



Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy



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Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy



The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world with more than 134 million items, including:

- 59 million manuscripts
- 5 million maps
- 12 million photographs
- 1 million moving images
- And, of course, books – more than 20 million in over 460 languages



Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy



For most of our 207-year history, you had to be able to come to Washington to use these extraordinary collections.

In 1987, the current Librarian of Congress, James H. Billington, came to the Library with the idea that we needed to share our collections widely with the nation and the world.

But we had no distribution channel to make this possible.

Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy

- 1990: Library began digitizing its collections before widespread public access to the Internet.
 - Collections distributed to 44 schools and libraries in U.S. via CD-ROM
 - This 5-year pilot was called American Memory
 - Program was a huge success—teachers were using these digitized primary source materials and they wanted more of them



Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy



- 1994: Public access to the Internet became widely available.
 - We now had our distribution channel
 - Announced gifts of \$13 million to the Library to digitize its collections and make accessible online for use by educators and the general public
 - Congress agreed to provide \$15 million over 5 years
 - Library agreed to raise \$45 million in a 3-1 match
 - We raised more than \$48 million by 2000 and exceeded our goal of having 5 million items online by that same year.



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- 1994 was also the start of what we call our National Digital Library (NDL) Program
- Success of NDL Program led to other successes such as:
 - Thomas—congressional database
 - America’s Library—kids site
 - Global Gateway—international collections of LC
 - World Digital Library—proposed site to include materials from libraries worldwide



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- 2007: More than 11 million items online in American Memory
 - Most are from LC collections
 - Others from 33 partner institutions nationwide
 - More than 110 million site visits to loc.gov in 2006
 - Award-winning site is one of federal government's most popular
 - Collections in loc.gov are as diverse and deep as the physical collections of the Library itself
 - For example:



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- Advertising...

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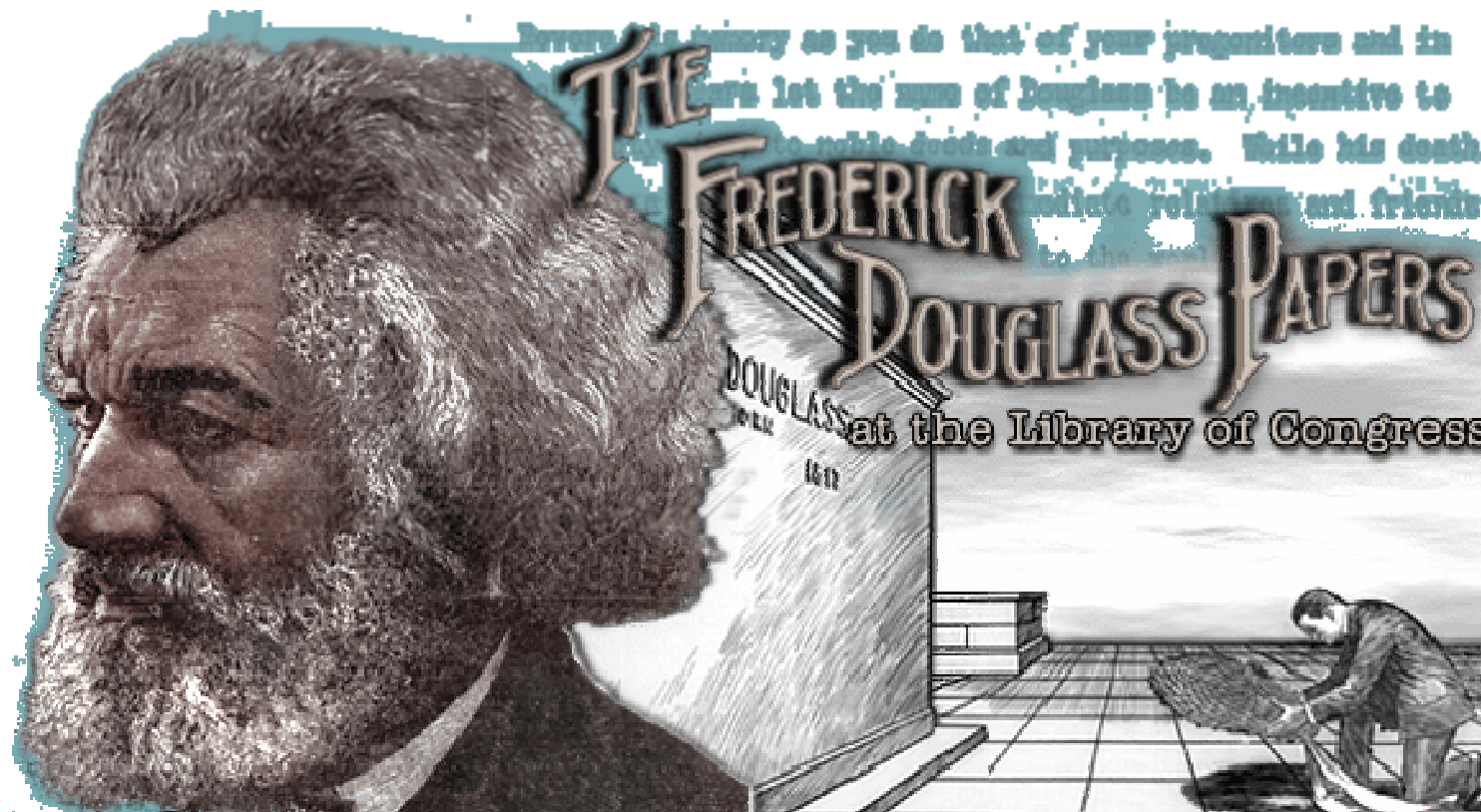


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– African American History and Culture...

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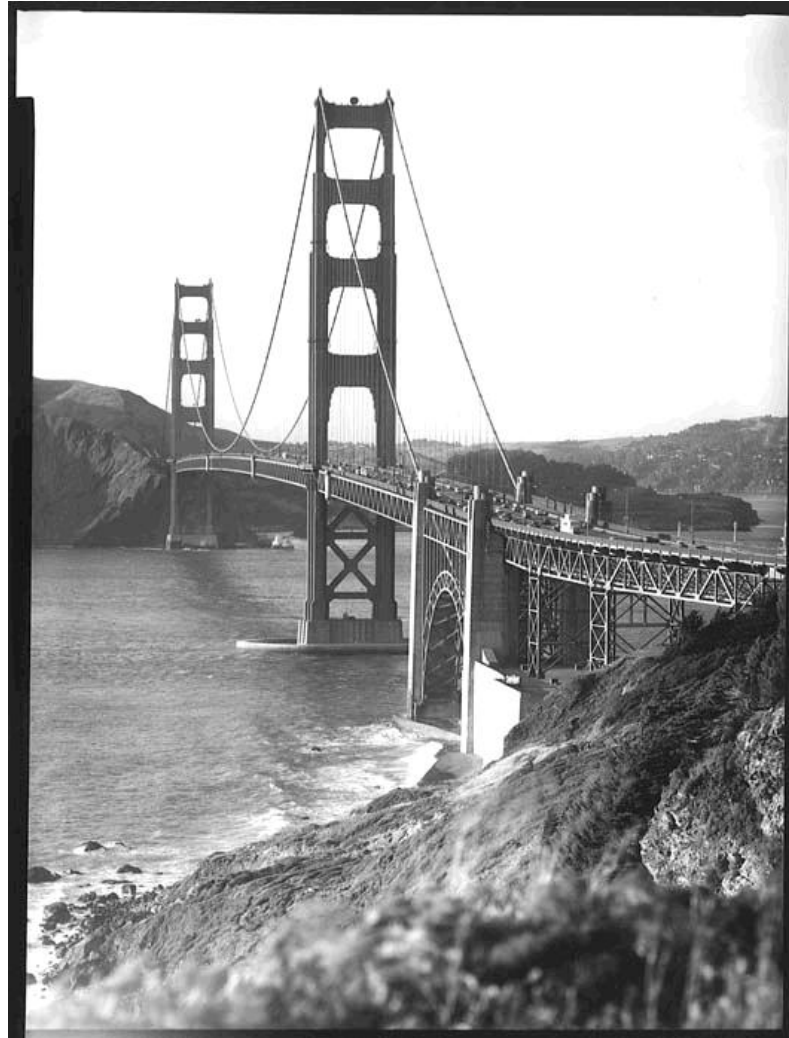
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– Architecture...



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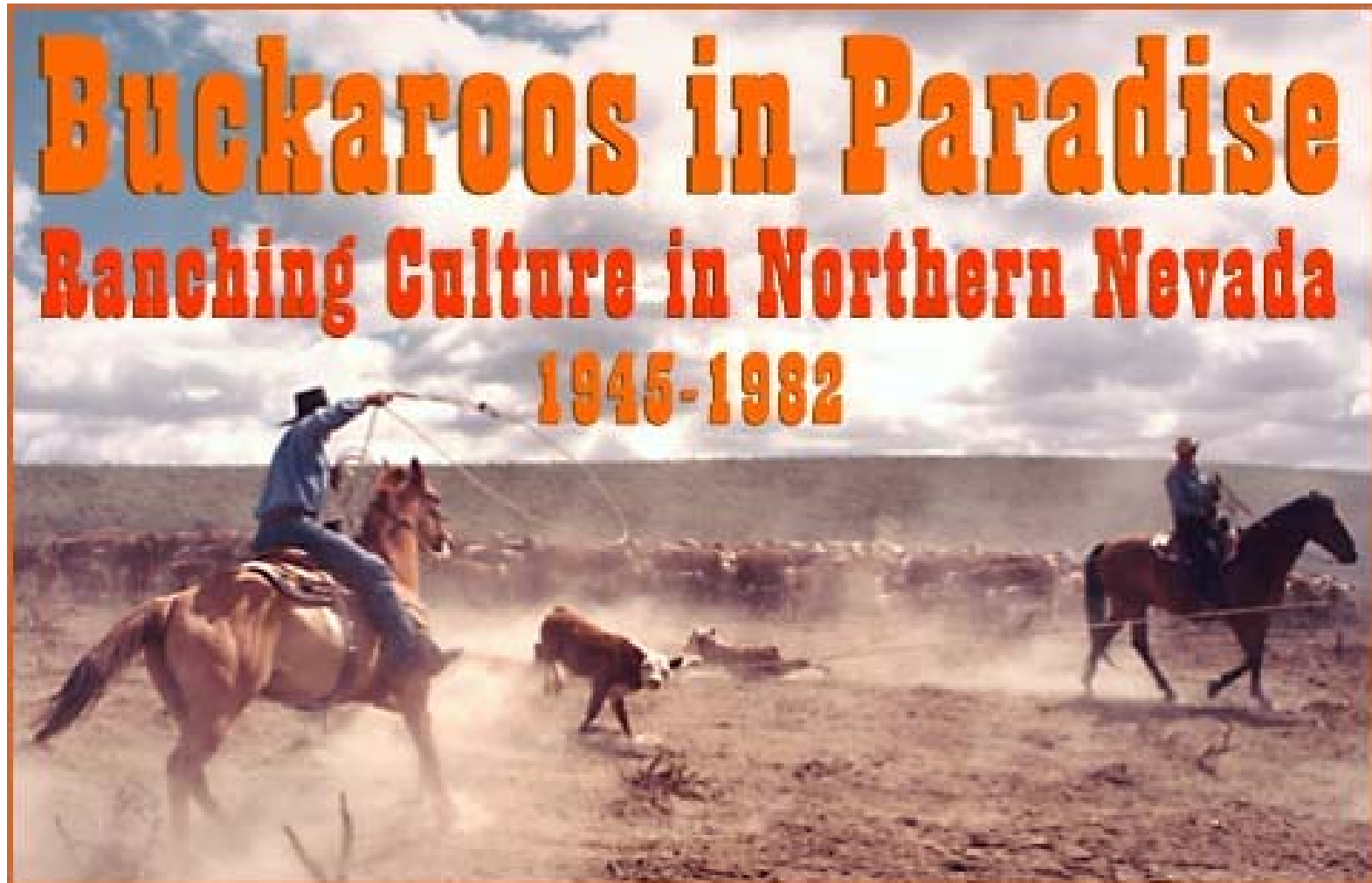




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– American Folklife...





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- Maps, such as Martin Waldseemuller’s 1507 map—the first to use “America”

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– Native American History...

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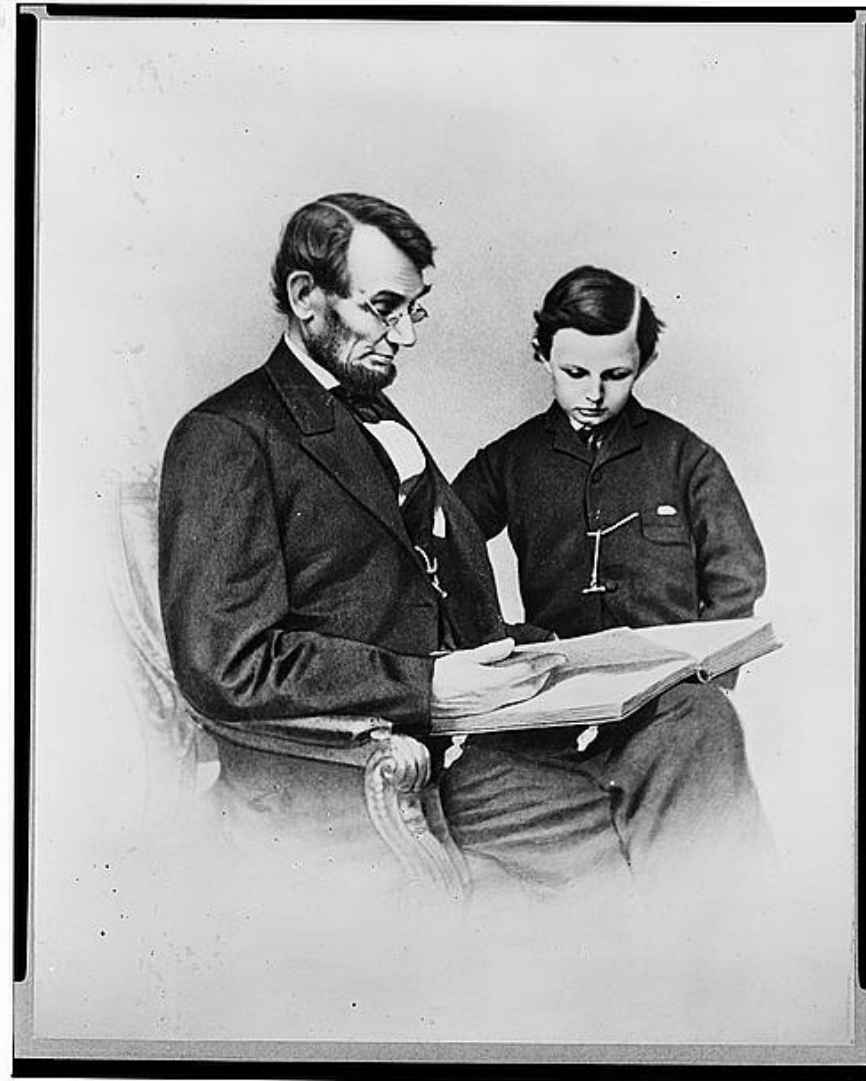
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– Presidents and Their Families...



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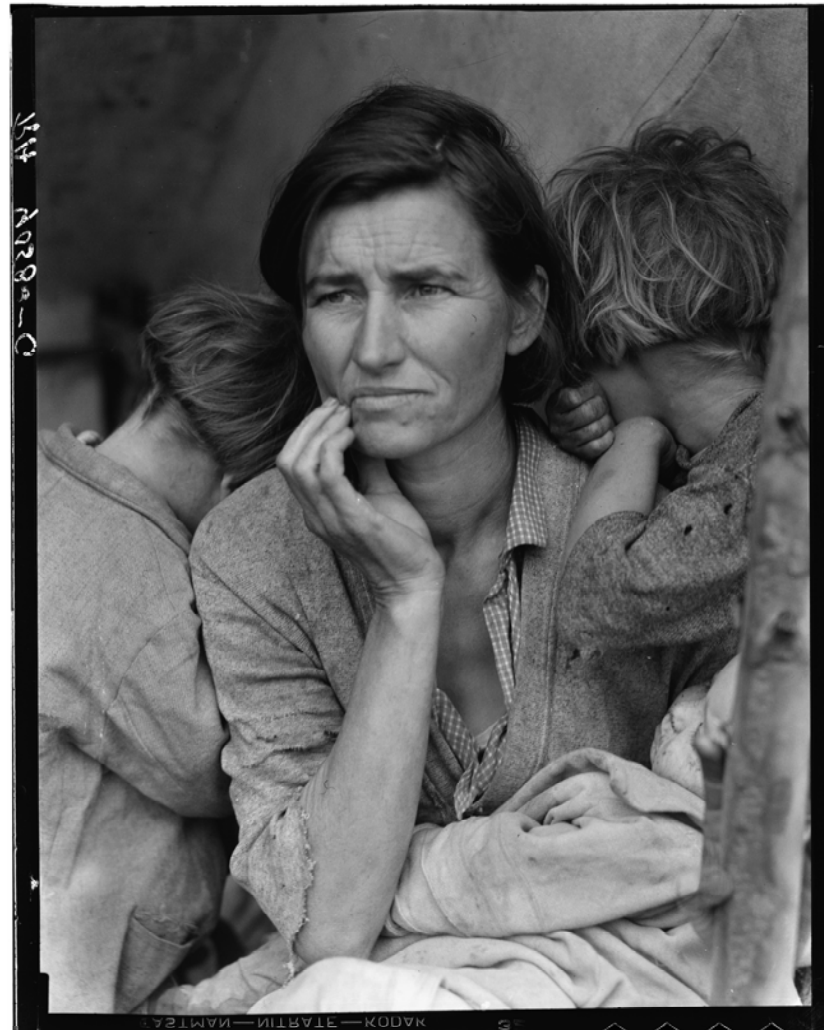


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- The Great Depression, such as this iconic image of “Migrant Mother”...

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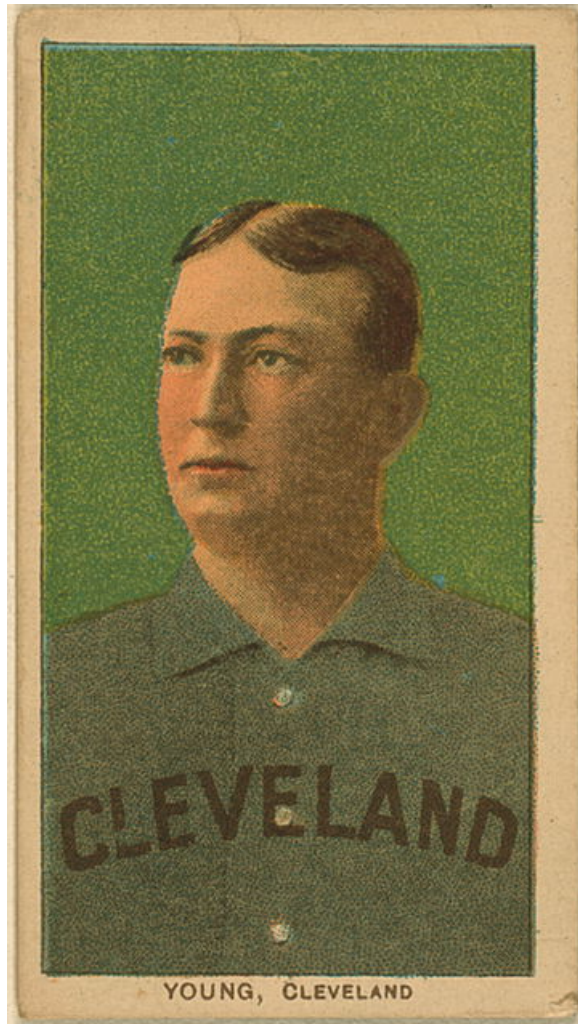


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- Sports...such as the earliest baseball cards

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- And Women's History...

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How we built these digital collections:

Worked with the Library's curators and subject matter experts to identify materials of maximum usefulness

- Also worked with partners at 33 other repositories

Worked with educational experts, including our own team of experts, to identify primary sources useful to educators

- Items keyed to state standards of learning
 - Lesson plans, activities and other curriculum-based programs for teachers
 - Educational Outreach program reaches teachers nationwide



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- Collections can be searched in a variety of ways. In addition to using search terms, the collections are organized so that they can be searched according to:
 - Topic
 - Time Period
 - Format Type
 - Place...

Library of Congress Digital Collections Strategy

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Library of Congress Digital Collections website. The browser's address bar and toolbar are visible at the top. The website header includes the Library of Congress logo, navigation buttons (HOME, BROWSE, ABOUT, HELP, CONTACT), and a search bar with a 'SEARCH' button. Below the header is an orange banner with the text 'Browse Collections' and a breadcrumb trail: 'The Library of Congress > American Memory Home > Browse Collections'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Browse by Topic:** A list of topic categories with links to 'more' information, including Advertising, African American History, Architecture, Landscape, Cities, Towns, Culture, Folklife, Environment, Conservation, Government, Law, Immigration, American Expansion, Literature, and Maps.
- List all collections:** A list of collection categories with links to 'more' information, including Native American History, Performing Arts, Music, Presidents, Religion, Sports, Recreation, Technology, Industry, War, Military, and Women's History.
- Help with browsing collections:** A section with a clock icon and a link to 'Help with browsing collections'.
- Browse Collections by Time Period:** A section with a clock icon and a grid of time period links: 1400-1699, 1700-1799, 1800-1849, 1850-1899, 1900-1929, 1930-1949, 1950-1969, and 1970-present.
- Browse Collections Containing:** A section with a circular icon and a list of collection types: Maps, Manuscripts, Motion Pictures, Sheet Music, Song Sheets, Photos, Prints, Sound Recordings, and Books, Other Printed Texts.
- Browse Collections by Place:** A section with a map icon and a list of geographic regions: Northeast U.S., South U.S., Midwest U.S., West U.S., and All U.S., International.

The footer of the website contains the text 'The Library of Congress | Legal'.



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Collections have also been repurposed to tailor them to the specific needs of educators and their students.


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The Library of Congress

The Learning Page

The Learning Page... especially for teachers

- getting started
- lesson plans
- features & activities
- collection connections
- community center
- professional development

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Selected for **101 BEST WEB SITES**
ISTE Publications 2005-2006

Let us be your "front door" to more than 100 **American Memory collections!** Here is a "teacher's eye view" of over 7 million historical documents, photographs, maps, films, and audio recordings. You will find lessons, features, activities, and tips and tricks for using these collections in your classroom. Please join us!

[More Educational Resources - Around and Beyond The Library](#)

[The Library of Congress](#) | [American Memory](#) [Contact us](#)

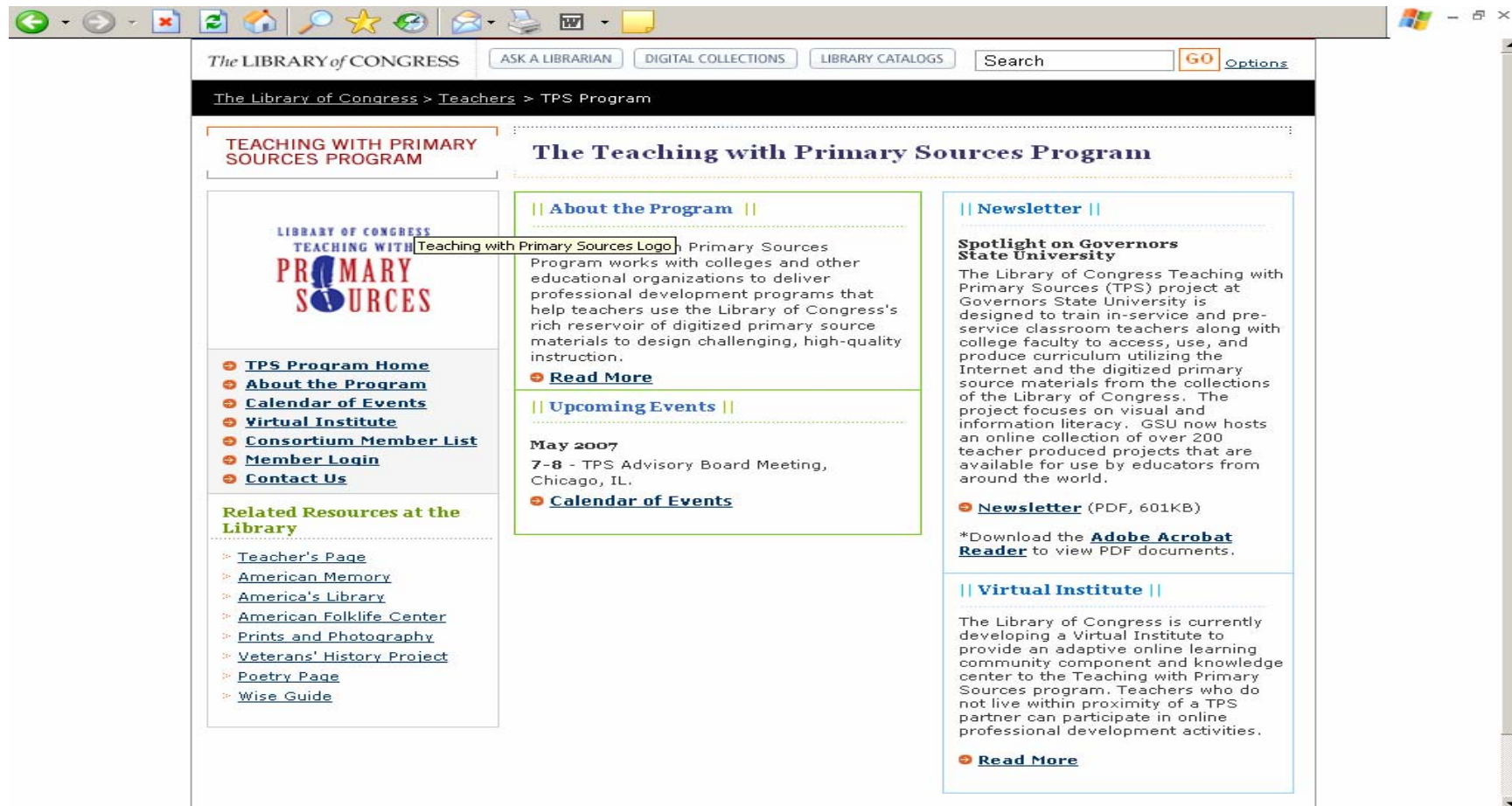


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Learning Page materials support our Teaching with Primary Sources program, which reaches all 50 states

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STATISTICS:

- More than 110 million site visits in 2006
- Over 523 million page views
- Users from more than 223 countries
- More than 22 million items online, including 11 million in American Memory Web site
- Winner of multiple awards

- 2000:** By this time, we realized that we needed to build a trusted repository for these items to ensure their long-term availability.
- Needed not just for the materials that we had digitized but also for the extraordinary growth in the number of “born-digital” materials we needed to collect in order to fulfill our mission:

To sustain and preserve a universal collection for Congress and the American people



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Every 15 minutes the world creates in digital form the equivalent of all the information the Library of Congress has collected in its 207-year history.

How can the Library of Congress and other repositories even begin to collect and preserve the digital content that will be needed by future generations?

The issues are social as well as technical:

Who will determine:

- What is worth saving?
- Who saves it?
- How it is saved?
- How digital preservation is paid for?



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2000: The National Academy of Sciences issued a report, at the request of the Library, that laid out what we needed to do as a 21st century library.

One of their recommendations was that we lead a digital preservation program for the nation.



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In December 2000, the U.S. Congress established the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program to enable the Library to collect the digital content that will be needed for the long term



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Congress mandated that:

The Library work with other institutions in the federal government as well as the private sector

The Library form a network of partners to do this work, as no single institution alone can collect and preserve the important digital content necessary for the future



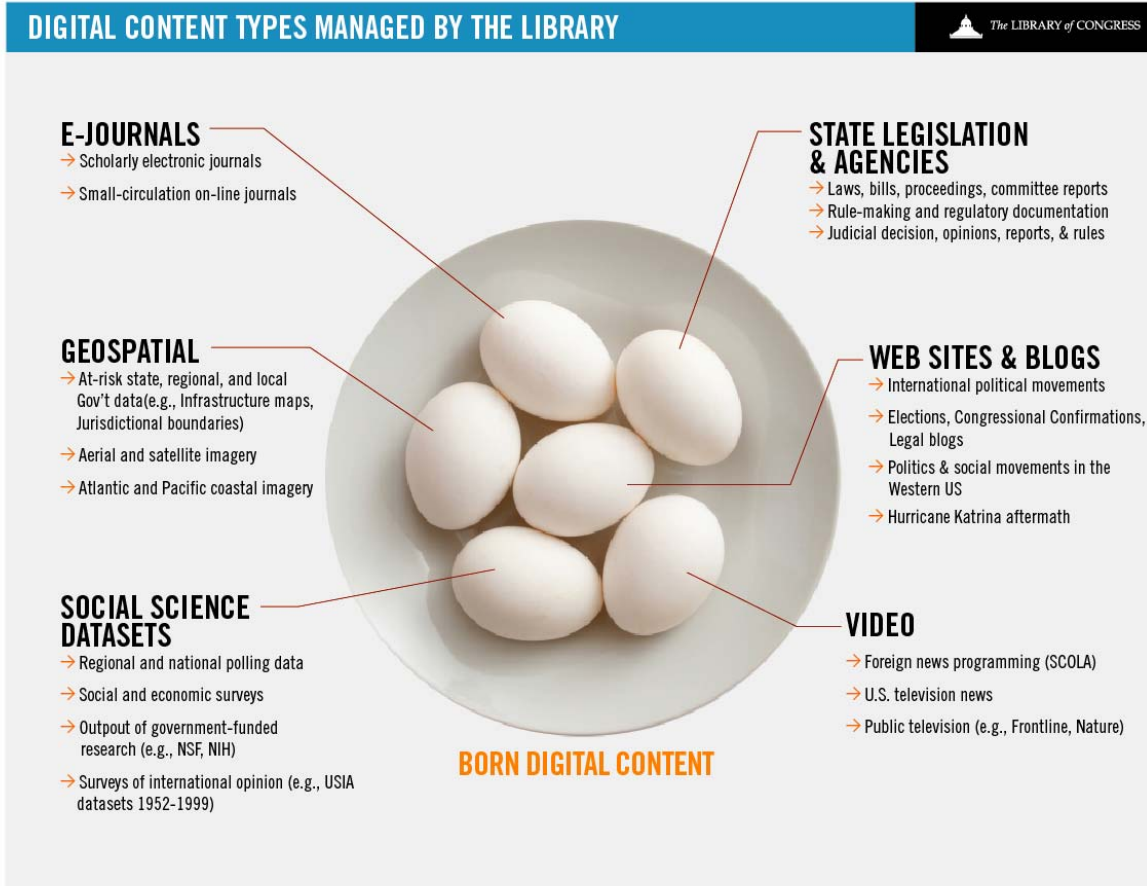
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We are making award-investments in three areas (in most cases the awardees match dollar-for-dollar the amount of the award from the Library):

- Collection, selection and preservation of at-risk digital content
- Digital preservation technical architecture
- Digital preservation research

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Digital Preservation Research:

With the National Science Foundation, we have funded 10 cutting-edge projects

Technical Architecture:

- San Diego Supercomputer Center
- Los Alamos National Laboratory



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The work the partners are doing includes:

Committed Content Partners:

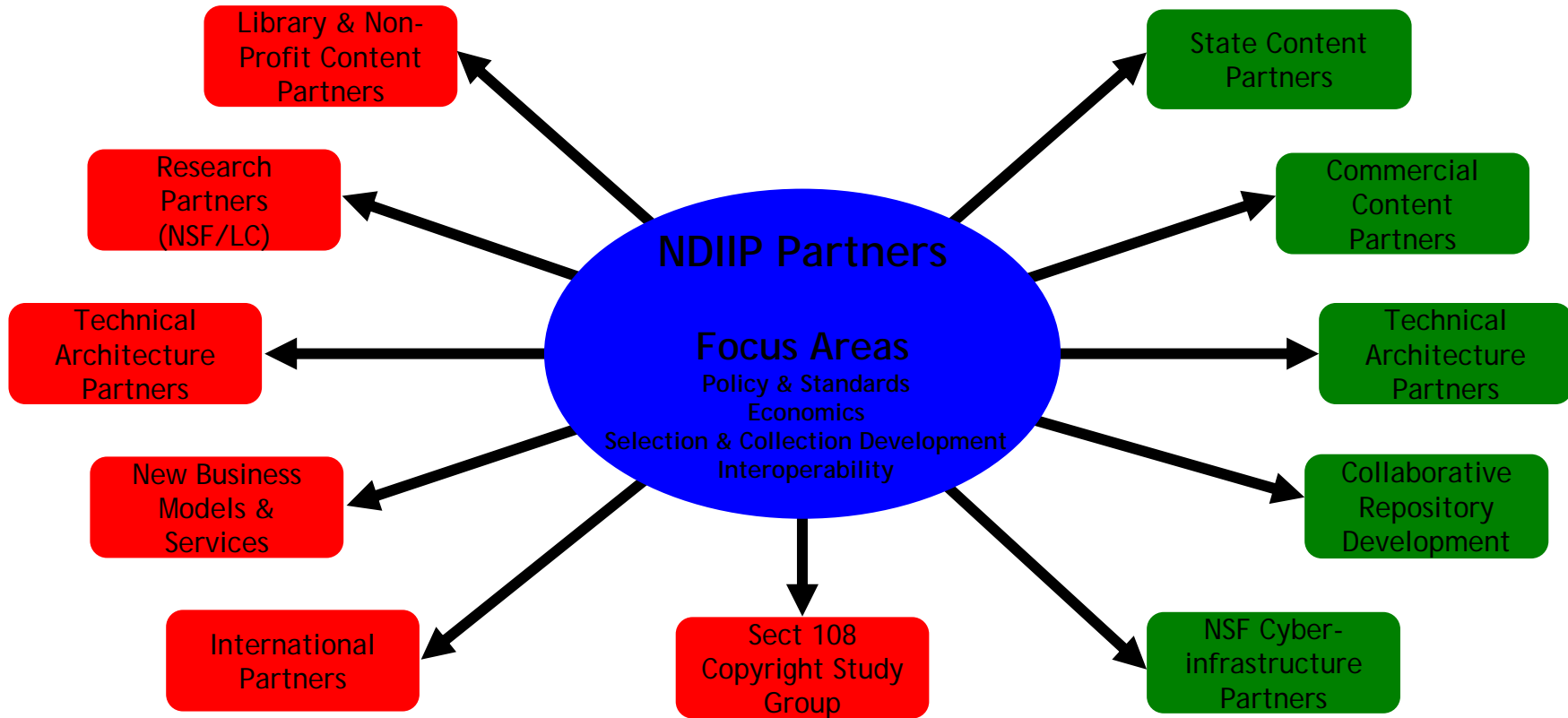
- Universities
- Libraries and archives
- U.S. States
- Commercial producers

Services Partners:

- Storage
- Tools
- Services
- Section 108 Study Group working on copyright law revisions

Research Partners

- 10 Projects in cutting-edge digital preservation research



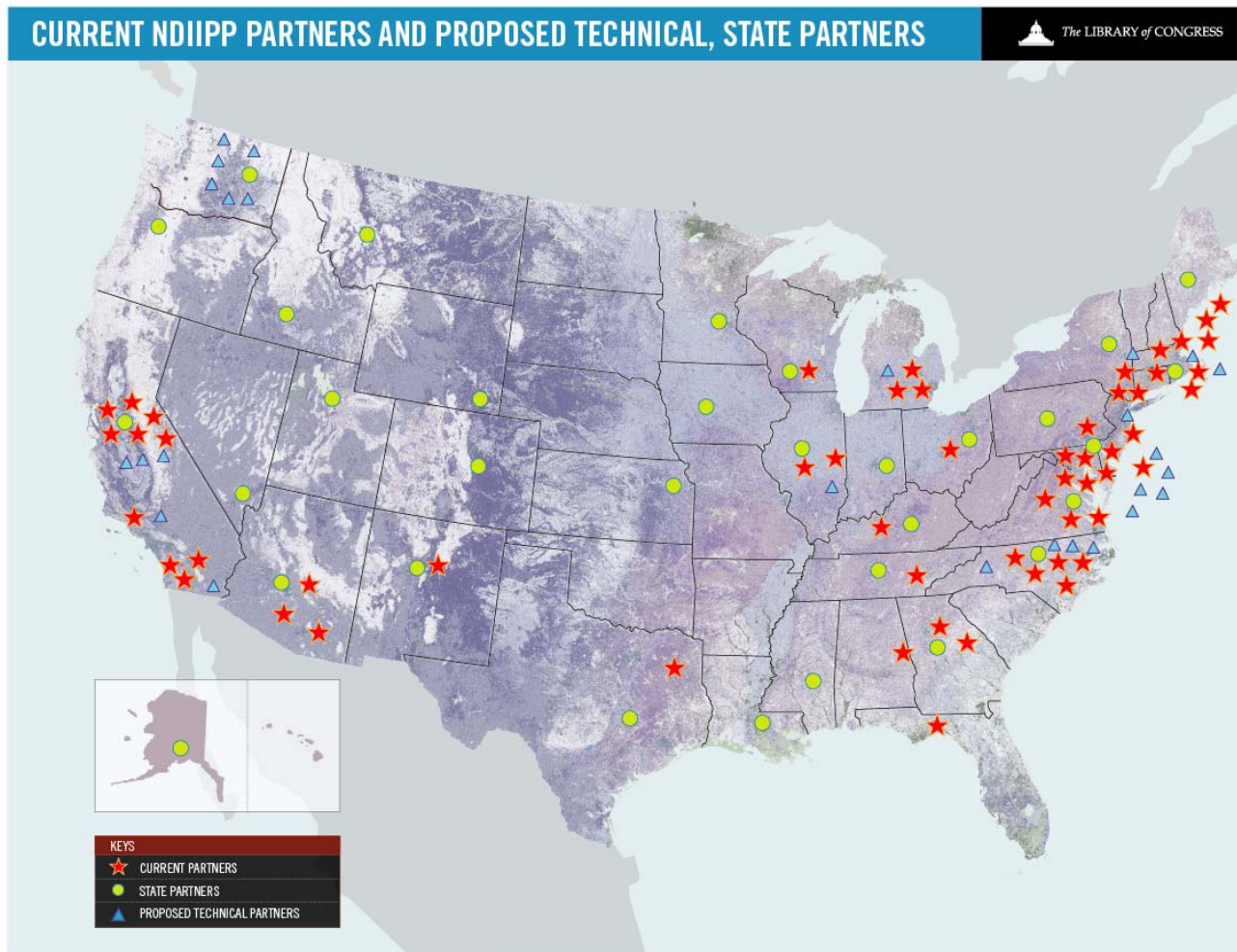


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So far, the Library and its 67 partners have saved more than 66 terabytes of at-risk content that otherwise would have been lost

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Future investments:

NDIIPP plans investments in three areas:

- Private sector creators of content such as films, art in electronic formats, video games
- U.S. states, to help them preserve important state records
- Current partners, to help them continue their important work

This will bring the digital preservation network to more than **100 partners** committed to working within a collaborative network to leverage expertise and resources



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NDIIPP Strategic Outcomes 2007-2010

- Develop a national digital collection for the nation
- Define the scope and context of a national digital stewardship network
- Develop shared technical solutions and tools
- Develop a model for economic sustainability
- Promote public awareness of the importance of digital preservation

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The Library of Congress > Digital Preservation

DIGITAL PRESERVATION

- [Digital Preservation Home](#)
- [Importance of Digital Preservation](#)
- [What the Library Is Doing](#)
- [Partners](#)
- [Achievements](#)
- [What You Can Do](#)
- [News & Events](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Related Resources

- [Standards at the Library of Congress](#)
- [Digital Collections & Programs](#)
- [U.S. Copyright Office](#)
- [Section 108 Study Group](#)
- [Web Capture](#)
- [World Digital Library](#)

[RSS](#)

TODAY
TOMORROW
FOREVER

The preservation of this information is vital to your heritage.



Talking about Digital Preservation

▶ ◀ ⏪ ⏩ 00:00 00:00 ◀ ▶

David Kirsch - Assistant Professor, University of Maryland

Abby Smith - NDIPP Consultant

American Voices - Digital Preservation

Highlights

NDIPP to Offer Several Panels in June

On June 25, the NDIPP will hold several informative and thought-provoking events at the Library of Congress. The events are timed to coincide with the Annual Meeting of the American Library Association, which is in the nation's capital this year.

NDIPP in the News

The Washington Times ran an excellent feature story on NDIPP and the importance of digital preservation.

[Read More](#)

Resources

Preserving Your Digital Memories

Just as libraries are preserving the nation's digital memory, individuals need to take steps to preserve their own digital memories. Here are some tips on what you can do.

[Read More](#)

Video Transcripts

Meeting the Challenge

The world's cultural and intellectual output is increasingly being created in digital formats, much of it available on the Web. The Library recognized the cultural heritage value of Web-based materials at an early date and has actively been exploring ways to preserve these materials.

[Read more](#)

Digital Preservation Pioneers

Although he may have a collection of more than 2,000 T-shirts, Howard Besser is best known as an often-quoted visionary. Learn what he has to say about digital preservation.

[Read More](#)

Did You Know?

Did you know that the average Web site lasts between 44 and 100 days?

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