

Jump In - 2014

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Archives and Special Collections



Short staffed with a priority list that changes almost hourly, Archives staff haven't taken the opportunity, until now, to address the issue of incoming computer media. Having noticed growing stacks of CD's and DVD's, some of which didn't have descriptions or noticeable accession numbers, Jenifer Monger, Assistant Institute Archivist decided to *Jump In*.

Computer media in the Archives dates back to 1996 and consists primarily of photographs, music, and videos. The staff's past practices of accepting this material consisted of a few scenarios. In most cases CD's and DVD's were accessioned if the material met certain criteria. Either the contents fit into existing analog collections, or photographs were unique enough to be included in the image database. Anything else was usually kept in a designated area in the closed stacks, or at office desks.

Jenifer located large quantities of computer media. The inventory and investigation of accession records took 4 months and was fairly straightforward and simple, at first. Any media that was accessioned had been described in the accessions database. Keyword searches for "compact disc" "cd" "dvd" and/or "digital" were conducted in the database and media was located within collections and added to the inventory.



After all known computer media was located, Jenifer investigated further. Within the stacks she found two designated areas for miscellaneous unprocessed or unaccessioned items and collections. Here, 11 groupings of computer media consisting of 139 CD's and DVD's that hadn't been accounted for previously were found and documented.

The bulk of the digital content inventoried consists of photographs on 192 CD's ranging from 1996-2013, leaving approximately 130 GB in need of appraisal. Identifying photographs and determining copyright will be challenging, as will copyright of music and videos. Only 10 Zip disks and 5 floppies were found. Also included in the inventory are electronic documents of the Board of Trustees. At present, the BOT Minutes are the most important electronic documents that have been acquired.

The completion of this inventory allowed staff to gain physical and intellectual control over the media. Concerned however, that the current policies and procedures don't account for born

digital material, the next steps are slated to include an analysis of the Archives technical limitations, and curatorial appraisal. Key to this endeavor is the utilization of the AIMS: Inter-Institutional Model for Stewardship which will assist the Archives in formulating their collection development policy to meet their collecting goals.

Photographs and Description of Computer Media:

	<p>AC 29</p>	<p>R.P.I. Players performances DVDs</p>
	<p>Accession #2006-03</p>	<p>Office of the First Year Experience records. Student orientation and survival photographs and videos.</p>
	<p>Accession #2009-25 Collection Title: Videos</p>	<p>All CDs and DVDs are in the same box as 7 VHS tapes – one collection. Miscellaneous videos consisting of photographs, videos and PPT presentations.</p>
	<p>Accession #2012-12</p>	<p>RPI digital images and music. Approx. 45 CDs and DVDs.</p>

	<p>Not Accessioned box labelled as "CDs & DVDs (images and videos), 2004-2008"</p>	<p>CDs and DVDs (photographs and videos) 2004-2008. Stack of 9 discs inside box with other discs inside it. We presume these 9 discs are separate from the other contents inside the box. Sticky not on top of stack says "videos."</p>
	<p>Office Desk #1</p>	<p>Office Desk images 1-5 CDs, DVDs, zips, and floppies found at desk. Majority of the discs indicate collection material.</p>
	<p>Office Desk #2</p>	
	<p>Office Desk #3</p>	

		Office Desk #4	
		Office Desk #5	