

Digitally Uniting Historical Nutrition Guidance

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Abstract: The question of how to unify dispersed and disparate collections remains a problem in the archival profession. Documentation strategy, while widely known as a collection development strategy in archives, is not commonly adopted among institutions. (Malkmus, 2008) The emerging strategy of virtual reunification is still in exploratory stages at a handful of institutions. (Austenfeld, 2010; Punzalan, 2014) This poster describes an ongoing effort to digitize dispersed publications at a national research library. By depicting a process of acquiring and integrating publications, the poster will demonstrate other unification methods that archivists may draw upon to collect dispersed items.

This poster will address the National Agricultural Library's forthcoming Historical Dietary Guidance Digital Collection, an effort to document continuity and change in the U.S. government's influence on the American diet. The process involves a unique unification challenge: digitizing disparate holdings from the library's central collection while also acquiring, preserving and cataloging a variety of Internet resources. The poster will address several components of the ongoing project, including advisory group consulting and harvesting, analyzing and migrating metadata. By drawing connections to similar archival process models, it will suggest approaches, lessons and future areas of study for both the library and archival fields.

About the author:

Christian James is a M.L.S. Candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park, where he specializes in the Curation and Management of Digital Assets. He holds a B.A. in both History and American Studies from the University of Maryland, College Park and a M.A. in History from George Mason University. Christian is a Digital Curation Fellow at the National Agricultural Library and Student Assistant at the University of Maryland Special Collections and University Archives.