

Here Today; Gone Tomorrow

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Woman's Collection

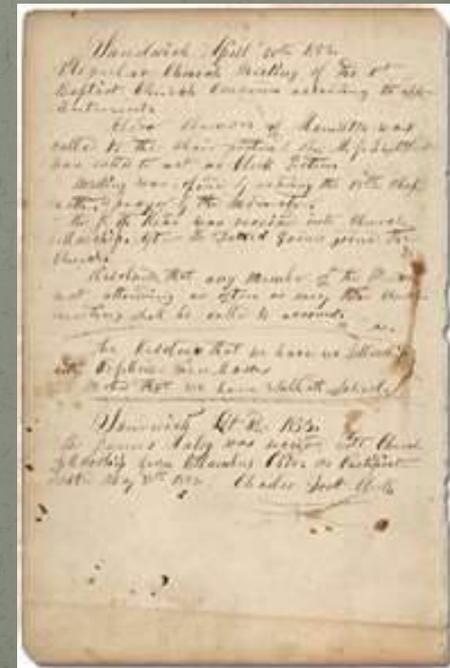
University Archives and Rare Books

Texas Woman's University

Blagg-Huey Library

Archives, what are you talking about?

- Archives refer to a collection of documents such as letters, diaries, photographs, and correspondence. Also defined as the location where historically valuable materials are housed.
 - Kept for their historical value
 - Rare, one-of-a-kind items
 - Fragile, priceless



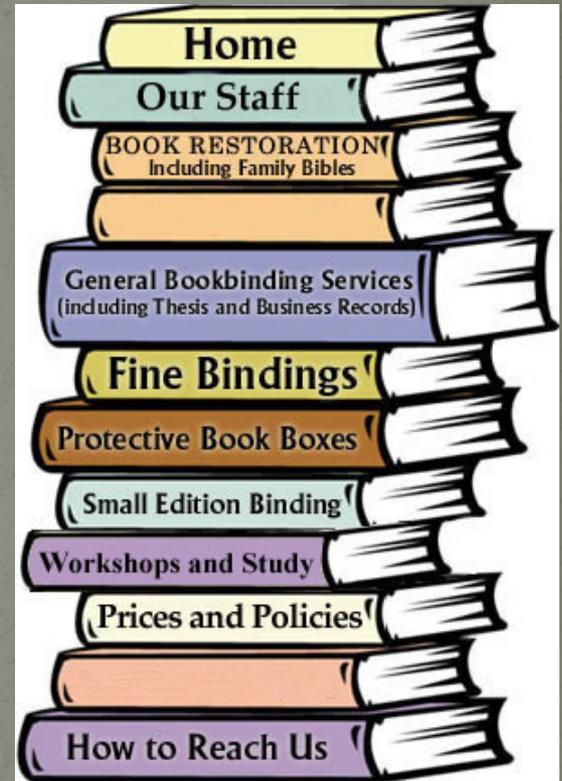
Why are they important?

- Document history
- Contribute to the public discourse
- Educate and inform
- Preserve the past
- Encourage and inspire



Who uses them and why?

- Historians
- Scholars
- Educators
- Filmmakers
- Documentarians
- Authors
- Journalists and media professionals
- Museum and exhibition curators
- Event planners



Looking forward....

- Leading research center in the area of women's history.
 - Growing initiative to digitize resources including documents and photos.
 - Online presence that positions the Woman's Collection to be the leader in archival resources for women's history.



Planning and Homework...

- Begin brainstorming.
 - Collaborate.
- Who is our audience?
- What is our purpose?
- What do our visitor's need?
 - Will we be able to fulfill those needs?
 - Can we answer their basic questions?
- Call to action?
- What type of resources are needed?
 - Staff
 - Equipment
 - Time
 - Technology
 - Copyright
- In the end, what is our vision?



The Vision...

- Ultimately, we determined telling women's history cannot be done without also reinforcing that we a leading repository in country specializing in women's history.
 - Next steps...
 - How do we do this... let the collections tell the story.
The collections will tell women's stories with their photos, letters, diaries, oral histories, video, and audio.
In their own voice and with their own words.
 - What do we need to prepare?
 - ☞ RESEARCH
 - ☞ REVIEW
 - ☞ EVALUATE



Market Analysis...

- Identify the competition.
 - What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Evaluate the information that is out there.
 - What do people know?
- What are the resources our patrons/researchers use.
 - Rely on the stats.
- Don't ignore the mistakes.
 - Either ours or the competitors.



Next Steps...

- Visually appealing.

Users are compelled to enter the site because of what they see, ease of use, curiosity, and desire to know more.

- Iconic images vs. those never/rarely seen.
- Personal accounts of heroism and bravery.
- Outline content and hierarchy of pages.
- To link or not to link -- CONTENTdm.



Start with a Strategy...

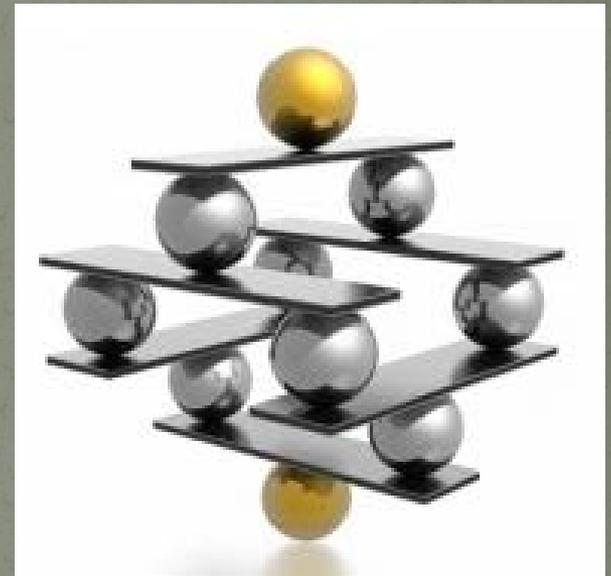
- Digital outline focused on strategy:
 - Assists in the tracking of physical data as intent and purpose grows.
 - Allows you to determine your content. What's necessary, what's extraneous, and what's been forgotten.

Expect to be flexible. Anticipate the unexpected.
 - Keeps things organized.
 - Serves as a guide to navigation.
 - Involve users in the process.
 - Think traffic.



Striking the Right Balance...

- Prioritize, Prioritize, Prioritize.
- What needs to be digitized?
 - Control the access.
- Convert audio to digital format?
- What format is your video?
- Secure copyright?
- Whose story to tell?
- Metadata, Metadata, and More Metadata
 - You can't have too much.



Is the Deal Sealed?

- Will users walk away with the knowledge we are the place to go for women's history?
 - If you aren't sure, expect they won't be either.
 - Are all resources/records identified and easy to access?
 - How many clicks does it take?
 - Resources for researchers?
 - Examples: bibliographies; FAQs; timeline; glossary; etc.
- What additional documentation do you need to support your position as the leader.
 - Collection development policy?
 - Collection management policy?
 - Collection management handbook?
 - Mission statement?
 - Additional materials and resources.

Where Are We Today...

- Don't put the horse before the cart.
 - **Selecting a design firm takes time.**
 - Solicit proposals from many web designers.
 - Determine what your needs are first and then let them help you execute.
 - ☞ Consider their recommendations and suggestions. Web designers bring experience to the table that is valuable, useful and potentially beneficial.
- It's okay to reevaluate and retool.
 - **Identified multiple-phases for development.**
 - **Review and modify records and finding aids.**
- Develop marketing plan to promote launch.
 - **Don't wait for people to stumble on you.**
 - Lead/direct them your way.

And Finally...

- Think circular.

A digital presence and electronic resource highlights holdings and promotes research.

- The End Result:

- Increase visibility Promote awareness
- Motivate interest
- Generate enthusiasm
- Expand our holdings
- Build donor relationships



The who, what, when, why, where, and how should all be answered.

Look beyond today, past tomorrow, and seize the future.

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