

**A Gentle Bibliographic
Madness:
Cataloging and Digitizing
the Journal of the Book
Club of Washington**



Mitch Waltos
MLIS 2024



The Impetus of the Project

In Fall 2023, I started on a directed field work project for the Book Club of Washington (BCW), which is a bibliophile society dedicated to book collecting and the celebration of books as physical objects. The BCW hired me as a volunteer to create a finding aid for their independently published periodical, the Journal of the Book Club of Washington. The BCW's goal was for me to create something that would help their members discover articles through the use of a digital tool that would allow them to search via author name, year published, article title, etc. After much experimentation, I settled on using LibraryThing and its online public access catalog software, TinyCat, to create my own digital catalog for the Journal.

As that DFW progressed, the scope of the project continued to grow, and I got permission from the BCW to extend my timeline and turn that project into my Capstone. On top of continuing to work on creating bibliographic records for each article and fine-tuning the catalog website, I now was also in charge of digitizing the backlist of the Journal, integrating those digital copies into the catalog, and creating workflow documents to guide future BCW catalogers.



Team/Sponsor Introductions



Mitch Waltos

Since this was a solo Capstone project, I was entirely in charge of creating the various deliverables mentioned throughout this slide deck.



Jane Carlin

As my direct supervisor and board member of the BCW, Jane acted as the liaison between myself and the organization. Additionally, she used her extensive experience as a librarian to provide invaluable guidance on all aspects of the project.

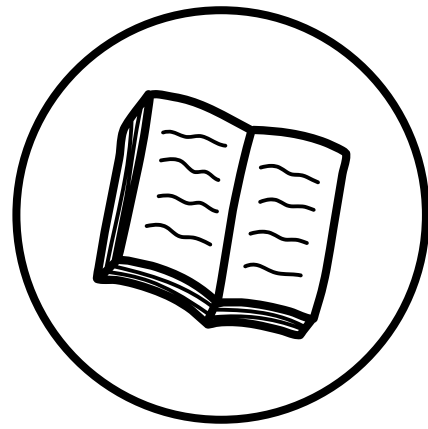


Book Club of Washington

Various members of the Book Club of Washington provided insight and guidance on various aspects of the project throughout every stage of its development.

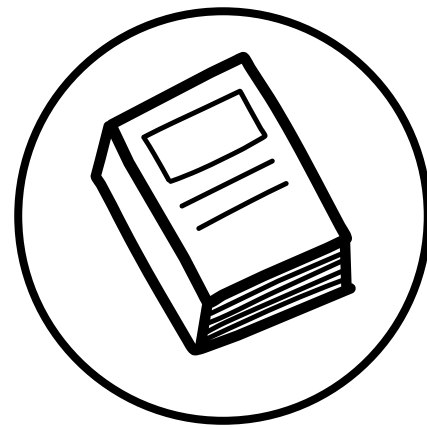


Project objectives



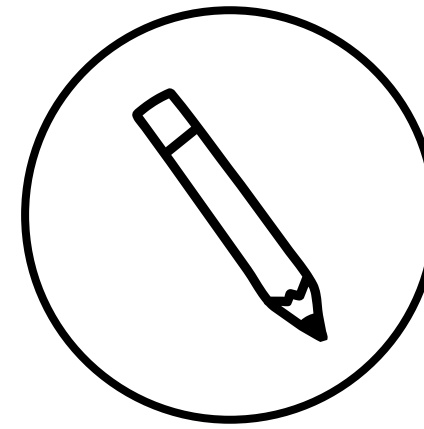
Increase accessibility of the Journal

Make text of digitized articles machine-readable, refine online catalog, allow digital access to articles.



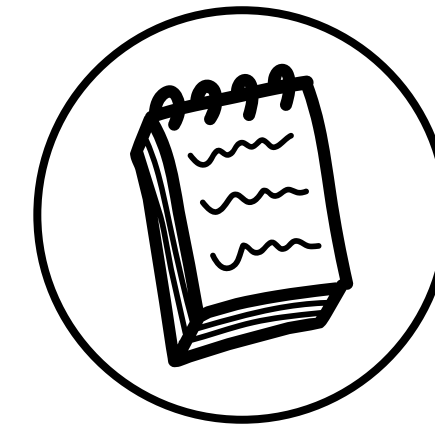
Facilitate information discovery for readers of the Journal

Add subject terms to each article's bibliographic record, enabling searchers to find items relevant to their subject interests.



Contribute to the preservation of the Journal

Digitize the Journal's backlist and upload all digitized items to a cloud-based storage system.



Develop a sustainable cataloging process for the BCW

Create documents that give BCW members the necessary information to catalog future issues of the Journal without me.





All the issues of the Journal of the Book Club of Washington given to me at the beginning of this process.



Deliverable #1: Bibliographic Records



The screenshot shows the LibraryThing website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a logo 'L' and links for Home, Your books, Add books, Groups, Talk, Local, More, and Zeitgeist. On the right, there are links for BCW_Archives, Sign out, and Help, along with a search bar for LibraryThing. Below the navigation bar, there are options for 'The Journal: Complete...' and a list of view options: List, Covers, Tags, and Style (A, B, C, D, E). There are also navigation buttons for 'next page' and a search bar for the library. The main content area displays a list of records with columns for Title, Author, Date, Tags, Rating, and Entry date. Two records are visible:

Title	Author	Date	Tags	Rating	Entry date
Western American Collections: Lewis & Clark College	Stephen Dow Beckham	2023 (Spring)	Lewis & Clark College, Watzek Library, Boley Library, Library special collections, Library collection development, Donations, Lewis and Clark Expedition, American explorers, Private libraries, First edition books, Special edition books, Pacific Northwest history, Exploration, Western Americana, Book collectors, Colonialism, North American indigenous peoples, Libraries	★★★★★	12/5/2023
Scripts & Scribes & Scribbles	Jane Carlin	2023 (Spring)	University of Puget Sound, Book art, Writing instruments, Handwriting, Libraries, Material culture study, Scribes, Manuscripts, Book history, Calligraphy, Historical artifacts, Artists' books, Asemic writing, Education, Neuroscience	★★★★★	12/5/2023

Pictured in this slide is a zoomed-in snippet of a webpage from LibraryThing, which is the website I used to manually create and organize the bibliographic records for each article of every issue of the Journal from its debut in 2000 to Spring 2023. In this screenshot, one can see some of the information included in each record, such as its article title, author name, publication date, and bespoke subject tags.

Deliverable #2: Online Catalog for the Journal



The Journal of the Book Club of Washington

Welcome! Start typing below or click on one of the categories under the search box to discover individual articles and get access to digital copies.

[Artists' Books](#) | [Biographies](#) | [Book Art and Design](#) | [Book Collecting Advice](#) | [Book Collectors](#) | [Book History](#) | [Bookbinding](#) | [Booksellers](#) | [Bookselling](#) | [Bookish Memoir](#) | [Children's Books](#) | [Ephemera](#) | [Library Special Collections](#) | [Manuscripts](#) | [Pacific Northwest](#) | [Preservation and Conservation](#) | [Printing](#) | [Seattle](#)

[Bibliographic Record Feedback Survey](#) | bcwcatalog@gmail.com

Pictured above is the homepage of the online catalog I created for the Journal. Key features include broad hyperlink categories for browsing, a search box for text-based queries, and a link to a feedback survey.

Deliverable #2: Online Catalog for the Journal (cont.)



leather The Journal

5 items relevancy ↓

[Nurturing Knowledge: Conservation at the University of Washington Libraries](#)
by Justin Johnson
Journal Article, 2017 (Fall)

Tags: University of Washington Libraries, Library special collections, Libraries, Book conservation and preservation, Bookbinding, Paper preservation and conservation, Paper stain reduction, Leather conservation and preservation, Leather book bindings, Orotone photography, Book boxes — 2 more

Collections: The Journal (Fall 2017), The Journal: Complete Catalog

Status: **AVAILABLE**

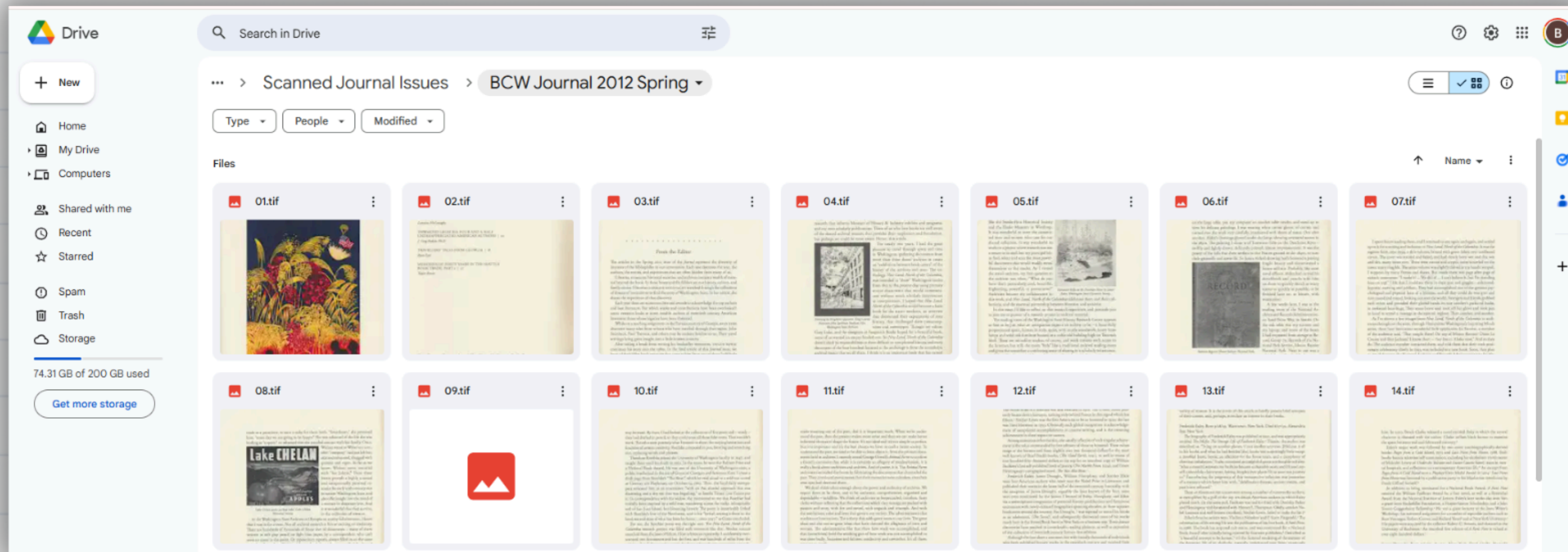
[Ask About This](#)

Tags

- Leather book bindings 5
- Library special collections 4
- Libraries 4
- University of Washington Libraries 3
- Bookbinding 2
- Book theft 2
- 19 more

Here we have the top result for the search term “leather,” which we see represented in the subject tag “Leather book bindings.” To the right of the results list, there is a list of tags that can be used as search facets.

Deliverable #3: Digitized Issues



Here is an example of how all the files for the Spring 2012 issue of the Journal of the Book Club of Washington live on the Drive of a Google account that I made for the BCW, who will gain ownership of the account at the end of the project. Each page of each issue were scanned with a flatbed scanner, edited on GIMP, and saved as a TIF file.

Deliverable #4:

Machine-readable text

Once each page of an issue was digitized, edited, and saved as a TIF file, the next step was to create a single PDF file from all those TIF files, thereby recreating the issue in a digital format. To increase the accessibility of these digital copies, I used the Optical Character Recognition function in Adobe Acrobat Pro to convert all the text into a machine-readable format. Machine-readable text is necessary for the highlight, copy/paste, keyword search, and read-aloud features to work on a document. The included photo shows the accuracy of the OCR through the highlight function.



From the Editor

The Winter 2008 issue of the *Journal*, showcases the interests and activities of Book Club of Washington (BCW) members: book collectors, librarians, and book dealers. Enjoy the following seven articles from our accomplished colleagues.

Marty Greene is renowned for his collection of books on polar exploration. A recent acquisition from the Boeing library sent Marty to his collection to research the story of Carl Lomen, the "Reindeer King."

In Part 2 of his Seattle book trade reminiscences, *Taylor Bowie* enters the 1970s, goes to college, and begins his career as a bookseller.

Among the holdings of the University of Washington, Special Collections, is a rich collection of publishers' bindings. From the recent exhibition of over 500 volumes, librarians *Sandra Kroupa* and *Kate Leonard* describe the collection and the chronology of the various binding styles.

After attending the 2006 Seattle FABS Tour, collector *Mike Repas* and librarian *Kathryn Hamilton Wang* decided to attend the 2007 Washington, D.C. tour. They share their notes from visits to libraries, museums, and private collections. One highlight was seeing the actual *Trevelyan Miscellany of 1608*. An image from the UW Press facsimile is on the cover.

The Alcuin Society, based in Vancouver, B.C. is a bibliophilic society similar to the BCW. In this article we learn about the work and influence of Robert Reid, Canada's leading book designer, typographer, and publisher.

John Henrick explores the world of aptigrams and antigrams, with examples drawn from literature. An avid reader of Gertrude Stein, John uses the letters of her name to uncover an abundance of anagrams.

The recent BCW publication of the Yoho bungalow pattern book has a wonderful introduction by *Dennis Andersen*. A brief sample is reproduced.

An enormous thank you goes to BCW member Dana Church Cordrey. The layout and format of this issue benefited greatly from his expertise and guidance. An accomplished book designer, typographer, and publisher, Dana graciously shared his knowledge and lent his books, helping me to become a bit more skilled. He showed great patience as I worked to learn new language and techniques of printing. The credit for the journal's enhanced look and feel goes to Dana.

Best regards, your editor
– Claudia Skelton

Deliverable #5: Feedback Survey

Since I created a bibliographic record with manually assigned subject terms for each article of every issue of the Journal from 2000 to Spring 2023, there are bound to be mistakes in the catalog. To democratize the revision process and give the authors of these articles more control over the representation of their creative works, I created a feedback survey that has been attached to the online catalog via a hyperlink on the homepage and will be disseminated via email by the end of the project.



Article Title and Publication Date *

E.g., "I Love Book Collecting" (Spring 2006)

Your answer

Feedback on Your Article's Bibliographic Record *

Example responses:

- "I would like my articles to be cataloged under the name Jonathan D. Doe instead of Johnny Doe."
- "This article is about collecting comic books, but comic books aren't mentioned in the subject tags."
- "*Incunabula* shouldn't be in the subject tags list for this article. The books discussed were printed in the 19th century, way beyond the traditional publication cut-off date of 1500 for incunabula."
- "There is a typo in the title/tag/author field. It should read as..."

Your answer

Other Comments or Concerns About the Catalog (Optional)

Your answer

Submit

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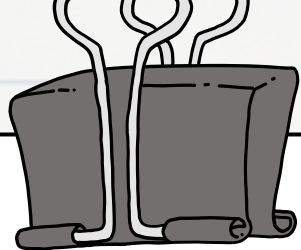
Clear form

Deliverable #5: Cataloging

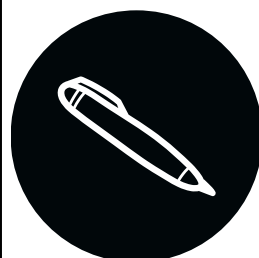
How-To Documents

While not yet complete at the time of this slide deck's creation, the cataloging how-to documents for this project will give the Book Club of Washington step-by-step instructions on how to maintain the catalog I have created for them as they continue to publish additional issues of the Journal. This will include instructions on how to manually create bibliographic records on LibraryThing, an overview of the philosophy that guided my subject tag choices, an explanation of how to customize the online catalog through TinyCat, etc.





Project Impact



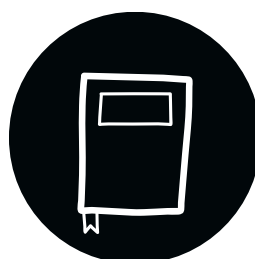
Accessibility

The online catalog for the Journal is available to the public and provides access to the digital copies of every issue from 2000 to Spring 2023, meaning that there is no longer any supply limit, fiscal cost, or lack of access to a physical copy preventing individuals from reading the Journal of the Book Club of Washington. Readers can now more easily discover articles relevant to their interests by using the online catalog to search by author name, subject tag, keywords, publication date, issue number, etc. TinyCat also supports a facet filtration system and Boolean search functions, so readers can use more advanced research techniques if desired. The content of the articles themselves have become more accessible in their digital forms because of their conversion into machine-readable text. With documents that have machine-readable text, readers can keyword search, highlight text, copy/paste, and use text-to-speech accessibility tools. Additionally, readers with vision issues now have the option to zoom in on the text of these documents on their preferred device, effectively changing the font size to whatever suits them best.



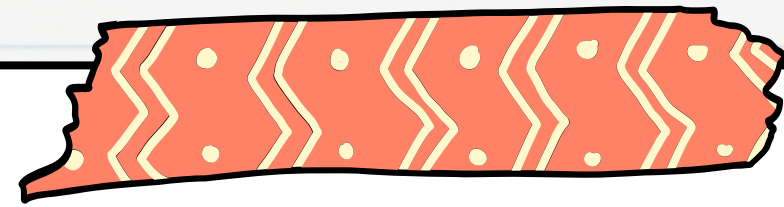
Preservation

Prior to this project, the Book Club of Washington only had digital versions of issues of the Journal from 2017 and onward. Now, the BCW has a digital version of every issue of the Journal from its debut in 2000 to Spring 2023, all stored together on a Google Drive connected to an official BCW email account. Nowadays, the editor of the Journal usually obtains a pre-print PDF version of the upcoming issue from whatever printing service is contracted by the BCW, but now they have a safe and secure organization system for storing those files.



Sustainability & Efficiency

With the completed cataloging how-to documents, members of the BCW will have the knowledge of how to use LibraryThing to create bibliographic records for future issues of the Journal, allowing them to maintain the accuracy of the online catalog and keep it up to date. Such documentation will free the organization from being dependent on one individual's personal knowledge, which will ensure the longevity and quality of the catalog regardless of personnel changes within the organization. Part of the documentation will also include a form that authors can fill out about their articles, which will streamline the cataloging process by providing the cataloger with suggested subject tags and accurate author information.



Acknowledgements

BCW Members:

Gary Ackerman, Matt Brehe, Jane Carlin, Cindy Richardson, Carla Rickerson, David Wertheimer

Family:

Sarah Cerdena, Ken Waltos, Lisa Waltos, Mikaila Wilkening, Phil Wilkening, Eliza Wilkening, Ava Wilkening

