Strategies for Audiovisual Digitization Projects

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

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Moderator:
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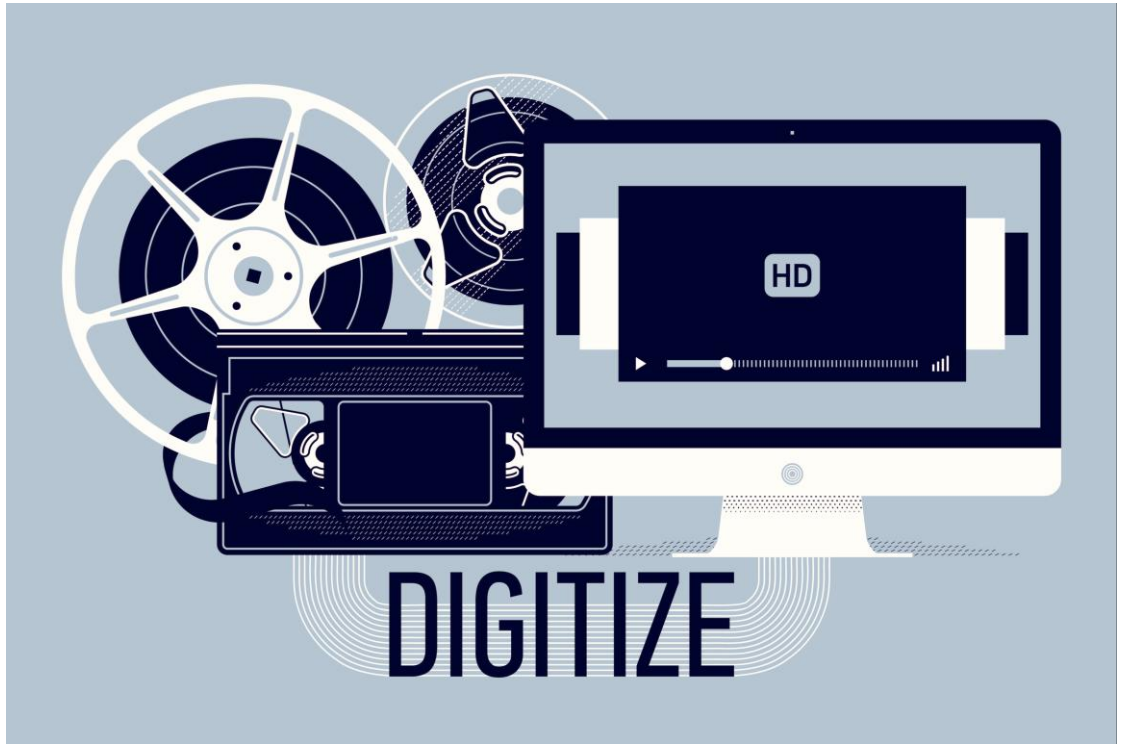
We know the **why**, what we want is the **how**!



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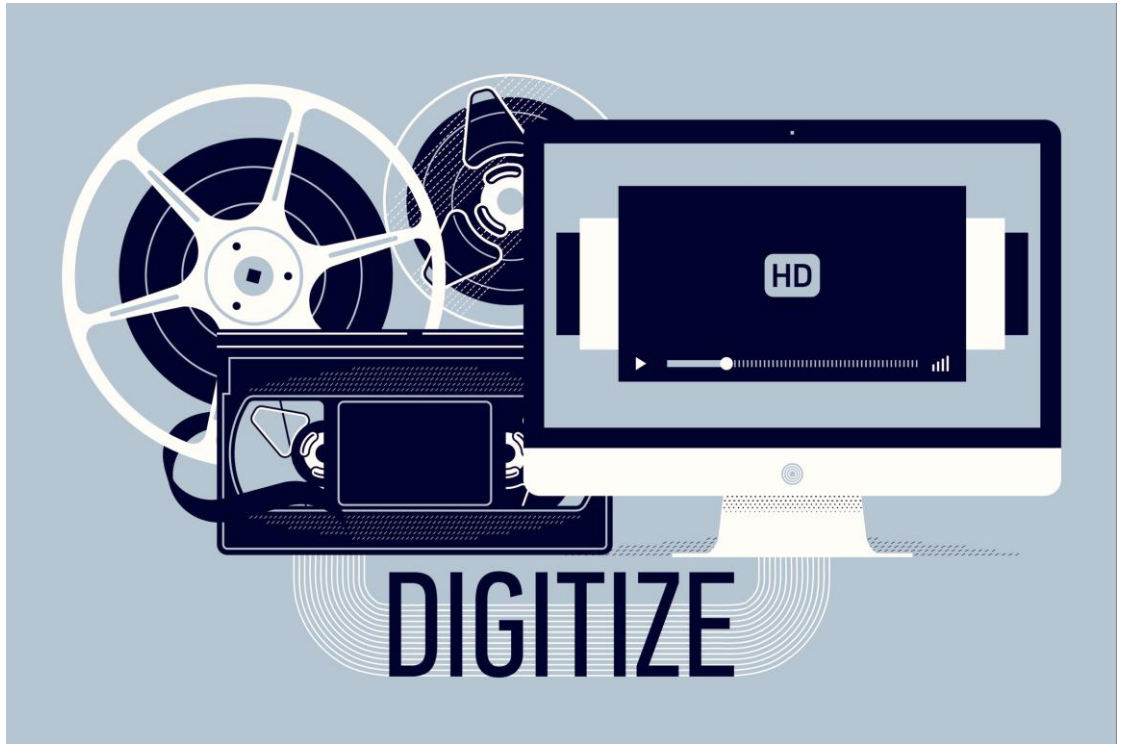
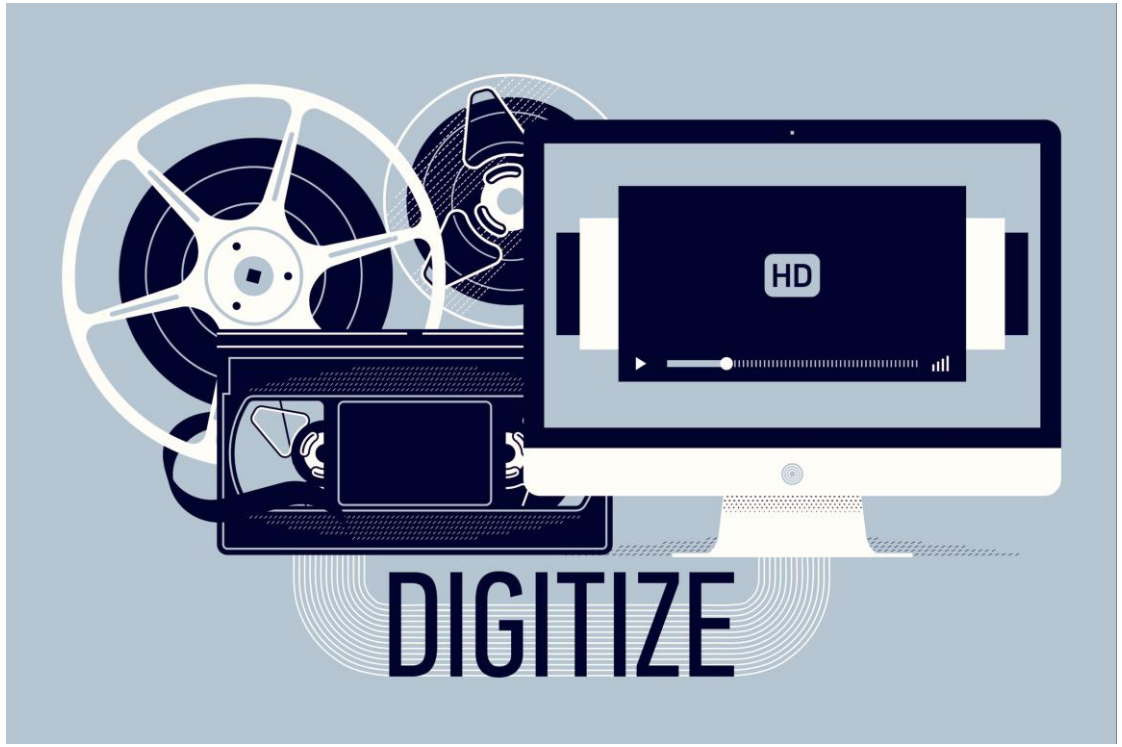


Lightning talks

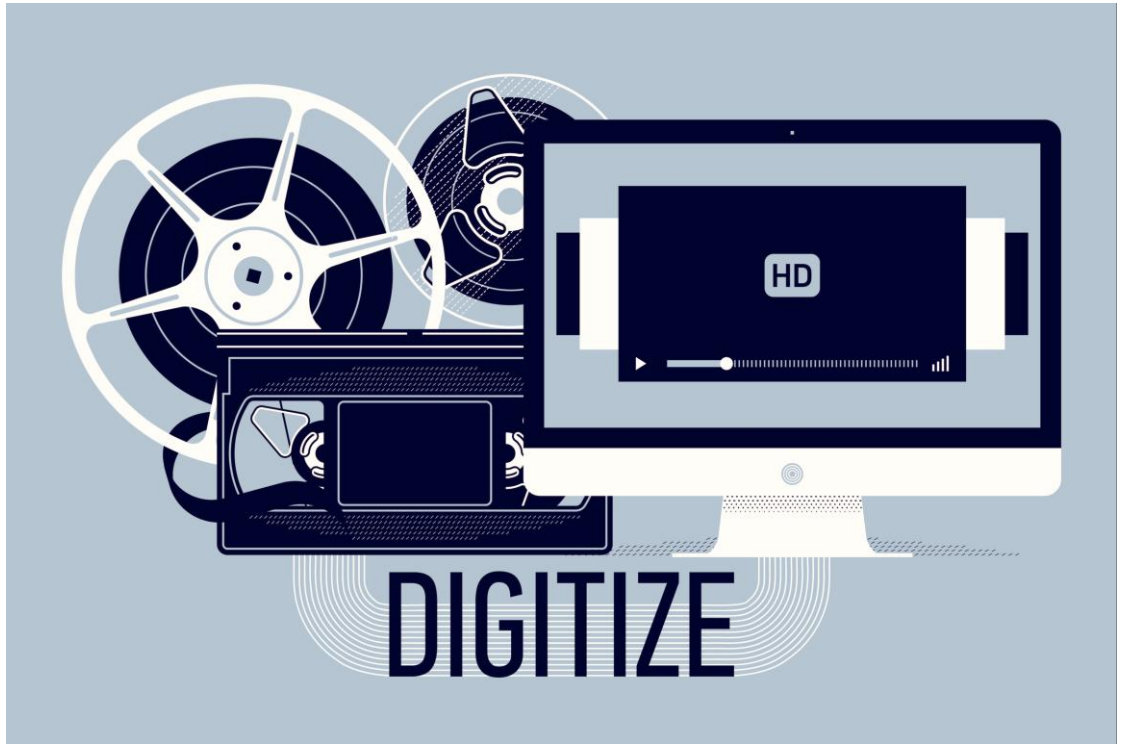
We know the **why**, what we want is the **how**!



Lightning talks

Moderated discussion

We know the **why**, what we want is the **how**!



Lightning talks

Moderated discussion

Q & A

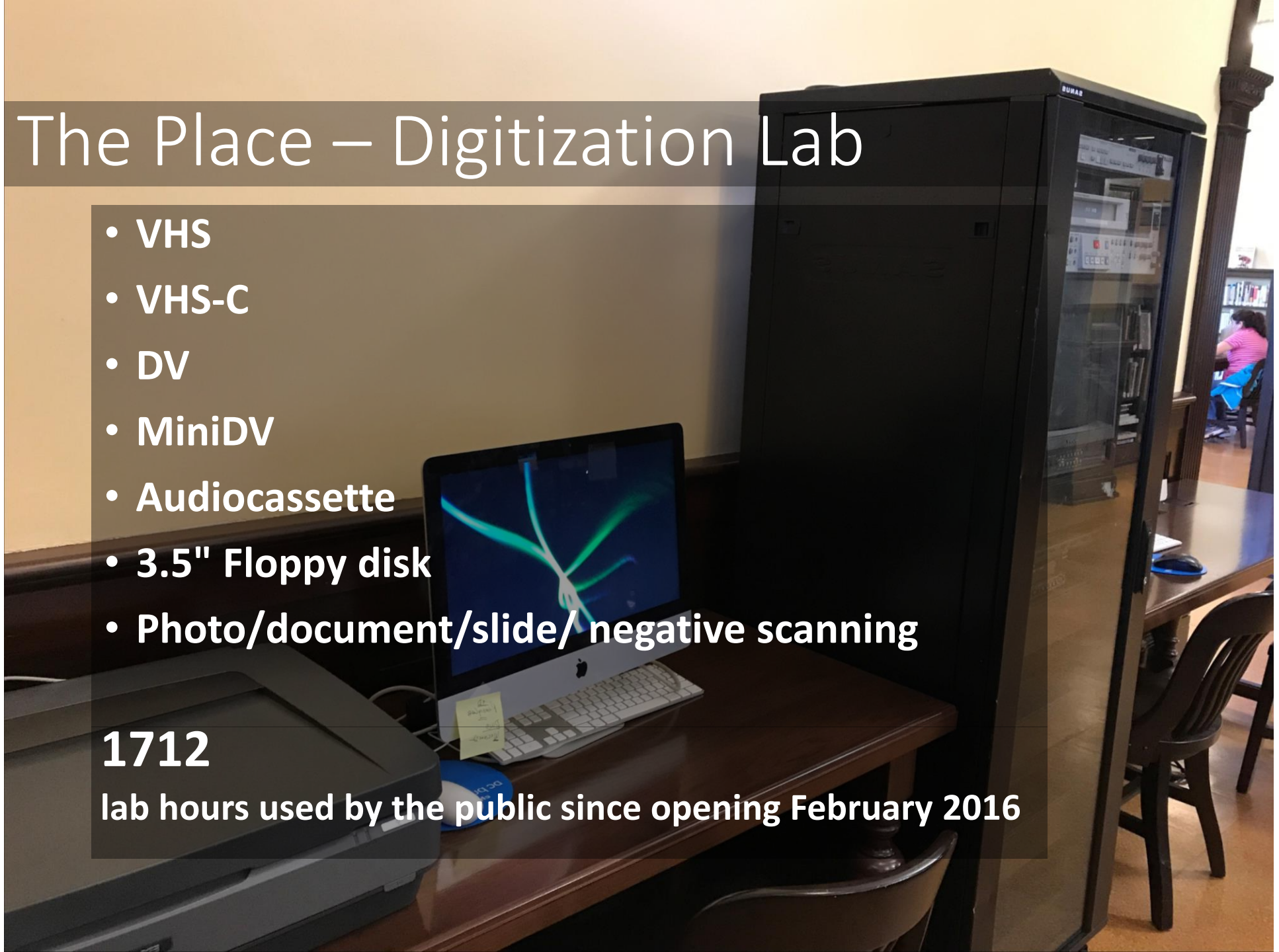
Lauren Algee
Digital Curation Librarian, DCPL Special Collections

lauren.algee@dc.gov
@algeebraten
http://www.dclibrary.org/labs/memorylab

Origin Story

- 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

Memory Lab Tags: digital preservation, personal archiving

Start your personal archiving project today.

Last Updated: Feb 18, 2016 | URL: http://libguides.dclibrary.org/memorylab | Print Guide | RSS Updates | Email Alerts

In the Lab | Taking care of your physical stuff | Taking care of your digital stuff | Build your own Memory Lab

In the Lab | Comments(0) | Print Page | Search: This Guide Search

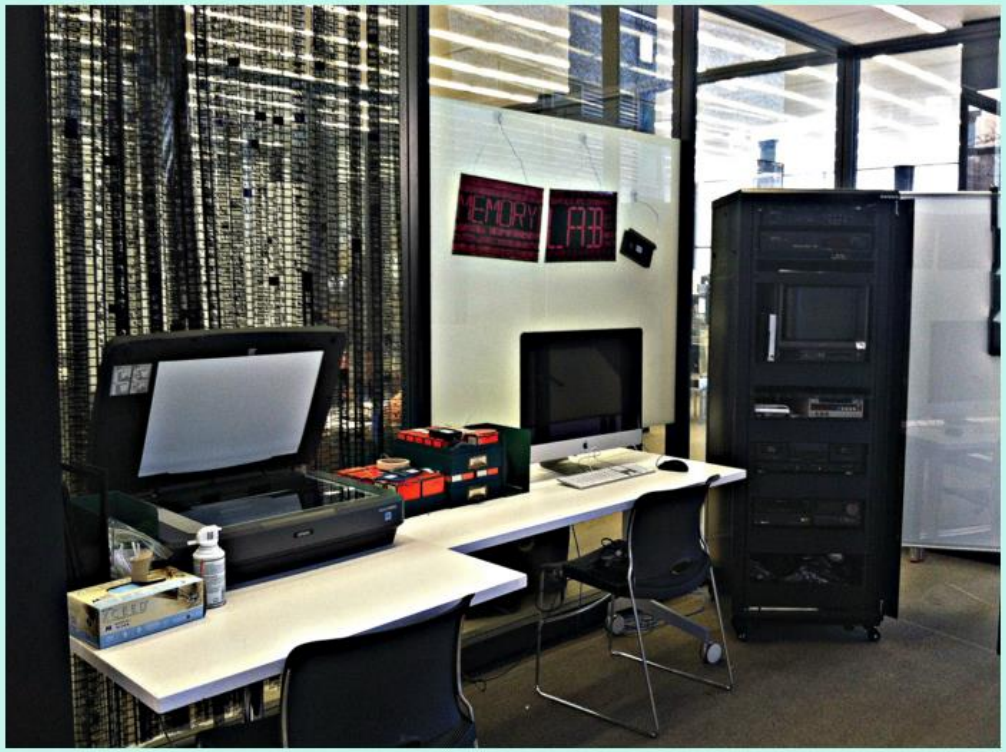


Table of Contents

- Transfer VHS
- Transfer VHS-C
- Transfer DV
- Transfer Audio Cassettes
- Transfer 3.5" Floppies
- Scan Photographs
- Scan Slides
- Scan Papers
- Saving and Sharing

FAQ

When can I sign up?

Booking will go live on 2/17. Reservations can be made for Monday, 2/22 and on.

What formats can I digitize?

The formats we accept currently are listed in the Table of

The Programs

Classes

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

Events

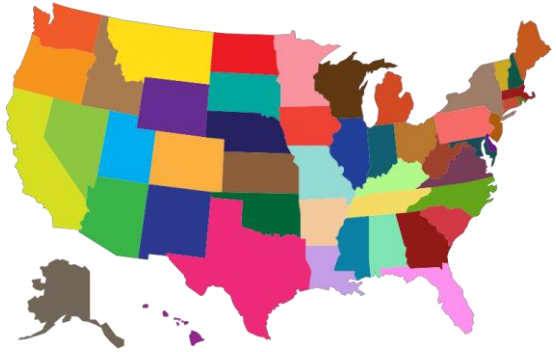
- Home Movie Day
- DC Zinefest
- Preservation workshops

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



INSTITUTE *of* Museum and Library SERVICES

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.

CLOSED

SONY

XFR
COLLECTIVE

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

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 [illegible]ed from obsolete media—be it a VHS cassette or a [illegible] disk—these bits must now be inscribed on a new [illegible]. 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

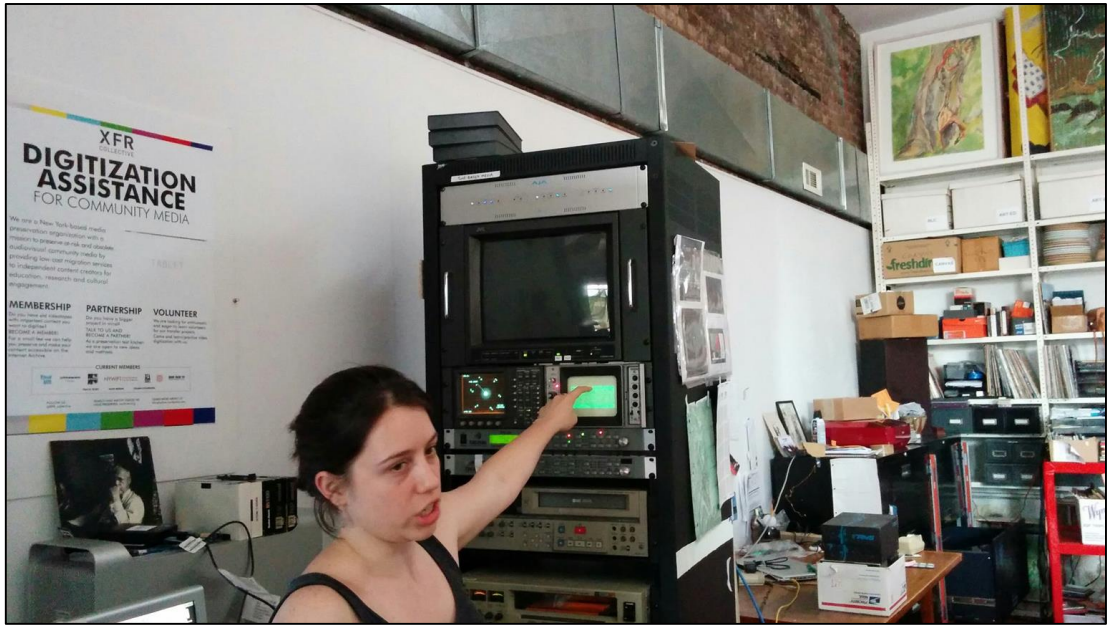
The Baltimore Museum of Art/Mid-Atlantic Regional Moving Image Archive, 2017

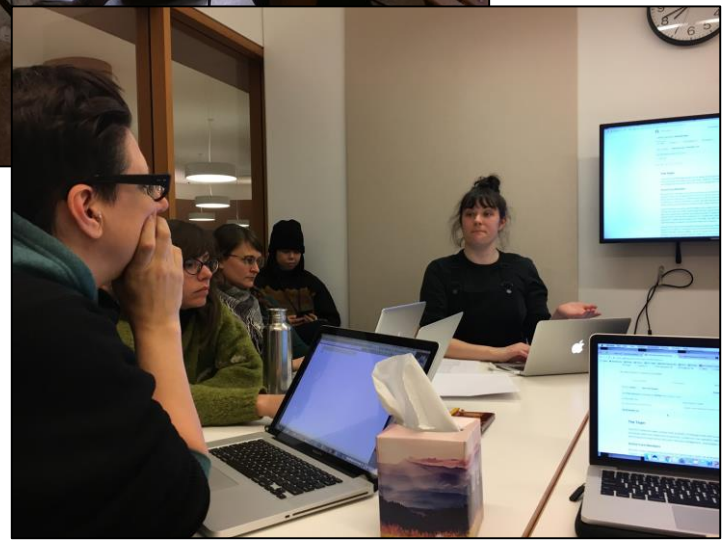
What is a catalog?
A set of systematically arranged descriptions of materials.

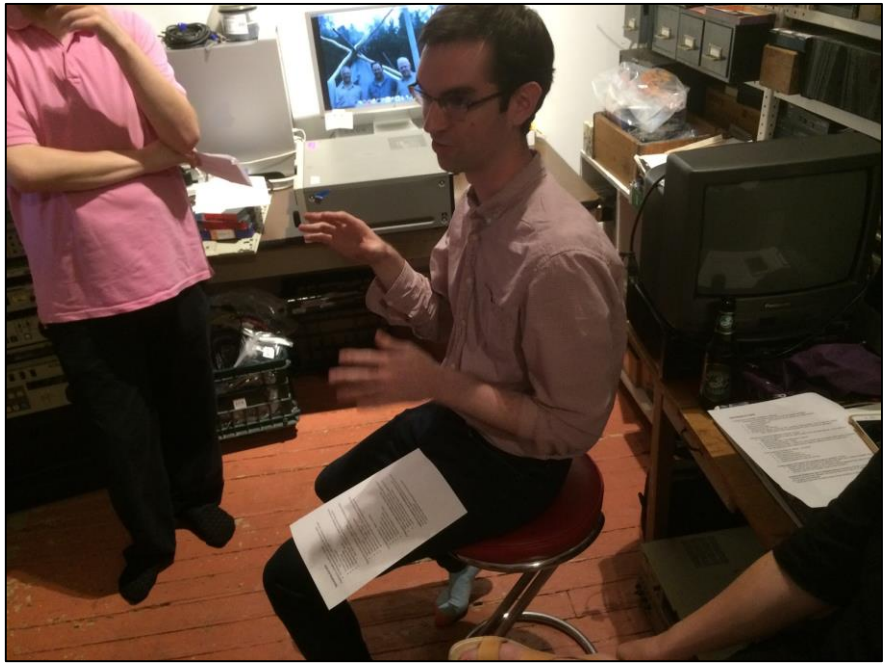
Workshops

Illustration by XFR Collective member Mary Kidd

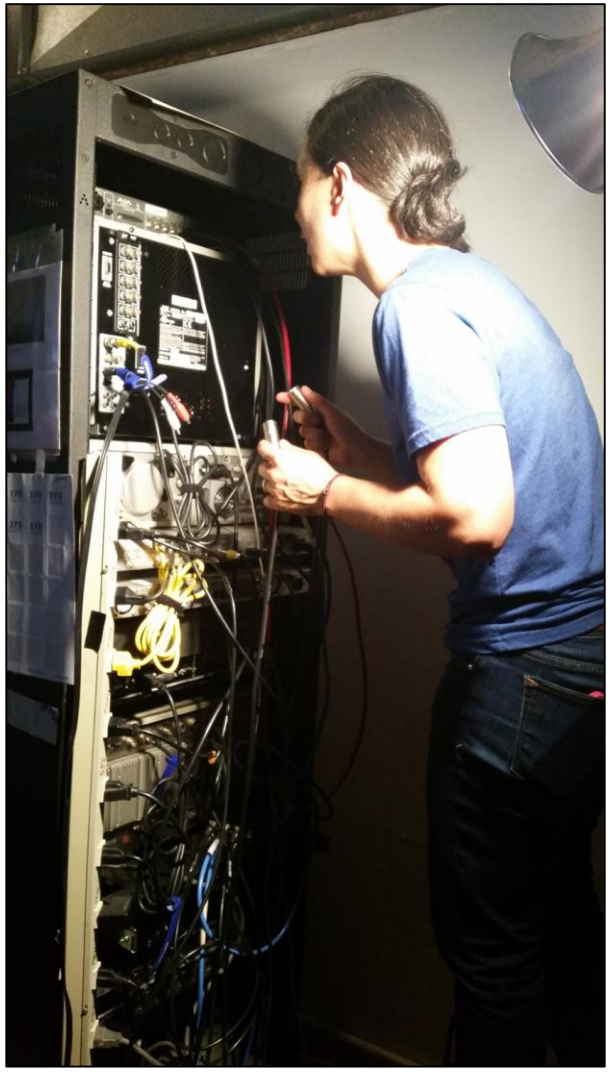
The new transfer rack at METRO



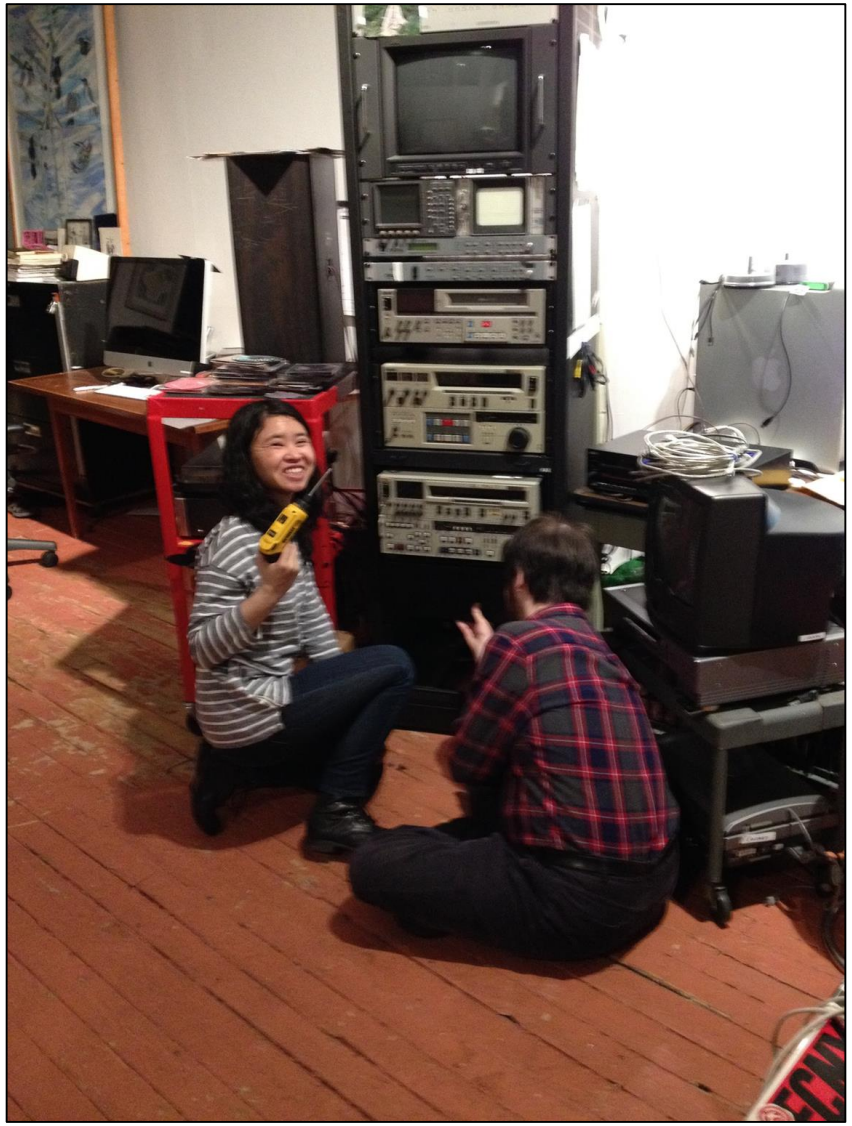




Horizontal mentorship & skill-sharing



Troubleshooting, tinkering, & repair



Some resources & tools that we rely upon in our work

AMIA Open Source Committee, Workflows for A/V Archiving
https://github.com/amiaopensource/open-workflows

Ashley Blewer's Minimum Viable Station document
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oJvr8zCMK4A97GF9xYOM0uijDqyNStuwjtZ23yMRkGw/edit

Ethan Gates's Cable Bible
https://amiaopensource.github.io/cable-bible/

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

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

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/project-update-xfr-metro-partnership/

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

Cataloging and File Management workshop for the Asian American Oral History Collective
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16LtCx4WQYYSitfo9HxRstIVCW2T8RG0sSoqGkbrlghU/edit#slide=id.g10b18693ea_1_423

Illustration by XFR Collective member Mary Kidd

Find us online.

email: xfrcollective[at]gmail.com

website: xfrcollective.wordpress.com

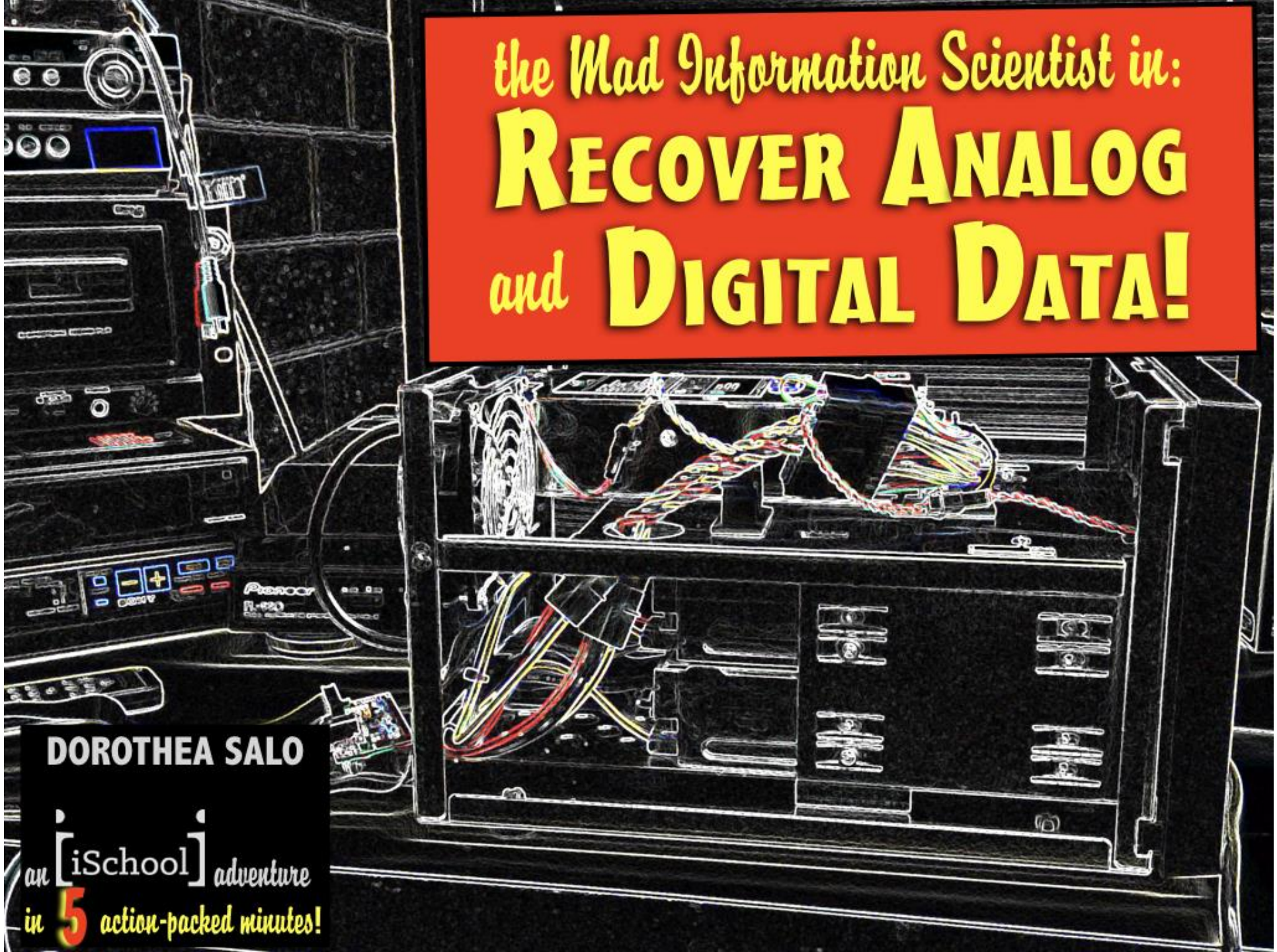
twitter: @xfr_collective

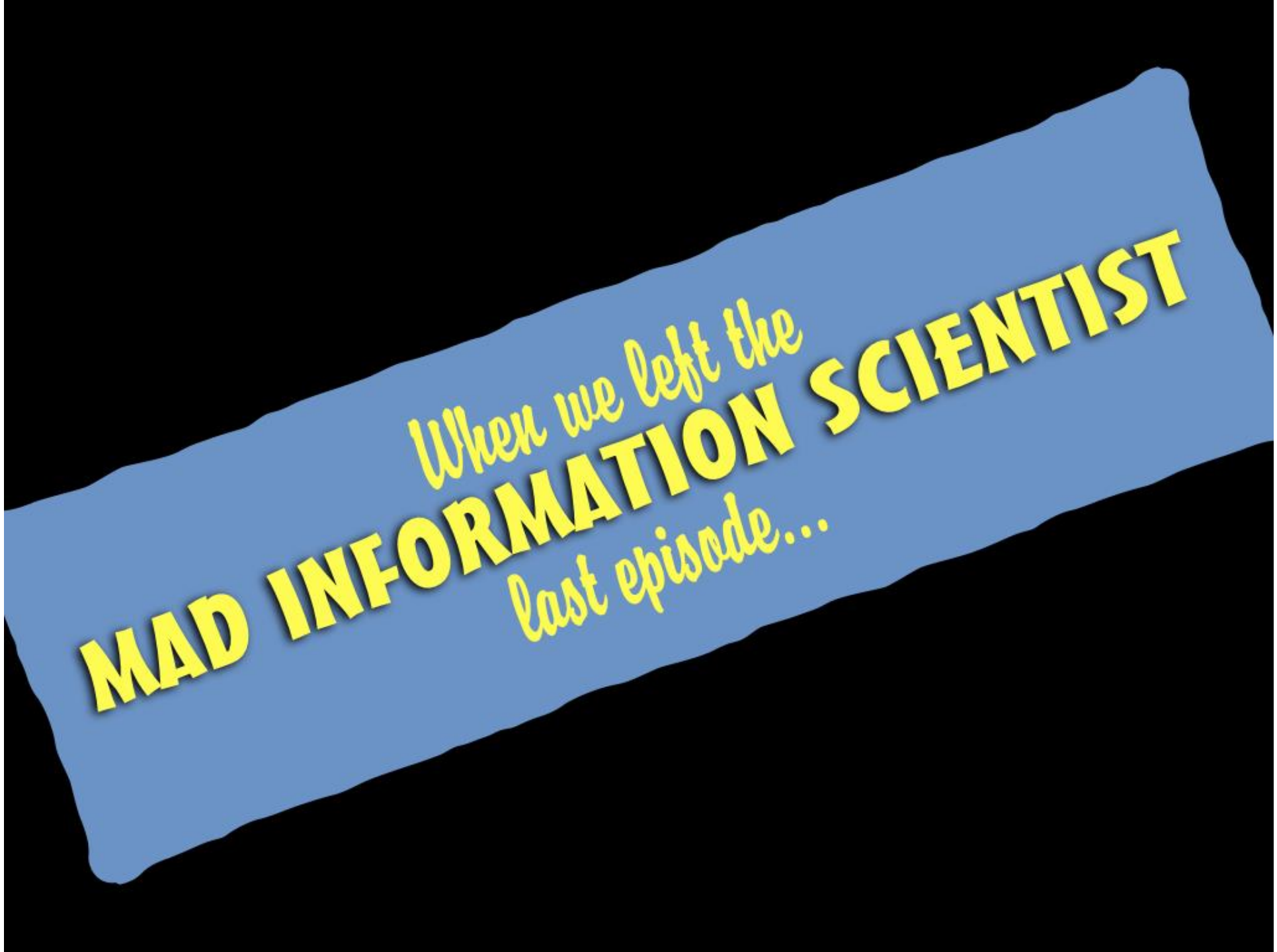
github: github.com/XFRCollective

And/or feel free to reach out to me directly

Email: rachmattson[at]gmail.com

Twitter: captain_maybe


the Mad Information Scientist in:
RECOVER ANALOG
and DIGITAL DATA!
DOROTHEA SALO
an [iSchool] adventure
in 5 action-packed minutes!


When we left the
MAD INFORMATION SCIENTIST
last episode...

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.

H. Michael Karchis, "Service" https://www.flickr.com/photos/hmk/15318591498/ CC-BY, cropped and desaturated

A/V digitization...

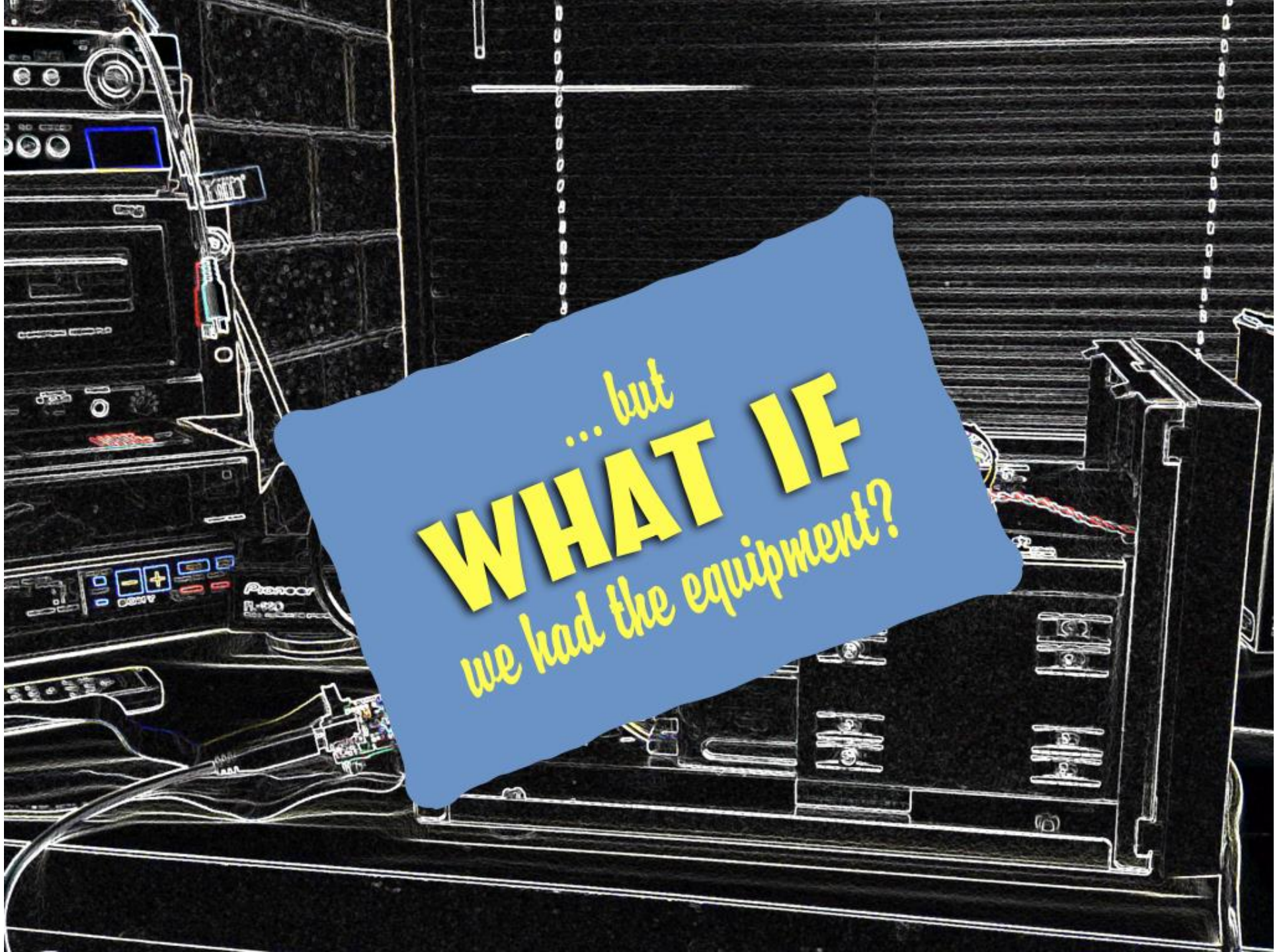
Bill Smith, "Movies" https://www.flickr.com/photos/byzantiumbooks/34936852682/ CC-BY

media archaeology

Marcin Krzyżanowski, "Floppy HD"
https://www.flickr.com/photos/krzakpłak/335533724/ CC-BY, cropped

Toshiyuki IMAI, "Floppy disks" https://www.flickr.com/photos/matsuyuki/2607912618/ CC-BY, cropped

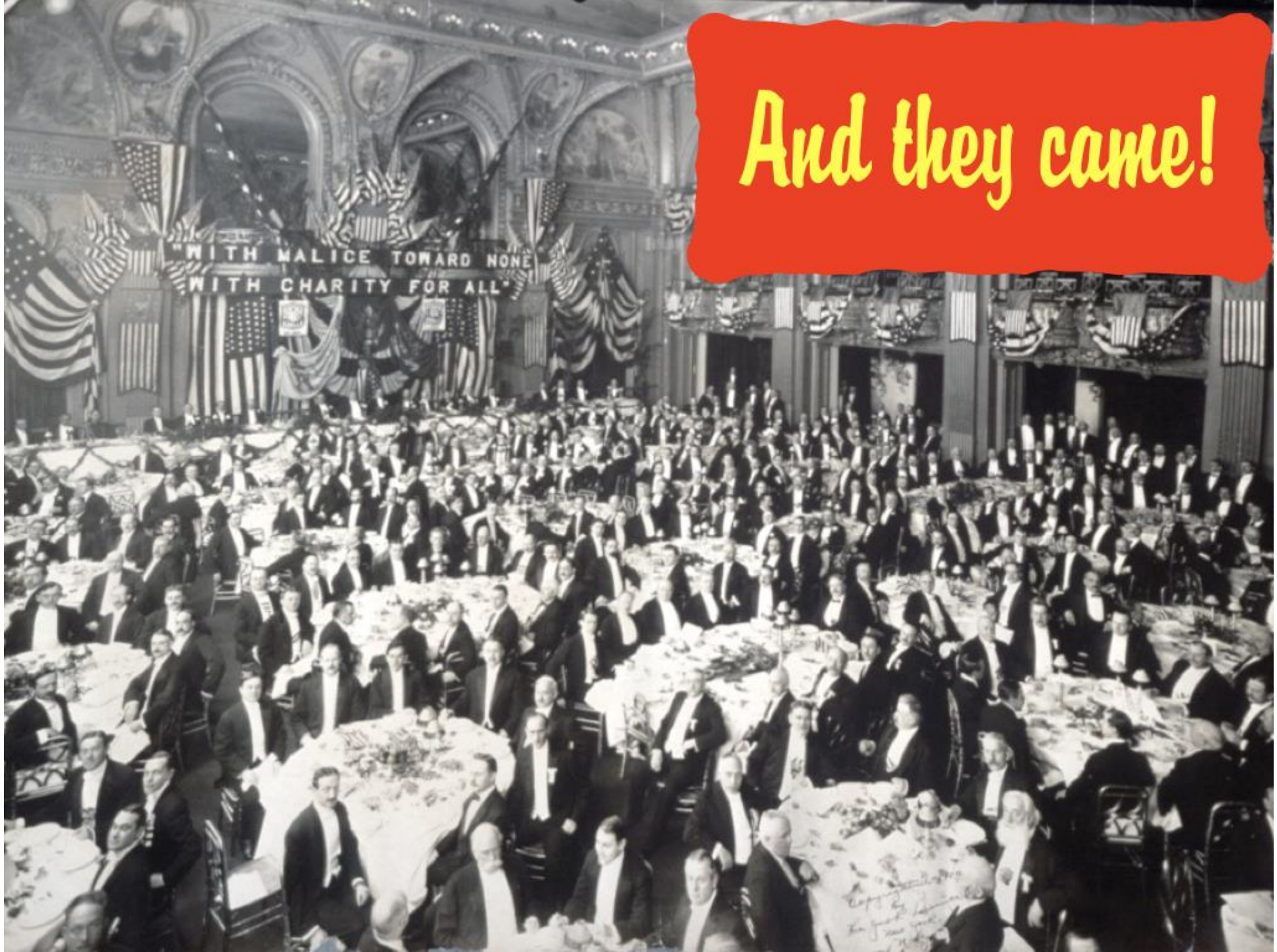
Sarah, "(340/365) TOO SOON! FAR TOO SOON!" https://www.flickr.com/photos/dm-set/4200760617/ CC-BY, cropped


... but
WHAT IF
we had the equipment?

80/20
we can't tackle everything

Andrew Butitta, "MAD" https://www.flickr.com/photos/aperture_lag/8555436371/ CC-BY-SA

but we built it!
Hi! My name is RADD!
I Recover Analog and Digital Dat
I help train SLIS students
to digitize, recover, and preserve
information from various media.
Got a media-recovery problem
that I can help with?
Contact Dorothea Salo at
salo@wisc.edu or 608-265-4733
VIDEO STACK



And they came!

Ludovic Bertron "Wedding Cake Figurines" https://www.flickr.com/photos/23912576@N05/2942523255/ CC-BY, cropped

But what about
OUR DISTANCE STUDENTS?

But what about
SMALL COLLECTIONS
in
SMALL ORGANIZATIONS?

Sarah, "(340/365) TOO SOON! FAR TOO SOON!" https://www.flickr.com/photos/dm-set/4200760617/ CC-BY, cropped

Fear not, professionals! The
MAD INFORMATION SCIENTIST
has a plan...

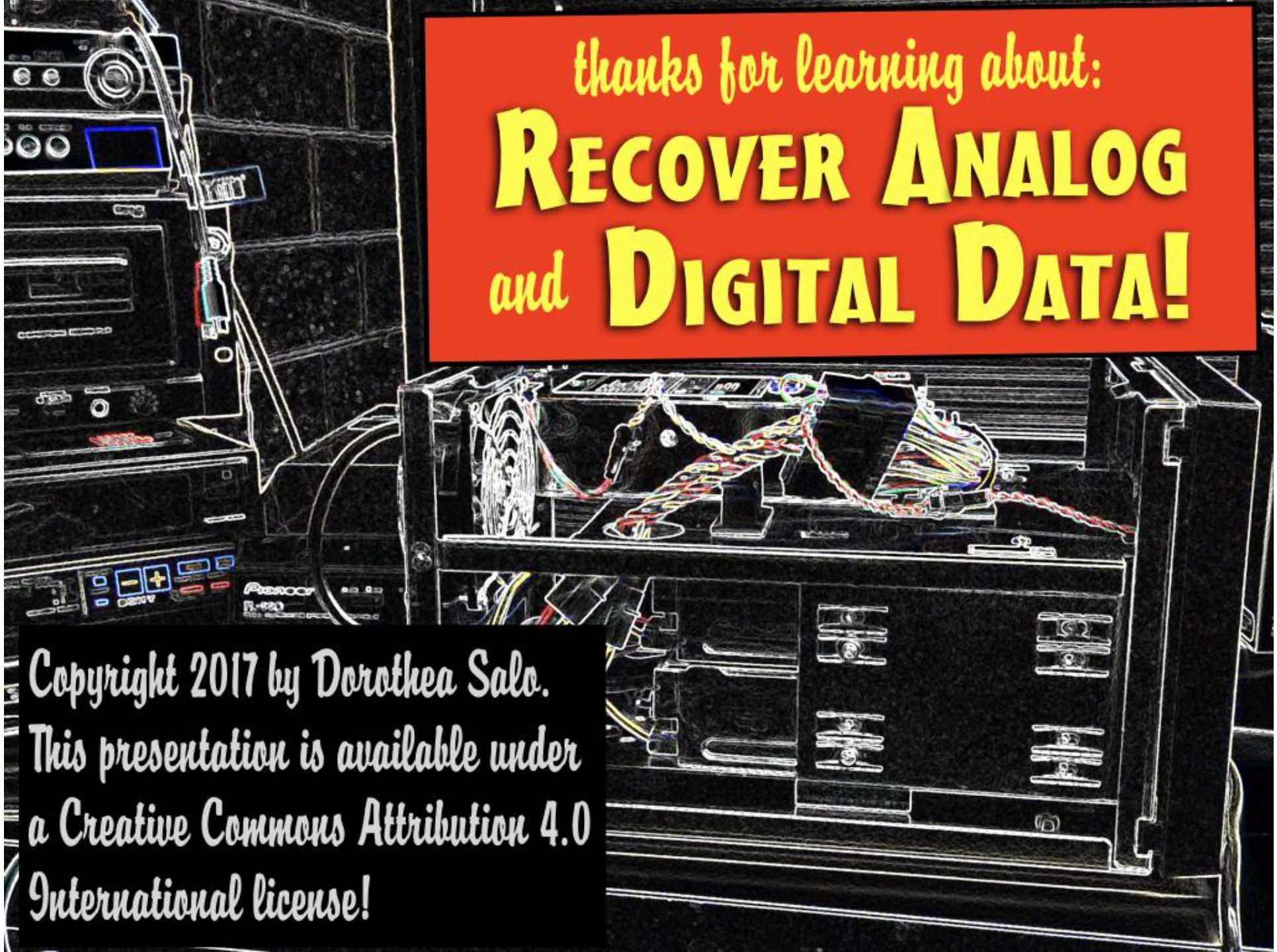
PROUD
PRAVDA

Robert Freiberger "5dmk2-0927" https://www.flickr.com/photos/robscomputer/4416375864/ CC-BY, cropped

PROUD and PRAUDA are made possible by

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

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



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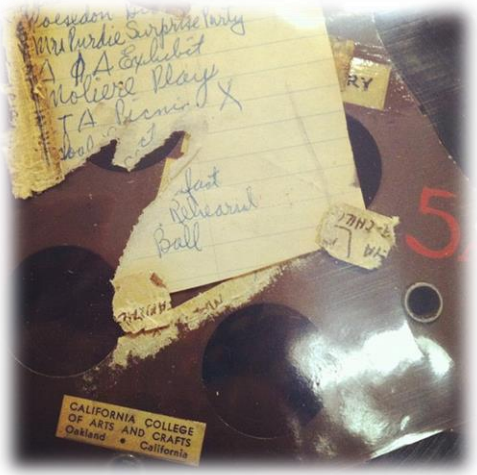
Low-Cost, DIY, and Community-Based Approaches to Audiovisual Digitization

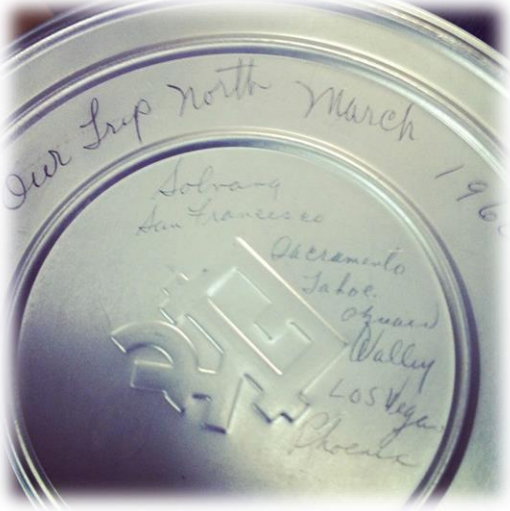
Pamela Vadakan

CALIFORNIA
LIGHT AND
SOUND.ORG

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

CALIFORNIA
LIGHT
& SOUND
COLLECTION

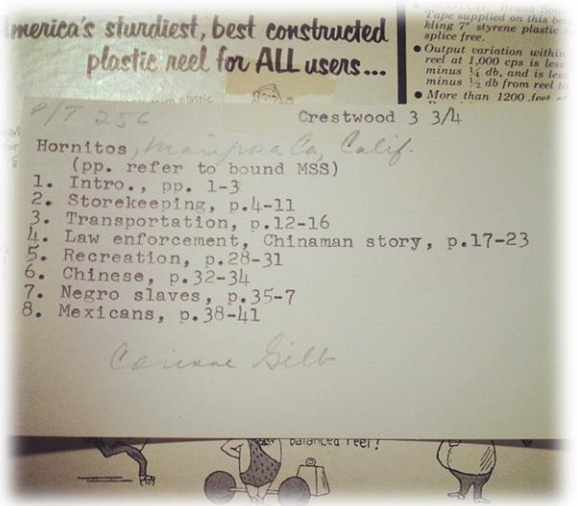

CALIFORNIA COLLEGE
OF ARTS AND CRAFTS
Oakland • California



Why now?

OLD AGE
.5 MIN

Shamrock
recording tape


merica's sturdiest, best constructed
plastic reel for ALL users...
Crestwood 3 3/4
Hornitos, Mariposa Co, Calif.
(pp. refer to bound MSS)
1. Intro., pp. 1-3
2. Storekeeping, p.4-11
3. Transportation, p.12-16
4. Law enforcement, Chinaman story, p.17-23
5. Recreation, p.28-31
6. Chinese, p.32-34
7. Negro slaves, p.35-7
8. Mexicans, p.38-41

Essential Preservation Steps

Inventory

Describe

Digitize

Quality Assurance

Preserve

Access and Outreach

Essential Preservation Steps

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!

Essential Preservation Steps

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

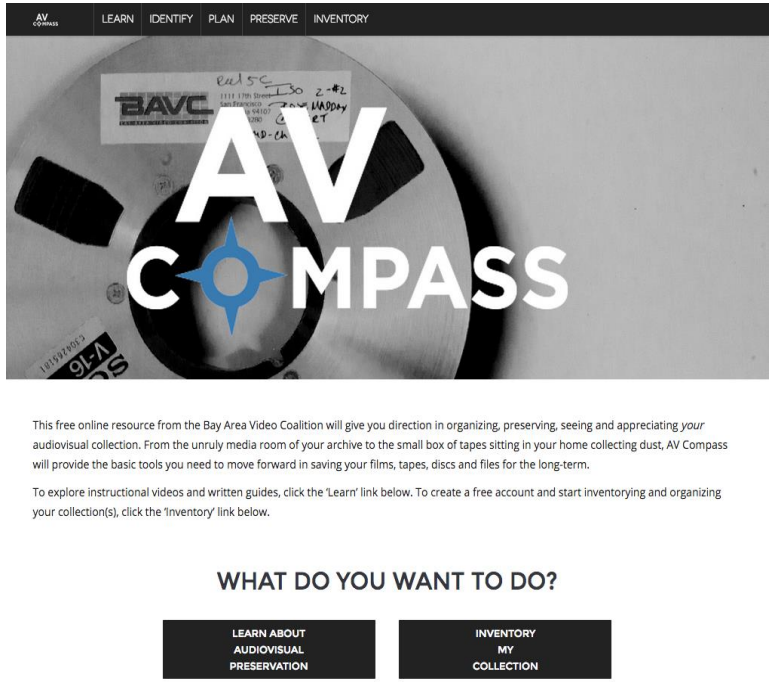
Essential Preservation Steps

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



Essential Preservation Steps

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!

Essential Preservation Steps

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

Essential Preservation Steps

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.

Essential Preservation Steps

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

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pamelajean@berkeley.edu

californialightandsound.org

calpreservation.org/projects/audiovisual-preservation

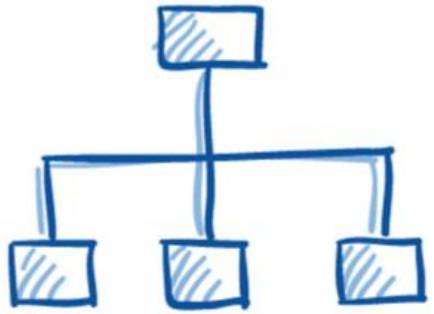
Moderated Discussion

Moderated Discussion

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

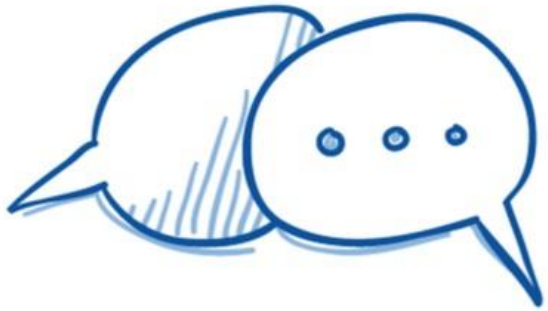
Moderated Discussion

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



Moderated Discussion

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



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