



**Northern Illinois  
University**

**The Life Cycle of Scholarly  
Research: Leaving a Legacy**

**Panelists: Dr. Winifred Creamer, Stacey Erdman  
Jaime Schumacher, Danielle Spalenka**

**Open Access Week 2013**

# Preserving Digital Objects



The digital objects that Dr. Creamer has created in the course of her research are more fragile than most of the artifacts she has excavated.



## *The Dead Sea Scrolls*

VS.

The First Presidential Campaign Website

# Preserving Digital Objects



*Neglected for centuries...*



*...in a cave.*

*Carefully restored...*



Credit: AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner



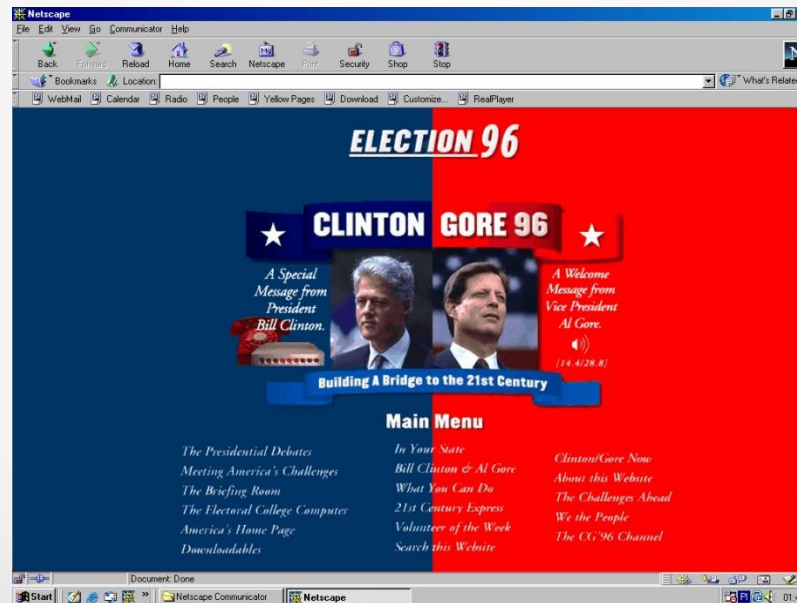
*...and preserved for future generations.*

# Preserving Digital Objects



**1996:** The first candidate to use the World Wide Web in his Presidential Campaign, William Jefferson Clinton, is elected.

**18 Years Later:** All that remains is a screen shot of the initial page.



**The rest is lost to history.**

# Preserving Digital Objects



But..... Why?

## 3 Reasons, Actually...

- Media Obsolescence
- Software Obsolescence
- Bit Rot

# Preserving Digital Objects



## Hope Is Not Lost!

- **Utilize Personal Archiving Best Practices**  
(Yes, there is such a thing!)  
(No, it does not involve printing out all your stuff!)
  - <http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving/>
- **Take Advantage of University Provided Services and Resources**
  - Institutional Repository
  - University Archives



# Northern Illinois University

**Huskie Commons – NIU's Institutional Repository**

**Stacey Erdman**



# Huskie Commons: An Institutional Repository for NIU



- An *institutional repository* is a secure virtual space that allows us to protect, promote, and showcase the work of the university (scholarly articles, campus publications, official administrative records, campus conference proceedings, research data, performances, student work, theses and dissertations) in digital form, in compliance with copyright laws.

# Huskie Commons: An Institutional Repository for NIU



## Huskie Commons mission statement:

The mission of the Northern Illinois University digital repository--hereafter Huskie Commons--is to collect, preserve, and share the intellectual output of the faculty, staff, and students in digital format. By centralizing the production of knowledge and scholarship into a one-stop "digital showplace," Huskie Commons stands poised to strengthen and extend NIU's teaching and learning environment more fully into a highly interdisciplinary digital realm. The Commons presents the best and brightest of NIU to the region, and even across the globe, helping the university become a true institution of "First Choice" for faculty, students, and staff.

# Huskie Commons: An Institutional Repository for NIU




- Faculty focus groups began in 2010, and a pilot program started up shortly thereafter.
- Library is working with ITS to ensure adequate technical infrastructure.
- A campus-wide taskforce convened by the Provost brought more visibility among faculty/departments.
- Initially collected only peer-reviewed scholarly articles, have since widened scope.
- Policies and procedures are still being ironed out, but faculty/staff/students can contact us to participate!

# Huskie Commons: An Institutional Repository for NIU



← → ↻ commons.lib.niu.edu



## HUSKIE COMMONS

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Huskie Commons >

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### Huskie Commons Repository

Welcome to the new Huskie Commons digital repository. This is a digital service that collects, preserves, and distributes digital material from scholars within the Northern Illinois University Community.

### Search

Enter some text in the box below to search Huskie Commons.



For more information on depositing materials,  
please contact:

Stacey Erdman, Digital Collections Curator  
97 Founders Memorial Library

[serdman@niu.edu](mailto:serdman@niu.edu)

815-753-1004



# Northern Illinois University

## Regional History Center and University Archives

Danielle Spalenka

# Regional History Center



- Mission Statement:
  - Collect, preserve, and make available to the public the most significant records of the northern Illinois region
  - Three sets of historical records
    - University Archives
    - Regional Collections
    - Local Government Records

# Regional History Center



- What is an archive?
  - To collect, preserve, and provide access to documents and records that have enduring historical value
  - Original and unique documents
    - Research notes
    - Papers
    - Annual reports and meeting minutes



# University Archives



- The University Archives serves as the repository for all official records of NIU that have permanent historical or administrative value
- We preserve all aspects of the University from its charter in 1895 to present



# University Archives



- Types of university records
  - Board of Trustees proceedings
  - President's and Provost's office
  - College and department records
  - Faculty and student papers
  - Extensive photographs of campus life

# University Archives



- Not only do we accept paper records but also born-digital and electronic records
- Digital records preserved by University Archives will be made available to researchers through Huskie Commons



# University Archives and You



- Should I give my materials to the archives?
  - Yes! Your work helps tell the story of NIU
  - “Archival worthy”
- Think about preserving your records NOW
  - It is much easier to simply “delete” a digital file that has archival value
  - Playing a more active role
    - E-mail us your stuff!
      - Memos, meeting minutes, notes, newsletters