WORKING FROM SCRAPS: DIGITAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE EDWIN MORGAN SCRAPBOOKS

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STM WEEK 2018
1. The *Working from Scraps* Project
Scrapbook Images: Glasgow University Flickr Album “Edwin Morgan”

16 Volumes
3600 Pages
54,000 Items
Edwin Morgan (1920-2010) Scrapbooks

• 16 scrapbooks compiled between 1931-1967

• Rich resources showing queer identity, evolving technology, and the impact of war over 40 years

• A wide range of sources, including magazines, newspapers, literature, personal photographs, letters, drawings and more
“With respect to the 16 scrapbooks created by Edwin Morgan, we estimate that it would take one researcher over 8 years to undertake the diligent search activity alone, at a cost of more than £185,000.”

--Deazley, Patterson, and Stobo 2017
Innovating Around Copyright

- **Capture** rich metadata for the scrapbooks in a relational MariaDB database
- **Experiment** with digital prototypes that depart from facsimiles to give the scrapbooks an online presence
- **Explore** media-specific forms of meaning-making embodied by the scrapbooks
Built in collaboration with Akmal Putra, Advanced MSc., University of Edinburgh

2. Open Scholarship
• Public online prototypes
• Code shared via Github
• Connect to linked data (VIAF, WOEID)
• Database to be made public
• Our tools therefore:
  • **increase** the discoverability of the scrapbooks online
  • **reach** out to a range of users and interest levels to help explore the scrapbooks
  • **show** the value of rich, creative metadata in thinking beyond the facsimile
3. Publishers and Scrapbooks
The largest collections of scrapbooks in the public domain include the more than six thousand volumes at the Library of Congress, Washington DC … However, virtually every special collections unit has scrapbooks.

--Tucker, Ott, Buckler 2006, p285
Scrapbooks are the archives of marginalized groups and ideas made when such groups were largely kept out of bricks-and-mortar collections. As organizational structures, they [scrapbooks] reflect and embody the thinking of those groups.

--Garvey 2012, p209
Chronological distribution of *dcterms:issued* values in Europeana dataset (1800-2015)
Publishers Can Help:

- **Approach** scrapbooks and similarly ephemeral artifacts as texts worthy of publication
- **Collaborate** with research/archival institutions to tackle legal, material, and financial constraints to publication
- **Innovate** publication platforms to enable more creative routes of access by marginalized forms of media
- **Review and assess** digital interfaces and visualizations as arguments and forms of scholarly output
- **Emphasize** with and to legislators the need for changes to copyright laws that more readily account for marginalized and otherwise difficult texts
Thank you!
And thanks to:

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