Archiving Media from the “Occupy” Movement: Methods for Archives trying to manage large amounts of user-generated audiovisual media

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- Why look at Occupy?
- Projects from Activist Archivists
- Projects from NYU’s Tamiment Library/Archive

What’s interesting/important about Occupy?

March 24, 2012 Flickr stats (just 6 months after start of movement)

- “#Occupy” 632,089
- “Occupy Wall Street” 164,304
- “Occupy Protest” 179,454
- “Occupy Movement” 40,572
- “#OWS” 113,904
- “Occupy Oakland” 27,202
- “Zuccotti Park” 9,164

What’s interesting/important about Occupy?

How Occupy material resembles what we’ll be facing in the future

- Vast quantity of user-contributed material
- No easy way to control for quality, file format, metadata
  — no enforcing guidelines as with organizational records
  — no semi-consistency as in a single individual’s personal records
- Much of the material can most easily be found on Social Networks
- Need to find smart ways to harvest metadata and analyze files, as well as to influence behavior of potential contributors
How this material may (or may not) be different

• Huge suspicion of conventional organizations (incl universities and libraries)
• DIY mentality—want to control own story
• Reluctance to sanction turning over material to an institution
• Consensus Process becomes more difficult when each meeting attracts a different set of people

What I know from my prior work

• InterPARES—If we hope to preserve electronic records, archivists need to be involved early in the life-cycle of that record, long before the record enters the archive
• Preserving Digital Public Television—Pushing metadata gathering upstream into the production cycle

Activist Archivists

• MIAP students and grads originally working on archiving media from the Occupy movement
• Guidelines for recorders to make their works more easily preservable: make notes, turn on GPS, upload to service that doesn’t strip out metadata, keep raw footage, don’t compress
• For meeting recordings, have them read a script at start of the recording

Activist Archivist Website

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OWS Archives Working Group

Archives Working Group

Post at January 9, 2012

The Occupy Wall Street Archives is an institutionally-independent collection of historical material created and distributed in and around Library Plaza of ephemera, signs, and audiovisual materials.

The Occupy Wall Street Archives Working Group is created to ensure that the Occupy Wall Street movement will own its past. Its mission is to keep OWS History self-consistent, and guarantee that our History will be accessible to the public.

OWS Wall Street Archives Working Group is a collecting initiative, which preserves, safeguards, and makes accessible the records of OWS. It is the repository of the legacy which we will leave for the future generations.

Activist Archivists

http://activist-archivists.org/
Activist Archivists Projects -

- "Why Archive" postcard & video
- 7 Tips to Ensure Your Video Is Usable in the Long Term
- Study of metadata loss through uploading to services
- Best Practices for Creators/Collectors
- "Toolkit" for Occupy archiving
- Coordinating discussions among various groups archiving different parts of Occupy
- Exploring methods for obscuring identities

"Why Archive" video

"Why Archive" postcard

- ACCOUNTABILITY: Archives collect evidence that can hold those in power accountable.
- SELF-DETERMINATION: We define our own movement. We need to create and maintain our own historical record.
- SHARE: Archives are a point of entry to our movement’s rich record. We can use them to ensure transparency, generate discussion, and enable direct action.
- EDUCATE: Today’s videos, flyers, web-pages, and signs are material for tomorrow’s skill-shares, classes, and mobilizations.
- CONTINUITY: Just as past movements inspire us, new activists will learn from the experiences we document.

- RECORD & COLLECT what’s happening around you.
- PRESERVE the record.
7 Tips to Ensure Your Video Is Usable in the Long Term

• Collect details while filming
• Keep your original raw footage, unaltered
• Make your video discoverable
• Contextualize it
• Make it verifiable
• Allow others to collect and archive
• Or archive it yourself

Best Practices for Content Collectors

• Security
  — Sensitive material
  — Scraping for content
• Content Search
  — Internet Archive, Archive-it, YouTube, Vimeo, BitTorrent
• Receiving Content
• Metadata Extraction
• Copyright

Best Practices for Content Creators

• Security
  — Hidden camera laws, parties’ consent laws
• Capturing Content
  — Highest quality, set date and time-stamps, note location
• Offloading Content
  — Raw files directly onto computer, keep material organized
• Uploading Content
  — Importance of tagging, review of diff services
• Depositing with an Archive
• Copyright

Occupy Archiving Kit

• Why Archive?
• What is an “archive”? How do I create an archive?
• Creating archiving-friendly content
• How can I collect materials for the archive?
• What should I save?
• How should I organize my materials? How do I get it into the archive?
• Description/Metadata
• Media Management
• Storage & Preservation
• Access
• Exhibition and Presentation/Outreach
• Rights and Re-Use

Study of metadata loss through uploading to services
Self-help activities:

**OWS Archive Share Day used variety of tools**

*Bulkr in just over 1 minute*

- Batch download from FLICKR
- Set selection filters (#OWS, Creative Commons)
- Set what elements you want to grab (essence, EXIF metadata, tagged-text metadata)

Self-help activities:

**Downloaded FLICKR image**

- Downloaded EXIF metadata

Self-help activities:

**Other Archive Share-Day and Hackathon activities**

- Re-mixing of older footage
- Creating a visual timeline
- Mining material for data (eg. number of co-locations of an officer’s name with “pepper spray”)

Creative Commons Guidance

- Creative Commons lets you mix-and-match four different conditions:
  - **Attribution:** You let others copy, re-use and distribute your video, but they must credit you.
  - **Share-Alike:** You let others copy, re-use and distribute your video, only if they do the same with the work they create.
  - **Non-Commercial:** You let others copy, re-use and distribute your video for non-commercial purposes only.
  - **No Derivative Works:** You let others copy and distribute your video, but not to create new works using it.
- You can use these conditions in different combinations to share your work in a controlled way. Creative Commons licenses are legal tools that depend on pre-existing copyright laws. Having a Creative Commons license on your work may give you legal recourse, but it may not actually prevent people from downloading and re-using your video illegally.
Marking Creative Commons licenses

- There are a few ways to mark your video with a Creative Commons license. One way is to include a Creative Commons “bumper” or text card in your video. Creative Commons has created some with graphics that you can download from their website. This method is useful if your video is going to be shared offline (e.g., on DVD, live screenings), as the license information is attached to the video itself.
- Another way to mark your video with a Creative Commons license is to publish your video on platforms that are Creative Commons-enabled, such as YouTube, Vimeo, or Internet Archive. These platforms allow you to easily select a license during the upload process. This method is useful because the license is machine-readable. A search engine, for example, can detect the license.

Promoting ObscuraCam

- “ObscuraCam is a visual privacy app for photo and video, that gives you the power to better protect the identity of those captures in your photos, before you post them online”
- Developed by Guardian Project in conjunction with Human Rights group WITNESS.

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Activist Archivist Collaborations

- With Occupy Wall Street groups
  - Helping store and manage Media Working Group’s media streams
- With Tamiment Collection
  - Methods for extracting metadata from recordings
  - Methods for collaborative selection of YouTube videos

Occupy’s Media Working Group—Streaming Services (1/3)

- livestream, ustream—almost impossible to hack into downloads
- One of Occupy Oakland’s streamers uses the streaming service as his fileserver.
  - does no recording onto local media (to avoid confiscation of equipment)
  - when he wants to edit, he downloads from streaming service, edits, then uploads it back
  - trusts the streaming service, and thinks that it will be around forever

Occupy’s Media Working Group—Streaming Services (2/3)

- OWS keeps masters for their streams and other media locally, and as numbers grow, they’re having trouble with managing the files and storage and want a DAM, but...
  - Activist Archivists (AA) brokered a deal to put copies of their content on a reliable archival service
  - AA helped them select open source tool to use for cataloging (Omeka), and AA volunteer is currently cataloging their mini DV collection of footage from all General Assemblies and Spokes Councils from September 17th to date—
Cataloging GA/Spokescouncil mini-DVs

Metadata for OWS Core google doc

Omeka for Cataloging/Managing

Occupy’s Media Working Group—Streaming Services (3/3)
• Currently working on plan to turn over the Global Revolution streaming collection to NYU’s Tamiment
  – OWS will NOT sign a donor agreement, as they see that as conferring exclusivity to a bureaucratic organization
  – Instead, OWS will execute a Creative Commons license letting anyone else use the material, and AA volunteers will make sure that the corpus is transferred to NYU.

AA Collaboration with Tamiment on Collecting OWS Content-
• Think Tank meeting recordings
• YouTube videos
• Other Tamiment OWS activities
  – Websites
  – Meeting notes
  – Ephemera
  – Oral/video history
  – Google, Facebook groups

Collecting – Think Tank
Collecting – Think Tank

- Daily, 2 hours
- Audio capture hardware provided by NYU library (Zoom-H2n)
- Bi-weekly digital file transfers

Think Tank metadata redundancies

- Guidelines stipulate that person holding recording device will check to see that time and date stamp are correct before beginning recording (mostly didn’t happen)
- Guidelines stipulate that a script be read verbatim at the beginning of the recording, with date, time, proposed subject, etc. (and would eventually allow voice-recognition software to create appropriate metadata). Script also stated that all participants agreed to Creative Commons licensing of the recording
- Guidelines requested that date/time be embedded in the applied file-name

Think Tank Guidelines

- Guidelines for Podmasss Recording audio and video

Collecting – Think Tank

-plug-in for FireFox (downloadhelper.net)
- As of April, ca. 250 items, policy: large events
- Fair Use: 2012 ARL Code of Best Practices
  – “transformative” collecting with context
- Tamiment has been selectively browsing through YouTube Occupy videos, trying to choose which ones to keep, then cataloging them with
  - Title, Creator, Creation Date, Upload Date,
  - Description, URL, Youtube Username, License, Format, Codec, Source Media, On Internet Archive, CC License type

Tamiment YouTube collecting

Plug-in for Firefox (downloadhelper.net)
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 Tamiment YouTube Cataloging

But this won’t scale!

March 24, 2012 YouTube stats (just 6 months after start of movement)

- “#Occupy” 169,000
- “Occupy Wall Street” 98,400
- “Occupy Protest” 70,500
- “Occupy Movement” 54,800
- “#OWS” 50,300
- “Occupy Oakland” 13,400
- “Zucotti Park” 6,690

Alternative approach to YouTube Selection process

- Develop categories of important YouTube videos
  - Celebrity visits, Internal workings (library, kitchen, media), Confrontations with police, Labor, Housing, etc.
- Have Occupiers fill in an online form listing the 5 most important videos in each category

Advantages of YouTube Collaborative Filtering Selection Process

- Scalable and manageable
- Consistent with Occupy ideas of inclusiveness and of managing own story
- Tamiment can still choose to be selective in collecting only a portion of what is voted in, but the total set for review is a manageable scale

Social Networks starting to police their “Terms of Use”
YouTube User Agreement

• 5B “You shall not download any Content unless you see a ‘download’ or similar link displayed by YouTube on the Service for that Content.”

But even 1916 Public Domain material on Creative Commons YouTube Channel don’t have “download” button

But using YouTube’s video editor to view and “Re-Mix” exact copies is probably legal

YouTube sees Creative Commons as only for Re-Mix, not archiving

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“Preservation Week” event

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