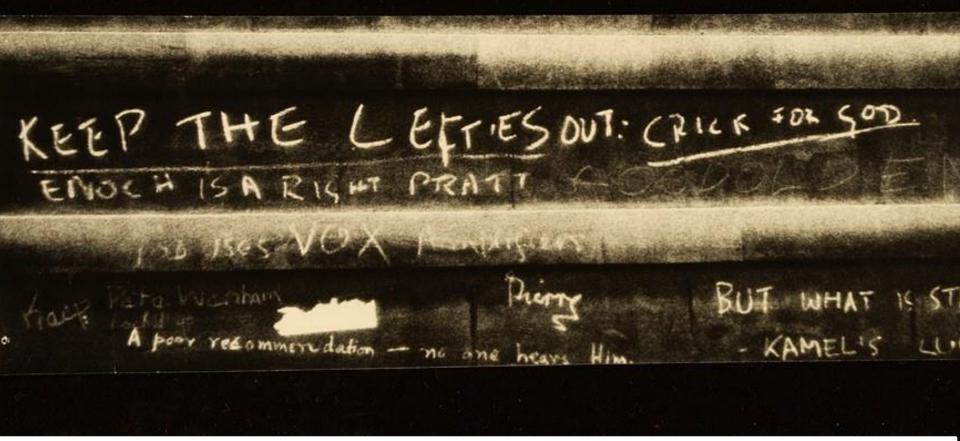
Digitising modern archives – the *Codebreakers* project



Simon Chaplin

wellcome library

Wellcome Trust

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We strive to embed biomedical science in the historical and cultural landscape.





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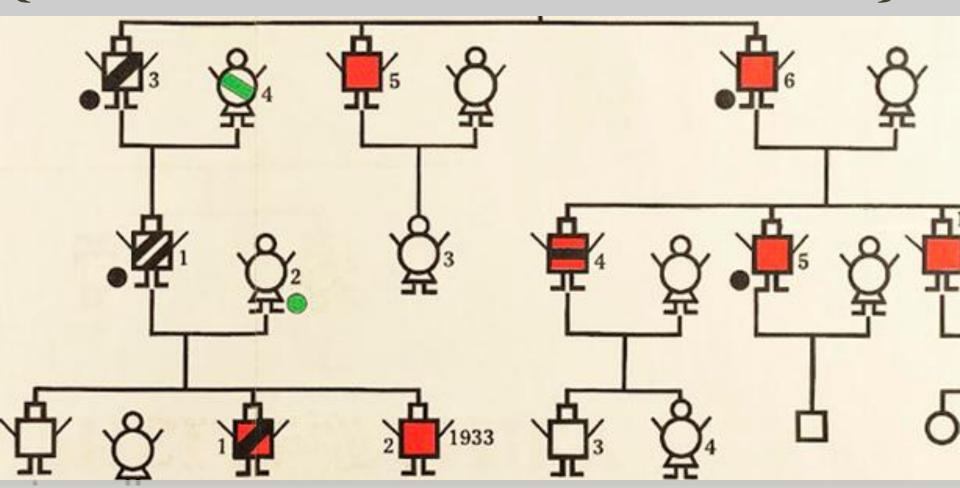


{ we are transforming ourselves

The Wellcome Library aims to digitise 50 million pages of books and archives, to create a free online research library based on our holdings, and those of partner institutions.



{ Codebreakers: makers of modern genetics }

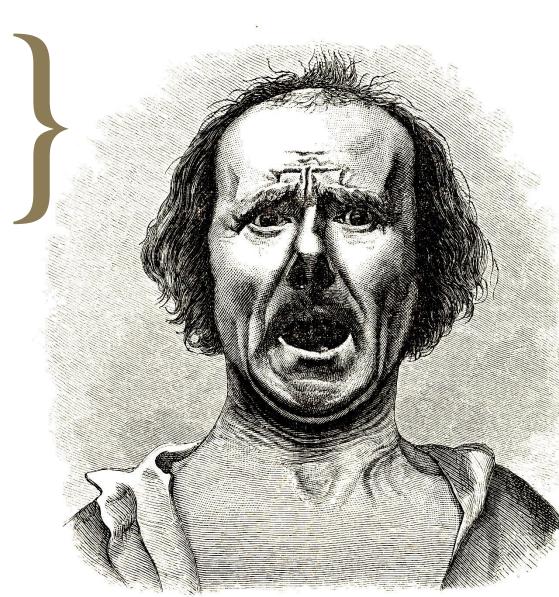


Our pilot project involved digitising 1,700 books and 22 archive collections drawn from six institutions – about 1.5m pages of content in total – together with interpretive content.

THE HISTORY OF GENETICS: FROM DARWIN TO THE 21ST CENTURY: 1859 - 2012



sensitivity and copyright?



{copyright}

In the UK all published material is in copyright until 70 years after the authors death. Unpublished material is in copyright until 2040.

{sensitivity}



case study: copyright for books

Worked with ALCS/PLS to identify rightsholders.

3/3 rule – for multi-author works we only looked at first 3 named authors, or authors named in 3 or more works.

We discovered 5,500 authors for 1,620 works - most had 1 or 2 authors, but 32 works had 41+ authors each.

Wrote (3 times) to each rightsholder.

orphan

Total cost = £45,000
Cost per work (all) = £22
Cost per available work = £46
Cost per available image = £0.12

86%

no response 29%

outstanding questions

permission denied permission granted 38%

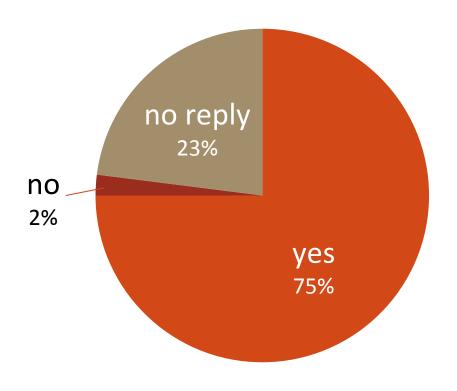
case study: copyright for archives

Very many copyright holders – and very few identified in catalogue metadata.

Unstructured data – one folder can contain hundreds of potential rights holders.

Risk-managed approach is essential – identify those who have most to lose.

Selective identification and contacting, emphasising the benefits of saying yes.



total cost = <£12,000 (distributed among partners)

cost per available image = £0.005 - £0.01

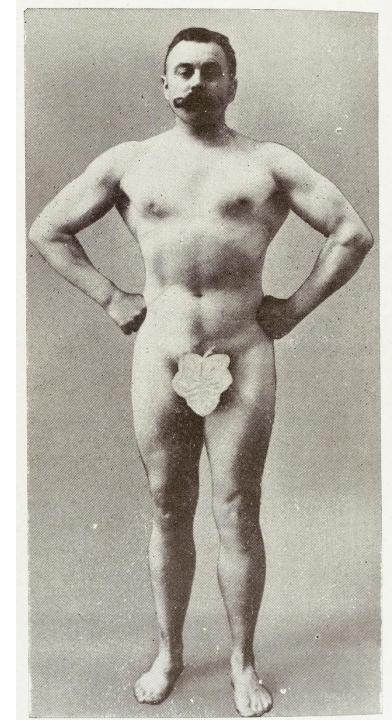
case study: sensitivity for archives

Legal obligation to abide by DPA – but best practice is to go beyond letter of law.

Can't check every item, instead sampled (and resampled where necessary). For new cataloguing, assessing sensitivity for digitisation can be tackled up front.

Not checking everything means risk exists – can be mitigated using access controls (but at a price).

Material classed as open, 'restricted' or closed. Anything <100 years old is restricted by default.



managing access

Viewing 'restricted' requires login using library membership or social media (but this deters >95% of visitors, and we're changing to click-through T&Cs)

Also have ability to restrict download/embed, or restrict individual images within items.

Links to licence/credit info.

Clear access policy.

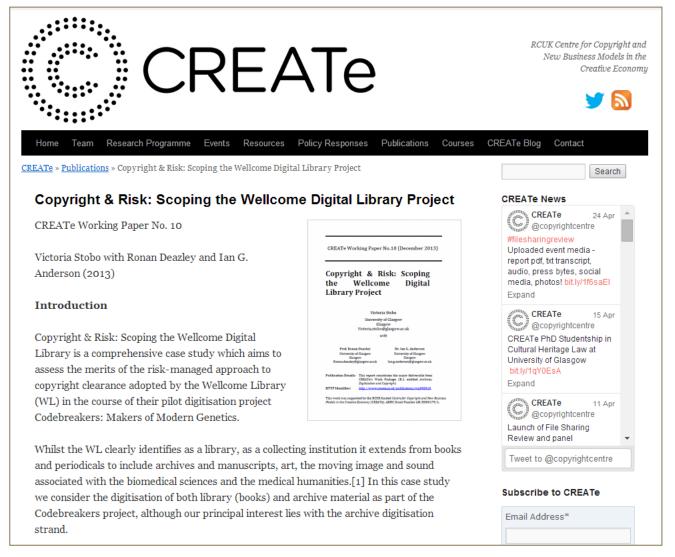
Robust takedown policy (and training to back it up)



In summary...

- ☐ You can't digitise modern archives without tackling sensitivity and copyright
- ☐ But unless you have VERY deep pockets, you can't be exhaustive
- ☐ Need to assess, and manage, the risk (to rightsholders/data subjects/you)
- ☐ For a collaborative project, need to ensure common approach
- ☐ Partners must ensure metadata is consistent, identify names, contact depositors
- Coordinator consolidate and assess data, manage contacts with other rightsholders
- ☐ Building confidence may mean starting cautious, and loosening up
- ☐ You will need patience...
 but it can be done

Further reading...



wellcomelibrary.org wellcomeimages.org

