Projects in Moving Image & Sound Archiving

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-3:00p, Thursdays 5:00-6:00pm, and by appointment
Credits: 3
Prerequisites: LIS 654 (Information Technologies), or by permission
Recommend: LIS 694 (Film and Media Collections)
Location: PMC 611

Bulletin Description:

From film, video, to born digital, moving image and sound recordings have compelled users since their advent in the late nineteenth century. Today, many archives housed at universities or non-profit institutions act to preserve the moving image record. However, the fragility of this medium (particularly the magnetic medium that holds sound and video), combined with the preservation needs of today’s born-digital works (such as independent documentaries), are questioning our collective ability to preserve this work. This class will work to combat this trend by focusing on the theoretical and practical aspects related to archiving moving image and sound recording, with a particular focus on digitization and born-digital assets.
Detailed Description:

This class will explore how to use digital technology to preserve the moving image and sound record for future generations. To best understand this process, students will work with an archive to transform an analog collection into a digital archive for long-term preservation. Additionally, students will work in a team to implement this moving image and sound archive using open source software.

Course Goals:

- Familiarize students with the current discourses in the area of moving image and sound archiving, including theoretical and practical aspects.
- Introduce students to the digitization of moving image and sound content, and the handling of materials that are born digital.
- Learn about metadata and standards used in digital archive creation, as well as digital infrastructure.
- Anticipate managing digital archives in a time of technical change, including issues related in archiving the web, managing digital rights, and preserving digital content.

Student Learning Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with the technical dimensions related to digitally archiving moving image and sound assets.
- Students will be able to digitize (select) analog material into digital form in a variety of moving image and sound formats.
- Students will be able to create metadata appropriate for moving image and sound content.
- Students will be able to identify rights issues (legal, ethical, moral) with digitized materials.
- Students will be able to work with a team to implement a small moving image or sound digital archive using open source software.

Course Schedule and Readings

8/28 - Introduction

- Overview of Syllabus and Projects
- Assign weekly presenters of class readings
- Post a photo of yourself and fill-out your profile on the LMS http://lms.pratt.edu
- Sign-up for the Association of Moving Image Archivists Listserv: http://www.amianet.org/participate/listserv.php

9/4 – Video and Television: Carriers and Digitization


Further Reading:


*On video specific carriers:*

- 8 mm video format - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8_mm_video_format](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8_mm_video_format)

*Reflection Questions:*

Given the AMIA videotape preservation factsheets, and the digitization roadmap from Prestospace, what might the implications be for our project with LHA?

**9/11 – Video and Television: Cases of Video Migrations**


*Further Reading:*


Independent Media Arts Preservation - http://www.imappreserve.org/

EVIA Digital Archive: Ethnographic Video for Instruction and Analysis - http://www.eviada.org/


NYPL Jerome Robbins Archive of the Moving Image: http://video.nypl.org/

Discussion Question:
For the LHA project, we have 29 VHS tapes (approximately), and let's assume that the average running time is 55 minutes. If the contents are captured at 25 Mbps (MiniDV rate), approximately how much total disk space will we need?

9/18 – Motion Pictures: Film Preservation


Further Reading:


**Reflection Questions:**

How do you know if a film you are the steward of is degrading? What do you do if it is?

**9/25 - Motion Pictures: Digitization and The Digital Dilemma**


**Further Reading:**


**Reflection Questions:**

What is the “Digital Dilemma,” as outlined by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences? Do you think this dilemma has been assuaged by developments in digital technology over the last six years since the report was published?

**10/2 – Sound Archiving: Oral History and Sound in Historic Preservation**


**Further Reading:**


Oral History Association - [http://www.oralhistory.org](http://www.oralhistory.org)

Columbia Center for Oral History - [http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/ccoh.html](http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/ccoh.html)

Association of Cultural Equity (Alan Lomax Archive) - [http://www.culturalequity.org/](http://www.culturalequity.org/)

**Reflection Questions:**

What is oral history good at, and what isn’t it?

### 10/9 - Sound Archiving: Digitization and Standards


**Further Reading:**


**Reflection Questions:**

What standards have the audio preservation community decided upon for preserving sound?

### 10/16 – Moving Image Metadata


**Further Reading:**
Reflection Questions:

Many different metadata standards and structuring devices exist for a variety of purposes. Why would you want to adopt a standard metadata schema? What metadata do we need for the LHA video project?

10/23 – Moving Image File Formats and CODECs


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

Why do some archivists think Motion JPEG 2000 is a good format for archiving moving image assets? Why would you and why would you not want to use this format?

10/30 – Rights Management


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

Sommer and Quinlan (2009) outlines some legal and ethical issues related to oral history. What are the issues? What do you think the implications are for an oral history digital archive (like the LHA project)? Are there other digital rights issues other than copyright that we should be paying attention to?

11/6 - Digital Preservation of Moving Image and Sound Assets


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What are the primary methods to digitally preserve moving image and sound files for the long-term?

11/13 - Interactions with Moving Image and Sound Producers

Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

In DD2, non-profit audiovisual archives are described as the “repositories of last resort,” and none of the independent film makers, documentarians, marketers, distributors and film festival organizers surveyed, viewed these organizations as archival destinations for their materials (p. 39-40). Why do producers of audiovisual content not know about audiovisual archives? Should this change?

11/20 – Appraisal of Moving Image and Sound Assets


Further Reading:


Reflection Question:

What aught one consider when selecting a moving image or sound asset to be placed in long-term archival storage?

11/27 – No Class; Thanksgiving Holiday

12/4 - Emerging Technologies: Tensions and Opportunities


Reflection Questions:
Prelinger (2009) argues that YouTube makes moving image archives look like barriers to access rather than enablers, and has been exacerbated by the fact that archives have prioritized preservation over access. Are moving image archives in competition with YouTube, and if so, how can they compete more effectively?

12/11 – Presentations

Textbooks, Readings, and Materials

No textbook is required for this course. All readings are available online via the LMS (http://lms.pratt.edu).

Course Requirements

Students’ course grades will be determined by performance on the following activities:

1. Class Participation (20%)
2. Weekly Responses (20%) – 11 responses required over the course of the semester
3. Digital Archive Creation Project (50%)
   3a. Report on work completed (10-15 pages) (25%)
   3b. Presentation on work completed (25%)
4. Self-assessment (10%) – due December 11, last day of class

Class Participation

Students are expected to be prepared and to contribute to class discussions each week with scholarly analyses and insights. In addition, each week one student or a team of two students will present their understanding of the readings to the class. This is an opportunity to consolidate your (or your team’s) understanding on a topic, to present your perspective, to make novel connections to other domains, and to relate the readings to real-world experience. Presenters should be prepared to make around a 10-15-minute presentation, and conclude with some questions or issues they would like to discuss more thoroughly.

The schedule of presenters will be decided on the first day of class.

Weekly Responses

Each week, students are expected to write at least two paragraphs that reflect on the readings. Reflections can be in response to the essential questions posted on the LMS. Students responses should be posed on the LMS by 6pm (at the latest) on the day of class (late responses will receive a reduced grade). Please do not bring in a hard-copy or email unless the LMS is unavailable. The purpose of these responses is to allow students the opportunity to reflect on the readings and share their reflections with the other members of the class. Students are encouraged to read the responses by their fellow classmates (this is, however, not a requirement). Based on interests, students may choose two weeks NOT to do a weekly response. This means by the end of the semester, each student should have posted 11 responses.

Please note that the instructor will refer to these responses during class discussion and may ask students to further clarify or expand on their response.

Digital Archive Creation Project (DACP)

The objective of the Projects in Moving Image and Sound Archiving course is to provide students with the theoretical, practical and hands-on experience in digital archive creation. In order to provide the most relevant and realistic learning experience for students, students will digitize an actual archival collection and develop the means of access to that collection through creating a web-presence.
This semester, we will be working to create a digital archive based on the oral history video recordings of members of the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), which was the first lesbian civil and political rights organization in the United States (founded in 1955 in San Francisco, and ending in 1970). DOB published the serial “The Ladder” (cover shown to the right), which was the first nationally distributed lesbian publication.

The stories contained within the oral histories touch on issues of 1950s social oppression, feminism and women’s sexuality, and provide a timely contrast with recent legal and cultural developments related to LGBT populations, such as the overturning of the Defense of Marriage Act and California Proposition 8 by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The collection of video tapes are archived by the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn, NY, which is one of the world’s oldest LGBT archives (it will celebrate it’s 40th anniversary in 2014). The videotapes have been removed from Iron Mountain for use with this class. The class’s effort will result in the first time that these recordings will be made available worldwide over the Internet.

In order to digitize the materials, each student will be responsible for digitizing approximately a few tapes. In addition to students digitizing a few tapes, students will be placed in groups based on interests to carrying-out the project:

- Research and Collection Development: Research the cutting edge in digital archiving; bring ideas and research to enrich the collection; providing any auxiliary materials (photos, etc.) that could augment the experience.
- Metadata: Develop a metadata plan; import digital materials into the CMS
- Technology: Responsible for setting-up and installing the Content Management System, working with the design team to integrate the design.
- Design: Responsible for designing the look and feel of the site (graphics, colors, user experience, usability).

More information on this project will be made available as the course progresses.

Each group will submit a 10-15 page report detailing the work completed on the project. This report should highlight a) achievements and work completed in the project, b) challenges that have been overcome, as well as those that did not, and c) future directions for the project as perceived by project team. Be sure to include hyperlinks or evidence of work completed. The group will also present this report to the class on the final class.

**Self-Assessment**

In one or more pages, reflect on your contribution to the DAOP and DACP. What role did you play in each? What were your specific contributions? How would you rate your performance, and how does it compare to your fellow group members? Please submit by the end of the final class electronically via the LMS.

**E-Portfolio**

Starting Fall 2012, all students entering the MSLIS degree program are required to complete an e-portfolio that must be approved by their advisor before they will be permitted to graduate. The e-Portfolio provides students with an opportunity to showcase their best work from the courses they have taken at SILS, and an
opportunity to demonstrate they have met the learning objectives of a Master of Information and Library Science.

Work completed for this course may be included in the e-portfolio. Students must demonstrate that their work fulfills at least one of the following learning outcomes:

1. **Research** - Students carry-out and apply research
2. **Communication** - Students demonstrate excellent communication skills and create and convey content
3. **Technology** - Students use information technology and digital tools effectively
4. **User-Centered Focus** - Students apply concepts related to use and users of information and user needs and perspectives
5. **LIS Practice** - Students perform within the framework of professional practice

Detailed information on the learning outcomes, requirements and how to create your e-portfolio is available from: [http://www.pratt.edu/academics/information_and_library_sciences/about_sils/sils_eportfolio/](http://www.pratt.edu/academics/information_and_library_sciences/about_sils/sils_eportfolio/)

Work completed in this class may satisfy one or more program-level learning objectives. You may discuss this with your instructor and/or advisor.

**Assessment and Evaluation**

1. All assignments must completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course
2. Assignments must be turned in during class in hard copy (except for the weekly responses which should be completed on The LMS). Late assignments will receive a reduced grade
4. Late papers will receive a grade but no comments
5. Pratt policy: Students with extensive absences (three or more for any reason) will be required to drop the course.

**Pratt’s grading scale:**

| Superior work: | A 4.0 (96-100) | A- 3.7 (90-95) |
| Very good work: | B+ 3.3 (87-89) | B 3.0 (83-86) | B- 2.7 (80-82) |
| Marginally satisfactory: | C+ 2.3 (77-79) | C 2.0 |
| Failed: | F 0.0 (0-69) |

**Policies**

All Institute-wide policies are listed in the Bulletin under “Community Standards,” which include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, computer, and network use. Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must obtain clearance from the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. They should contact Mai McDonald, Disability Services Coordinator, in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Main Building, Lower Level: 718-636-3711.

**Notes on Research, Archiving and Photographs**

1. Students taking this class may be asked to participate in faculty-sponsored research for advancing knowledge in the field of Information and Library Science. This research will exclude any personally identifiable information. If you object to this practice, please communicate with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.
2. Student work may be may be retained by Pratt SILS and disseminated, including through electronic networks (e.g., repositories, websites). Students retain intellectual property rights on their work but Pratt has the right to use and display your work (for more information see Pratt’s Intellectual Property Policy available at: [http://www.pratt.edu/provost/Final_Approved_by_BOT_Effective_01-01-08.pdf](http://www.pratt.edu/provost/Final_Approved_by_BOT_Effective_01-01-08.pdf) )
3. Students in the class may be photographed during class related activities. Photographs may be archived in institutional archives or websites. Photographs may be name tagged. If you object to being included in such photographs, please communicate with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.