Visual Archives as Historical Tools for Web Presentation

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Two Areas for Consideration

A. Issues and concerns in using visual archives and other graphics for Web presentation

B. Repertoire: the range of visual and graphic categories that convey historical information

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A. Issues and Concerns in Web Use

1. Rationale and value of visual archives

2. Avoiding perpetuating stigma & stereotypes

3. Privacy considerations & legalities

4. Rights' clearances in preparing for use

5. Labeling for context & acknowledgements

6. Some technical presentation considerations

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1. Rationale and Value for Visual Archives

- Incl. *historic* photos, art, architectural drawings, caricatures, line drawings, and moving images (film, video, digital).
- More than decoration – evidential value.
- What was chosen for preservation reveals values and tastes of creators & recorders.
- May disclose vital contextual information
- Scarce in mental health & addiction due to a mix of stigma and privacy concerns.
- For the researcher, the fact of scarcity becomes a challenge and an obligation.

What's wrong with this picture?

Staff Ontario Hospital Toronto 1932

Collection of the former Queen Street Mental Health Centre

All images are from the CAMH Archives except as noted.

Where are the female staff members?

... including nurses ...

... nursing students ...

... psychometrists ...

... cooks, launderers, cleaners ...

... occupational therapists ...

... stenographers, dicta-typists ...

... and social workers?

No comparable group photo for the female staff has been found. Did the Superintendent decide to leave them out of the 1932 picture?

Dr. William C. Herriman was the Superintendent in 1932-33, transferred from the equivalent post in Cobourg.

In his annual report for 1933 Dr. J.S. Stewart, Herriman's successor as Superintendent at Toronto, reported that Herriman had been granted six months leave of absence due to ill health on 15 Jan.'33, "and on July 15th Dr. Herriman was superannuated."

Why did he leave his female staff out of the photo? Was his illness a factor? Did the mystery retire along with him?

2. Avoiding Perpetuating Stigma and Stereotypes

- Some historic visual material fostered stigma and stereotypes, whether or not intentionally.
- Re-surfacing those images entails discretion and careful contextualizing; generally their value lies in learning from the insensitivity and mistakes of the past.
- Privacy considerations and respect, often ignored in the past, should be imposed to current standards.

In 1924 the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (later re-named the CMHA) toured a posters' display for department store windows across the country. This and the next slide are two of their posters.

3. Privacy Considerations & Legalities

- *Limited* privacy for officials, clinicians and staff: their names and functions are open, but private personal information is restricted by current Privacy legislation.
- 100-year rule of thumb: no name nor other identifier for a patient admitted less than 100 years ago to any psychiatric or addiction facility (eg., see Geoffrey Reaume, *Remembrance of Patients Past*, p.4).
- Federal *PIPEDA*: 100 years after creation of the record or 20 years after the individual's death.
- Ont. Prov. & Municipal *FIPPA*: 30 years after death.
- Ontario draft bill for Privacy of Personal Information: proposing 150 years after creation of the record or 75 years after the individual's death. HAIG supports this for "health information" but recommended reducing to 100/20 years (Fed) for non-health personal information.

4. Rights' Clearances in Preparing for Use
A. Copyright

- Pertains to the rights of the creator: intellectual property rights, rather than physical property rights or other considerations.
- Federal *Copyright Act*, 1997 for Canada, includes WIPO international compliance.
- Part III of the *Act*, to follow, will address digital and web considerations more specifically.
- Generally clear (i.e. public domain) for photos pre-1948, and fine art by artists dead for 50+ years in 1998; or if the image purchase includes indemnification against Copyright claims.

William Thomson - watercolour painting of
the Toronto Asylum, 1890;
collection of CAMH Archives

4. Rights' Clearances in Preparing for Use
B. Other Ownership Rights

- Ownership of the image (archives, etc.), ie. physical property rights; may involve a user fee; see appended policy note.
- Rights based on the image contents (such as a person's image, or personally owned physical property). Unless very old, make effort to determine if photographer obtained a valid permission or release.

William Notman (1826-1891), Canada's foremost 19th-century photographer and his talented Toronto partner, the artist John A. Fraser (1838–1898) captured this view of the Toronto asylum in 1868. People of ordinary circumstances like the anonymous man and boy were a regular feature of Notman's striking views. Both Notman and Fraser are renowned for their photographic realism, evocative perspectives and artistic use of line and light. Silver albumen photo (1868) by the Notman & Fraser Studio, courtesy Toronto Reference Library, Baldwin Room.

5. Labeling for Citations & Acknowledgements – information from which to select toward the ideal

- Artist or photographer credit: name & date.
- Identify subject matter & circumstances.
- Technical - medium & support for art; type /standard for a photo, film or digital image (e.g. Silver Albumen process on paper; Super 8 colour film, digital still photo or video, etc.).
- Repository source - archives, museum, etc. (e.g. as ideal for print format: Notman Photographic Archives, I-34480.1, McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montréal, courtesy CAMH Archives, Toronto).

6. Some technical presentation considerations

- Secure access to a scanner plus image mofifying software, eg. Adobe *Photoshop*.
- Convert digital images from file formats used for preservation & paper reproduction to web/ screen formats; ie., from TIFF (*.tif) to JPEG (*.jpg) and from bitmap (*.bmp) to GIF (*.gif).
- De-screen to remove dots /moire patterns.
- Decide on intensity of scan - dots per inch (dpi).
- RGB (for screen) rather than CMYK (paper).
- Import moving images (*.mpg) if available.
- Watermark can be applied for rights control.

Sample of watermarked web photo

Photo: Dr. John G. FitzGerald (1882-1940), Connaught Labs and University of Toronto.

Offered for sale by the U.S. National Library of Medicine, History of Medicine Division (Bethesda, MD) - photos database at: wwwihm.nlm.nih.gov/

"**Terms of Use:** Copyright status must be investigated before publishing or commercial use."

B. Repertoire: the range of categories for visual and graphic information

1. People –

● Patient-centred – individuals, or personal contexts such as patients' work or creations.

● Other individuals – to acknowledge contributions or identify them with programs, facilities, scientific discoveries, other events.

● Types – paintings (oil, watercolour, etc.), photos, drawings, sketches, caricatures.

An industrial therapy workshop, from the same era as the CNCMH posters but showing a more respectful, less stigmatized view of patients. Dr. J.G. FitzGerald's glass lantern slide no. 473, Connaught Laboratories Archives, Aventis Pasteur (Toronto)

Dr. Bruno M. Cormier (1919 - 1991), a signatory to the 1948 manifesto, *Refus global*, became Professor of Forensic Psychiatry at McGill University and the founding Director of the McGill Clinic in Forensic Psychiatry, from 1955 to 1987. Pencil portrait by Irma Coucill, courtesy of the artist and Robert Davies Multimedia Publishing Inc. (Montréal)

Nurse Marjorie Keyes, later the professional assistant and second wife of Dr. C. M. Hincks, in the Feeble Mindedness ("F.M.") Clinic held in Toronto General Hospital's psychiatric outpatient clinic, 1914 to ca.1922. Caricature (artist unknown), ca.1915

2. Settings –

● Landscapes, such as asylum grounds.
● Structures, such as asylum buildings, fences, interiors, treatment modalities.
● External contextual settings and community-based service arrangements.
● Maps that depict catchment areas, origin of populations, etc.
● Charts, graphs, tables that summarize data or illustrate other findings.

Notwithstanding the scandal created by the shocking 1961 exposé, *"Les fous crient au secours,"* l'hôpital St-Jean-de-Dieu at Longue-Pointe (Montréal) had long boasted through postcard sales of its lavish physical amenities, like this internal tramway system. Early 20th century postcard photo courtesy Les Archives des Soeurs Providence and CAMH Archives
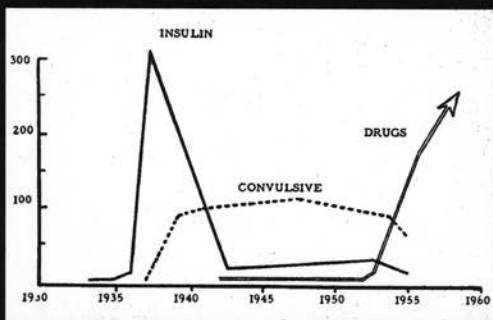
Practice settings: solo practitioner, ca.1920s. Dr. J.G. FitzGerald's hand-tinted glass lantern slide 182, Connaught Laboratories Archives, Aventis Pasteur (Toronto)
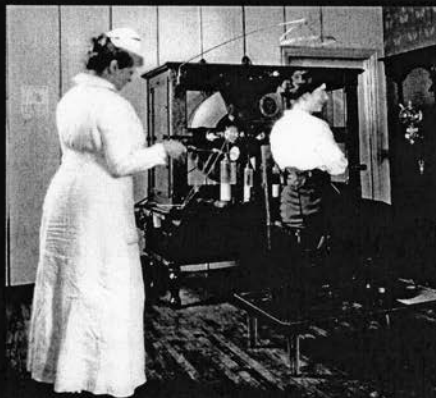
The Electrotherapy Room at the Homewood Sanitarium (Guelph, Ontario) ca.1915, courtesy Homewood Archives

"The number of articles published each year in the world's medical literature on insulin, convulsive and drug treatment of psychoses," early 1930s to late 1950s, reflecting the abrupt replacement of the former two modalities by pharmaceuticals. Jos. Wortis, MD, in *Insulin Treatment in Psychiatry*, ed. Max Rinkel and H.E. Himwich (London, UK.: Peter Owen Ltd .) 1960, p.28.
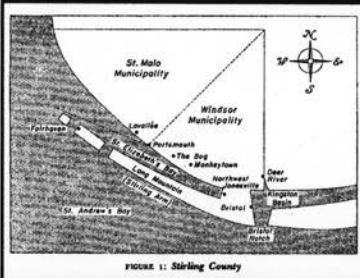
Schematic map of Stirling County and "Landing a pollock from St. Andrew's Bay" - two of a series of illustrations for the second volume of the Stirling County Study, *People of Cove and Woodlot: Communities from the Viewpoint of Social Psychiatry*. Courtesy Basic Books Inc. (New York), 1960, copyright Alexander H. Leighton

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