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Author(s): Paul Conway, Ph.D., 2010

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SI 640 DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

2010 Week 5: Transformations and Representations

THEMES FOR THIS WEEK

- Transformations
  - Representation and remediation
- Text and image
  - Mark Twain
- Text transformation
- More examples

"It is a little humbling to look back and admit that we are still asking many of the difficult questions that we were asking over a decade ago."

Puglia and Rhodes, *"Digital imaging,"* 2007

TWO TYPES OF LARGE COLLECTIONS

Thematic

© FAIR USE The Walt Whitman Archive

General Purpose

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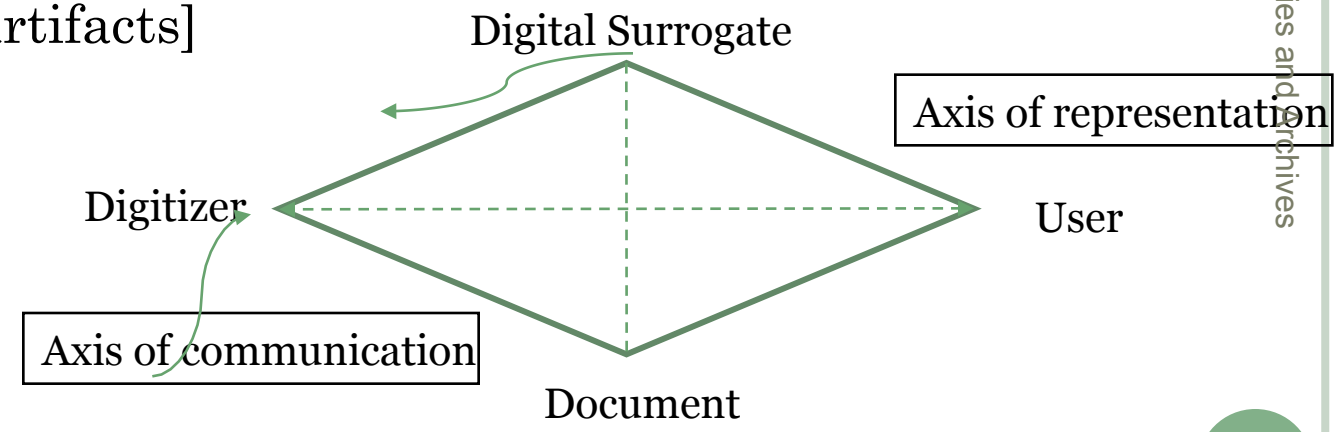
W.J.T. Mitchell , "Representation," 1995

TRANSFORMATIONS: REPRESENTATION

1. **Transformation**
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples

"…representation is always *of* something or someone, *by* something or someone, *to* someone."

- Intentionality [camera | scanner]
- Technical decisions [darkroom | "photoshop"]
- Materiality [content | historical digital artifacts]



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MATERIALITY AND MEANING

1. **Transformation**
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples

- Photo-realism masks human meaning making [intention, subject matter, format, target audience] (Schwartz 2000)
- Some meanings not translated into digital form (Koltun 1999)
- Formerly joined – materiality and meaning now result in 'ephemeral ghost' (Sassoon 2004)
- "Original" is fiction: surrogate may be superior (Mitchell 2003)

REMEDIATION

1. **Transformation**
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples

- Bolter and Grusin (1996/1999)
  - What is the concept?
  - Is it relevant?
  - Digital applications

"…we call the representation of one medium in another "remediation," and we will argue that remediation is a defining characteristic of the new digital media."

REMEDIATION AND RENDERING

1. **Transformation**
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples

"Our culture wants both to multiply its media and erase all traces of mediation…" (Bolter & Grusin 1996).

- Transparency is goal
- Hypermediacy: presence of old in new gives a sense of multiplicity
- Technologies of rendering (making visible) are tools for mediating mediation

- "No text is an innocent by-product…but rather a constructed product," perhaps unconsciously [Cook 2001]

Frey & Reilly. *Digital Imaging for Photographic Collections,* (1999, 2006). pp. 28-29.

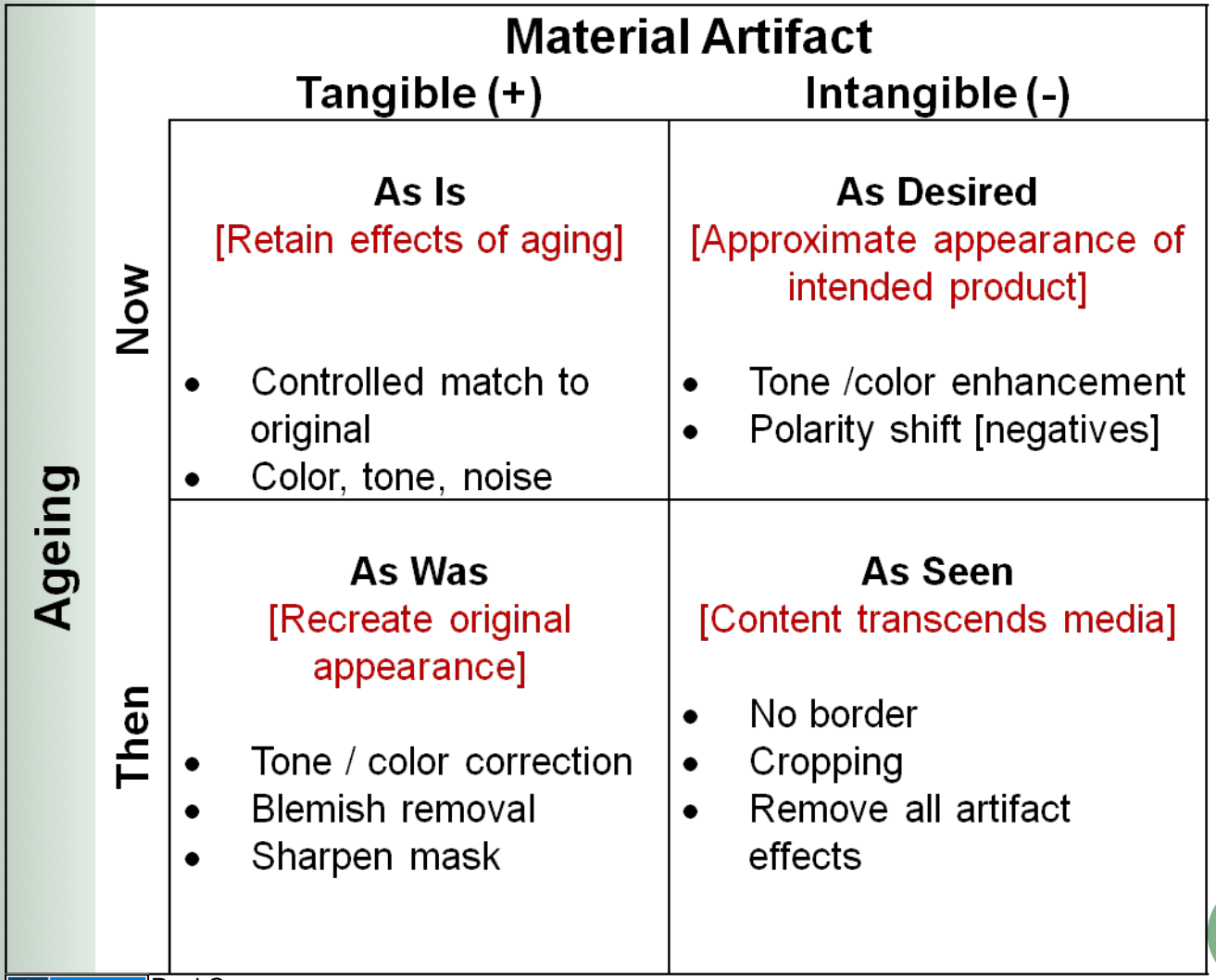
PICTORIAL RENDERING INTENT

1. Transformation
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples

- The photographic image is rendered. (As Is)
  - Match appearance of original
- The original appearance of the photograph is rendered. (As Was)
  - Reverse aging (color fading, physical damage)
- The photographer's goal is rendered. (As Desired)
  - Adjust for errors in exposure or processing
- The original scene is rendered. (As Seen)
  - Remove effects of intermediate

RE-PRESENTATION FRAMEWORK

1. **Transformation**
2. Text/Image
3. Text
4. Examples



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TRANSFORMATIONS: QUALITY DIMENSIONS

Intrinsic

- Reliability
- Objectivity
- Accuracy
- Believability

Representational

- Conciseness
- Completeness
- Consistency
- Understandability

Contextual

- Timeliness/Currency
- Value Added/Uniqueness
- Relevancy
- Scope/Depth

Accessibility

- Reliability
- Security
- Efficiency
- Usability

Shirlee-ann Knight. *User Perceptions of Information Quality in World Wide Web Information Retrieval Behaviour*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Edith Cowan University, 2008.

TWO TYPES OF LARGE COLLECTIONS

Thematic

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• Chapman, 2003.

TEXT AND IMAGE INTERMINGLED

1. Transformation
2. **Text/Image**
3. Text
4. Examples

- Text only (TEI or similar mark up)
  - Perseus Digital Library
    - http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/
- Image only (pictures of text)
  - AmMem Travel Notes
    - http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/lhtnhtml/lhtnhome.html
- Image over text
  - Making of America (Cornell and Michigan)
    - http://digital.library.cornell.edu/m/moa/
- Text over image
  - Documenting American South
    - http://docsouth.unc.edu/
- Text and image
  - Carrie Watkins Cookbook (Missouri Heritage)
    - http://campus.jewell.edu/academics/curry/library/digital/cwatkins/index.html

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. Transformation
2. **Text/Image**
3. Text
4. Examples

- What about text and image in the same object?
- What about metadata associations with text and image?
- What is the connection between source and representation?
- How consistent within a given collection of sources? Across collections through aggregation?

• Holtz, 2006.

TEXT AND IMAGE: MARK TWAIN

1. Transformation
2. Representation
3. **Text/Image**
4. Text
5. Examples

- Deeply collaborative (archivists/scholars)
  - Who is in charge?
- Strongly archival in its approach
  - What, exactly, do we mean by this?
- A publishing enterprise
  - What is being transformed?
- Technologically innovative
  - Archival finding aids and support for documentary editing

Mark Twain Project: http://www.marktwainproject.org/

• Cohen, 2006.

TEXT TRANSLATION

1. Transformation
2. Representation
3. Text/Image
4. **Text**
5. Examples

- Matt Cohen on Walt Whitman mark up
- TEI encoding as "de-formation"
- TEI encoding as translation (a textual form of remediation)

"This step—including a critical deformation in an archive known more for its historical bent than experiments in digital criticism—may be seen as a gesture towards a different way of thinking about archival politics."

Manuscript view:
http://www.whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/transcriptions/bpl.00007.html
Leaves of Grass view:
http://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1881/poems/8

• Dalbello, 2004.

TEXT AND CULTURAL MEMORY

1. Transformation
2. Representation
3. Text/Image
4. **Text**
5. Examples

- Study of development of digital collections of cultural heritage sources
  - Institutional context of DL development
    - University dominance
  - Content analysis
    - Biography, time and space
  - Assess nature of representation

EXAMPLES

1. Transformation
2. Representation
3. Text/Image
4. Text
5. **Examples**

- Whitman Archive
  - http://www.whitmanarchive.org/
- Valley of the Shadow
  - http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/
- Denver Public Library
  - http://history.denverlibrary.org/images/index.html
- Civil War Washington
  - http://civilwardc.org/
- Mornings on Maple Street
  - http://www.morningsonmaplestreet.com/lewishine.html

Thank you!

Paul Conway
Associate Professor
School of Information
University of Michigan
www.si.umich.edu

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Slide 5: The Walt Whitman Archive, http://www.whitmanarchive.org/; Online Archive of California, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/

Slide 6: Source Undetermined

Slide 11: Paul Conway

Slide 13: The Walt Whitman Archive, http://www.whitmanarchive.org/; Online Archive of California, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/