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**CONTENTdm Community Insights: From Art & Artists  
to COVID-19: Making Themed Collections Work for You**

# Presenters



**Maire Gurevitz**  
Archivist  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)



**Susan Sutton**  
Director, Digitization  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)



**Kathy Mulder**  
Assistant, Digitization  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)

# From Art & Artists to COVID-19: Making Themed Collections Work for You

Susan Sutton, Maire Gurevitz, Kathy Taylor Mulder,  
Indiana Historical Society

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# WHY USE THEMED COLLECTIONS

Fighting chaos and serving researchers

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# Short Answer: Organization and Flexibility



P0003\_BOX1\_FOLDER3\_003

Mitchell Printing Co. Collection, P0003, Indiana Historical Society

## A little background on Indiana Historical Society Digital Collections

- First uploads were in 1999
- Original focus was on images, though we now offer multiple formats
- We have 123 Digital Collections—69 collection-based and 54 themed—containing about 90,000 items

Collections-based organization worked as long as we were focused on providing access in those blocks.

# Photographers' Collections



P0178\_30\_4\_149

Digital image © 2003 Indiana Historical Society. All Rights Reserved.

Mary Lyon Taylor Collection, P0178, Indiana Historical Society



P0338\_A\_4X5\_SERIES2\_BOX2\_24066-4

The Bretzman Collection, Indiana Historical Society



P0130\_P\_BOX63\_FOLDER3\_6487

Bass Photo Company Collection, P0130, Indiana Historical Society

# Folios, company records, small important collections

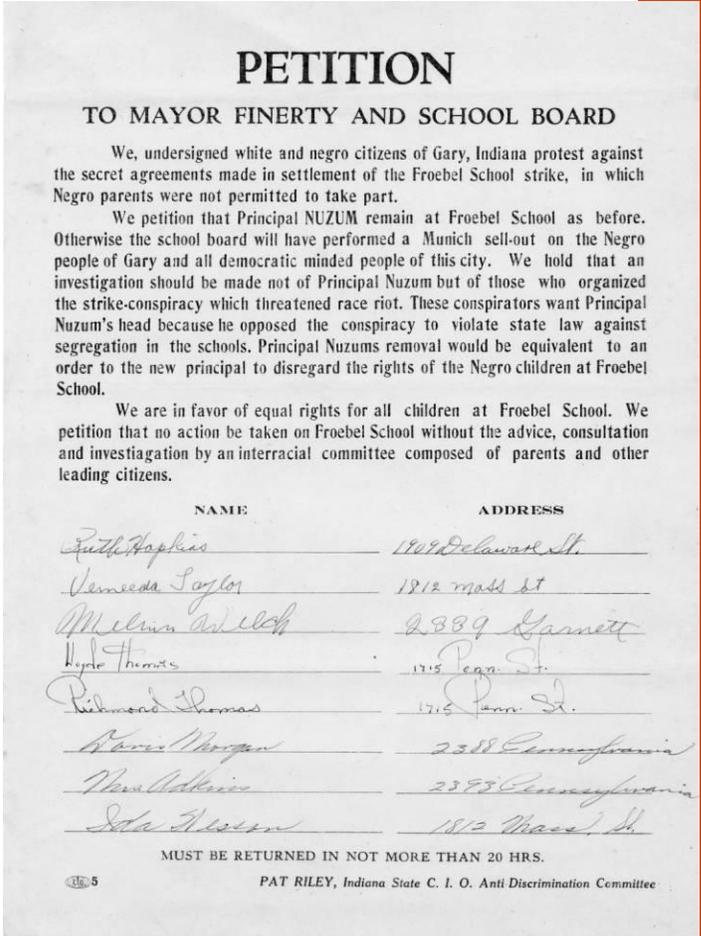


*The Aboriginal Port-folio,*  
E89 .L67 1836, Indiana Historical  
Society



P0376\_BOX12\_FOLDER24\_001

Cincinnati Car Corporation  
Collection, P0376, Indiana  
Historical Society



SC3154\_BOX1\_FOLDER1\_001

Froebel School Boycott Petitions  
Collection, SC3154, Indiana  
Historical Society



P0282\_POSTCARDS\_BOX1\_PUMPKIN

Adding  
items singly  
doesn't  
make them  
strays—  
they're just  
outside  
their neat  
packaging.

# Why add them this way?

- Because of their importance
- Iconic images
- Material gleaned from researcher requests
- Images for our online exhibit platform,  
[Destination Indiana](#)

# Chaos or an infestation of Tribbles?



P0411\_BOX8\_FOLDER12\_002



Advanced Search

## Subject

- Transportation (333)
- Clothing & dress (199)
- Monument Circle (Indianapolis, Ind.) (173)
- Portrait photographs (156)
- Steamboats (143)
- Hats (139)
- Natural disasters (135)
- Architecture (130)
- Automobiles (121)
- Boats (121)

Show More

## Date

- circa 1900 (181)
- circa 1920 (176)



**1822 Kentucky Resoluton to Neighboring States**

☆ Save



**1849 Fayette County Courthouse, Connersville,...**

☆ Save



**1855 Greek Revival St. Joseph County Courthouse in Fro...**

☆ Save



**1856 Diploma**

☆ Save



**1858 Lighthouse Michigan City, Indiana**



**1878 Carrier's Greeting of the Booneville Standard**



**1888 Illustration of Monument Circle with Christ Church..**



**1898 Football Team**

# Examples of Themed Collections

- [African American History](#)
- [Art and Artists of Indiana](#)
- [Civil War Home Front](#)
- [Civil War Military Front](#)
- [Civil War Materials](#)
- [Indiana Historical Society Moving Images](#)
- [Low Wallace Collection](#)
- [Panoramic Photograph Images](#)
- [Women's History](#)
- [Nineteen's 19](#)

# Themed Collections from Collecting Initiatives

- [East Asia Heritage](#)
- [Indiana LGBTQ](#)
- [Indianapolis Bicentennial](#)
- [Latino and Hispanic Heritage](#)
- [South Asia Heritage](#)
- [Southeast Asia Heritage](#)
- [Collecting COVID-19](#)

# Multiple Benefits of Themed Collections

- Organizes material in CONTENTdm as well as in high res file storage
- Provides logical storage for new materials
- Gives a good starting point for evaluating areas of weakness in coverage
- Flexibility for presentation of different formats across collection lines
- Helps novice searchers with browsing topics
- Efficient start for those researching by topic or format
- Cuts down on Tribbles in your Digital Collection

# Collecting COVID-19

An adventure in participatory archives/contemporary collecting

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# What are participatory archives?

- Crowdsourcing metadata or transcription of digital objects
- Encouraging community engagement and understanding of a collection
- Community or patron created and sourced collections

# Collecting COVID-19 Project Purpose/Set-up Goals

- 1) To collect journals, photographs, music, videos, drawings, or poems from our fellow Hoosiers in real time to help us understand and in the future to remember what it was like to experience a global pandemic.
- 2) To have permissions for use acknowledged upon submission
- 3) To have a quick turnaround to share some of what we have been collecting even while the collecting initiative continues, via CONTENTdm.



# Landing Page for Documenting COVID-19

## Telling Your Story: Documenting COVID-19 in Indiana

At the Indiana Historical Society, we have collected items that document Indiana's past since 1830. There are thousands of letters, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, slides, albums, graphics, and ephemera in our archives documenting the Hoosier experience.

Right now, we are all grappling with a unique historical moment as we respond as a state, nation, and world to a pandemic. At the Indiana Historical Society, we want to add your story of how you and your family are understanding and experiencing the current "new normal."

Below are examples of what we're looking for:

- Writings
- Photos
- Drawings, paintings
- Short videos (limited to 100MB file size, for larger files please email [collectingcovid-19@indianahistory.org](mailto:collectingcovid-19@indianahistory.org))

### How to Help

We have set up a special online resource that will allow you to share your stories, photos and other items so future generations can understand what this experience was like for Hoosiers. If you are a teacher or student and need ideas on how to help, please visit the following [link](#).

[UPLOAD YOUR RESOURCE HERE](#)

[VIEW EXAMPLE SUBMISSIONS](#)

### Why This is Important

Items in our collection let us hear the voices and see the people from our past who are living all the ranges of human experience and emotion. Through the items we collect, we can understand their joys and disappointments, as well as their achievements and failings. And yes, we can even understand the seemingly dull tasks of everyday life – what the weather was like, the neighborhood gossip, or what someone ate for dinner.

Please take the time to read and respond to each of the fields in this form before uploading your item(s) for consideration. It is important that we have your permission to use and share the items you submit with future researchers, just as it is important that our digitization and archives team have a basic understanding of the object you are submitting.

Future researchers and visitors to the Indiana Historical Society will have you to thank for sharing a part of your lives with them as they work to understand our current lived experience.

[NEWSROOM](#)

[CAREERS](#)

[ROOM RENTALS](#)

[BLOG](#)

[DONATE](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[GET IN TOUCH!](#)

*Never miss a story!*

Enter email for our latest publications and events!

# How best to collect? Social media hashtag

## PROS

- User friendly for the social media savvy
- Truly real time snapshots of what is happening
- Easy to search for content by the unique hashtag
- Built in audio, visual and text capabilities

## CONS

- Not everyone has access or is comfortable with using hashtags
- Unclear on permissions for use by the institution collecting
- Institution must be savvy enough to be able to run software to capture social media posts to an archival format for collections
- Potential lack of metadata or description

# Example- Archive This Moment DC

**Tweet**

**DC Public Library** @dcpl

We need your help to tell the story of daily life in the District during this current period in time . Continue to share your photos with us. #ArchivethismomentDC [ow.ly/C4My50zGfr3](https://ow.ly/C4My50zGfr3)



11:30 AM · May 15, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.

1 Retweet 1 Quote Tweet 2 Likes

Reply Retweet Like Share

**DC Public Library** @dcpl

#archivethismomentDC

**ker\_dc** @ker\_dc · Apr 30

Sidewalk and road in front of @dcpl MLK library are open and streets are empty so it's perfect for stopping to peek inside at renovations. New stairs (and looks like a slide) are bright and lovely.



8:32 AM · Apr 30, 2020 · Twitter Web App

2 Retweets 7 Likes

Reply Retweet Like Share

**DC Public Library** @dcpl

Such great photos for #ArchivethisMomentDC - Please continue to share your pics and stories with us to document this time in history. #SocialDistancing

**tmeehleib** @tmeehleib · Apr 17

#COVID-19 #ArchiveThisMomentDC #DC  
© 2020 Tracy Meehleib



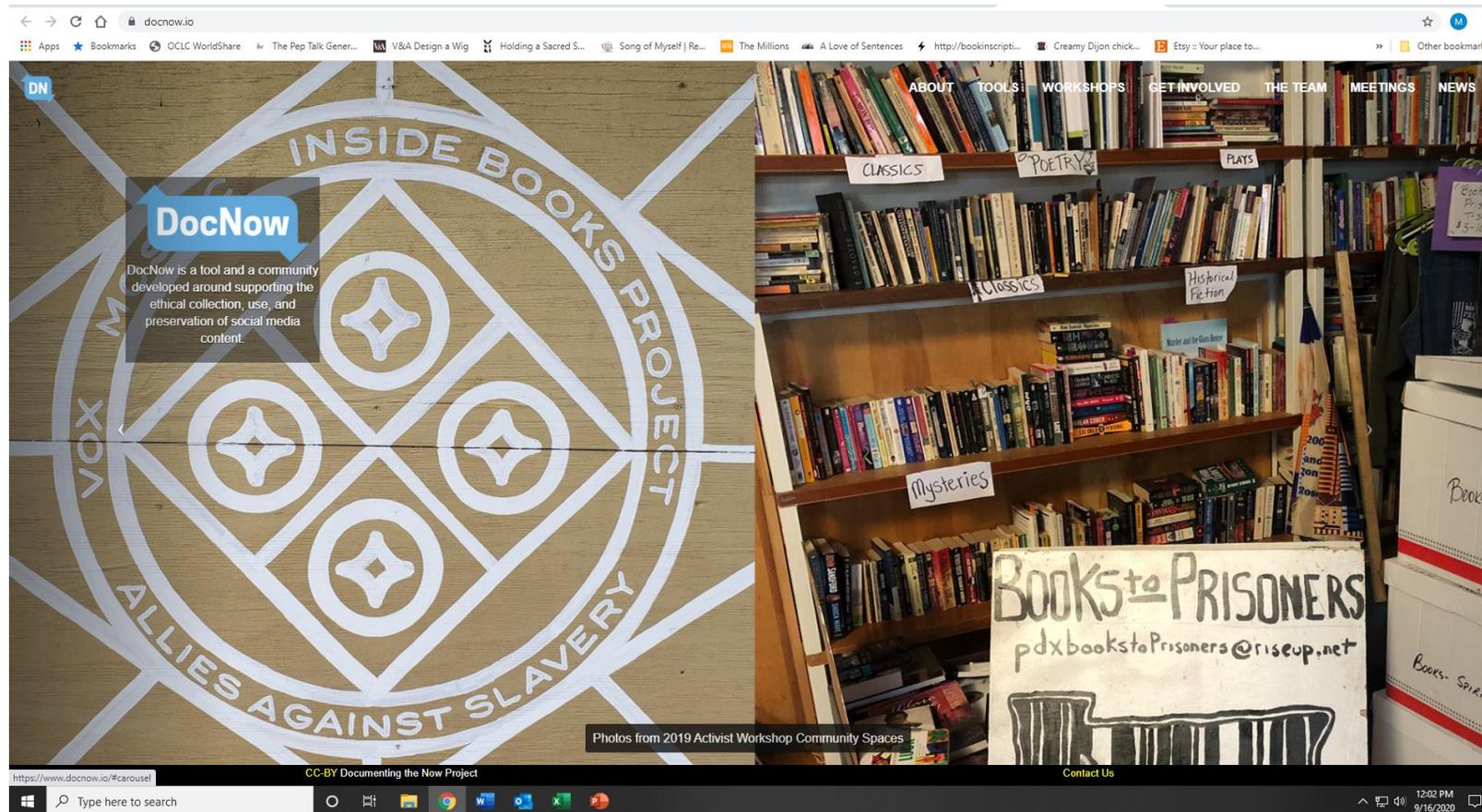
10:15 AM · Apr 20, 2020 · Twitter Web App

5 Likes

Reply Retweet Like Share

<https://www.dclibrary.org/archivethismomentdc>

# Resources for Preserving Social Media Content: Documenting the Now



<https://www.docnow.io/>

# How best to collect? Mass Observation Journals

## PROS

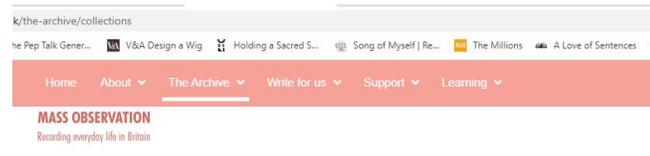
- More democratic means of submission (more common/user friendly than social media for some audiences?)
- Less need for extra software or expertise, depending on the nature of the submissions (if they are analog or digital)

## CONS

- Must play the long game of reminding people to both participate and submit over the course of months or a year
- Potentially more time on the part of the registrar in corresponding to complete permissions paperwork

# Project Examples

Mass Observation,  
<http://www.massobs.org.uk/>

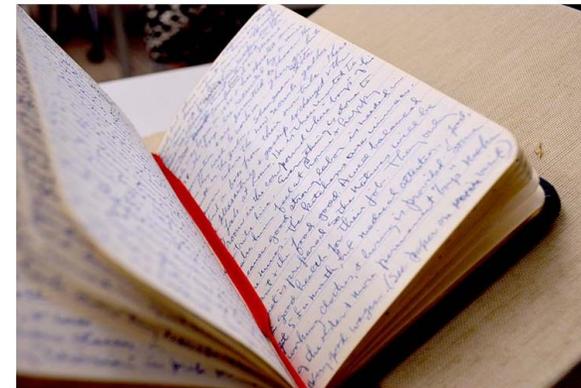


## Collections

The Mass Observation Archive is one of the Special Collections in the care of the [University of Sussex](#) at [The Keep](#). You can use [The Keep's website](#) to search the [Mass Observation catalogues](#). You will need to visit the Archive to view the actual materials or you can take a look at our resources page to find out about accessing material online. We've provided an overview of the collection and a set of links to the relevant catalogues at [The Keep](#) in the menus below.



IU Archives, Coronavirus Archive  
<https://libraries.indiana.edu/coronavirus-days-archive-story>



## ONGOING CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We find ourselves living in a historic time. Historians of the future will want to know how we spent our days. What was the local, lived experience of a global pandemic and rapid political and social change from day to day and week to week?

# How best to collect? Google Forms

## PROS

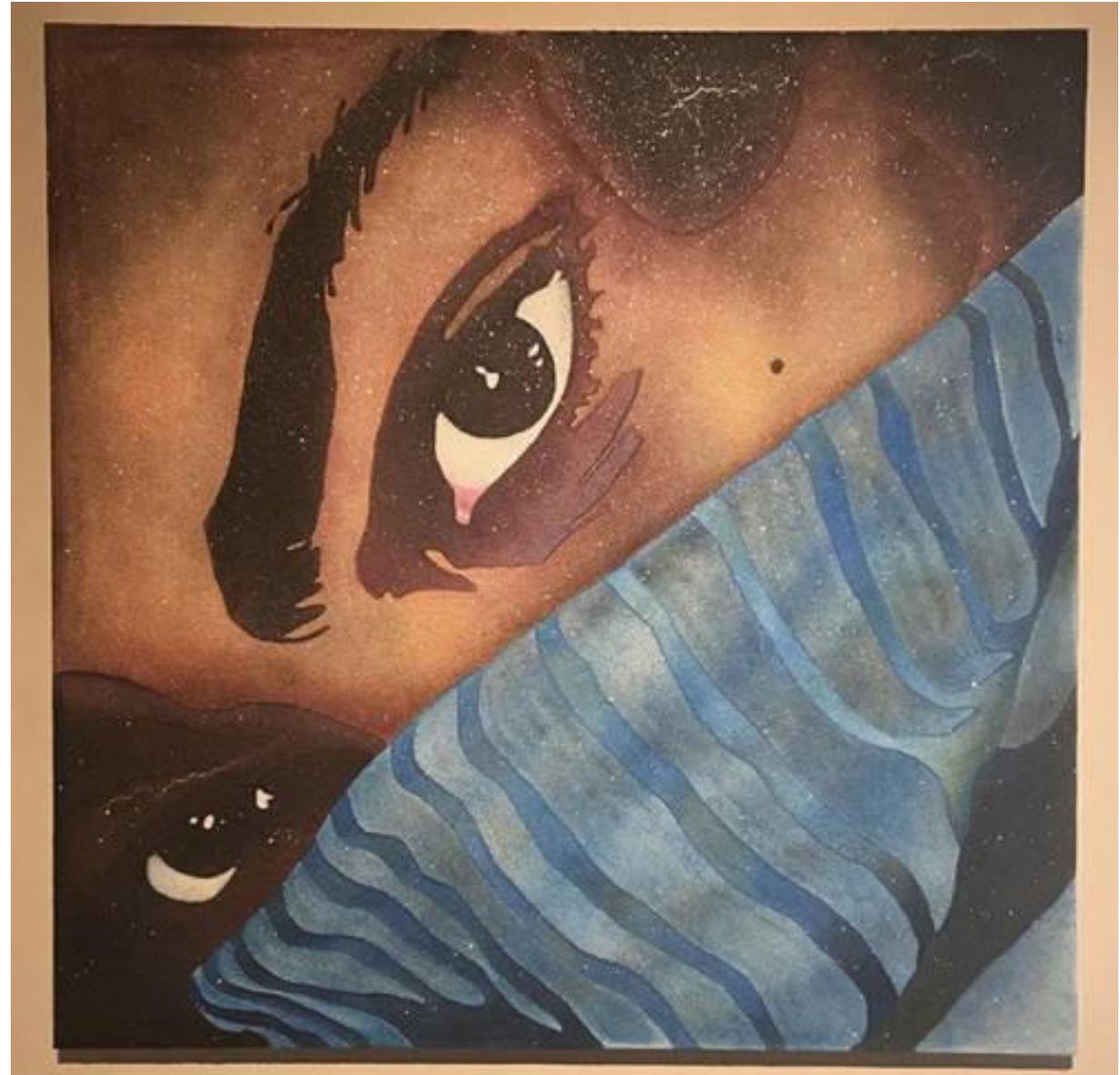
- Can set up specific fields to (hopefully) receive consistent metadata from users
- Permission statements can be added onto the form, which means less follow up for the institution
- User-friendly
- Free to set up, no extra software to purchase

## CONS

- Data collected comes to the end-users (archivists, digitization staff) in a Forms doc that takes time to organize and sort.
- Forms doc doesn't link back to each individual image, which adds more time in assigning new file names for processing.
- Some cost in purchasing storage space for submissions

## Fields to Collect Metadata

- Email Address
- Name
- What date was this object created?
- Where was this object created? (City, County, State)
- What else should we know about this object to create some context? i.e. Do you want to identify any individuals in the photograph? Why did your family decide to create this journal?



DG0001\_0183

DG0001, Indiana Historical Society

# Permission Statements

- In granting this permission, you warrant that you are 18 years of age or older and have the full power and authority to consent to this agreement, that your submission does not infringe any existing copyright or contain any libelous matter, nor invade any third-party rights of privacy or publicity.
- I hereby give the Indiana Historical Society (“IHS”) a royalty-free, non-exclusive, worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, and fully sub-licensable license to copy, digitize, reproduce, edit, translate, create derivative works, distribute, and publicly display and perform certain materials described below. I agree that IHS may add the material to the library collection according to the IHS Collection Management Policy and associated Collections Development and Acquisitions Policy Statements and to make the available to researchers in a manner consistent with IHS practices. I agree that IHS may utilize any medium or media now existing or that will exist in the future to achieve the above-described purposes.

A person is sitting on a large map of the United States painted on a sidewalk. The map is white and shows the outlines of the states. The person is wearing a blue shirt and dark pants. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly asphalt or concrete. The text is overlaid on the map.

# Collecting COVID-19: A Themed Digital Collection

Metadata & CONTENTdm

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# Themed Collection Metadata Considerations

- Themed digital collections are built around a topic or theme, not one specific format or physical collection
- It's best to work with a team to determine:
  - Which collections should be included
  - Workflow between archives and digitization staff
  - File naming conventions for digital files
  - Subject Headings (most up-to-date terminology)
  - Special credit lines for images
- The amount of time you have to process the digital collections will determine how rich your metadata descriptions can be.

# Themed Collection Metadata Considerations

- Themed collections can contain several different physical collections and original/digital formats:

Original Format	Digital Format
Photographs	JPG, TIFF, PNG, etc.
Documents & Manuscripts	PDF, Word, etc.
Books & Printed Items	PDF
Artwork & Illustrations	JPG, TIFF, PNG, PDF, etc.
Films	MP4, MOV, M4V
Audio Recordings	MP3, WAV, etc.

- Building your metadata template may help answer questions or anticipate issues concerning the digital collection.

# Themed Collection: Example Metadata Template

Field name	DC map	Notes/Questions	Example Metadata
Title	Title	create title from donor-provided description	Student Completing Virtual School Lesson at Home
Owning Institution	Provenance	Indiana Historical Society	Indiana Historical Society
Rights	Rights	Blank	
Use Statement	Rights-License	This image may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for study, research or classroom teaching without permission. For other uses contact: <a href="mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org">mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org</a>	This image may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for study, research or classroom teaching without permission. For other uses contact: <a href="mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org">mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org</a>
Required Credit Line	Rights	the attribution: Indiana Historical Society	Use must be accompanied with the attribution: Indiana Historical Society
Original Filename	Title-Alternative	Create new field here	inbound908682181823621137.jpg
Item ID	Identifier	IHS filename	DG0001_0008
Description	Description	Use donor provided description, or add information as needed	Naomi, first grade, age 7, completing her virtual school lesson with her teacher via Youtube in our living room.
Subject	Subject	<b>Possible LCSH Subject Headings:</b> COVID-19 (Disease); Coronavirus Communicable diseases; Communicable diseases--Prevention; Quarantine; Medicine, Health and Life Sciences; Pandemics; Public health; Medical personnel; Medical care; Distance education [e-learning]; Students; Employment; Telecommuting; Home offices; Unemployment; Homeschooling; Virtual learning	COVID-19 (Disease); Coronavirus infections; Medicine, Health and Life Sciences; Pandemics; Public health; Communicable diseases; Communicable diseases--Prevention; Homeschooling; Distance education; Students; Quarantine; Virtual learning
Creator	Creator	Donor name	Tabitha Jackson
Date	Date-Created	2020-MM-DD	3/20/2020

Field name	DC map	Notes/Questions	Example Metadata
Time Period	Coverage--Temporal	2020s (2020-2029)	2020s (2020-2029)
Geographic Location	Coverage-Spatial	Indiana--County--City	Indiana--Marion County--Indianapolis
Source Collection Name	Source	Collecting COVID-19	Collecting COVID-19
Source Collection Number	Source	DG0001	DG0001
Digital Collection Name	Relation-Is Part Of	Collecting COVID-19	Collecting COVID-19
Digital Collection Number	Source	dc128	dc128
Format of Original	Format-Medium	Digital photograph, Digital video, Word document, etc.	Digital photograph
Size of Original	Format-Extent	Digital file size?	4 MB
Digital Format	Format	JPG, TIF, PDF, MP4, ect.	JPG
Resolution	None	Will we resize photographs and add title bars? This will affect resolution - Yes for images going into CONTENTdm	300 ppi
Notes	None	In March 2020 the Indiana Historical Society launched a collecting initiative to document the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Indiana in real time. This digital collection contains selected photographs, videos, documents, and other materials from participants in this collecting initiative.	In March 2020 the Indiana Historical Society launched a collecting initiative to document the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Indiana in real time. This digital collection contains selected photographs, videos, documents, and other materials from participants in this collecting initiative.
Destination IN Journey	format of	Possible future use in journeys?	
Transcription	None	Possibly needed for handwritten submissions.	
Type	Type	Image; Text; Moving Image; etc.	Image
Copyright Notice	Rights-Rights Holder	Digital Image 2020 Indiana Historical Society. All Rights Reserved.	Digital Image 2020 Indiana Historical Society. All Rights Reserved.
Checksum	None	CONTENTdm now has automatic checksum field to check integrity of digital file	

# Themed Collection Example

## Indiana Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19

- Indiana Historical Society's first born-digital "Participatory Archive"
- COVID-19-related items collected via Google Forms and Google Drive
- The Google Forms filled out by participants provided much of our metadata such as: Description, Date, Creator, Original Filename
- Digital formats submitted included: PDF, Word docs, JPG, TIFF, PNG, MP4, MOV, M4V, MP3
- The collecting initiative began in March 2020 and staff began selecting items for the digital collection in July

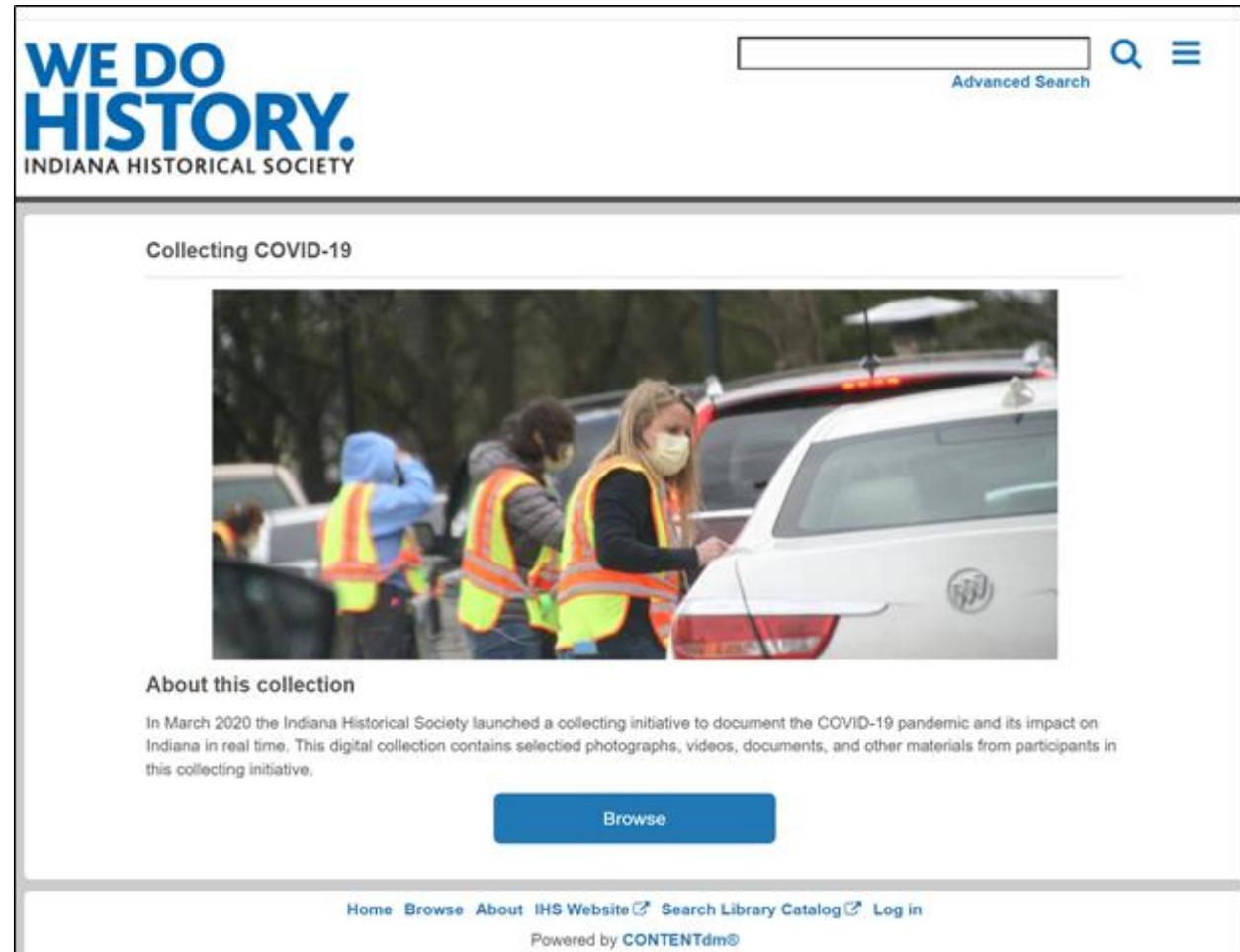
# Themed Collection Example

## Indiana Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19

Collecting COVID-19 went live on our CONTENTDM site in September 2020 (while also undergoing our upgrade to Responsive!)

URL:

<https://images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/p16797coll76>



The screenshot displays the Indiana Historical Society website interface. At the top left is the logo "WE DO HISTORY. INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY". To the right is a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and a menu icon. Below the logo, the title "Collecting COVID-19" is centered. A photograph shows several people wearing high-visibility vests and face masks standing near a white van. Below the photo is the heading "About this collection" followed by a paragraph: "In March 2020 the Indiana Historical Society launched a collecting initiative to document the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Indiana in real time. This digital collection contains selected photographs, videos, documents, and other materials from participants in this collecting initiative." A blue "Browse" button is positioned below the text. At the bottom of the page, there is a navigation bar with links for "Home", "Browse", "About", "IHS Website", "Search Library Catalog", and "Log in". The footer text reads "Powered by CONTENTdm®".

# Sample Record [We Can Do This]



DG0001\_0300

DG0001, Indiana Historical Society

## Item Description

Title	[We Can Do This]
Owning Institution	Indiana Historical Society
Use Statement	This image may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for study, research or classroom teaching without permission. For other uses contact: <a href="mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org">mailto:visualcollections@indianahistory.org</a>
Required Credit Line	Use must be accompanied with the attribution: Indiana Historical Society
Original Filename	20200325_174257.jpg
Item ID	DG0001_0300.jpg
Description	Donor description: "Feeling called to show my community some love, I made this porch sign by cutting out letters from some discarded paneling found in a local swap group. As my husband helped me tie the letters to our porch, a neighbor came out and stood in the street to help us keep the words level. It was the first of many neighbor interactions we've had because of the sign. I hope it gives others hope that even when we're isolated, we are all #INthisogether!"
Subject	COVID-19 (Disease) Coronavirus Communicable diseases Communicable diseases--Prevention Quarantine Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Pandemics Public health Signs Residences Homes
Donor/Creator	Holly O'Neill
Date	2020-03-23
Time Period	2020s (2020-2029)
Geographic Location	Indiana--Marion County--Indianapolis
Source Collection Name	Collecting COVID-19
Source Collection Number	DG0001
Digital Collection Name	Collecting COVID-19
Digital Collection Number	dc128
Format of Original	Digital photograph
Digital Format	JP2000
Notes	In March 2020 the Indiana Historical Society launched a collecting initiative to document the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Indiana in real time. This digital collection contains selected photographs, videos, documents, and other materials from participants in this collecting initiative.
Type	Image
Copyright Notice	Digital image 2020 Indiana Historical Society. All Rights Reserved.
Checksum	891806773

# Themed Collection Example

## Indiana Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19

Specific metadata considerations for this collection:

### Item ID/Identifier

- Participant filenames vs. Institutional filenames: We kept original filenames in the metadata but renamed digital files to fit our institutional format.

### Title

- If a title was not provided by the participant or indicated in the original filename, the staff member created a title in brackets, i.e [We Can Do This]

# Themed Collection Example

## Indiana Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19

Specific metadata considerations for this collection:

### Description

- We provided a field in the Google form for participants to tell us about their submissions. In most cases this was sufficient for the Description field. That's a benefit of collecting in the present, crowdsourcing metadata.

### Subjects

- The COVID-19 Pandemic has introduced several new subject headings in our controlled vocabulary: **COVID-19 (Disease)**; **Coronavirus**; **Quarantine**; **Masks**; **Virtual learning**; **Telecommuting**; **Social distancing**; **Contact tracing**

# Takeaways

## Indiana Historical Society: Collecting COVID-19

- Collecting COVID-19 initiative is still underway and the digital collection will continue to grow
- IHS plans to launch future collection initiatives based on participatory archives and born-digital materials
- We learned that born-digital collecting initiatives can provide rich participant-provided content and metadata, and that collections can be processed and uploaded to CONTENTdm fairly quickly.
- Our Archives and Digitization team will review our processes, workflow and metadata standards as we continue to build these new types of themed collections.

# Questions or Collaboration?

Contact us!

Susan Sutton

[ssutton@indianahistory.org](mailto:ssutton@indianahistory.org)

Maire Gurevitz

[mgurevitz@indianahistory.org](mailto:mgurevitz@indianahistory.org)

Kathy Taylor Mulder

[kmulder@indianahistory.org](mailto:kmulder@indianahistory.org)



P0159\_G\_4X5\_132

Cephas M. Huddleston Collection, P0159, Indiana  
Historical Society

# Thank you



**Maire Gurevitz**  
Archivist  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)



**Susan Sutton**  
Director, Digitization  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)



**Kathy Mulder**  
Assistant, Digitization  
[Indiana Historical Society](#)