Designing the Archival Experience of Digital Self and Society

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#PDA2019
DESIGN PROMPT
Archivist, Archival Theory Lecturer

I’ve worked as a Civil Rights Archivist and Maritime Archivist, and currently lecture and advise in archival theory and archival practice.

User Experience Designer

As a UX designer and usability researcher, I employ human-centered and empathy-driven design techniques to design interfaces and services that support people.

Radical Knowledge Designer

I study how the design of information affects its consumption and comprehension, designing for new forms of liberatory, transformative, anti-racist, redemptive, anti-capitalist, humane knowledge.
What I Mean When I Say:

Design
Archive
Digital Self
Digital Society
Design & Design Thinking

A process, a practice, a set of visual choices, finding solutions to problems.

Design combines functionality and aesthetics to create an experience.

Everything is designed.

With varying levels of intention, consideration, and transparency.

“Design thinking is a non-linear, iterative process which seeks to understand users, challenge assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test.” – Interaction Design Foundation
The Archive

“It’s complicated” or, “It’s contested”

Arkheion – the dwelling of the arkhon, the records keeper.

A site of storage, forgetting, of violence, erasure, accountability, justice, inclusion.

Potential activation of memory.

A mediated construction.

What has survived, what was in the best position to survive.

The named, described, the accessible.
Digital Self

Identity construction and exploration.

Projected, curated, multi-faceted, controlled, re-mixed.

Embodied and disembodied.

Professional, personal, confessional, anonymous, connected.

Tracked, targeted, scraped.

Easily lost, outside our control once disseminated.
Digital Society

Great good place, a third place (Oldenberg, Lessig).

Interest- and identity-based connections, rather than geographic.

Networked information society (Rainie and Wellman).

Visibly enacted on social media platforms,

Increasingly corporatized space, data as currency.

No longer something we can opt out of (Zeynep Tufekci).

Muddled by bots and malicious actors.
Thinking About:

What We Share
Why We Share
What We Lose
Archival Agency
A Semi-Organized Brain Dump

What we are sharing: our joy, fears, illness, triumph! Meals, outfits, expressions of self! Opinions, interests, questions! In short, our humanity.

Why we are sharing: To connect, to notify/warn, to amplify, to unburden, to educate/correct, to preserve (fitfully), to let others know we were here.

What we are losing/risking: our privacy, safety, context/nuance, control of narrative, freedom from pervasive capitalism, our democracy.

What we need: meaningful connections, control, transparency,
DESIGN THINKING
IN THE DIGITAL ARCHIVE
DocNow is a community and set of tools developed around supporting the ethical collection, use, and preservation of social media content.
Without focusing on the first week of the Ferguson network and further unpacking the network by day, we would not have been able to see the important influence of key crowdsourced elites and members of American counterpublics. In particular, our data spotlight the discursive labor of initiators and other influential everyday citizens, most of whom were young and/or African-American, who pushed the larger public sphere to address what happened to Michael Brown and offered ideological interpretations of Brown's death and resulting events firmly situated in minority experiences with state oppression.

Jackson & Foucault Welles (2015)
An Intentionally Designed Community

The Team

Meredith Clark  
Academic Lead, Co-Principal Investigator

Deray Jules  
Project Director, Co-Principal Investigator

Tyaun Myles  
Administrative Lead, Principal Investigator

Alexandra Carlson  
UX and Web Designer

Travis Rayna  
Data/Geo Engineer

Tahereh Pressier  
Project Coordinator

Former Team Members

Vernon Mitchell  
Administrative Lead 2012

Christ Freeland  
Administrative Lead 2014

Timothy Druce  
Project Manager 2017

Evan Smith-Jones  
Project Manager 2016

Dan Chudnov  
Data Engineer 2016-2017

Ed Durren  
Technical Lead

Reid Viglianti  
Software Developer
Advisory board members are active participants in the development of DocNow. Board members were carefully chosen because of their expertise as archivists, librarians, computer scientists, historians, software developers, librarians, sociologists, and journalists, and in many cases their work has directly influenced how the DocNow project was designed. We’re extremely thankful to this group and their continued support and active involvement in the project.

Natalie Baur, Preservation Librarian, El Colegio de México
Tressie McMillan Cottom, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Virginia Commonwealth University
Brian Dietz, Digital Program Librarian, North Carolina Statue University
Jarrett Drake, Digital Archivist, Princeton University
Meredith Evans, Director, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum
Jonathan Fenderson, Assistant Professor of African & American Studies, Washington University St. Louis
Deen Freelon, Assistant Professor of Communication, American University
Jessica Johnson, Assistant Professor of History, Michigan State University
Robin Katz, Public Services Librarian, University of California at Riverside

David Kim, Project Manager, Colored Conventions, University of Delaware
Mark Anthony Neal, Professor of African American Studies, Duke University
Michael Nelson, Professor of Computer Science, Old Dominion University
Yvonne Ng, Senior Archivist, WITNESS
Matt Phillips, Lead Developer, Library Innovation Lab at Harvard University
Rashawn Ray, Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Maryland
Nicholas Taylor, Web Archiving Service Manager, Stanford University
Dexter Thomas, Writer, Los Angeles Times
Stacie Williams, Learning Lab Manager, University of Kentucky
Micah Zeller, Copyright and Digital Access Librarian, Washington University St Louis
Designing for:

Meaningful Inclusion
Longitudinal Context
Informed Consent
Empowerment & Ownership
We cannot ethically continue to conceive of our primary users as academic scholars; survivors of human rights abuse and victims’ families use records, community members use records. We need to build policies, procedures, and services with these users in mind, but even more so, we need to shift our affective orientations in service to these users.

Caswell & Cifor (2016)
Thinking Laterally About Users

Content creators, the documented, archivists, researchers, journalists.

Users - Contributors - Collaborators - The Used - Creators - Profiters - Remixers
Human- & Empathy-Centered Design

Listening to people! And supporting their time financially.
Human- & Empathy-Centered Design

What they are sharing: 1% of their activism, that which they feel safe in sharing, showing their work and struggles, responses and after-the-fact documentation.

Why they are sharing: To counteract mainstream narratives, to show the truth on the ground, to make the story real and personal.

What they are losing/risking: Their safety, their privacy, their sense of the internet as a positive space, their ability to control their narrative, their free time.

What they need: funding, support, power, time to heal, protection from negative forces, to be a part of the conversation about the broader story.
Archival Practice & Principles: Appraisal
Designing for:

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Social Humans is a set of labels dedicated to empowering content creators and informing users of creator intent.
The Problem

Social media is being used by researchers in archives and academia across many disciplines.

The terms of service set forth by private social platforms have proven insufficient for expressing the intent and wishes of content creators, protecting vulnerable and marginalized communities in these spaces, or identifying malicious actors and removing their content.

Activists are being doxxed, attacked, misrepresented; bots are treated as people; researchers are seeking ways go beyond legal rights to practice professional ethics.
Design Process

Conducted literature review of social media reuse and user perceptions

Created user personas, surveyed user groups for needs

Analyzed social media datasets available through archives and repositories

Explored metaphoric language for visual imagery

Designed labels including an image, phrase, and descriptive sentence

Sketched potential functionality for archival practice
“Un-network me”

Function: User Act - don't look at my friends/followers/following/contacts
Presence in set - remove me from any network nodes
User Persona

“Content Creator”

Actions:
- Create Content (IP?)
- Amplify Content (RT/share)
- Comment (Quote)
- Converse (Multiparty Thread)
- Share External Media
- Indicate Interest (Fan/Star/Like/Emoji)
- Network (Follow/Friend/Connect)

Needs/Concerns:
- Ownership of Content
- Respect
- Empowerment in deciding use
- Misrepresentation
- Social media as total expression - how to show the rest of the work
- Surveillance/Safety
- Community makeup/decision making

Mood:
No one is happy
Exhausted and uneasy
Consent Granted
Creator consents to use of this material.
Status: DRAFT

Delay Access
Creator wants access delayed.
Status: DRAFT

Expire Access
Creator wants access to expire.
Status: DRAFT

Remove Location
Creator wants location data removed.
Status: DRAFT

Remove Network
Creator wants network connections removed.
Status: DRAFT

Remove Media
Creator wants images and video removed.
Status: DRAFT

Anonymize Me
Creator wants to be anonymized.
Status: DRAFT

Credit Me
Creator wants to be credited in publications.
Status: DRAFT
**Prob-a-Bot**
This account is likely a bot.
Status: DRAFT

**New Account**
Account created shortly before data collection.
Status: DRAFT

**Content Warning**
Violent imagery, hate speech, etc.
Status: DRAFT

**Imposter**
This account claims to be someone it is not.
Status: DRAFT

**Noise**
Advertising or other irrelevant content.
Status: DRAFT

**Take Care**
Take extra care in using this content.
Status: DRAFT

**Community Control**
This account has many authors.
Status: DRAFT

**Misinformation**
Unverifiable, false, misleading, or misrepresented.
Status: DRAFT
From Design to Development

Story map functionality in digital archives platforms

Test and refine labels with various user communities

Develop protocols for donor relations and finding aids

Build labelling system into DocNow tools
Designing for:

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Documenting Activism Now

This is a pilot project to learn how the archival community can support activists by working together to build up archives of resistance. Activist groups work with the Documenting the Now team in a series of knowledge co-production workshops. Communities can add to this supported pilot group repository or spin out a new instance in their full control. In these workshops archivists and activists learn from each other about the unique needs of activists, documentation and memory-recording strategies, and the potential power of archives as sites of authority, validation, healing, and vulnerability.
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation invites community-based archives in the United States and its territories to submit proposals to fund one or more of the following areas of need:

- Operational support for the organization, including general support for staff, space, and utilities.
- Collections care, including storage, cataloging, description, and preservation.
- Programming and outreach activities, including collecting new materials, and exhibitions, publications, or other uses of the collections.
SOCIAL CONTROL 2019

A guide to getting your content from social media

Twitter

Writing about getting content from Twitter in 2019 is a little difficult. They’re moving from a legacy UI with two archive options to a new less-transparent interface with only one option. Here’s the new (worse!) way to get your data from Twitter:

1. Account → Settings & Privacy → Your Twitter Data
2. Enter PW, select Twitter and/or Periscope

A link is sent to your email, expires in 1 month. Mine took 45 min to generate large set of .js files and folder of media.

Question! Why “the information we believe is most relevant and useful to you” ?!?
Why not all of it?

User Friendliness: ★☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Data Reusability: ★☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
@ PDA

Recognize Creative Processes
Redefine the Problem
Identify Non-Extractive Support
Find Sideways Solutions
Introduce Play
THANK YOU!