

Systems integration in libraries

LIBR 509
Week 11 Mar 29 2022

1 Recorded Lecture

1.1 Case Study: Kinsey Institute Library & Special Collections (Bri Watson Guest Lecture)

Kinsey Institute: a microcosm of cultural heritage institutions

- Founded by Alfred Charles Kinsey; insect biologist, noticed lack of knowledge about sexual activity, collected 18,000 sex histories

Kinsey Institute Library and Special Collections: art and artifacts, photographs, film, library, archive
Massive collection, required rigorous classification and categorization

1.1.1 Classification System

In the early days of the collection: A = Artists, AC = Art Collections, AP = Art and Photography, BL = Bibliography (Kinsey trying to recreate his bug collection)

1960-2016: Dewey Decimal Classification applied to the library (chose Dewey over LCSH because it allows for finer-grained categorization between broad categories)

Class	DDC™	Kinsey DDC
100	Philo&psych	psychological, cultural, and attitudinal aspects (of sexuality)
200	Religion	religious aspects (of sexuality)
300	Social Sci	legal, educational, or research methodology and prostitution
400	Language	languages & linguistics (and sexuality)
500	Science	all works on sexual behaviors
600	Technology	medical aspects (of sexuality)
700	Art&Rec	treasured and rare items related to art (and sexuality)
800	Literature	erotic literature

1.1.2 Vocabulary: Sexual

Kinsey had a totally unique collection

Got a grant from the US government to develop a Thesaurus (Sexual Nomenclature: A Thesaurus)

Thesaurus is a powerful tool, but requires quite a bit of information maintenance (e.g., offensive words persist over time)

1.1.3 Inoperable Schemata

The collection has 50,000 photographs from the 1880s to 1970s

E.g., “♀ FIG XG STND HND ABV”

- Specialized coding that indicates:
 - female figure
 - XG: “with genitalia concealed by the pose...”
 - STND: torso is vertical +/- 44 degrees
 - HND ABV: either one or both of hands above the horizontal line...
- Not a useful classification system for anything other than this collection; there are reasons the Kinsey Institute did this (trying to make data out of photographs in order to understand the data)—but it gets needlessly complicated

1.1.4 Data Formats

Multiple layers on top of each other

1.1.5 Content: Nonstandard

E.g., Kinsey Institute has some photographs of its own objects (photograph “taken” 1512—before the invention of the photograph)

1.2 In-Person Lecture

1.2.1 Housekeeping and Announcements

Reminder to fill out surveys of course experience

“All extensions will be granted, but need to notify”

- Let Dr. Bullard know as soon as possible; even more helpful to know what day you plan to submit it

You are welcome to approach Dr. Bullard in directed study / directed research / collaborative research about this area

- Examples: investigations into particular systems or controlled vocabularies; writing a research paper doing a comparison about how a system works vs. users needs

2 Readings

- 2.1 Required: Liana Zhou (2003) Characteristics of Material Organization and Classification in the Kinsey Institute Library, *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 35:3-4, 335-353, DOI: 10.1300/ J104v35n03_04

- 2.2 Suggested: Zhou, Liana H. "Bodies of Evidence: Understanding the Transformation of Collections from Individuals to Institutions." *Library Trends* 66, no. 4 (2018): 568-84. <https://doi.org/10/gfx5v7>