Thank you everyone for taking the time to join us.

I'm Amanda Rust, the Associate Director for Services in the Digital Scholarship Group at Northeastern University Library. Full disclosure: in my career, I've only worked in academic libraries, though I am deeply involved in archives.

Mattie Clear is a Research Associate in the Design for Diversity project and also candidate in the dual MA/MS History and Archives program at Simmons University. She has worked in archives and museums more than I have, having worked in museums and archives in organizations like the Library of Congress, William & Mary, MIT, and the small non-profit Museum of the Middle Appalachians.
Design for Diversity

Focuses on the ways in which information systems embody and reinforce cultural norms.

Asks how we might design systems that account for diverse cultural materials and ways of knowing.

Today we’re going to focus on two different items from the Design for Diversity Toolkit.

This Toolkit is part of a larger project called Design for Diversity, which started in Fall 2016 with an IMLS grant. I’m the co-PI along with Julia Flanders, and the project is based in the Digital Scholarship Group at the Northeastern University Library. We aren’t museum experts but rather creators of information systems who want to prompt more inclusive information systems, both in our own work and in the field. Similar to, for example, how many museums now re-evaluating the vocabulary used to describe the belongings of Native American and Indigenous peoples.
So, in Design for Diversity, we developed a prototype teaching and learning toolkit -- that's the URL on the lower right -- as a way to prompt both classroom and workplace education and action.

We selected what we thought were some of the most impactful publications and categorized those into major topics. We also commissioned two forms of writing for the toolkit itself: case studies and study paths.

Case studies are specific analyses of information and computer systems, using inclusivity as a frame. Study paths combine those case studies with readings and a learning activity to animate the toolkit, giving learners a way to engage with the ideas by for example performing an analysis at their workplace.

We think this Toolkit could be used in a museum studies class, or in professional development workshops, or in workplace task forces and study groups. Our goal was to design something with relatively brief but impactful readings and activities that a busy instructor or practitioner could use in short bursts.

If you were to use it, we hope the Toolkit would spark larger conversations about your in-house information and computer systems.

Now Mattie will talk about one of our case studies.
Our case study, “Honoring the Dead: A Digital Archive of the Insane Indian Asylum” by Stacey Berry, Associate Professor of English for New Media at Dakota State University. Through it we ask questions like: How do you work with communities whose belongings you steward, particularly if you are not a member? How do you determine what you put online and what you don’t? What assumptions do you make about your audience?

“Honoring the Dead” focuses on the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians in Canton, South Dakota during its largely overlooked 30 years of operation. Berry and her colleague, John Nelson, developed the project to digitize, transcribe, tag, and make searchable physically dispersed sources relating to the asylum. Their goal was to honor the experiences of affected individuals and their families, while recognizing that these documents were created by and used to enact violence.

They first consulted with Jerry Fogg and Anne Dilenschneider, representatives of the Keepers of the Canton Native Asylum Story. The Keepers gave their guidance and blessing to digitize the materials for public release to further a shared goal of disseminating this story.

The Keepers had previously conducted outreach on making this information publicly available. The feedback from affected Native American communities was **positive as information could potentially aid in reconstructing lost connections**, though this turned out to usually be impossible due to the complexity of records keeping within and between tribes.
The primary stakeholders of this project are tribes and Native peoples, but many in the potential research audience are academics outside of these groups. While online accessibility serves most academic research audiences, to ensure access for tribes and Native peoples who might be without Internet service, the project partnered with the Keepers, to distribute over 50 flash drives to Tribal Historic Preservation Officers for local access.

Finally, digitized and encoded documents enable analysis with new computer tools. The project continues to work to ensure that resulting interpretations respect the Native cultural perspective. For example, visualizations using maps with current geopolitical boundaries are inherently biased as those boundaries were forced on Native peoples by violent displacement and genocide.

This is just a short summary, so please read the full work on our website. Next, Amanda will talk about a study path.
Our example study path, called “Comparing Curation Styles”, was developed by Sonoe Nakasone, the Lead Librarian for Metadata Technologies at North Carolina State University libraries.

Nakasone asks users to first read a case study on the Mukurtu content and collections management system. Are folks familiar with Mukurtu? Kim Christen is the leader of that project, follow everything she does. Mukurtu was designed in partnership with Indigenous communities.

After reading the case study, learners then compare how different online descriptions affect our understanding of an item. Nakasone asks learners look through selected websites and gather a collection of 8-10 items they’d use in an exhibit. She then prompts learners to compare the metadata styles on each website, some using Mukurtu and some not, and reflect on how the style and type of metadata on each item might have affected their overall curatorial choices.

Learners end with a written reflection or group discussion focused on questions like: Do objects have lives? What are some of the types of metadata that have not traditionally been included in museum, archive, or library records for cultural belongings? Nakasone ends with an assignment: Imagine something in your life that has had significant utility and meaning. Perhaps it’s a favorite outfit or mug or your first car. How would a museum describe that item in 200 years? How does this differ if I were to ask you to tell me about the item? Through these assignments, Nakasone focuses learners on real-world and collections and catalogs.
We've only touched on two items in the Toolkit -- there are many, many more. We hope you take a look at the larger website, and we're always happy to have constructive criticism through the website feedback form.
Thanks!

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