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
WHY USE THEMED COLLECTIONS

Fighting chaos and serving researchers
Short Answer: Organization and Flexibility
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

Mary Lyon Taylor Collection, P0178, Indiana Historical Society

The Bretzman Collection, Indiana Historical Society

Bass Photo Company Collection, P0130, Indiana Historical Society
Folios, company records, small important collections

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

Cincinnati Car Corporation Collection, P0376, Indiana Historical Society

Froebel School Boycott Petitions Collection, SC3154, Indiana Historical Society
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?
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
• Lew 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
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

DG0001, Indiana Historical Society
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 1820. There are thousands of letters, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, Civil War, slides, graphics, and ephemera in our archives documenting the Hoosier experience.

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

Below are examples of what we’re looking for:
- Letters
- Photos
- Drawings, paintings
- Short videos (limited to 50MB file size, larger files please email crickley@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 in future generations can understand what this experience was like for Hoosiers. If you are an educator or student and need ideas on how to help, please visit the following link.

Why This is Important:
Entries in our collection fill us with the stories and the people from our past who are living all the ranges of human experience and emotion. Through these entries we collect, we can understand their joys and disappointments, as well as their achievements and failures. And yet, we can never understand the seemingly dull tasks of everyday life — what the weather was like, the neighborhood gossip, or what someone is for dinner.

Please take the time to read and respond to each of these images 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 archiving team have a basic understanding of the object you are submitting.

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

NEWSPAPER  CAREERS  ROOM RENTALS  BLOG  DONATE  ARCHIVE  GET IN TOUCH
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

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


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

The Coronavirus Days: Archive Your Story

By marcelo  August 24th, 2020

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?
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.
Collecting COVID-19: A Themed Digital Collection

Metadata & CONTENTdm
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Format</th>
<th>Digital Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>JPG, TIFF, PNG, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents &amp; Manuscripts</td>
<td>PDF, Word, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books &amp; Printed Items</td>
<td>PDF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artwork &amp; Illustrations</td>
<td>JPG, TIFF, PNG, PDF, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Films</td>
<td>MP4, MOV, M4V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recordings</td>
<td>MP3, WAV, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Building your metadata template may help answer questions or anticipate issues concerning the digital collection.
Themed Collection:
Example Metadata Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field name</th>
<th>DC map</th>
<th>Notes/Questions</th>
<th>Example Metadata</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
<td>create title from donor-provided description</td>
<td>Student Completing Virtual School Lesson at Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provenance</td>
<td>Provenance</td>
<td>Indiana Historical Society</td>
<td>Indiana Historical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights-License</td>
<td>Use Statement</td>
<td>This image may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for study, research or classroom teaching without permission. For other use contact <a href="mailto:virgo@indianahistory.org">mailto:virgo@indianahistory.org</a></td>
<td>This image may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for study, research or classroom teaching without permission. For other use contact <a href="mailto:virgo@indianahistory.org">mailto:virgo@indianahistory.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Credit Line</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>the attribution: Indiana Historical Society</td>
<td>Use must be accompanied with the attribution: Indiana Historical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Filename</td>
<td>Title-Alternative</td>
<td>Create new field here</td>
<td>inbound9036628151823621137.jpg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item ID</td>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td>HS filename</td>
<td>DG0001_0008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Use donor provided description, or add information as needed</td>
<td>Naomi, first grade, age 7, completing her virtual school lesson with her teacher via YouTube in our living room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Possible LCSH Subject Headings: 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</td>
<td>COVID-19 (Disease); Coronavirus; Kommunicable diseases; Communicable diseases—Prevention; Quarantine; Medicine, Health and Life Sciences; Pandemics; Public health; Communicable diseases; Communicable diseases—Prevention; Homeschooling; Distance education; Students; Quarantine; Virtual learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Donor name</td>
<td>Tabitha Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Date-Created</td>
<td>2020-04-05</td>
<td>3/20/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field name | DC map | Notes/Questions | Example Metadata |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Location</td>
<td>Coverage-Spatial</td>
<td>Indiana—County-City</td>
<td>Indiana—Marion County—Indianapolis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Collection Name</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Collecting COVID-19</td>
<td>Collecting COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Collection Number</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>DG0001</td>
<td>DG0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Collection Name</td>
<td>Relation--is Part Of</td>
<td>Collecting COVID-19</td>
<td>Collecting COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Collection Number</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>96.123</td>
<td>96.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format of Original</td>
<td>Format Medium</td>
<td>Digital photograph, digital video, Word document, etc.</td>
<td>Digital photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of Original</td>
<td>Format Extent</td>
<td>Digital file size</td>
<td>4 MB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Format</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>JPG, TIFF, PDF, MP4, etc.</td>
<td>JPG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Will we resize photographs and add title bars? This will affect resolution - yes for images going into CONTENTdm.</td>
<td>300 ppi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>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 participating in this collecting initiative.</td>
<td>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 participating in this collecting initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination In Journey</td>
<td>Format of</td>
<td>Possible future use in journeys?</td>
<td>Possible future use in journeys?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Possibly needed for handwritten submissions.</td>
<td>Possibly needed for handwritten submissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Image; Text; Moving Image; etc.</td>
<td>Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checksum</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>CONTENTdm now has automatic checksum field to check integrity of digital file</td>
<td>CONTENTdm now has automatic checksum field to check integrity of digital file</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
Sample Record
[We Can Do This]

DG0001, Indiana Historical Society

Title: [We Can Do This]

Description: "We Can Do This" sign made from plywood and hung on the porch of a home in Marion County, Indiana, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sign was a response to the social isolation and community challenges posed by the pandemic.

Donor/Creator: Holly O'Neil

Date: 2020.03.23

Time Period: 2020s (2020-2029)

Geographic Location: Marion County, Indiana

Source Collection Name: Collecting COVID-19

Source Collection Number: DG0001

Digital Collection Name: Collecting COVID-19

Digital Collection Number: dc128

Digital Format: Digital photograph

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.
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
Maire Gurevitz
mgurevitz@indianahistory.org
Kathy Taylor Mulder
kmulder@indianahistory.org

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