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Digitizing Murder: Content and Platform Considerations

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Digitizing Murder: Content and Platform Considerations

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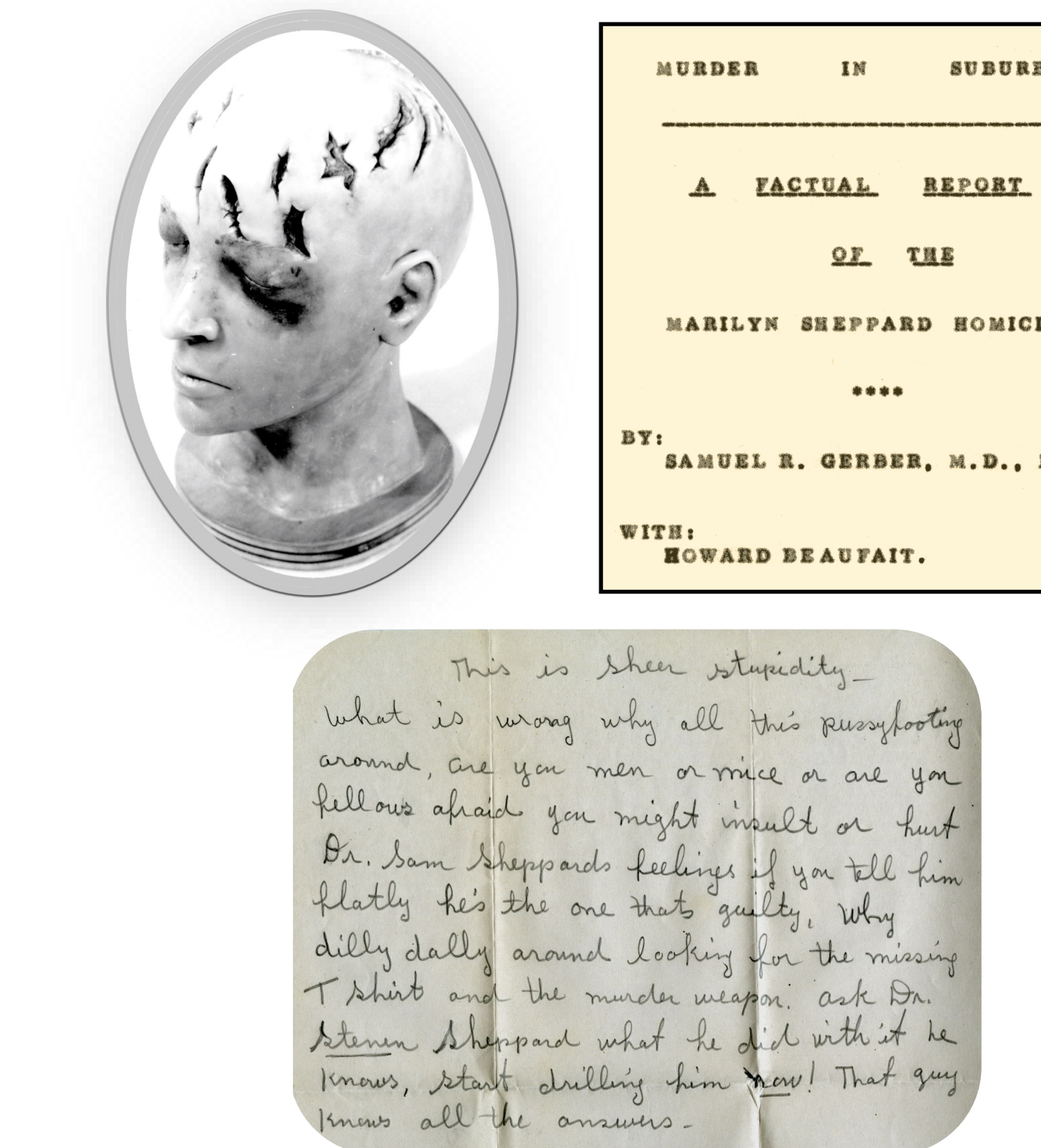
The Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office donated its materials regarding the Sam Sheppard trials to the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law Library with the stipulation that the library digitize the files, create a web exhibit, and store the files in the library for public access.



Content Considerations

Several of the factors considered when choosing documents and photos for the Sheppard Collection website include:

- Public interest
- Value to researchers
- Copyright issues
- Privacy
- Graphic content
- Document quality
- Physical items

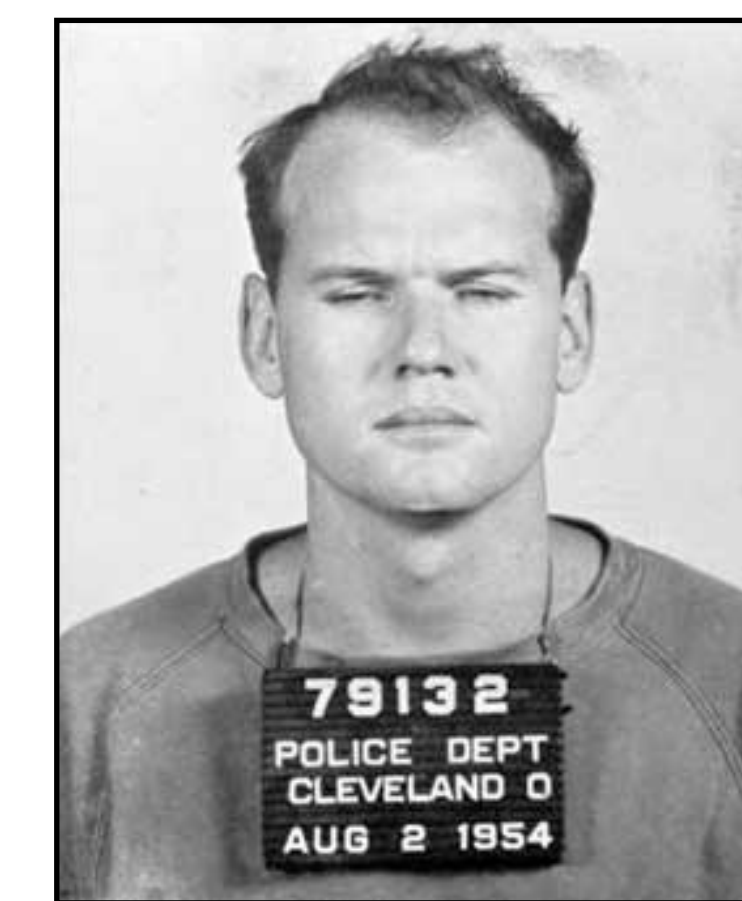


Platform Considerations

Comparing CONTENTdm®, Digital Commons®, and open source platforms, the library chose Digital Commons after considering:

- Cost/funding
- Ease of use
- Layout options
- Metadata options
- Transferability
- Searchability and discoverability
- Data storage and tech support

In the early morning hours of July 4, 1954, Marilyn Sheppard was bludgeoned to death in her bed. Her husband Sam, a prominent Bay Village doctor, maintained that Marilyn was murdered by a bushy-haired intruder. He stood trial and was convicted for his wife's murder amidst a media storm.



The media frenzy so tainted his case that the United States Supreme Court ordered a retrial in the decision *Sheppard v. Maxwell*. At the 1966 retrial, Sheppard was acquitted. He died just a few years later.



Courtesy of The Cleveland Memory Project

In 1999, Sam and Marilyn's son, Sam Reese Sheppard, unsuccessfully sued the state of Ohio for the wrongful imprisonment of his father. The documents collected and used by the prosecutor's office in this trial are the basis of the collection.

