



Faculty Publications

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Using Student Researchers to Assess the Digital Collections User Experience

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Using Student Researchers to Assess the Digital Collections User Experience

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Undergraduate Student

Presentation Outline

01

INTRO/METHODOLOGY

Participants will learn about our study's methodology, which may inform the development of their own digital collections assessments

04

STUDY RESULTS

Participants will discover techniques for improving the user experience with a digital asset management system

02

COURSE PROJECT

"Outside the library" perspective of the project, as incorporated into a research methods course

05

INCORPORATING STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Participants will learn tips for designing a research study that utilizes student research assistants and how to avoid some potential pitfalls

03

STUDENT RESEARCHERS' EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate student research assistants' experience

06

Q&A

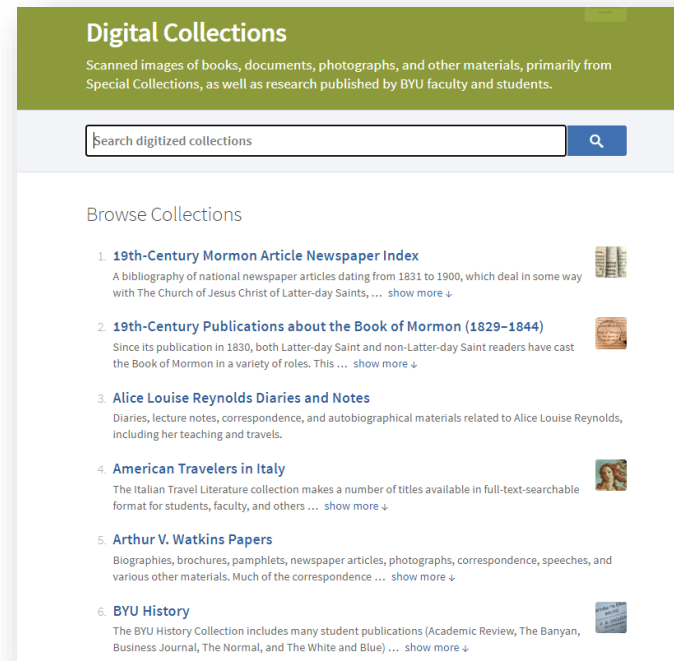
Moderated by Cory Lampert, Head of Digital Collections, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

01

**INTRODUCTION/
METHODOLOGY**

BYU Library and CONTENTdm

- First collection went live in 2002
- 2,770,000+ digital items
- 150+ collections*
- Supplemented by landing pages
- Harvested by our discovery layer and MWDL/DPLA via OAI-PMH



BYU's Undergraduates

- 33,633: largest undergraduate enrollment of any private US university
- 95% Americans
- 50/50 male-female ratio
- 8% first-generation college students
- Majority are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

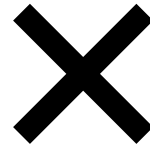


Conducting the Study

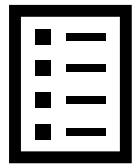
- Holistic study design with a combination of data collection methods
- 10 user tasks:
 - “Please find and download a journal or diary written by Alice Louise Reynolds.”
 - “Please find a copy of the Woman’s Exponent newspaper from May 1882.”
- 10 follow-up questions about their experiences:
 - "How efficient did you feel you were in the completion of the tasks?"
 - "In the future, if you needed to find X item, what process would you use to find it on your own?"

Analyzing the Data

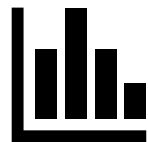
- Initial Coding & Summary of Data by student researchers



- Secondary Coding & Summary of Data by library staff



- Analysis of Data

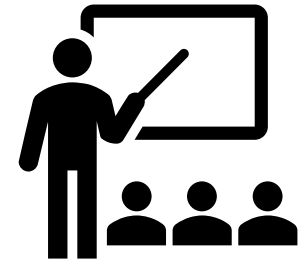


02

COURSE PROJECT

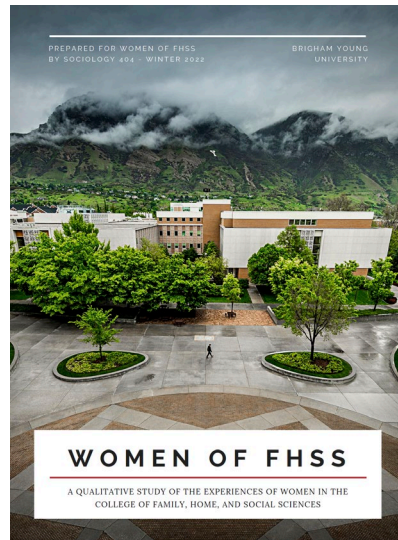
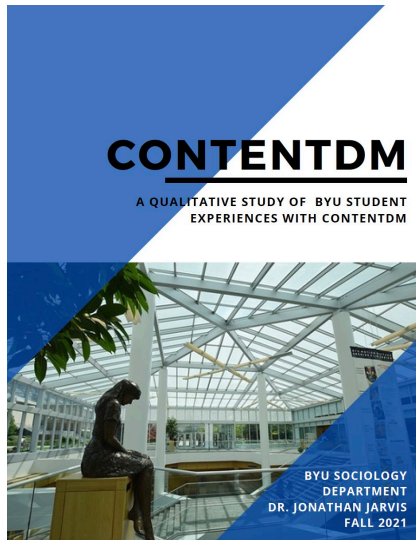
Experiential Learning

- Sociology 404 – Qualitative Research Methods
 - Moving from theoretical to practical/applied (getting reps)
 - Personal projects
 - Class projects
- Goal: Providing Research Experiences
 - Mentored research experience
- We can also provide the service of throwing hours at questions organizations need answers to



Experiential Learning

- Evaluations
 - Past projects and questions
 - Working with the Library



Oral Histories of the COVID-19 Pandemic
One Year Later

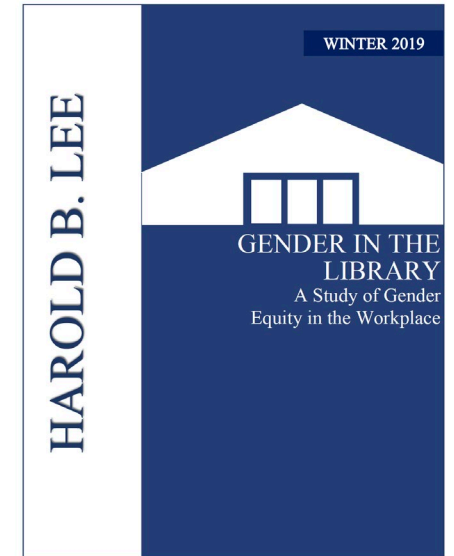
Sociology 404
Dr. Jonathan A. Jarvis
Winter 2021



LGBTQ+ AND RACIAL MINORITY STUDENTS

*A Study of Equality and Experience Within Brigham
Young University's College of Family, Home and Social
Sciences*

Prepared by Sociology 404 Classes of Winter and Fall 2020
Edited by Professor Jonathan Jarvis and Dylan Smith



The Process

- Meet with Client
 - Expectations, Big Questions, Deliverables
- Familiarize students with project
- Multiple stages
- Getting over nervousness
- Qualitative Data gathering is messy and can be unorganized
- Analyzing Qualitative data can be a confusing and insecure experience
- Too descriptive, looking for patterns and processes

03

**STUDENT
RESEARCHERS'
EXPERIENCE**

Our Process & Methods

1. Practice project
2. Library study: Gathering Student Sample
 - Email (19)
 - Adding other students by word-of-mouth (4)
3. List of user tasks provided
4. Interview guide

Class	Male	Female	Total
Freshman	0	1	1
Sophomore	0	3	3
Junior	2	4	6
Senior	4	7	11
Unknown	1	1	2
Total	7	16	23

Table 1: Gender Demographics of Participants

Data gathering

1. Meeting with students
2. Transcribing interviews
3. Creating a coding guide
4. Coding

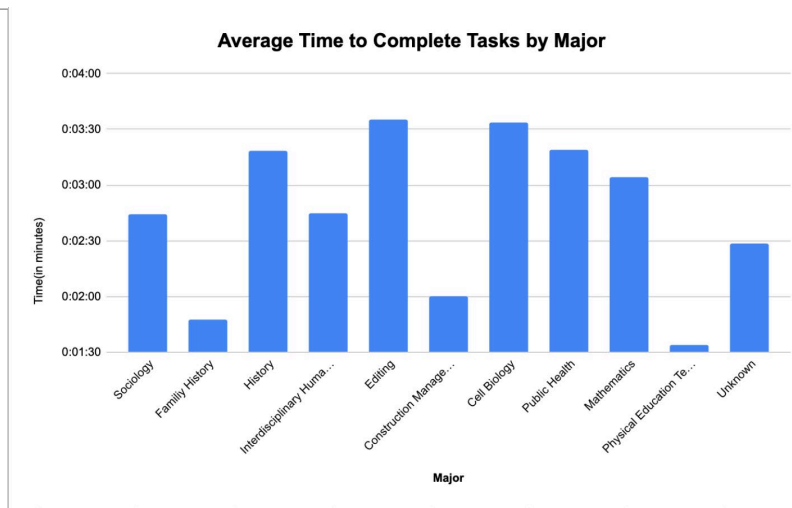
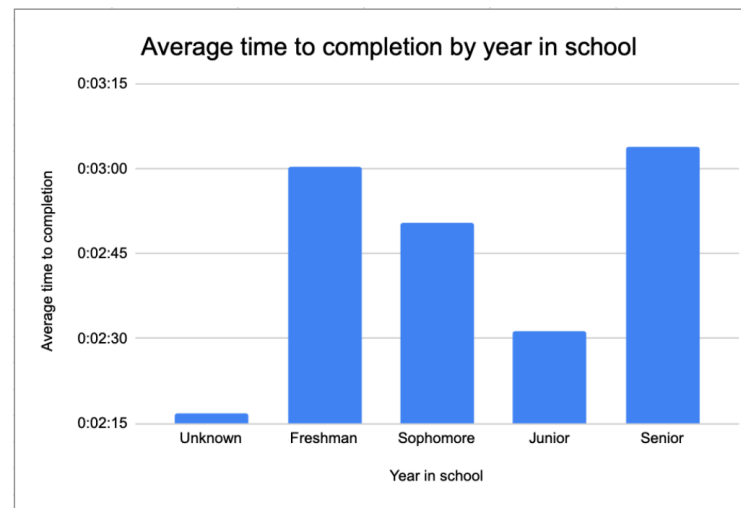


Data Analysis

- Each student filled out a Closed Coding sheet for their interview
 - Whether participant finished each task, how long it took, whether they needed a hint
- The class was divided into 8 groups
 - Effectiveness ("How well did they do?")
 - Assessment of the system
 - Ease of use
 - Obstacles/Problems
 - Past Experience
 - Suggestions
 - Presentation/Methods
 - Editing/Introduction

Data Analysis

- Within the groups, students looked through the codes to identify quotes and themes that fit their subject
- Pared down to 2-3 major themes, found quotes associated with them
- Used closed coding to identify how participants performed on each task and overall based on their major and year in school
- All groups' findings were compiled and presented to the library



What students got out of it

- Experience contacting and interviewing participants
- Real-life practice with qualitative coding
- Working with a group to identify themes and analyze findings
- Develop an official report and present to faculty



04

STUDY RESULTS

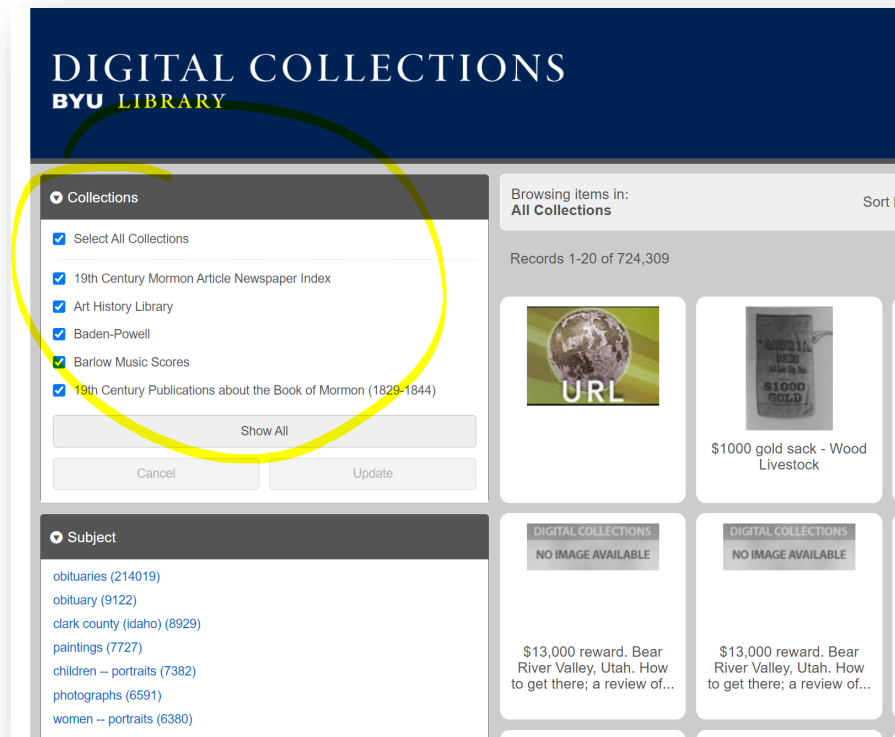
Four themes

- CONTENTdm interface
- CONTENTdm integration with lib.byu.edu
- Metadata
- Undergraduate behaviors and preferences

CONTENTdm Interface

- Progressive searching is very difficult within CONTENTdm.
 - Collection selection was more a hindrance than a help

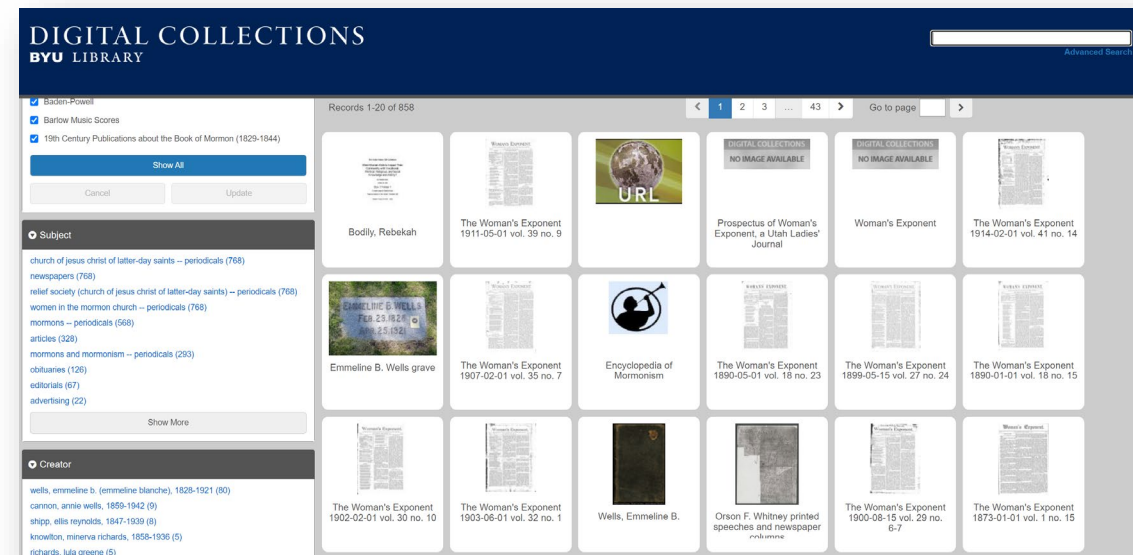
"I don't really know what baden-powell is so we can just leave it."



- Pioneers in Your Attic
- Polynesian Cultural Center Photo Collection, 1961-1979
- Provo Photographs
- Religious Education
- Relief Society Magazine Index
- Religious Studies Center
- Saskia
- Special Collections Miscellaneous
- Special Collections Miscellaneous 2
- Special Collections Miscellaneous 3
- Special Collections Miscellaneous 4
- Special Collections - Photograph Archives
- Special Collections - Gates (MSS279)
- Special Collections - Watkins (MSS146)
- Special Collections - Kane (VMSS792)
- Special Collections - TMA Slides (UA1346)
- Special Collections - History in Your Attic

CONTENTdm Interface

- Progressive searching is very difficult within CONTENTdm.
 - Collection selection was more a hindrance than a help
 - Filter facets were difficult to use
 - Many resorted to inefficient, aimless, hunt-and-peck browsing across pages of results:



Integration into lib.byu.edu

- Digital Collections landing page(s) were useful... when found

The image displays three sequential screenshots of the BYU Library website, illustrating the integration of digital collections.

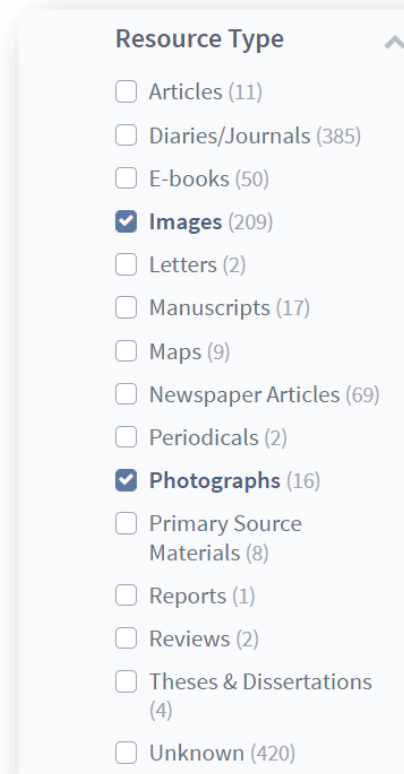
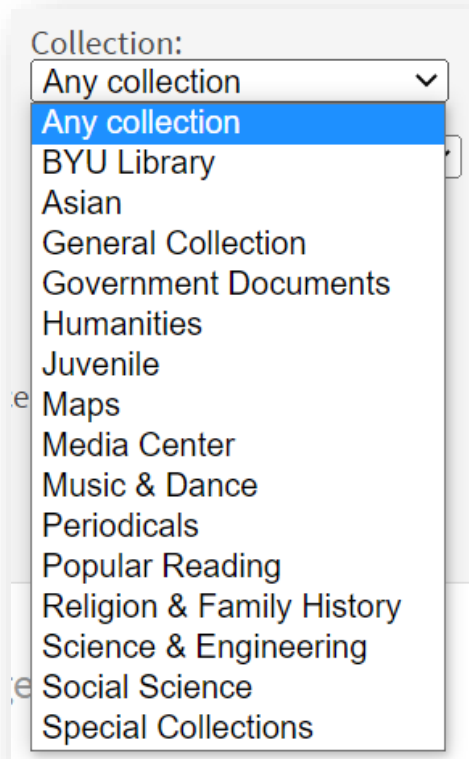
Left Screenshot: Shows the main navigation menu on the left. The "Collections" link is highlighted with a yellow circle. The main content area features a search bar and a "Research Guides" button. Below the search bar, there are buttons for "Articles" and "Music Scores".

Middle Screenshot: Shows the "Collections" landing page. The page title is "Collections" with the subtitle "Overview of the different collections available". It lists three categories: "General Collections", "Special Collections", and "Digital Collections". The "Digital Collections" link is highlighted with a red circle.

Right Screenshot: Shows the "Digital Collections" landing page. The page title is "Digital Collections" with the subtitle "Scanned images of books, documents, photos, audio, and video, as well as research publications". It features a search bar for "Search digitized collections" and a list of collections. The third item, "Alice Louise Reynolds Diaries and Notes", is highlighted with a yellow circle. Below the list, there is a section titled "About the Collection" and a "Browse all" link.

Integration into lib.byu.edu

- Discovery layer's advanced search facets can be misleading



Integration into lib.byu.edu

- Used the subject headings to assess what a search result is about

← Back to search

12 HOLDINGS

Mormon Missionary Diaries
contentdm.lib.byu.edu
Diary/Journal (Online)

Mormon Missionary Diaries
contentdm.lib.byu.edu
Diary/Journal (Online)

Mormon Missionary Diaries
contentdm.lib.byu.edu
Diary/Journal (Online)

Mormon Missionary Diaries
contentdm.lib.byu.edu
Diary/Journal (Online)

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Diary/Journal (Online)

Mormon Missionary Diaries
contentdm.lib.byu.edu
Diary/Journal (Online)

Page 99

Diary/Journal (Online) / Kirkham, Francis W. (1877-1972)
English

Transcription

99 The captain is ill & therefore no church. a This morning had quite a conversation with a number of men on Mormonism. One man would not believe, he had a heart because he could not see it. A good Dinner to day. Passed. St. Mary's Island at 2 oclock. It appeared as a Sand ridge in the distance and is uninhabited. Another beauful day & night. Monday Apr 13/96 . Pacific Ocean . Studied Bible to day. A beautiful morning, not hardly a ripple on the sea. A little wind this afternoon. I saw a very beautiful sunset. Wrote a letter to home to night. Bed 9 3 0 I write this in the sitting room alone. The boys are on the deck. Pacific Ocean Tuesday Apr 14 1896 Up at 6 o'clock. Beautiful weather. Passed the Ulymera tonight

contentdm.lib.byu.edu →
Mormon Missionary Diaries
Browse collection

Actions

Other Titles

- > Kirkham, Francis W., vol. 2, 1896, Page 99

Subjects

- > Saint Mary's Island (UK)
- > South Pacific Ocean

Spatial Coverage

- > Australasian
- > Pacific
- > Saint Mary's Island (UK)
- > South Pacific Ocean

Language

- > English

Subjects

- > Saint Mary's Island (UK)
- > South Pacific Ocean

Subjects

- > Murder—Utah
- > Liquor laws—Utah

← Back to search

1 HOLDING

19th Century Mormon Article Newspaper Index
AN .N622
Newspaper Article (Online)

Utah: The Murder of Dr. Robinson—Dull Times—The Liquor Question

Newspaper Article (Online)

26 Dec 1866, New York Times vol. 16 no. 4719, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, (Digital Publisher), New York, New York : H. J. Raymond & Co., (Original Publisher), English

Transcription

UTAH. The Murder of Dr. Robinson—Dull Times—The Liquor Question. From Our Own Correspondent. GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, Thursday, Nov. 29, 1866. The excitement connected with the murder of Dr. ROBINSON has entirely subsided, and the city is once again as quiet as a country village. No due to the perpetrators has yet been obtained—nothing made manifest further than what was made known at the inquest. In all probability this affair will remain secret until doomsday, when all secrets will be proclaimed and final judgments given. Among the merchants and storekeepers generally of this city there is much complaint of dull times. Some say they never knew things so dull. Money is scarce, so everybody says. Fortunes are not made so quickly as they were two years ago, when the Mon-tana gold mines were . . . show more

AN .N622
Browse nearby items

contentdm.lib.byu.edu →
19th Century Mormon Article Newspaper Index
Browse collection

Actions

Description

A recent murder remains unsolved. Money is scarce and business is slow in Salt Lake City. In spite of winter, building in the city continues. Among the projects is the building of the new Mormon tabernacles; "it will always . . . show more

Edition

- > Electronic reproduction

Extent

- > p. 2; columns 3-4; 10 ¼ col. in.; text

Subjects

- > Murder—Utah
- > Liquor laws—Utah

Genres

- > Newspapers

Metadata

- Too many fields (64!)
- Jargony field labels
 - Change to natural language terms
 - Example: **Source** not “**Cite as**”

Object Description	
Creator	Strang, John H. (John Hazard), 1785-1878
Title	A memorandum of the family of Daniel d'Estrange and of Charlotte his wife who escaped from France in the year of 1685 in the persecution under Louis in the County of Westchester, then Province of New York
Description	Small book by John Strang (also called Uncle John D'Estrange), written for his niece, Sarah Ann Strang. Title page says, "A Memorandum of the family of the year of 1685 in the persecution under Louis XIV and came to America in the year 1688 and settled at New Rochelle in the County of Westchester, the the Protestant D'Estrange family, John D'Estrange's immigration to America, his dislike of Catholics and Jesuits, the visit of a man who claimed to be D'E D'Estrange and Charlotte Hubert. A photocopy from Fitzpatrick's book includes a typed version of the journal and some information about Jesse James S
Date Original	1819
Date Span	1819
Edition	Electronic version
Physical Description	1 folder (0.1 linear ft.)
Contributing Institution	L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University
Language	English eng en
General Notes	Small memorandum book by John Strang written for his niece, 1819.
Collection	A memorandum of the family of Daniel d'Estrange and of Charlotte his wife who escaped from France in the year of 1685 in the persecution under Louis in the County of Westchester, then Province of New York
Link to Finding Aid	http://archives.lib.byu.edu/repositories/14/resources/2711
Source	A memorandum of the family of Daniel d'Estrange and of Charlotte his wife who escaped from France in the year of 1685 in the persecution under Louis in the County of Westchester, then Province of New York; MSS 3893; L. Tom Perry Special Collections; 1130 Harold B. Lee Library; Brigham Young Univ
Call Number	MSS 3893
Copyright Status	Public domain
Rights Management	http://lib.byu.edu/about/copyright/special_collections.php
Rights Holder	Brigham Young University
Contact Address of Rights Holder	ATTN: Supervisor of Reference Services, 1130 Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602
Contact Phone of Rights Holder	801-422-3175
Contact E-Mail of Rights Holder	specialcollections@byu.edu
Publisher (Digital)	L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University
File Type	text
Format	text/jpeg
Conversion Specifications	Nikon D800E Nikon 60mm AF Nikkor lens; attributes: jpg, 200ppi
Date Digital	2020-02
System Requirements	Web browser. Adobe Acrobat reader.
Identifier	MSS3893
Media type	JPG

Item Description	
Title	Page 1
Copyright status	Public domain
Rights Management	http://lib.byu.edu/about/copyright/special_collections.php
Rights Holder	Brigham Young University
Contact Address of Rights Holder	ATTN: Supervisor of Reference Services, 1130 Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602
Contact Phone of Rights Holder	801-422-3175

Metadata

- Title and object description orient user.
 - "Based on everything it gives me in the object description, it gives me a pretty good idea of exactly what this is, instead of just looking at the actual photos because the handwriting is hard to read."
- Hyperlinks in metadata are useful; controlled vocab lists/filter facets not as much.

architecture (4120)
germany -- maps, topographic (3529)
newspapers (3424)
advertising (3410)
an2.i2 r49 (3273)
infants -- portraits (3085)
young women -- portraits (2896)
female (2445)
provo (utah) -- newspapers (2404)

Editor

[Wells, Emmeline B. \(Emmeline Blanche\), 1828-1921 \(684\)](#)
[Richards, Lula Greene \(124\)](#)
[Cannon, Annie Wells, 1859-1942 \(68\)](#)

Date Original

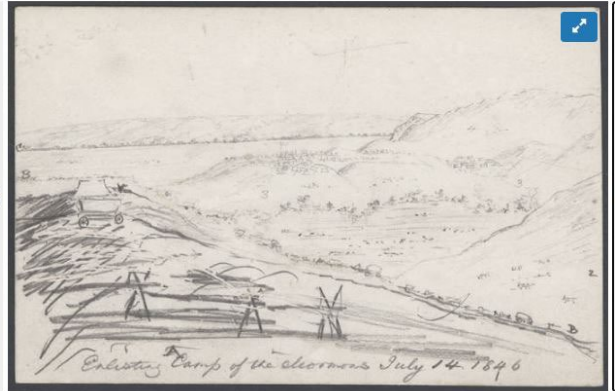
1884-10-15 (2)
1893-04-15; 1893-05-01 (2)
1894-08-01; 1894-08-15 (2)
1897-06-01 (2)
1899-01-01 (2)
1872-06-01 (1)
1872-06-15 (1)

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS
BYU LIBRARY

Digital Collections > Special Collections - Kane (VMSS792) > Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane

Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane

Page 3



3 of 6

Transcript

Object Description

Title
Description

Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane
Letter from Kane from Winter Quarters to John K. Kane. Contains a letter of introduction for Orson Hyde, dated July 25, 1846 and enclosed are two sketches of Winter Quarters (formerly in 3 pieces) titled: "My wagon-the first camp," "Distant view," and "Enlisting Camp of the Mormons," all drawn on the back of invitations. The last ("Enlisting Camp") has brief explanation written on

Metadata – The importance of image descriptions



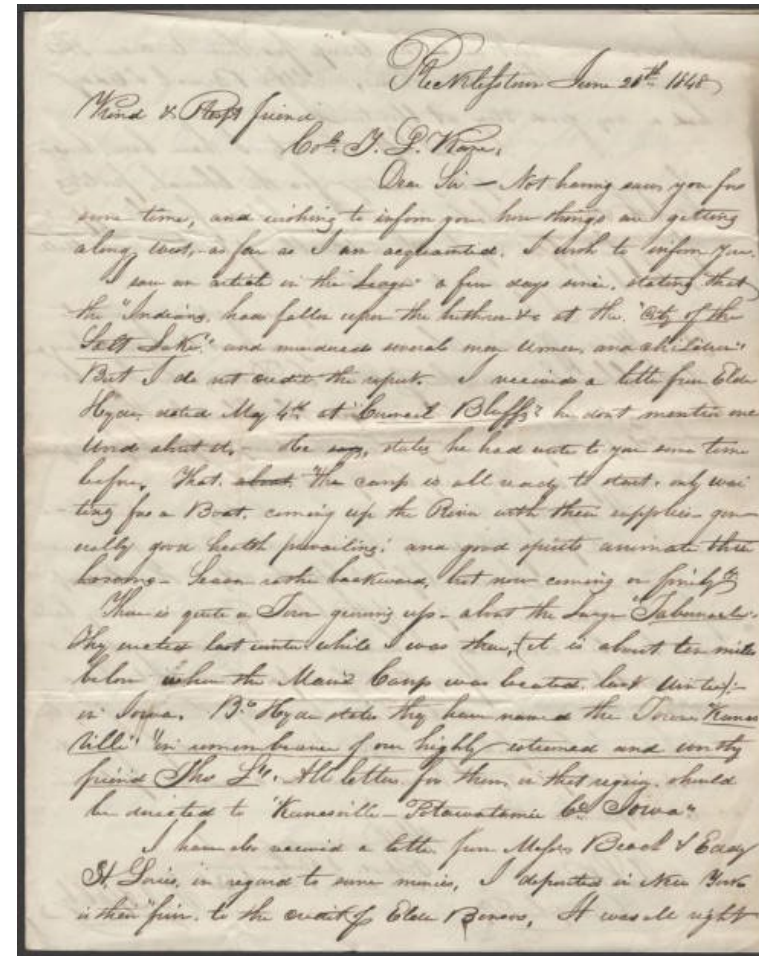
Who are these guys?
Where are they?
What are they doing?

Undergraduate Behaviors & Preferences

Reading handwriting

- Immediate disinterest
- Transcriptions desired... and often missed

"What?! I cannot read any of that! I think if I knew how to read this I could tell you if I found it or not."



Undergraduate Behaviors

- VERY quick to give up on search strategy or try a new method if they don't see pertinent results above the fold
- Not afraid of searching and filtering, but too many options stops them up

Scrolls past most of the info on the page. Does not choose to click on anything. Says, "I give up"



Undergraduate Behaviors

- Student preference for familiar functionality



- Highlighted search terms in search results page desired

"I will say what's really strange, obviously the search engine found it somehow, but it doesn't highlight what it found. Normally if you search something on google and you click on the article it will skip right to what you searched and it will be highlighted or bolded."

Undergraduate Behaviors

- Digital object navigation
 - Some clicked through pages, most relied on description

The screenshot displays the Digital Collections BYU Library interface. The header includes the logo and a search bar. The breadcrumb trail reads: Digital Collections > Special Collections - Kane (VMSS792) > Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane. The main title is "Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane" and it is identified as "Page 3".

The central feature is a large image of a handwritten sketch. The sketch depicts a landscape with a wagon and several figures. Below the sketch, the text reads: "Enlisting Camp of the Mormons July 14, 1846". Navigation arrows are visible on the left and right sides of the image.

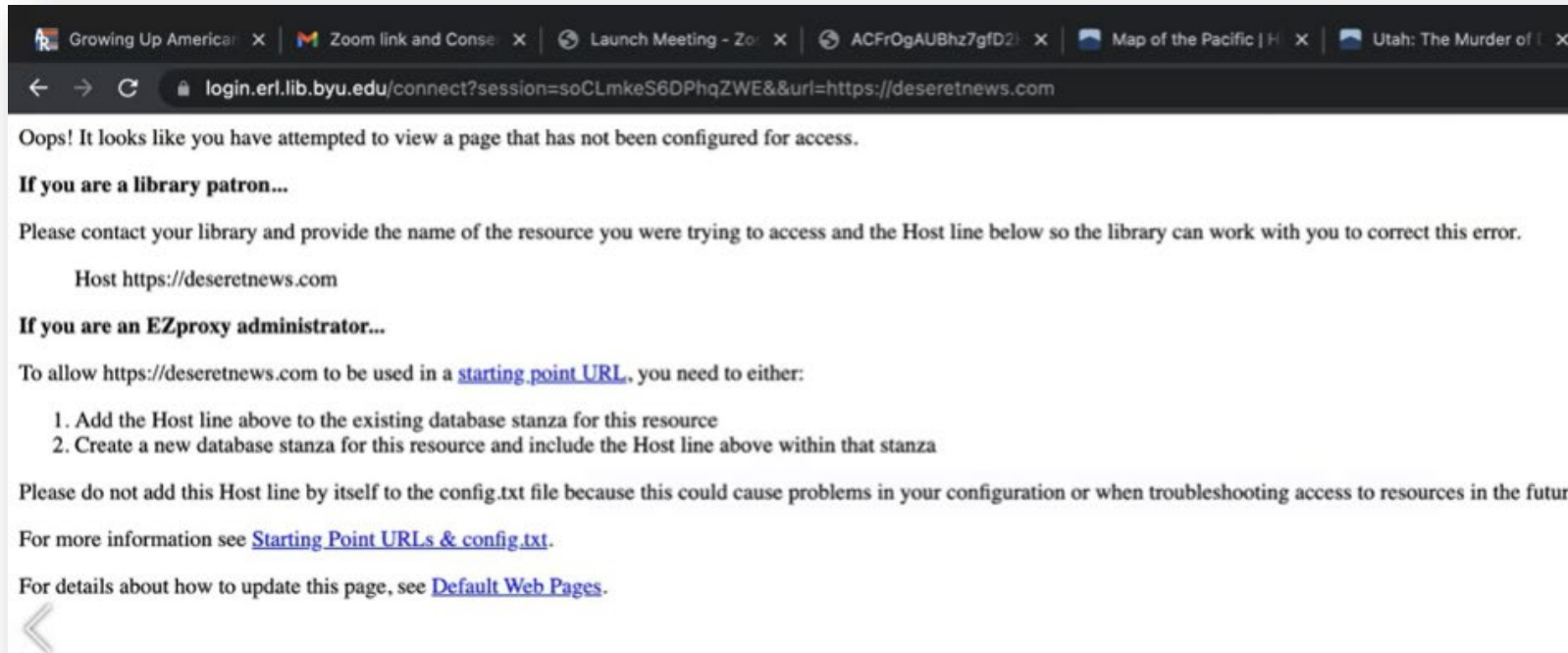
Below the image, there is a "3 of 6" indicator. To the right of the image, there are icons for download and print. Below these icons is a search bar labeled "Search this record" with a search icon and a refresh icon. Below the search bar is a list of pages: "Box 14 Folder 4 Item 2", "Page 1", "Page 2", "Page 3" (highlighted in yellow), "Page 4", "Page 5", and "Page 6".

At the bottom, there are two tabs: "Transcript" and "Object Description". The "Object Description" tab is active, showing the following information:

Title	Thomas L. Kane letter and sketches to John K. Kane
Description	Letter from Kane from Winter Quarters to John K. Kane. Contains a letter of introduction for Orson Hyde, dated July 25, 1846 and enclosed are two sketches of Winter Quarters (formerly in 3 pieces) titled: "My wagon-the first camp," "Distant view," and "Enlisting Camp of the Mormons," all drawn on the back of invitations. The last ("Enlisting Camp") has brief explanation written on

Undergraduate Behaviors

- The experience of CONTENTdm at home is impacted by extra logins, internet speed, and type of device.



"Okay, don't know why it's not loading..."

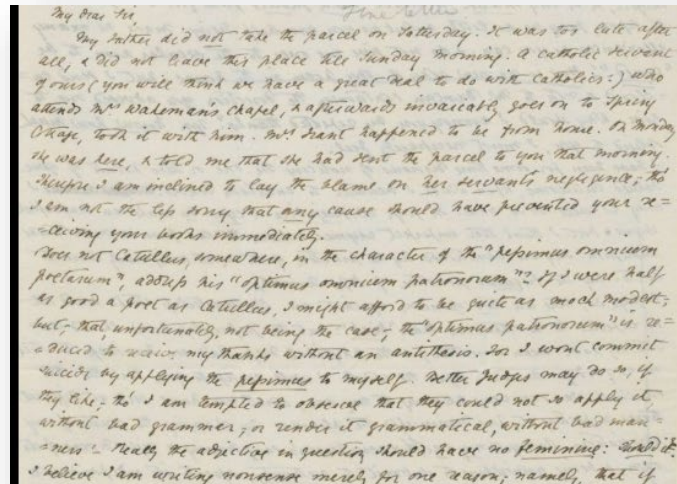
Future Directions

- Consider data from the interviews:
 - Very picky about search tool now
 - Perhaps create 1-minute use tutorials
 - Take better advantage of the way digital content is different than physical
 - Collection Selection – blow it up, facilitate browsing more readily



Future Directions

- Interface:
 - Scale back number of fields displayed (64 fields)
 - Put transcriptions next to item
 - Ensure relevance is the primary sort method
 - Seek ways to facilitate scroll-ability of results (and actual objects, where possible)

A snippet of a handwritten manuscript in cursive script, likely from the 18th century. The text is written on aged, slightly yellowed paper. The handwriting is dense and fills most of the page. The ink is dark, and the script is consistent throughout. The text appears to be a letter or a formal document, discussing a parcel and a servant's negligence. The words are difficult to read due to the cursive style and the handwriting's slant.

My Father did not take the parcel on Saturday. It was too late after all, & did not leave this place till Sunday morning. A Catholic servant of ours (you will think we have a great deal to do with Catholics;) who attends Mr. Waleman's Chapel, & afterwards invariably goes on to Spring Cottage, took it with him. Mrs. Trant happened to be from home. On Monday she was here, & told me that she had sent the parcel to you that morning. Therefore I am inclined to lay the blame on her servant's negligence; tho' I am not the less sorry that any cause should have prevented your receiving your books immediately. Does not Catullus, somewhere, in the Character of the "Optimus omnium patronorum" 22 17 1/2 vers. half as good a poet as Catullus, I might afford to be quite as good a poet; but, that unfortunately, not being the case, the "Optimus patronorum" is a success to receive my thanks without an antithesis. For I would commit success by applying the "Optimus" to myself. Better Judges may do so, if they like; tho' I am tempted to observe that they could not so apply it, without bad grammar; or render it grammatical, without bad meaning. Really the adjectives in question should have no feminine: "bad" is a believe I am writing nonsense merely for one reason; namely, that if

Hope End. May 1st [-3] 1828. My dear Sir,
My Father did not take the parcel on Saturday. It was too late after all, & did not leave this place till Sunday morning. A Catholic servant of ours (you will think we have a great deal to do with Catholics!) who attends Mrs Wakeman's Chapel, & afterwards invariably goes on to Spring Cottage, took it with him. Mrs Trant happened to be from home. On Monday she was here, & told me that she had sent the parcel to you that morning. Therefore I am inclined to lay the blame on her servant's negligence,—tho' I am not the less sorry that any cause should have prevented your receiving your books immediately. Does not Catullus, somewhere, in

05

**INCORPORATING
STUDENT
RESEARCHERS**

Working with Students and Faculty

Initial researchers (Becca and Lindsey) coordinated with our library assessment officer to find a professor interested in assisting with the study. Going in, we were aware of the following benefits:

- Professor Jarvis has lots of experience! He is an expert in qualitative research. His willingness to work with us was irreplaceable. He also has significant experience working with organizations to help them.
- His Sociology 404 course, Qualitative Research Methods, dovetailed perfectly with our study goals!
- The students are well-taught and educated!
- His students could recruit and do interviews, providing us with a highly effective large labor pool.

Benefits (Happy Surprises)

- Beyond the benefits identified in the previous slide, our study benefited from the following outcomes:
 - The students were highly effective at recruiting fellow students for the study. This improved the reliability of our study since the pool of individuals interviewed was larger.
 - Professor Jarvis and the Sociology 404 students prepared a detailed, professionally-presented multi-page report on students' experiences with our digital collections. When it was presented to our library administrators, it was received quite well and made clear that we needed to explore new options for presenting our digital collections.
 - The students gathered information we forgot to, specifically demographic and quantitative data such as how long it took students to perform the requested tasks.
 - We were able to take some of their final recommendations and implement them immediately, such as shifting fields around and changing how search results were ordered.

Challenges

- Our own inexperience showed. For example, sometimes interviewers rushing interviewees since they were not sure they would have time to get through everything.
 - We could have prevented this in one of three or all of the following ways:
 - Demo the interview so that students would have a clear idea of the flow of the interview/observation.
 - Assign TAs or select students to head up groups of interviewers to help with quality control and to be more easily at hand for interviewers to get answers to questions they might have
 - Visiting their class to discuss the interview and answer questions an additional time before interviews to clarify any misunderstandings
- The interviewers' own lack of experience with library systems sometimes led them to make suggestions that only made tasks harder. This could have been caught through the points above.
- We started the interviewers and interviewees on a less-than-ideal starting page, which only served to make the initial round of questions even more confusing. This is one where experience was necessary, so perhaps not something we could have thought of on our own
- Students are obviously not versed in library terms so their report sometimes was not as granular as we needed it to be

Assessment and Data Analysis

- Students approached task to assess the usability of the site, leading to a coding of responses that was sometimes not as in-depth as we librarians wanted it to be. This led us to review all of the interviews and observations.
- We noted that we could dig much deeper into the students' responses and behaviors, leading to more specific codes such as "patrons have the capacity to accidentally be searching in the wrong collection"; "CONTENTdm displays serial titles, not article titles"; "Patron uses breadcrumb trail in CONTENTdm successfully"; "after using advanced search, patron required to retype search terms"
- Ultimately, the combination of the students' work and analysis provided a great picture of our digital collection. Without their data and hard work, we would not be able to review their work for additional details that will be critical for improving or requesting a new system.

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QUESTIONS

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