Tammy Ravas, University of Montana, Visual and Performing Arts Librarian, and Megan Stark, University of Montana, Undergraduate Services Librarian at the Mansfield Library, “I Spy with My Little Eye.”

Julia Simic, University of Oregon, Visual Resources Librarian, and Katie Moss, University of Oregon, Digital Metadata Technician, “Engaging Faculty Research and Teaching through Collaborative Digital Collections.”


Merriann Bidgood opened the session by introducing the Case Studies II panelists and concluded by stating that each speaker would be present at the tables around the room for further discussion and questions after the entire session concluded. Because each presentation would take approximately twenty minutes, the questions and comments portion would begin in about an hour and would be about thirty minutes.

Tammy Ravas from The University of Montana stated that Megan Stark wasn’t able to make the conference and therefore, she would be delivering the presentation on behalf of both of them. Both Ravas and Stark began the case study by evaluating The University of Montana’s library guide, defining visual literacy, and reviewing the issues of visual literacy within the broader scope of various disciplines. Ravas stated, The University of Montana Museum of Art and Culture in conjunction with The Freedom Forum and the Newseum, held a traveling exhibit in 2009, Capture the Moment: the Pulitzer Prize Photographs. Because of this exhibit, The University of Montana’s Mansfield Library corresponded closely with and assisted undergraduates on pedagogical activities regarding this exhibition. Ravas continued on to demonstrate an example of this collaboration and this case study. She emphasized that in order to define what the needs were of these undergraduate patrons, we had to define what visual literacy meant, which is “skills of interpreting and discriminating visual objects and their potential meanings, but vary according to
discipline.”¹ The students were provided a photograph from the exhibition and were asked to answer the following, what do we have the right to observe?, what is this image?, who is the author?, what facts do you have here?, and do you have the right to view this? The evaluations and outcomes quantified major questions and answers. Students did not have the background information or context of the photo prior to being asked these questions. They struggled with this. The students were taking the images at face value, states Ravas. This exercise posed challenges relating back to the actual image, because of the lack of information and context not provided for the students. The discussion then led to Ravas telling the attendees about the resources that librarians at The University of Montana utilize to assist undergraduates in obtaining images for authoritative visual analyses and critical evaluations. ARTstor, CAMIO, and a few examples of meta-sites, including Boston University Libraries, were discussed as visual literacy resources that might assist students in their search to gain authoritative descriptive metadata that correlated with images.

Julia Simic and Katie Moss from the University of Oregon discussed their case study regarding the University of Oregon’s digital collections, the grants that were received to build the digital collections, and the issues of digital collections being a typical pattern for building a collection. The purpose was to try and steer away from the typical pattern of engaging faculty: suggesting images for obtaining, and following directions and providing instruction for the collection, states Simic. She continued by discussing how relationship building is not typically used in the library or special collections. “They build the collection hoping people will use it.”² This session earmarks the variation on the digital collections we build for constituents. Examples of these collections were then discussed. For example, Simic showed the University of Oregon’s Art and Architecture Image Collections website, stating that “faculty and students inform me of their needs, I digitize the images and then place them in the collection.”³ She then proceeded to discuss the Northwest FolkLife Digital Collections, which embodied the ideology of a specific subject need. The grant obtained was for one year, and currently holds approximately 75,000 images. Simic showed and discussed the University of Oregon’s Mongolian Altai Inventory Image Collection. This collection obtained a grant because faculty needed a digital holding for references and context on thousands of images locations. These examples produced fruitful collaborations between the faculty, Subject Specialist, Nathan, and Simic and Moss, which raised awareness of the Visual Resources Collection and the University of Oregon’s libraries as a whole. Katie Moss then began discussing the Petrarch Collection, which is currently hosted and maintained by the Department of Romance Languages. This site produced by Moss, Estlund (Head of DLS,) and Professor Lollini enables scholars and students to read, study and teach Francesco Petrarch’s Canzione, thus reitering successful collaboration between various departments across University of Oregon’s campus. Moss’s final example of digital cross-departmental collaboration was the African Political Ephemera Collection. A


³ ibid
federal grant of $4000 provided a platform to develop a collection of 50 items. Moss emphasized that while it is a low number of items, the collection indicates the “highest uses per item out of all the University’s digital collections.”

Rutgers University’s LIS alumna, Teresa Slobuski, discussed her outcomes from a case study she produced regarding keyword search queries in large digital image collections. While this project initially began as an Independent Study course, it flourished into a much larger project that developed more questions and needed more quantifiable answers. The questions Slobuski used to begin the project were:

1. What is the current state of metadata in art image databases?
2. What access points do users need to know to find what they want?
3. How do search interfaces help or hinder the searching process?
4. With image databases so large (and growing) how can one navigate the multitudes in order to find what they need?

Based on the Art Historical Survey guidebooks, such as Janson, and Gardner, Slobuski began to break down the History of Art. She broke them down into seventeen different time periods, with each of these time periods broken up into regions. The project was then identified by medium, such as applied arts, mosaics, performance art, painting, sculpture, and bibliographic information, such as titles, creators, and dates. After the faceting, the decision was to have the foci of the case study to remain on undergraduates who had knowledge of Art History Survey 101 or less, and computations of the precision of keyword searching in ARTstor and Bridgeman Education. The conclusion was that depending on the artwork, one or all of the following was necessary to have a successful search. Slobuski emphasized that end users needed knowledge of advanced searching, know how to use limiters, boolean, etc., have familiarity with genre terminology, have knowledge of foreign languages or alternative spellings, and have creativity in the search process or a combination of all the above search qualifications. For further information and results regarding the case study please read Teresa Slobuski’s essay published in the Fall 2011 Art Documentation.

Liv Valmestad, Librarian at the Fort Garry campus of University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, discussed her most recent project of producing QR Codes through various free digital media and advertising artworks on campus through the QR codes and mobile technology. Valmestad began the presentation by stating, that while the case study began as a pilot project regarding mobile technology and how the use of that technology could be utilized for outreach, it ended up presenting and creating inspirational convergence of web 2.0 software and the public art on campus. She explained how the project began---the documentation started by photographing eighteen public sculptures on campus with the iphone and then uploading those images onto Flickr. With this, Valmestad labeled the Flickr image collection as University of Manitoba Public Art to create tagging and cataloguing bibliographical information. The artwork’s location was mapped with a Flickr feature, and then the geotag pin was dragged to its geographical location on a series of maps at the national, provincial and city level. A GIS Librarian, Larry Laliberté, assigned a GPS location to each separate artwork with the assistance from the GPS Motion X mobile application. Since each artwork had a GPS coordinate, these coordinates (latitude and longitude) were then placed into Google Earth, and then with the assistance of html coding, were catalogued with bibliographical information and a thumbnail image

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4 Katie Moss, ibid.
for each work via Flickr. Google Earth then displayed the uploaded Flickr images. This created a site that would provide interactivity, a Word formatted print guide, so individuals could take a walking tour with the assistance of Google Maps, and a blog, which is “meant to function as a repository of information from which the QR code will draw from.”

Obtaining the URL from the blog and entering the same URL in the QRReader generator application, http://goqr.me/, the QR code that was produced could then be scanned with a QR code reader. Valmestad utilized the QuickMark QR Code Reader application on her iphone and then scanned the QR codes, which thus brought up the mobile version of the blog that was previously produced. The literal images were not seen on the site, but were hyperlinked and could be viewed if the end user wanted further resources. The QR codes were then printed out and stuck onto glass blocks, which were placed next to each correlating artifact on campus. Valmestad concluded her outcomes with the project, stating that Wikitude and foursquare are other mobile applications that enhance the end users experience. Wikitude provides the distance between the end user and the object providing real-time, and foursquare users “check-in” at a location and then can view and add any messages that correlate with that geo-location area. For any further information please go to Karen Keiler’s IFLA article published in 2010.

Merriann Bidgood thanked all of the session presenters and stated that all questions and comments could be placed at the tables located within the room. The room provided the speaker’s name(s) on the table and the presenters split off to their respective tables.

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