OLA Superconference 2016

Hidden Gems in the Academic Library

A Collaborative Approach to Revitalize a Special Collection and Preserve Knowledge

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Hello!

- Student at the Faculty of Information at U of T

- Started in the TALint program at OISE in late March 2015

- I will be discussing:

    - OHEC, the historical collection at OISE

    - the work I've been doing in OHEC as part of the TALint program

    - reflections on knowledge preservation and the internship process

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Hello!

Director, OISE Library (until August 2015)

I will be discussing:

University of Toronto Libraries and OISE

Brief history of the TALint (Toronto Academic Libraries Internship) program

Background of the OHEC internship

Michael Meth
Associate Dean, Research and Learning Services, Florida State University Libraries
@mmmeth

University of Toronto Libraries and OISE

- Largest academic library system in Canada, and one of the largest in the world

- 44 service points, incl. Robarts, Fisher Rare Book Library, and OISE

TALint (Toronto Academic Libraries Internship)

- Started Fall 2014

- UofT Libraries hire iSchool students for up to 20 months internships @ 15hrs/week

- Provide students will real working experience, gain practical skills, and support UTL efforts

For more information http://www.ischool.utoronto.ca/content/talint-program

OHEC Internship

- Advertised internship September 2014

- Purpose: "The iSchool intern would work with us on inventorying and updating the collection, creating promotional materials and finding aids, and helping patrons with OHEC research requests."

- But also… long term OISE staff member was nearing retirement, and we needed to figure out a way to plan for the future of the collection

Ontario Historical Education Collection(s)

Textbook Collection

Government Documents

Teacher Training Materials

Archival Documents

Photographs and Ephemera

Paulo Freire Collection

Collections Overview

- Covers elementary, secondary and teacher education in the Province from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day

- Over 7000 items

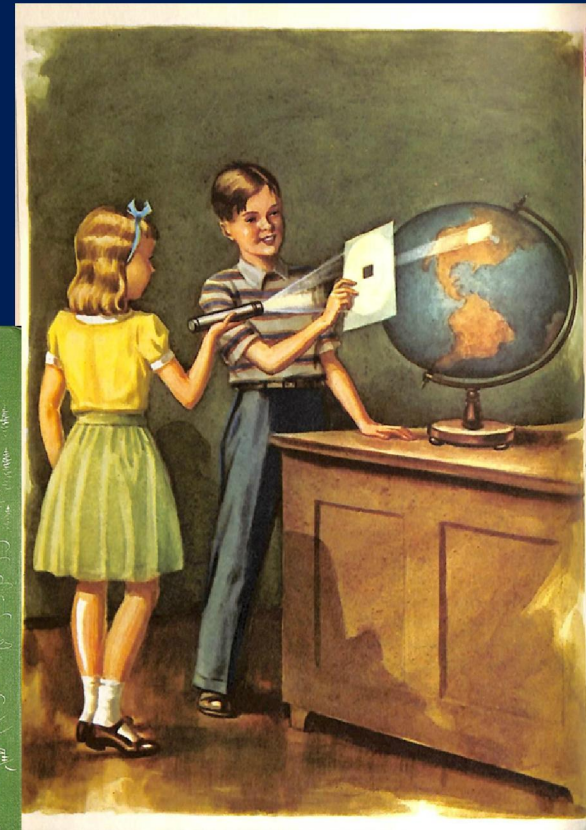- Includes textbooks and other teaching materials, government documents, periodicals, yearbooks, photographs and ephemera
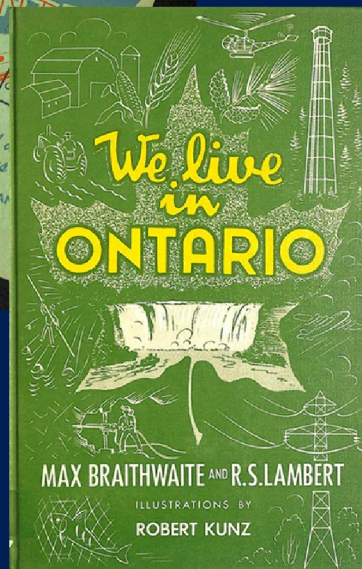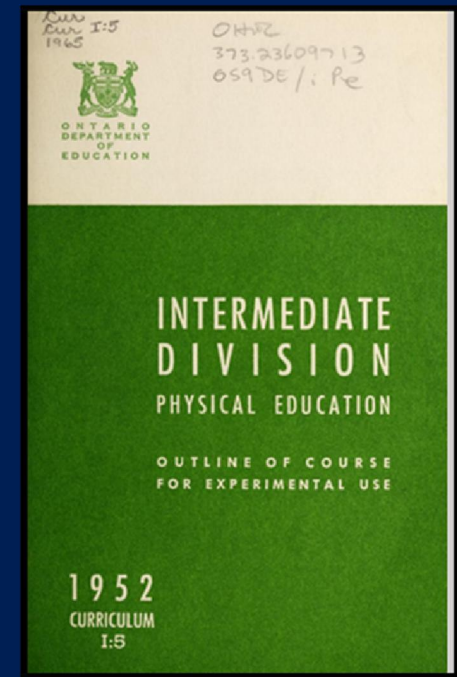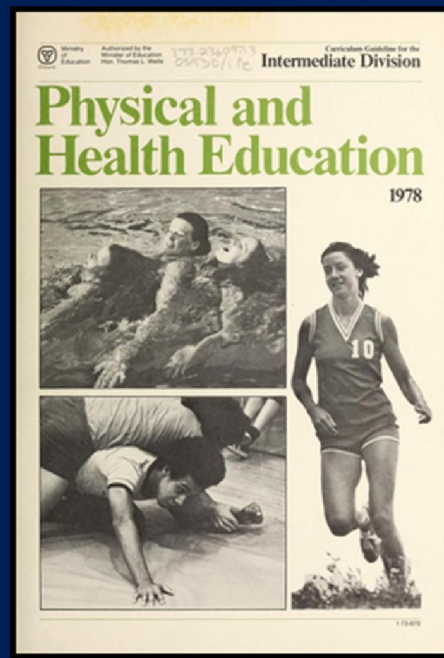
Textbook Collections

- Government approved and authorized textbooks used in Ontario schools from 1846 - 1996

- Also includes accompanying materials such as workbooks, teacher's guides

- Approved textbook lists were released annually as Circular 14
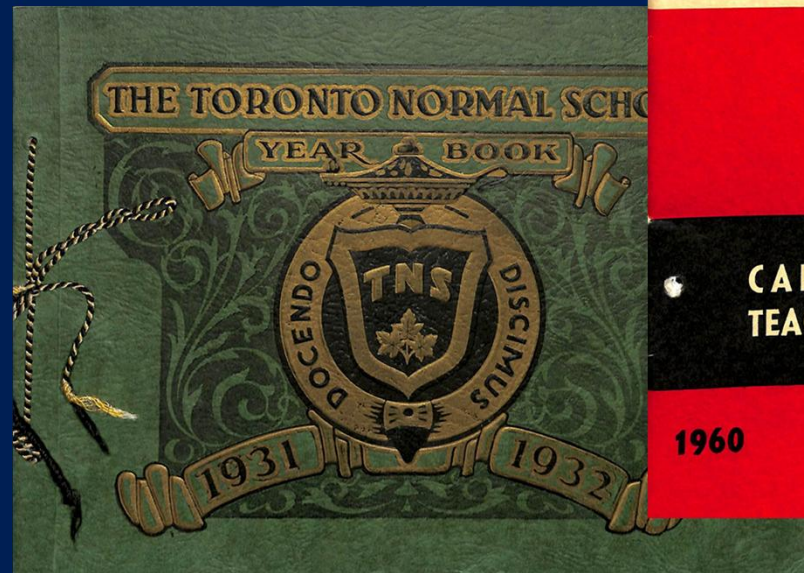
Textbook Collections

Government Documents on Education in Ontario

- Material from the mid-19th century to present day

- Reports, Policy, Procedures

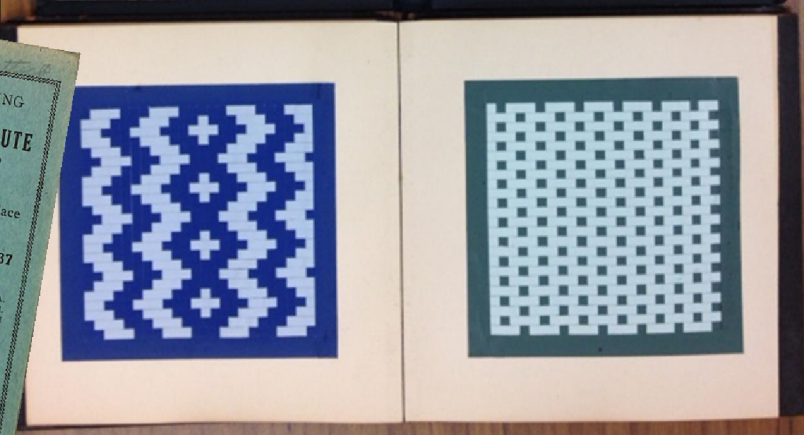- Curriculum Guidelines

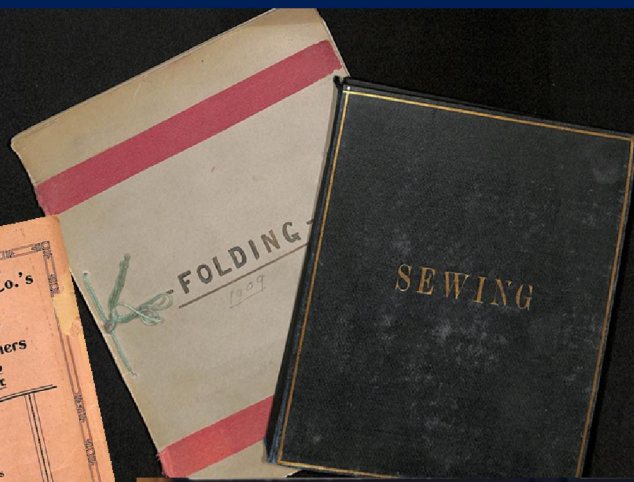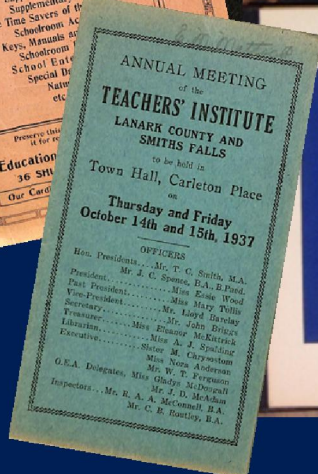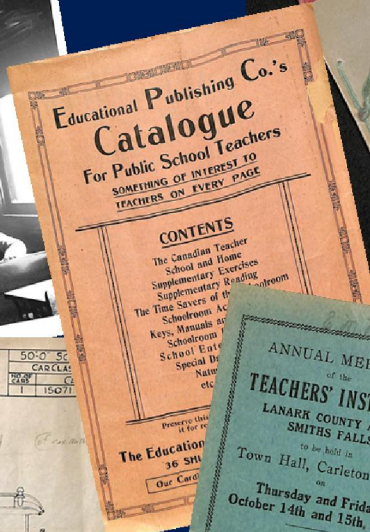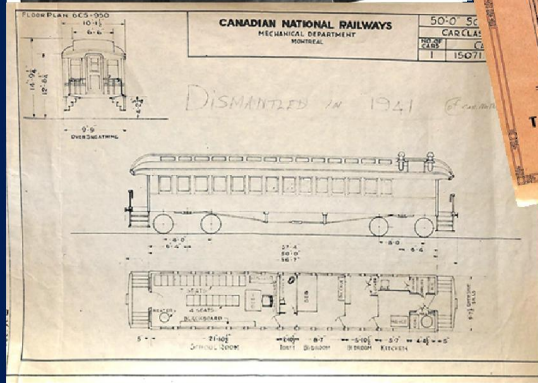- Requirements

- Circulars & Memorandum

Normal School and Teacher Colleges

- School Calendars

- Handbooks, Rules and Regulations

- Courses of Study

- Yearbooks

Other Materials

Goals of the internship

- Collection Management - help clear out backlog

- Raising the profile of the collections and making them more accessible to increase use

- Knowledge preservation - gain knowledge and insight from OHEC specialist and find ways to document and share collection-specific information

- Using personal connections and interests towards a productive experience

Initial Obstacles

- Gaining collection knowledge

- Establishing trust

- Building confidence

Gaining and Preserving Knowledge

Two Types of Knowledge:

Explicit Knowledge - contained in documents and media, easy to comprehend and transfer

Tacit Knowledge - gained by personal experience and human interaction, context specific, difficult to transfer
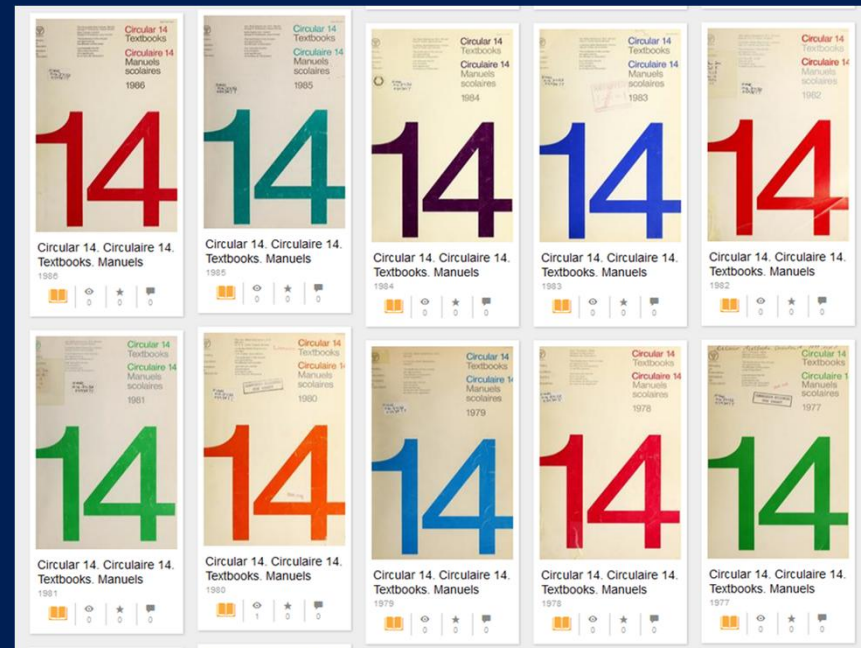
Backlog Project

- Process approx. 500 books for inclusion in collections

- Worked with Collection Specialist to develop workflow for project

- Instills tacit knowledge

- Gain confidence and knowledge through a productive activity

- Gain trust through consistent collaboration

Digitizing Circular 14 (1887-1996)

- Government policy and procedures for textbook approval and complete list of approved textbooks

- Important for both collection development and historical textbook research

- Conversation about digital preservation emerged during the backlog project

- Collaborative effort

Outreach

- Weekly #tbt image tweets on twitter to connect OHEC to community

- Raise awareness of collections

- Promote new materials and newly digitized materials

- Create image bank towards future use

Research Guide

- A guide is crucial for researchers accessing the collection - especially for materials that have previously had no public presence

- Also intended to document experience and knowledge gained working with collection specialist and with collection itself

- Challenge in balancing information for staff/librarians vs. information for outside users
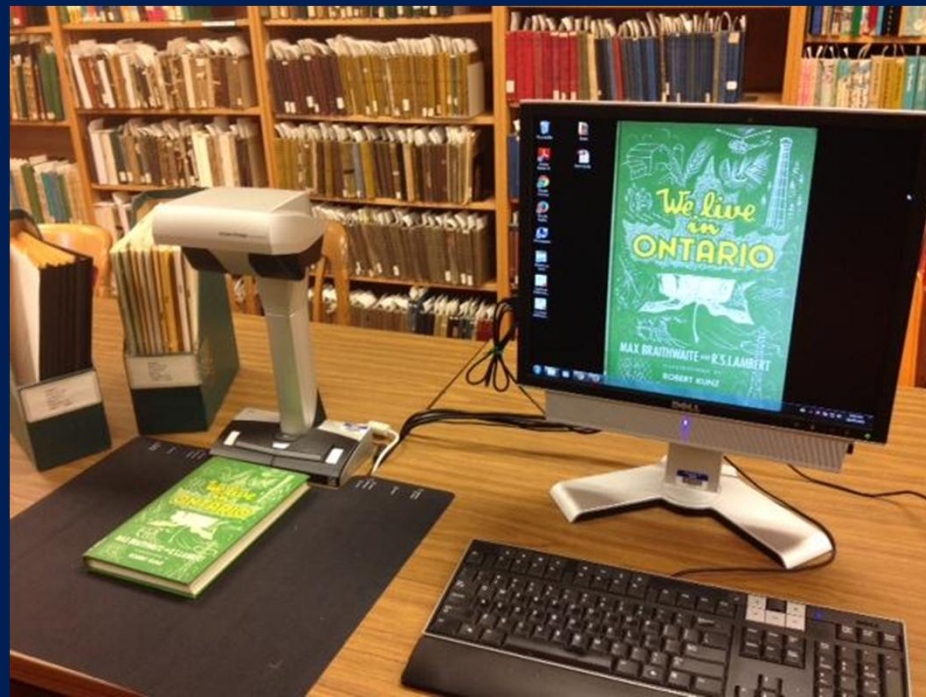
Strategies for Success

- Flexibility

- Collaboration

- Consistent communication

- Use personal interests and strengths

- Balance between self-direction and mentorship

"Knowledge Transfer, to be of value, should result in the creation of new ideas, new practices, and processes"
(Argarwal and Islam, 2015)

Future Steps and Ideas for OHEC

- New digitization projects

- User survey

- Digital exhibit space

- Outreach to faculty

- Event around collection subjects

Any other ideas? Similar experiences or collections?

Thank you

For more information about the OHEC

http://oise.library.utoronto.ca/specialcollections-ontario-historical-education

For follow up questions and comments:

@jillvhvh | @oiselibrary (#OHEC) | @mmmeth

Acknowledgements and References

Thank you to everyone at OISE - especially Kathy Imrie, Monique Flaccavento and Marcos Armstrong!

Most photography credits: Marcos Armstrong

References:

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