible plan. Once an artist's work

ed from obsolete media-be it a VHS cassette or a

**Text from the XFR STN lab/exhibit, New Museum, 2013.** (The XFR Collective evolved directly out of this exhibit.)

disk-these bits must now be inscribed on a new The spinning disk of a hard drive is a tenuous and temporary data carrier. If artists left "XFR STN" with nothing more than their recovered materials stored on a portable hard drive, we would truly be doing them a disservice. We would fail to meet digital preservation best practices by storing culturally and personally valuable content on an unstable carrier, and not providing any sort of redundancy or duplication. However, it would not be feasible or sustainable over the long-term for the New Museum to take on the responsibility of storing the terabytes of data that will be produced as a result of "XFR STN." As a solution, the New Museum has partnered with the Internet Archive to make all materials recovered as part of the exhibition available to the public. Subscribing to the dictum that Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe,1 we embrace the notion that distribution itself is a preservation strategy.

The full document is available at:

xfrcollective.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/xfrstn\_broadside.pdf



#### XFR Collective's pop-up video transfer stations

MIX: Queer Experimental Film Festival, 2015 & 2017 The Baltimore Museum of Art/Mid-Atlantic Regional Moving Image Archive, 2017



























Troubleshooting, tinkering, & repair



### Some resources & tools that we rely upon in our work

AMIA Open Source Committee, Workflows for A/V Archiving <a href="https://github.com/amiaopensource/open-workflows">https://github.com/amiaopensource/open-workflows</a>

Ashley Blewer's Minimum Viable Station document https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oJvr8zCMK4A97GF9xY OM0uijDqyNStuwjtZ23yMRkGw/edit

Ethan Gates's Cable Bible <a href="https://amiaopensource.github.io/cable-bible/">https://amiaopensource.github.io/cable-bible/</a>

vRecord, open-source digital video capture software https://github.com/amiaopensource/vrecord/blob/master/CO NTRIBUTING.md

Texas Commission on the Arts, Videotape Identification & Assessment Guide <u>http://www.arts.texas.gov/wp-</u>

content/uploads/2012/04/video.pdf

Internet Archive (visit our landing page!): https://archive.org/details/xfrcollective



### Some resources & tools that we have created

#### **XFR Workflows**

https://github.com/XFRCollective/WorkflowDocumentati

<u>on</u>

XFR-METRO partnership zine https://xfrcollective.wordpress.com/metro-xfr-rack-zine/

How to build a (preservation-oriented) A/V transfer station from scratch https://xfrcollective.wordpress.com/2017/06/06/projectupdate-xfr-metro-partnership/

**Re: Hi-8 Video** <u>https://xfrcollective.wordpress.com/2017/03/18/%f0%9f</u> <u>%91%8b%f0%9f%8f%bb-8-%f0%9f%93%bc/</u>

Cataloging and File Management workshop for the Asian American Oral History Collective

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16LtCx4WQYYSi tfo9HxRstIVCW2T8RG0sSoqGkbrlghU/edit#slide=id.g10b1 8693ea 1 423



## <u>Find us online</u>.

**email:** xfrcollective[at]gmail.com

website: xfrcollective.wordpress.com

## twitter: @xfr\_collective

## github.com/XFRCollective

And/or feel free to reach out to me directly Email: rachmattson[at]gmail.com Twitter: captain\_maybe





#### LIS 668, Digital Curation

#### School of Library and Information Studies University of Wisconsin-Madison Spring 2015

Dorothea Salo (please call me "Dorothea") Office address: 4261 Helen C. White Hall Course link page: http://pinboard.in/u:dsalo/t:668 salo@wisc.edu, 608-265-4733 Office Hours: by appointment

#### **Course Objectives**

- > Assess, plan for, manage, and execute a small-scale data-management or digital-preservation project.
- Assess digital or to-be-digitized data for preservability; make yes-or-no accessioning decisions.
- Appropriately manage intellectual-property issues related to data management and digital archiving.
- Understand (and where relevant, apply) technological, economic, and social models of digital preservation and sustainability.
- > Understand forms, formats, and lifecycles of digital data across a wide breadth of contexts.
- > Evaluate software and hardware tools relevant across the data lifecycle.
- > Construct a current-awareness strategy; assimilate substantial amounts of relevant writing.
- Self-sufficiently acquire technical knowledge.

This course is designed to assess student progress in the following SLIS program-level outcomes: 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 3d, 4a, and 4b.

#### **Course Policies**

I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know within two weeks if you require accommodation. I will try to maintain the confidentiality of this information.

Academic Honesty: I follow the academic standards for cheating and plagiarism set forth by the University of Wisconsin.




































IMLS grant number SP-02-16-0015-16

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# thanks for learning about: RECOVER ANALOG and DIGITAL DATA

62 80

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### Low-Cost, DIY, and Community-Based Approaches to Audiovisual Digitization

Pamela Vadakan

#### CALIFORNIA LIGHT AND SOUND.ORG



Over a hundred years of California's audiovisual history available for free.





























Why now?











Inventory Describe Digitize Quality Assurance Preserve Access and Outreach







Inventory (and assess value)

- What do you have?
- What will you have?
- Where is it?
- Assess as you inventory
  - Consider value historical significance and potential use
  - Consider physical condition and threat of obsolescence
- Partial inventory is a good start
- Inventory is the basis of a catalog
- Use an excel spreadsheet!

#### **Describe (keep it simple)**

\*Do NOT attempt playback for identification! Gather what you can from the recording itself \*Enhance description after digitization

#### **Minimal fields**

- Title
- Date
- Generation (duplicate vs. original)
- Format for budget
- Maximum size/length/duration (include total number reels/tapes) for budget
- Creator(s)
- Description labels/paperwork/other clues as to content
- Copyright status
- General notes condition (red flags) and assessment (prioritize)
- Location



**Inventory and Describe: Free tool** 

#### **AV Compass**

http://www.avcompass.bavc.org

- Free, easy to use, online form
- Exports data into a CSV file (readable as a spreadsheet)
- Site includes fun tutorial videos



This free online resource from the Bay Area Video Coalition will give you direction in organizing, preserving, seeing and appreciating your audiovisual collection. From the unruly media room of your archive to the small box of tapes sitting in your home collecting dust, AV Compass will provide the basic tools you need to move forward in saving your films, tapes, discs and files for the long-term.

To explore instructional videos and written guides, click the "Learn' link below. To create a free account and start inventorying and organizing your collection(s), click the 'Inventory' link below.

#### WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?



### **Digitize (outsourcing)**

#### Good vendors bring

- less "real time" staff cost
- expertise and professional, clean, calibrated equipment
- established preservation quality procedures and standards
- guidance on file naming conventions, destination formats
- 1:1 and/or batch transfer options

Don't be afraid to ask the vendor questions. You're building a relationship!



#### **Quality Assurance**

#### **Basic checks**

- technical specifications
- image quality at beginning, middle and end (at least 10% of running time)
- metadata
- run checksums
- confirm image and sound quality are adequate for patron use
- confirm content corresponds to descriptive metadata



#### **Quality Assurance**

#### Tips

- It takes practice to learn how to differentiate original analog look/sound/feel from digital look/sound/feel and how to determine if artifacts could have been introduced during the transfer process (in your best estimation).
- Consider intern or student help (for first and/or second pair of eyes and ears).
- Use free tools to help automate the process.



**Quality Assurance: Free tools** 

md5tool – generates and checks checksums https://github.com/cavpp/md5tool

verifymedia – checks technical specs of files
https://github.com/cavpp/cavppers/blob/master/verifymedia

**QCTools**- helps analyze and understand digitized video files through analytics and filtering

https://github.com/bavc/qctools

AV Artifact Atlas – helps identify errors and anomalies – inherent or introduced - in analog and digital video https://bavc.github.io/avaa



### Thanks!

Pamela Vadakan 510.642.4665 pamelajean@berkeley.edu



californialightandsound.org

calpreservation.org/projects/audiovisual-preservation

• What open source tools and low cost equipment would you recommend to ensure a high standard of digitization and quality control?



• What strategies and infrastructure do you use to provide digital storage and file management?



• How do you approach and engage your institution or community with your work?



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