

COLLECTING AND INTERPRETING ACTIVISM

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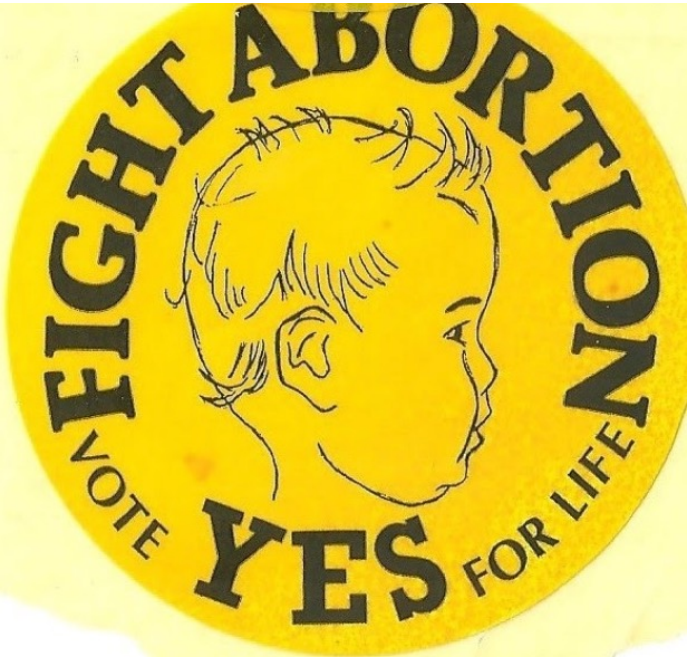
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Key Goals of the Archiving the 8th Project

- Seminar series discussing current issues within archives / documenting significant social shifts.
- Development of an interactive website to foster a networking approach to the challenge of archiving the lifespan of the 8th Amendment.
- Academic bibliography.
- E-guides for object submission and guidance for communities.
- Comprehensive database with submission information.
- “Collecting the Campaign” blog pieces from key constituents.
- Developing the conversation as regards feminism and archives.





Contribute to the fostering of a *collective vision* engaging with activist and community groups groups, Universities, associated collectives, to produce a 'live' ongoing conversation.

Utilising and promoting new archival concepts and methodologies, such as "rapid response" collecting which we have seen Dublin City Council employ in the immediate period after the repeal of the 8th Amendment.

This project seeks to archive items from 1983-2018. Due to the nature of the campaigns throughout the lifespan of the 8th, new comprehensions of items that are "worthy" of being preserved are generated.

"Yes" stickers from the 1983 campaign for the Amendment (Alan Kinsella)
"When I grow up I'll play for Ireland", prolifecampaign.ie sticker, 2017

Archival Neutrality

The question of archival neutrality is a prevalent one, particularly in regards to topics of a sensitive nature, such as abortion and reproductive rights. The answer to this question may lie in the type of archive being discussed. Should archival repositories adopt an omniscient stance? Is there value in an archive declaring a position / housing only certain artefacts?

- Well-funded national institutions that have the infrastructure to hold many items have the capacity to consider future researchers and to collect and document the full intensity of a conflict from the inside out.
- For smaller, community-driven repositories the responsibility to adopt a neutral position is less central.

It is important to note that archival neutrality can often be seen as offputting to grassroots groups – particularly groups who have been involved in civil disobedience. For grassroots and/or marginalized groups, mistrust of national institutions is also an issue that creates a barrier to the collection of materials.

Solutions to Mistrust

It is possible for community groups to create their own archives using softwares such as Omeka, as we see in work done by Cork LGBT Archive. (With the caveat that groups often become beholden to the funding bodies who support them).

"In the long run, NGOs are accountable to their funders, not to the people they work among. Nothing illustrates this more poignantly than the phenomenon of the U.S. preparing to invade a country and simultaneously readying NGOs to go in and clean up the devastation. In order make sure their funding is not jeopardized and that the governments of the countries they work in will allow them to function, NGOs have to present their work in a shallow framework, more or less shorn of a political or historical context."

- Arundhati Roy The NGO-ization of resistance

Innovative Strategies to Inspire Confidence

Despite some reticence, studies show that grassroots initiatives by and large are willing to take steps to share their data. Consider how new approaches to materials being collected are evolving - e.g. the digital archives of the Occupy Wall Street Movement and Documenting Ferguson Project.

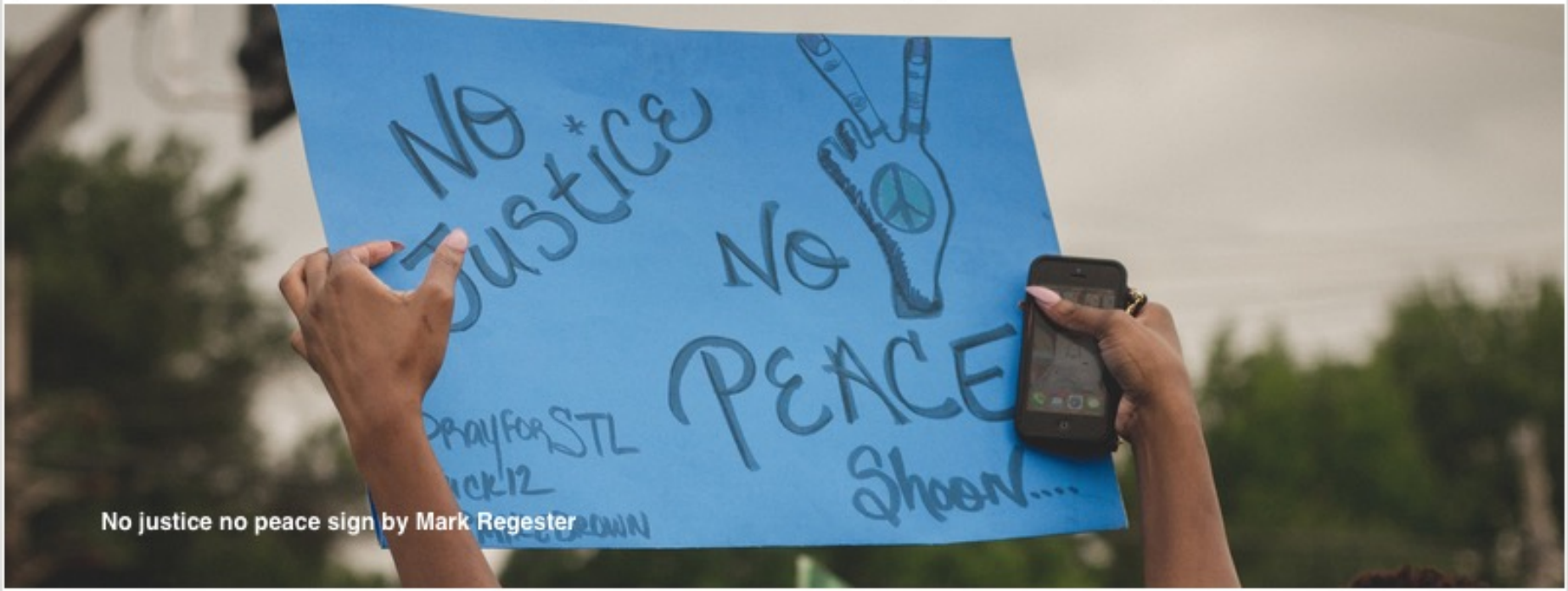
- Here, "archivists provide moderated access to the archives, whereas when dealing with social media accounts, archivists intend to seek permission to collect from the activist groups and provide access online." - Weller and Kinder-Kurlanda, 'A Manifesto for Data Sharing in Social Media Research' (2016)

"These current practices addressing ethical issues may serve as models for other institutions interested in collecting social media from activists. Understanding how to approach activist social media ethically decreases the risk that these important records of modern activism will be left out of the historical narrative." - Velte, 'Ethical Challenges and Current Practices in Activist Social Media Archives' (2018)

Search Advanced Search

documenting FERGUSON

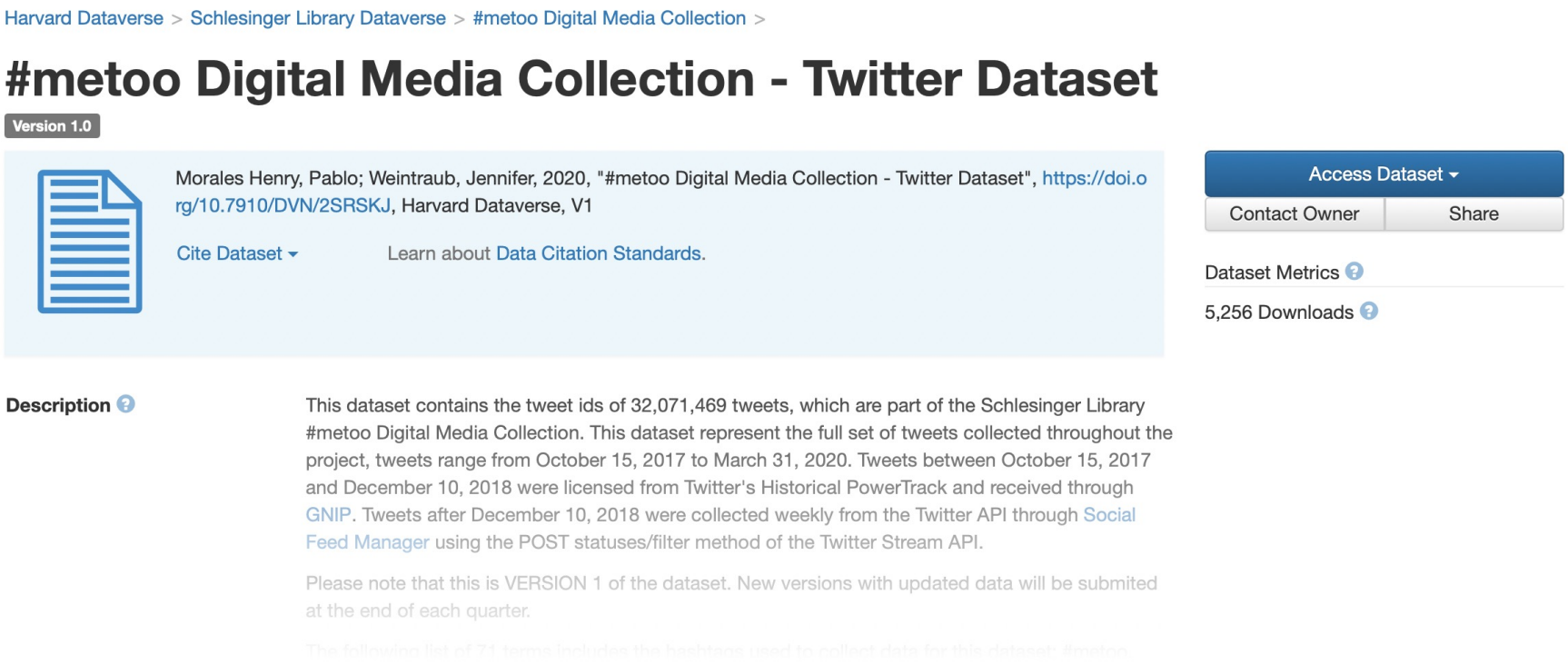
View the Collection | Contribute | Additional Resources | Our Purpose



No justice no peace sign by Mark Regester

Documenting Ferguson is a freely available resource that seeks to preserve and make accessible the digital media captured and created by community members following the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, 2014. Our project has the ultimate goal of providing diverse perspectives on the events in Ferguson and the resulting social dialogue. Contribute your voice to the discussion by **adding your images, videos or personal stories to the collection.**

In this fast-paced and increasingly digital era, how can archivists ensure that records of modern activism are collected?



- Creation of Twitter dataset lists and mapping of Twitter activity for hashtags (see #metoo Digital Repository). **34 million tweets harvested as part of this project.**
- Archive-It allows for the creation of comprehensive bibliographic lists of websites, platforms, blogs, etc, the archiving of which provide a backbone to the project. Archive-It can integrate with the 'Wayback' machine to save websites etc now before they disappear.
- Apt, concise and relevant metadata - allowing the scope of the project to evolve long-term.
- Inventive of audio, video, textual, media sources.
- Collaborative function is hugely important in terms of ensuring the web resource is valuable to future audiences and users - by interweaving collaboration with other plaftorms, e.g. Europeana or localised projects as well as signposting other relevant archives and working with partners, a ground-up community connected approach can be instilled ensuring project longevity and constant regeneration.

Rapid Response Collecting

Rapid Response Collecting is a new strand to the V&A's collecting activity. Objects are collected in response to major moments in history that touch the world of design and manufacturing.

Ranging from Christian Louboutin shoes in five shades of 'nude'; a cuddly toy wolf used as an object of political dissent; to the world's first 3D-printed gun, each new acquisition raises a different question about globalisation, popular culture, political and social change, demographics, technology, regulation or the law.

DESIGN AND SOCIETY

V&A acquires Xbox adaptive controller set to revolutionise accessibility in videogaming



DESIGN AND SOCIETY

Videogames and Digital Design at the V&A



NEWS AND UPDATES

'Pussyhat' acquired for Rapid Response Collection

The V&A has acquired a Pussyhat worn at the Women's March attended by an estimated 500,000 people in Washington on 21 January 2017 – the day after US President Donald...

<u>Technique has been carried out by the National Museum of Ireland and Dublin City Council Library and Archives, respectively:</u>

"I had to wait until Saturday morning, then I got out there and started collecting," said Malone. "The reaction has been amazing. On Sunday night Twitter kind of exploded – everyone is expressing a need to record this moment, it's so momentous." Curators and archivists have been coordinating their efforts under the hashtags #Archivingthe8th and #Collectingthe8th.

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2018/05/30052018-collecting-underway-after-irish-referendum/#

Recent Examples of Rapid Response Collecting

Sue John
@SueJohnGWL

As the UK's only Accredited Museum dedicated to women's history, @womenslibrary would like to create a thread - a digital album - of photos of recent vigils, protests, events & sites of remembrance. Please post your photo with location / details, using #DocumentReclaimTheStreets

4:06 PM · Mar 15, 2021 · Twitter Web App

70 Retweets **3** Quote Tweets **115** Likes

main locations, and I've just emailed you my album of images. I hope they're useful.
Thank you for creating this collection.

#DocumentReclaimTheStreets



From yesterday's walk, Scottish Parliament and Calton Hill, Edinburgh #DocumentReclaimTheStreets



I spent some time here on this beautiful spring day, sharing the anger, the sorrow, the love, the solidarity, the pain and the hope.
(Victoria road entrance to Queens Park, Glasgow 15.3.2021)
#DocumentReclaimTheStreets



What objects are of value?

Who defines "value"?

Adopting a feminist praxis of analysis:

There must be an acknowledgement of the breadth of what constitutes 'archivable material', e.g. graffiti, stickers on bathroom doors, parish pamphlets, and novel approaches such as 'Time Travellers for Choice'.



Examples of non-traditional objects and ephemera

Aisling Duffy
@aisling_duffy
Follow

Would love to donate my TShirt & my Stickers that I designed in support of the Repeal @Together4yes campaign to the archive. Does anyone have any further advice for me? #archivingthe8th @HunRealIssues





Valerie McDermott
@ValerieMcDermot
Follow

If anyone wants souvenir posters or posters for the corriboard let me know @labour @DLTogether4Yes



10:02 PM - 28 May 2018

Jack Sheehan @YuleGoat · Jun 4

This is the sole photo I have from the carpool canvassing group organised by @oonaghmurphy, who I never properly met, but is an absolute inspiration. It was a loose group of theatre people who went out multiple times a week to Kells, Naas, Cavan, Leixlip, all around Leinster.



1 6 17


Repealed
THE COMPLETE COSTUME HISTORY
FASHION
WORLD TEXTILES
Jewelry
Fashion

“I took all the pieces to Dublin and met with Alex at the museum in July 2018. It was exciting for me, knowing that my work was going in the collection - even if it wasn’t the best work I’ve ever created with wires sticking out everywhere (as my pieces are usually made for one day of wearing and with the knowledge that their parts will be reused.) I find it a bit hilarious that my hastily cobbled together headpieces have ended up in a museum, but I’m also glad they are there as I’m fairly certain they would not have been preserved if they stayed in my care. I’m a bit mortified for myself in advance of them ever being shown to the public and they’ll see how poorly they were made but I suppose I’ll get over that. It was all about the impact at the time - I didn’t ever imagine my work would be being scrutinised by a museum curator. If I had I would’ve spent weeks making them perfect!”

- Taryn De Vere on donating her headpieces and other fashion artwork to the National Museum of Ireland.



Working with sensitive content

Developing a working praxis informed by "a feminist ethics of care" whereby archives make implicated communities the central focal point in "all aspects of the archival endeavour - from appraisal to description to provision of access."

This offers the potentiality of transforming the traditional "reading-room" archive space to an affective, user-oriented, community-centred service space which reflects the core movements that participated in the 8th Amendment referendum.

<u>This work has implications for the mental and emotional health of archivists.</u>

See: Caswell and Cifor, 'From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives' (2016)

Final thoughts and methodologies

- Ensure participants feel safe to share their experiences by prioritizing safe spaces. These archives should not repeat the traumatizing 'laying bare' of people's stories and should not sensationalize.
- Emphasis on caring for the material – and the people-focused heart and intimacy of the project.
- Acknowledgement and respect of voluntary labour of participants.
- Use of focus groups to decide what should be archived, who we are not reaching, and how project should be directed – individual and group discussions.
- Bottom-up approach necessary, as is reflective of the grassroots nature of the 8th Referendum.
- Underpinned with the knowledge that the 8th was a public story and an 'every person' story – working respectfully under this code.

For more information on projects pertaining to the work of archiving the 8th, please see the DRI's initiative to preserve social media by their harvesting of the "In Her Shoes" Facebook Page.