Ethics, Technology and the Challenges of Documenting History in Real Time

Arab Spring

Los Indignados/Movimiento 15-M

How do Protesters document their activities?

Occupy Wall Street

Documentation is on Social Media

*photo from Activists Guide to Archiving Video*
Ethics, Technology and the Challenges of Documenting History in Real Time

- Intro to Green Movement
- Intro to Occupy Movement
- Partnering with Activists
- Technologies & Metadata Issues
- Privacy & Security
- Other Legal & Technical Issues
- Why is doing this so important?

Intro to Green Movement
Participatory International Collection Building

The Revolution will not be Televised, it will be Tweeted.

Use of Social Media:
- You Tube
- Twitter
- Web Archiving
- Crowd-sourced Metadata

Intro to Occupy Movement

Occupy Wall Street
What is Occupy?

- Protest movement against US governmental and capitalist power structures
- Anti-hierarchical—without leaders, power-from-below
- Has a visual presence in cities by taking over or “occupying” space in highly-traveled areas
- Began in NYC in Sept 2011, and spread to over 600 US communities, and more than 80 other countries
- Dominated by young people

99% is now common vocabulary

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
- “Zucotti Park” 9,164
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
- ...we 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

Partnering with Activists: Getting them to Accept Archiving

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

- 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.

“Why Archive” postcard

Partnering with Activists: Developing Cooperative Relationships
The International Digital Ephemera Project

Green Movement Collection

- Videos: 5900 which have these categories:
  - Protests, Interviews, Video Clips, Rasa TV
- Images: 8750
- Posters: 730
- Web site donated: Two
- Underground Newspaper: around 1200
- Miscellaneous files: around 1000
  - Software packages, DDoS Logs

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 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

WITNESS: Activists’ Guide to Archiving Video, Yvonne Ng

http://archivguide.witness.org/
Self-help activities:
OWS Archive Share Day used variety of tools
Bulkr in just over 1 minute

Downloaded FLICKR image

Technologies & Metadata Issues
Study of metadata loss through uploading to services

AA Collaboration with Tamiment on Collecting OWS Content-
• Think Tank meeting recordings
• YouTube videos

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

• 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

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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
- “Zuccotti 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

Privacy & Security
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 w/Human Rights group WITNESS.
PressSecure for Citizen Journalism

Other Legal & Technical Issues

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.

Social Networks starting to police their “Terms of Use”

• Facebook privacy chief fires warning shot at bosses who demand access

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

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

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

Why is archiving this material so important?

It’s all about mission

"It is our vision that all Americans will understand the vital role records play in a democracy”

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights @www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/
“We do indeed serve the records, by serving the records, we also serve every potential user, our organization, and the profession as well as society and the future.”


“The Struggle against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.”


Thanks IFLA!!!!

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- http://digital.library.ucla.edu/
- http://activist-archivists.org/

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