

Online Training Conference

# DIGITAL DIRECTIONS

Fundamentals of Creating and Managing Digital Collections

PRESENTED BY NEDCC

## Session 2: Selection & Prioritization for Digitization

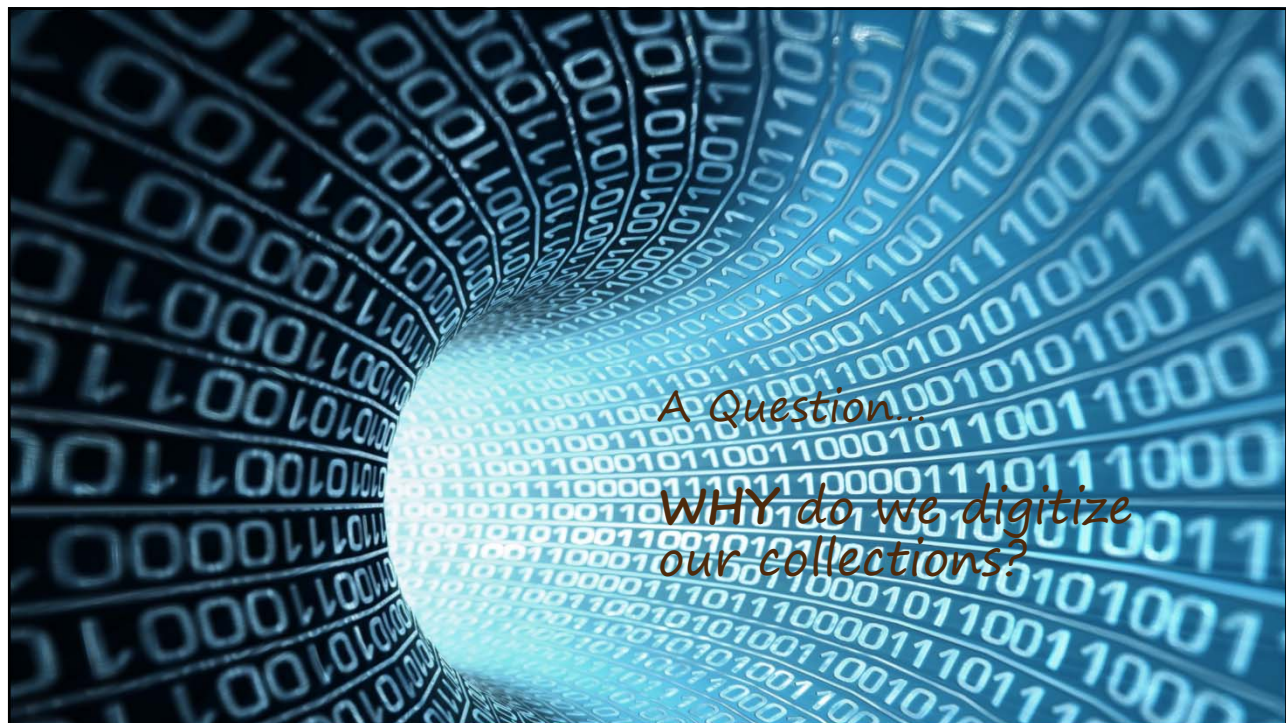
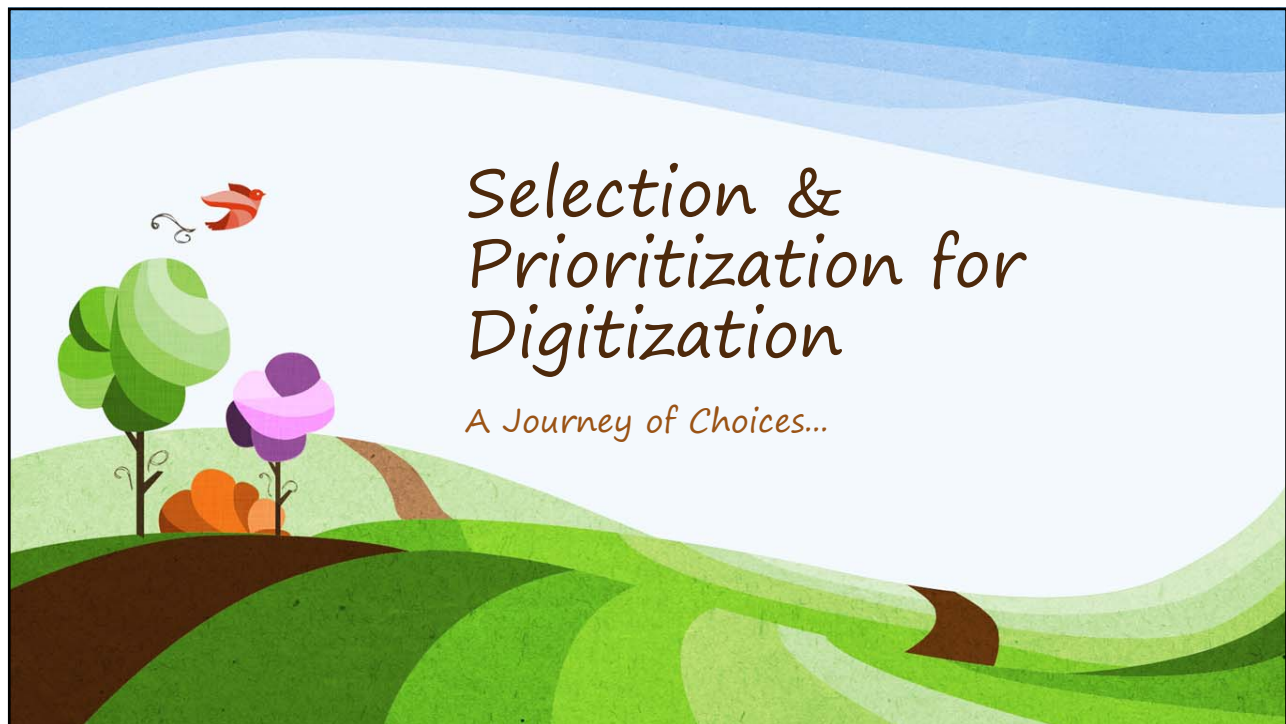
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University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, MA  
jessica.colati@umb.edu | @jcolati

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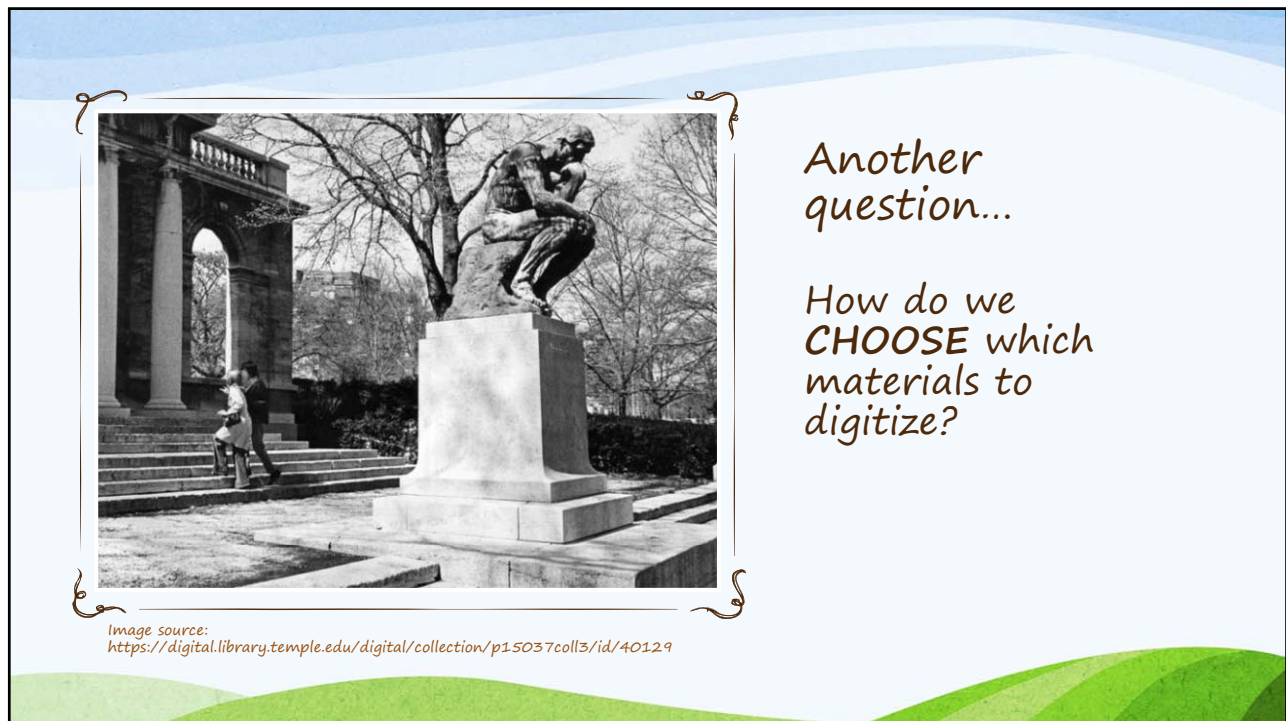
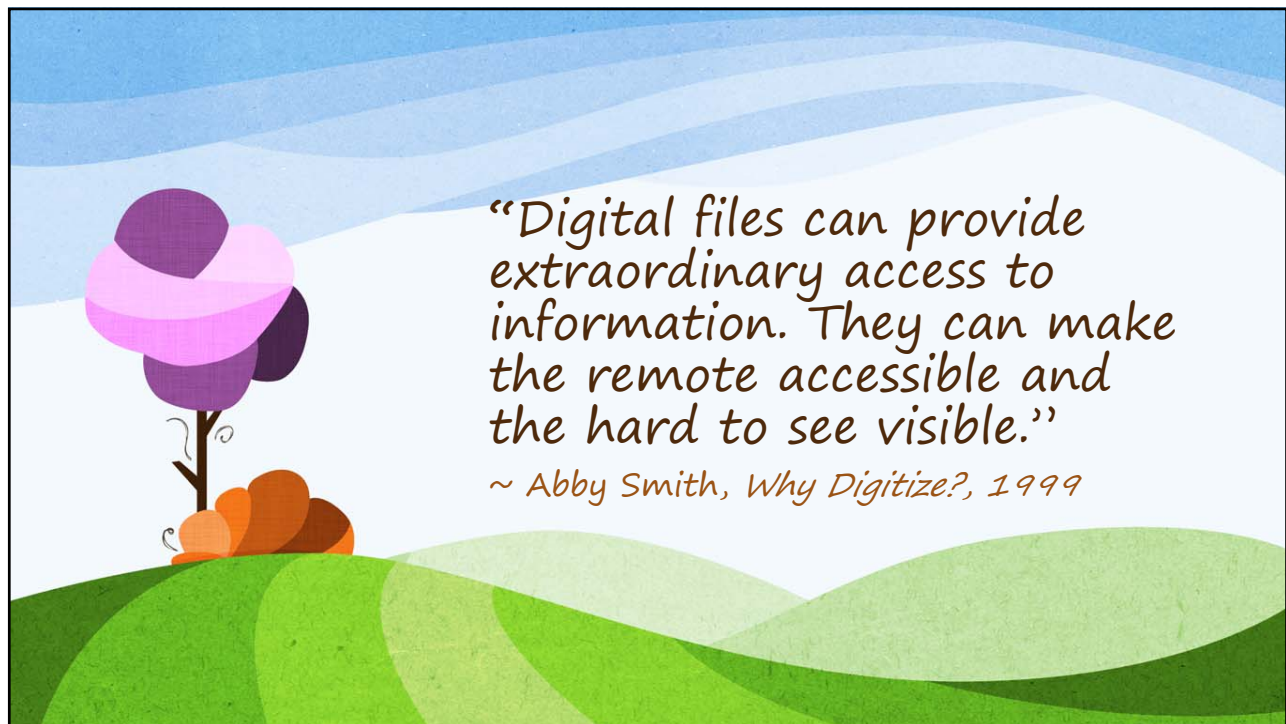
Monday, 11/15/2021

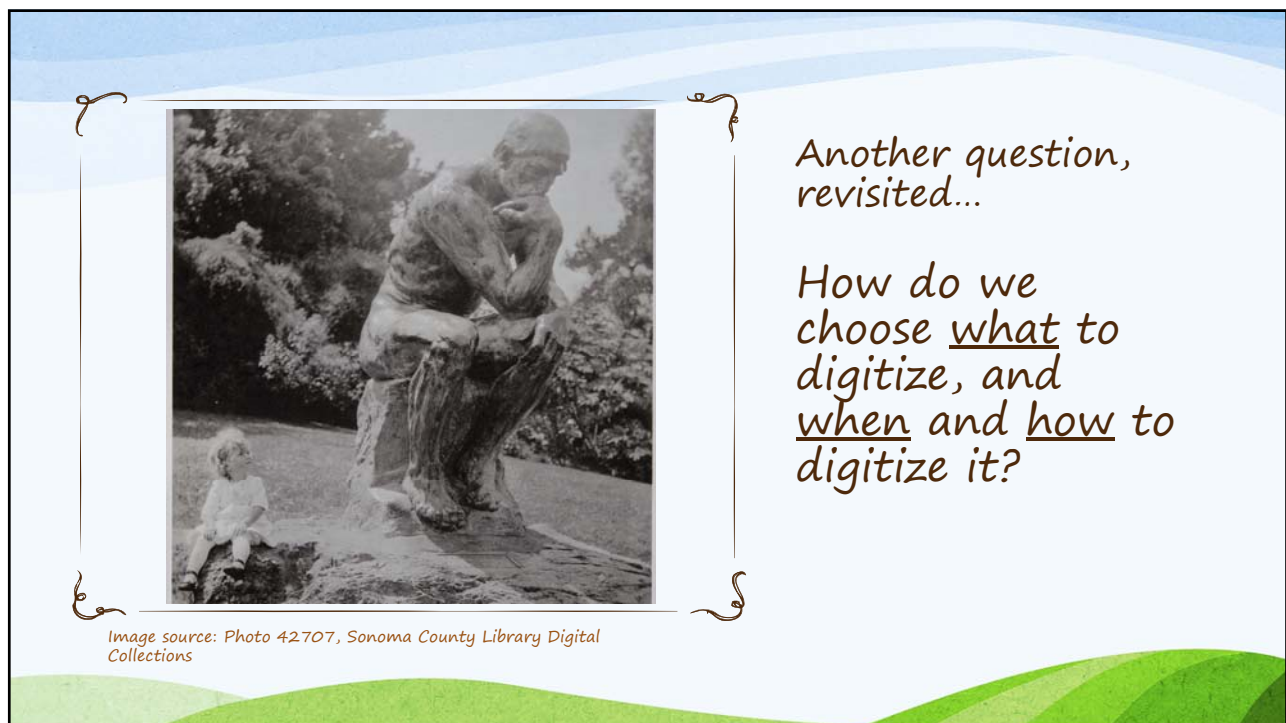
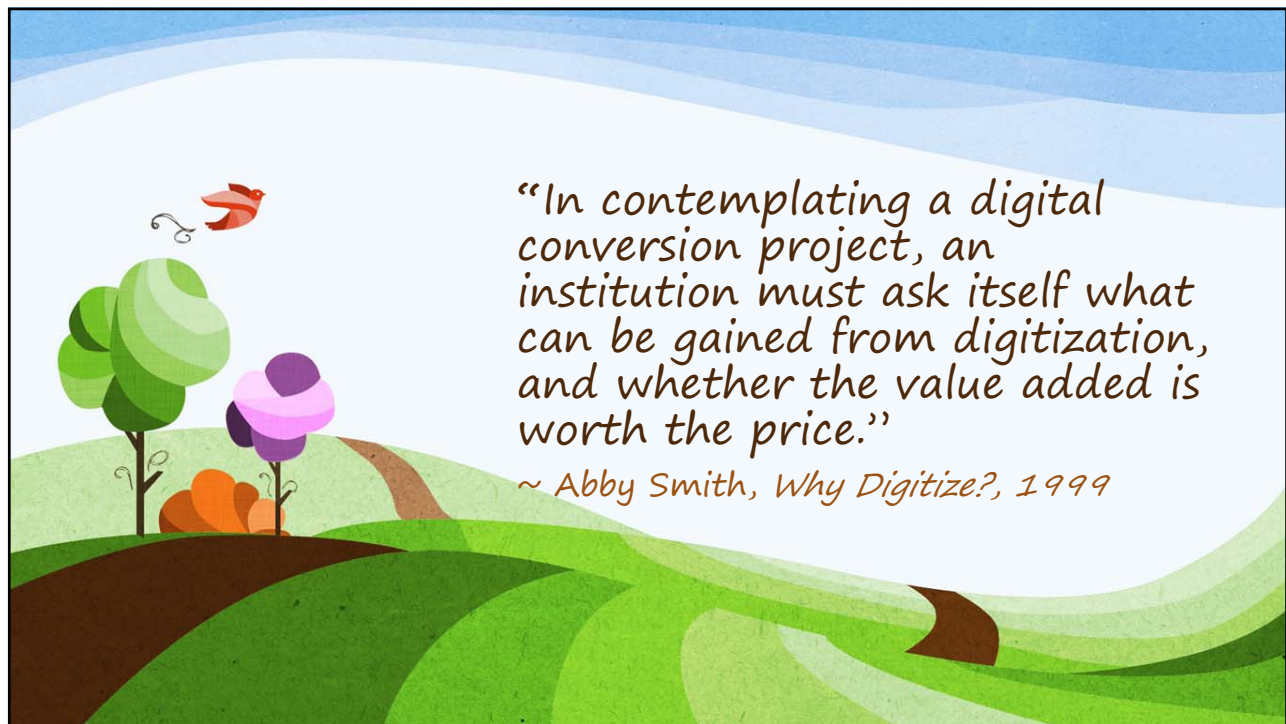


Today, I acknowledge the Massachusetts Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Pegans and the land from which I join you, including the nearby Tantiusques, which was also the 1800s home to Robert Crowd, a graphite miner of both Native American and African American ancestry and supplier to the Thoreau family's pencil factory.









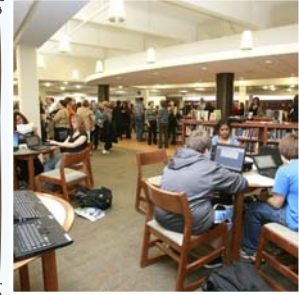
## How do you choose?



Prominent Donor's  
Support?

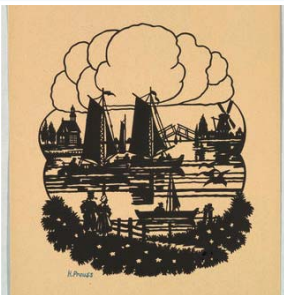


Significant Preservation  
Challenge?



Strong Community  
Interest?

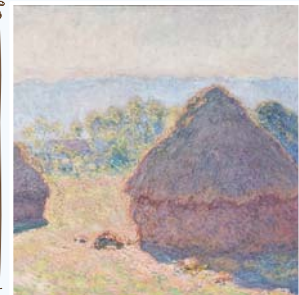
## How do you choose?



An "Easy" Format?



Available Equipment?



Or, Guaranteed Money  
Maker?





## Collection Forms



"Born Analog" Collections

Hybrid or "Mixed" Collections

Born Digital Collections

## Identifying Selection Decision Drivers



Image source: "Divergent Paths" DPLA: <https://collections.artsmia.org/art/65221>



Image source: Clark, Junebug. Retrieved from the Digital Public Library of America <<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1039317/>>.

## Item First: Digitizing On-Demand

Access-first approach (Yes, really...)

May – or may not – follow standards and best practices

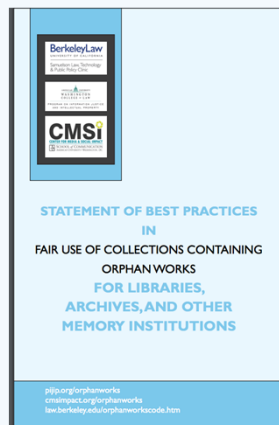
One item or many items

“Direct” delivery to requestor

❖ What value is gained?

❖ What is the price?

## When One Becomes Many “Ones”...



Managing risk, item by item and group by group, within a Community of Practice

[https://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/code\\_of\\_best\\_practices\\_in\\_fair\\_use\\_for\\_arl\\_final.pdf](https://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/code_of_best_practices_in_fair_use_for_arl_final.pdf)

<https://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/orphanworks-dec14.pdf>



## Identifying Selection Decision Drivers



Image source: "Divergent Paths" DPLA: <https://collections.artsmia.org/art/65221>

## Institution First: Purposeful Digitizing

- (Hopefully) Institutional & stakeholder buy-in
  - (Mostly) Policy-based decision-making
  - (More) Technically rigorous "Viability Assessment"
  - (Typically) Follows a defined work plan
  - (Ideally) Based on more than just community-driven requests
- ✓ Digitization for access can evolve to BE digitization as a preservation strategy, when Preservation is positioned as "Access Over Time"



**Textile Heritage Museum**  
~ Mission Statement ~  
A permanent non-profit organization for the preservation, study and enjoyment of our rich textile heritage extending from the early nineteenth century into the twenty-first.

*Image Source: Textile North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources*

## Aligns with your Mission

Does digitizing holdings support - and potentially enhance - your

- ✓ Purpose & Goals
- ✓ Users & Audience
- ✓ Future Vision



*Choosing a bat. Boston Public Library*

## Informed by Collection Development and Other Policies

1. Work from your overall collection development policy
2. Create a policy specifically for digital collections
  - ✓ Relevant to mission and goals
  - ✓ Appropriate to skills and infrastructure
  - ✓ Acknowledging "Same" and "Different"
3. Review it regularly



*Banking. East Carolina University*

## Counting the Cost\$

- ✓ Choosing DIY or vendor "solutions"
- ✓ Acquiring and maintaining "equipment"
- ✓ Committing staff
- ✓ Committing space
- ✓ Investing in training
  - And then, more equipment...
  - And then, more training...
  - And then, more people...





Austin American-Statesman. Austin History Center

## Considering Capabilities

What can you digitize well with your current...

- ❖ Technology?
- ❖ In-house expertise?

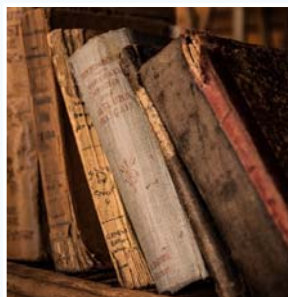
How much can you realistically do?

And, how quickly?

## Let's revisit: How do you choose?



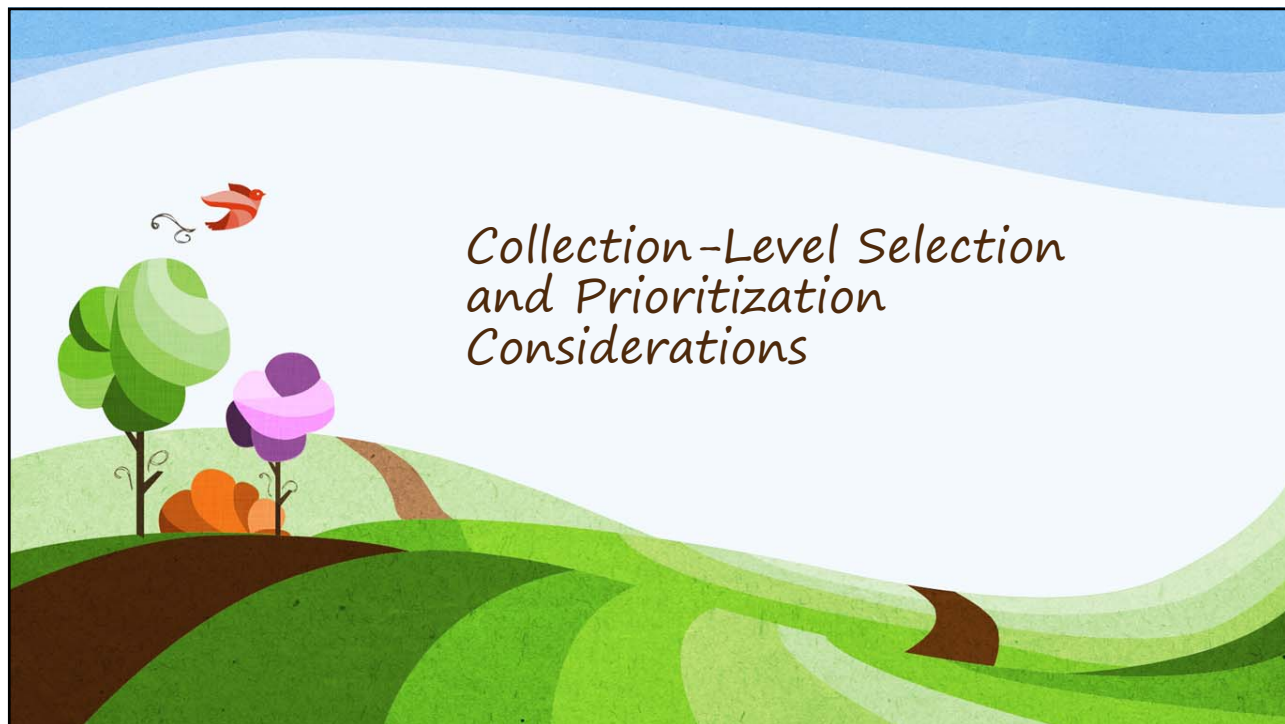
Prominent Donor's Support?



Significant Preservation Challenge?



Strong Community Interest?



## Identifying Values

What value(s) do your materials hold?

- ❖ Evidentiary
- ❖ Artifactual
- ❖ Informational
- ❖ Administrative
- ❖ Associational
- ❖ Monetary
- ❖ ...



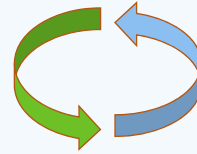
"His Most Valuable Possession." Courtesy of Hennepin County Library. Identifier: BART3240



Gutenberg Bible, NYPL

## Identifying “Once and Future” Treasures

Does the collection's items' value(s) merit an increase in access?



Will digitization increase the collection's item(s) value(s) for users?

## “Playing Up” Purpose

The materials...

- ✓ Highlight research or teaching strengths
- ✓ Help solicit new acquisitions
- ✓ Uncover hidden collections
- ✓ Help reach new users
- ✓ Fit funders' priorities



Blackburn, Providence. Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies





Audience. University of Memphis. Libraries. Special Collections Dept

## Activating Audience Awareness

What will the value of a collection's digitization be

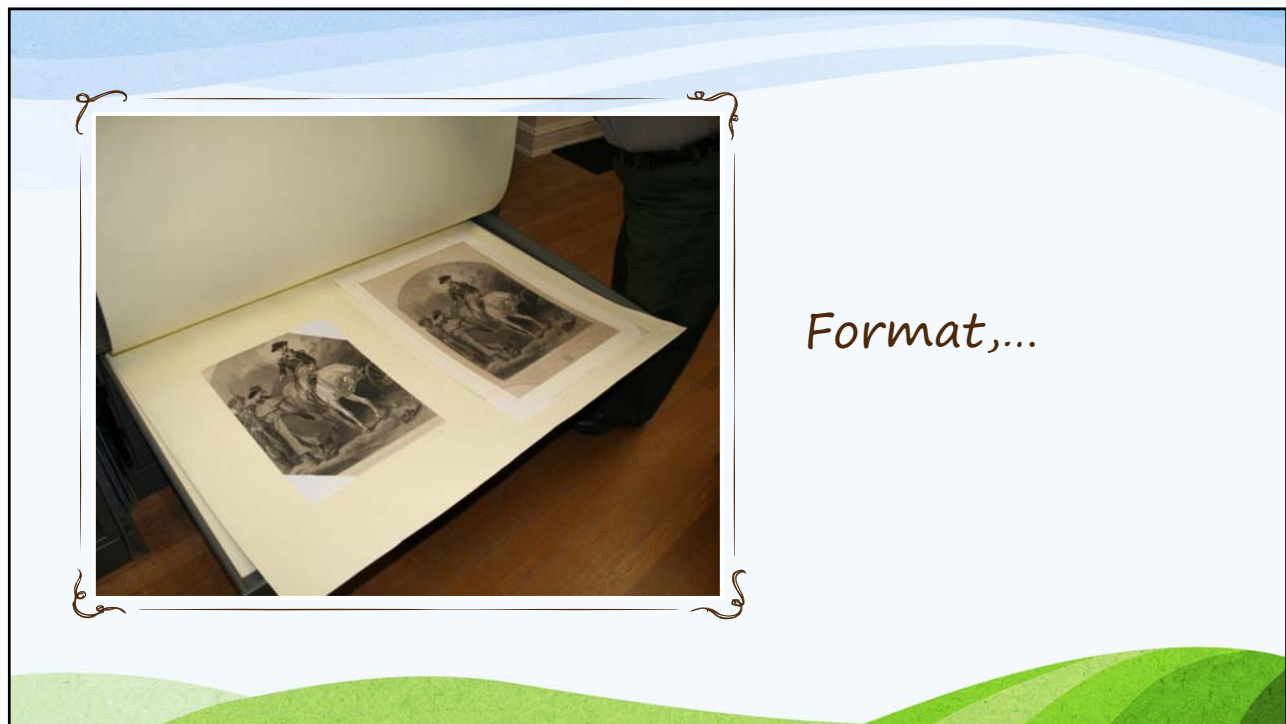
- ✓ To your current users?
- ✓ To your potential users?
- ✓ To your stakeholders?

Can you leverage that audience interest?

Are there ethical considerations?

## Item-Level Selection Considerations





...and, Format!



Car abandoned on the Seekonk River Bank. National Archives

## Considering Current Condition and Capacity

### Good condition?

Is there potential for damage?

Is it a priority by a different metric?

### Poor condition?

Could be slower, "trickier," or have potential for additional damage

Digitization may be the best option, but it may also be more complex and expensive





Chicken and Eggs. 1943. DPLA, [https://utah-primoprod.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=digcoll\\_uuu\\_11dha\\_kued\\_trc/483254&context=L&vid=MWDL](https://utah-primoprod.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=digcoll_uuu_11dha_kued_trc/483254&context=L&vid=MWDL)

## Equipment <-> Items Items <-> Equipment

- ❖ Equipping a digitization project can be a chicken-egg series of considerations
- ❖ Often involves making in-house purchases AND out-source decisions (e.g. "Make or Buy")
- ❖ Connects closely with other institutional considerations (capacity, \$\$\$, etc.)

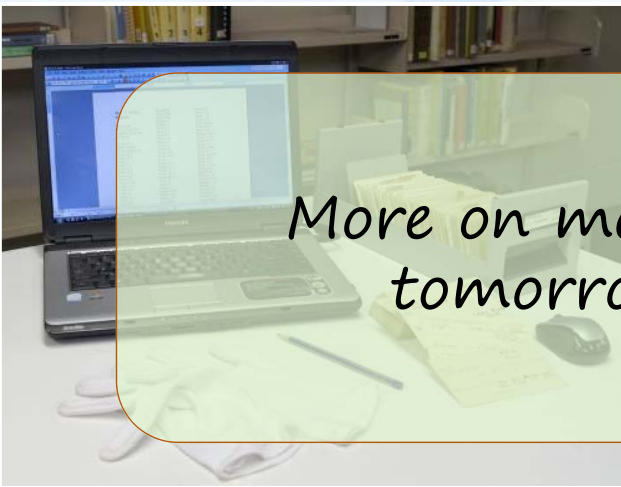


Laptop with index cards. Image: Air Force Museum of New Zealand.

## Ensuring Intellectual Control

A "good" digital object  
REQUIRES "good" metadata

- ☐ Do have "enough" control to get started digitizing?
- ☐ How will you capture and preserve this metadata?
- ☐ Can digitization spur new description activities that are useful?




## Ensuring Intellectual Control

A "good" digital object  
has "good" metadata

### More on metadata tomorrow...

- ☐ Do have "enough" control to get started digitizing?
- ☐ How will you capture and preserve this metadata?
- ☐ Can digitization spur new description activities that are useful?

Laptop with index cards. Image: Air Force Museum of New Zealand.



## The Many Permutations of Privacy

Just a few to consider when selecting items for digitization...

- ❖ Personal Identifying Information (PII)\*
- ❖ Medical Information\*
- ❖ "Embarrassing" photos or news accounts\*

(\*btw, it depends...)

Male skier falling down, circa 1930. University of Southern California Libraries

Let's revisit, again: How do you choose?



An "Easy" Format?



Available Equipment?



Or, Guaranteed Money Maker?

Knowing What's Right[s] and  
Prioritizing Good Practices

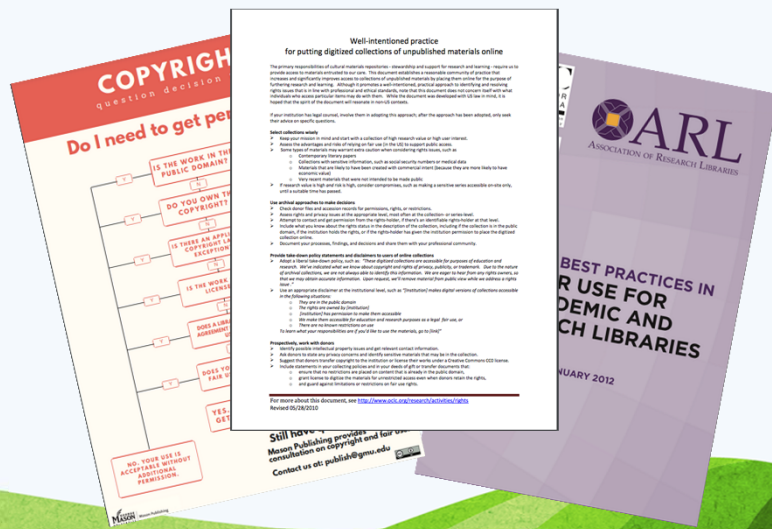


# Adopt “Well-intentioned” Practices

## OCCL guidelines:

- ✓ Select collections wisely
- ✓ Use archival approaches to make decisions
- ✓ Provide take-down policy statements & disclaimers to users of online collections
- ✓ Work proactively with donors
- ✓ Guidelines are not a substitute for legal counsel

Source:  
[www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/rights/practice.pdf](http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/rights/practice.pdf)



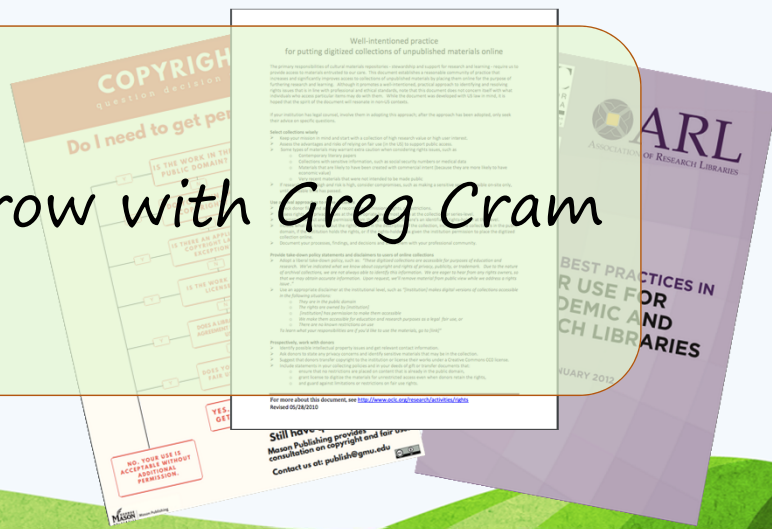
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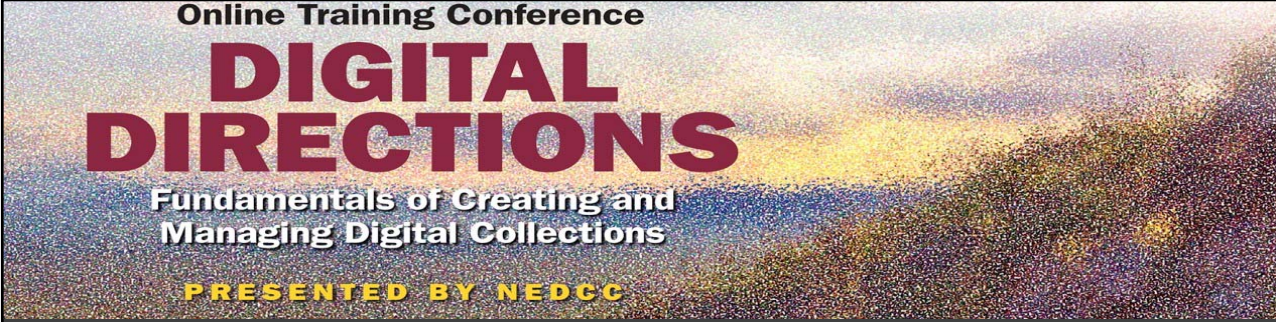
Source:  
[www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/rights/practice.pdf](http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/rights/practice.pdf)

Tomorrow with Greg Cram







The banner features a textured, abstract background with a warm, golden-yellow glow on the right side, suggesting a sunset or sunrise over a field of flowers. The text is overlaid on the left side of the banner.

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## Thank you!

Please complete the online evaluation form.  
A link was sent to your email address.  
You can edit your responses until you click submit.