UNCAP
Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project

• 3-year Mellon-funded project (Jan 2007-Dec 2009)
• Partners
  – Library
  – Faculty
  – Graduate Students
  – Local Archive-holding Institutions
• Precursor project: Mapping the Stacks
Mapping the Stacks

Professors Goldsby and Stewart

– Post-depression, pre-civil rights era African American literary and cinema history

– Mapping The Stacks: Mellon Officer’s Grant
  
  • “to identify primary source materials (books, films, photographs, newspapers, magazines, manuscript archives, recorded oral histories, and other ephemera) in need of processing and cataloguing.”
UNCAP Goals

• Hidden collections initiative
  – Identifying and processing collections important for African American cultural history

• Faculty-Library collaboration
  – User-driven collections, programs, services
  – Process and preserve important research materials
  – Train graduate students to process collections in their field

• Cross-institutional discovery tool
Faculty-Library Collaboration: 
User-driven Collections, Programs, Services

• Not just consultation - Not just scholarship
  – User involvement in Library decision-making and processing

• No one size fits all
  – Processing level dependent on
    • Nature of collection
    • Institutional context and mission
    • Needs of researchers using collection

• Faculty participation in identifying and placing collections
Faculty-Library Collaboration: Training Graduate Students

• Primary source research skills
  – Hunting is fun, but overwhelming
  – Discovering patterns and relationships
• Fostering interdisciplinary investigation and conceptualization
  – English (including Poetry and Poetics), Cinema and Media Studies, History, Art History, and Music
• Discovery for seminar and dissertation research
Faculty-Library Collaboration: Faculty Benefits

• Discover new areas of research
  – Curriculum development
  – Scholarship production

• Student recruitment

• Fostering collaborative research in humanistic fields
  – Breaking the mold of individualistic research
  – Science model
Organizational Architecture

UNCAP

- Mapping the Stacks (MTS)
  - Jaqueline Goldsby
  - Jaqueline Stewart
  - CPL Vivian Harsh Collection
    - DuSable Museum
    - Chicago Defender

- University of Chicago Library
  - Jazz Archive
  - Modern Poetry Collection
    - Travis Jackson
    - Robert von Hallberg
Cross-institutional Discovery Tool

• One Tool For:
  – Multiple institutions with differing needs
  – Hierarchical relationships within project
  – Collection survey and finding aids
  – Multiple formats
    • Personal and institutional papers
    • Radio transcripts
    • Image collections
    • Oral histories
    • Sound recordings
    • Newspaper clippings
    • Stock arrangements
    • Etc.
Challenges and Opportunities

• Training students and faculty in archival theory and practice
• Marrying goals of faculty and library
• Collaborations with libraries in other areas undertaking similar initiatives (e.g. Johns Hopkins Mellon-funded Diaspora Pathways Archival Access Project)
• Infrastructure available for other collaborative projects (e.g. BMRC)