

# Grateful Dead Archives

On April 24, 2008, Pilsen Law was a member of the Grateful Dead Archives and was a member of the Grateful Dead Archives.

## PREFACE

The Grateful Dead Archives is a collection of the Grateful Dead's music, including their live performances, studio recordings, and other related materials.

## INTRODUCTION

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By Wyatt Young

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### History 194H, University of California at Santa Barbara

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## Preface: The Keeper

On April 24, 2008, Eileen Law watched as two of the surviving members of the Grateful Dead participated in a ceremony announcing the donation of the popular music group's archives to the McHenry Library at the University of California at Santa Cruz.<sup>1</sup> Fitting of the situation, the announcement was held at the site of one of the Grateful Dead's "home turfs:" the legendary Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco.<sup>2</sup> Law, who had served in many capacities as an employee and significant member of the Grateful Dead's extended family for decades, played a large role in the amassing, storing, and organization of the collection that is now officially referred to as the Grateful Dead Archives.<sup>3</sup> The beginning of Law's service with the Grateful Dead dates back to 1965, before they were an organization when they were simply a band. Over the years she had been the housemate of several members of the band and had given birth at Dead guitarist and co-founder Bob Weir's ranch to her daughter Cassidy, after whom Weir later composed the song "Cassidy."<sup>4</sup> Noted Grateful Dead scholar (and their official biographer since 1980) Dennis McNally lovingly referred to Eileen as "the spiritual mother of all Deadheads," and her fingerprints can be found all over the Grateful Dead Archives, both literally and figuratively.<sup>5</sup>

The physical Grateful Dead Archives are comprehensive and represent nearly fifty years of activity and history by the band. These materials have been filed by Law and others within the

<sup>1</sup> Zoooma, "Eileen Law at the Grateful Dead Archive at the University of California-Santa Cruz press conference 4/24/08," Flickr, April 30, 2008. Accessed March 17, 2017, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zoooma/2455110640>.

<sup>2</sup> University of California at Santa Cruz, Library, "Grateful Dead Donates Archives to UC Santa Cruz," news release, April 24, 2008, University of California at Santa Cruz Newscenter, accessed November 4, 2016, <http://news.ucsc.edu/2008/04/2142.html>.

<sup>3</sup> "Conversation With Archivist Kate Dundon," interview by Wyatt Young, December 17, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Dennis McNally, *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead* (New York, NY: Broadway Books, 2002), 297-298, 375, 419.

<sup>5</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 419.



Grateful Dead organization throughout the years and contain letters of correspondence, office memos, manuscripts, photographs, articles of memorabilia and ephemera, stage props, show riders, legal forms, and nearly every fan letter generated and given to the band in its fifty year history. On many of the documents are numerous handwritten notes from Law herself denoting classification of the items and illuminating her many roles within the Grateful Dead organization and the collection itself.<sup>6</sup> It was her voice that was heard on the Concert Line recordings that updated Deadheads on the state of ticket sales for numerous tours during the 1980s and 90s, and her love can be felt throughout the collection simply by means of its existence.<sup>7</sup>

When the Grateful Dead decided to donate their collection to a public research institute, it was Eileen Law who spearheaded the process and served as liaison between the University and the band.<sup>8</sup> The story of the Grateful Dead Archives could not be told without mentioning the role that she played in keeping these items and recognizing the importance of the band in twentieth-century American culture. This work is "dedicated" to Eileen Law and to all of the other "keepers" who do history every day of their lives.

<sup>6</sup> Series Five, Box 43, Folder 1, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.

<sup>7</sup> Eileen Law, "Concert Line Recording: July 22, 1988," Grateful Dead Archive Online, accessed March 17, 2017, <https://www.gdao.org/items/show/374947>.

<sup>8</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



### Introduction

On August 9, 1995, fans of the popular rock group, The Grateful Dead, were shaken by the passing of Jerry Garcia who was the guitarist, vocalist, and spiritual leader for the band and their followers. Garcia was an influential artist and musician whose work dates back to the Beat Generation in the San Francisco Bay area. Arguably he had a strong influence on the establishment of the Counter Culture movement of the 1960s and the preservation of the materials that would become the Grateful Dead archives, as without him there would not be this phenomenon to document. A long-lasting subculture developed around the Grateful Dead over the years, and to these participants he was much more.<sup>9</sup> To them, Garcia was a shaman and a soothsayer, representing hope and communal stability throughout the radical social upheaval of the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s. The Grateful Dead have long held a reputation within the realm of popular music of the twentieth-century as having perhaps the most dedicated fanbase in history whose devotion can be observed in the materials contained within the Grateful Dead Archives (GDA) at UC Santa Cruz and also in its online component, the Grateful Dead Archives Online (GDAO).<sup>10</sup>

These fans who are sometimes referred to by journalists, scholars, and the community itself as Deadheads, consider themselves to be much more than the average rock music enthusiast. Indeed, the fact that the term Deadheads is now a recognized Library of Congress Subject Heading serves as a testament to the fact that the unique subculture and community

<sup>9</sup> Blair Jackson, *Garcia: An American Life* (New York: Viking, 1999), x, xi.

<sup>10</sup> Adam Kanzer, "Misfit Power, the First Amendment and the Public Forum: Is There Room in America for the Grateful Dead?" *Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems* 25, no. 3 (1992): 521-66. "The Grateful Dead Archive Online," accessed February 16, 2017, <https://www.gdao.org/advanced-search>; "Grateful Dead Archive University Library," accessed October 22, 2016, <http://library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead-archive>.



surrounding the Grateful Dead has surpassed conventional fandom, and they have also become a subject of rising interest within a variety academic fields.<sup>11</sup> These different perspectives have served as a rich resource offering insight into my investigation of how this collection came to be and what it might mean.<sup>12</sup>

My interest in researching these Grateful Dead Archives comes from a place of personal devotion. I consider myself to be part of the Deadhead community, and as a scholar of history and collections the creation of these archives has long been a topic I've wished to explore. This collection has caused me to contemplate collections and how they can become important to a community. Collecting in our modern culture can be thought of as more than just the accumulation of objects by one person or institution, and the GDA exemplify this ideology. Throughout the course of this research, I have discovered that collecting is inherent in the culture of the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community, and this has lead to the creation of both the GDA and GDAO.

Deadheads have long collected live concerts of the band as well as ticket stubs, memorabilia, experiences, and community through their shared enthusiasm for the Grateful Dead. The manner of collecting that I witnessed and unearthed within this community has led to the development of an archive that is unique in scope and content, and so far has been unmatched in public research institutions due to the specific circumstances of its interactive creation.

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<sup>11</sup> David G. Dodd and Diana Spaulding, "'Get Prepared, There's Gonna be a Party Tonight!' Carving Out a Territory," in *The Grateful Dead Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press), 4.

<sup>12</sup> Archivists at the University of California at Santa Cruz have compiled a helpful list of publications, dissertations, and theses for Dead scholars, with the earliest publication dating to 1972. This list does not include newspaper sources, which can be found in the archives themselves dating back to 1965 and the band's beginnings. For this list, please see Nicholas Merriwether and Robert G. Weiner, "Reading the Dead: A Basic Grateful Dead Bibliography," *Grateful Dead Research Guides*, January 2011, <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead>.



In 2009, the University of California at Santa Cruz began to receive the entirety of the band's physical archives, including fan art, letters, pictures, stage props, recordings, interviews, press materials, and more.<sup>13</sup> UC Santa Cruz is a public research institution, and their acquisition of the Grateful Dead Archives illustrate the academic potential that a collection of this nature can offer. This is not to say that there have never been music collections donated to a research facility before, quite the opposite. But since this community's very nature is based upon collecting, involvement, and inclusion, unique opportunities have arisen with the creation of the archives' socially-constructed online component GDAO that may prove valuable within the fields of Public History, Librarianship, and the Archival community. This online component may also serve as a prototype not just for collections, but collections that can be created from a community whose members exist globally and are unable to physically connect with a collection. GDAO has also created a sense of stake within the Deadhead community as the McHenry library has chosen to consult them regarding their historical legacy.

In my analysis of the GDA, I have encountered four questions that I wished to answer: First, how did a rock n roll group and their fans establish themselves as a significant cultural and social presence in order to warrant an archive of this nature? Second, how did this community that is seemingly based upon collecting develop? Third, why was the University of California at Santa Cruz chosen over other institutions (such as museums) to house the collection of an iconic performing arts group and their community? And finally, what are the Grateful Dead Archives and what can they teach us about how collections are handled by research institutions? These

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<sup>13</sup> It must first be noted here that the Grateful Dead Archives do not include the band's audio and video holdings. This is covered in depth in the section concerning the contents of the physical archives in Chapter 2 of this paper. University of California at Santa Cruz, Library, "Grateful Dead Donates Archives to UC Santa Cruz."



archives are the result of a mutual cooperation and admiration for one another between the Grateful Dead and their community, and the specialness of that relationship offers much to be learned in the realm of academia.<sup>14</sup> The GDA is an example of an organic community-based archive and is a testament to the impact that the Grateful Dead and their fanbase has had on popular culture. What has set them apart from other bands is their ability to recognize the importance of their legacy in popular culture by collecting and preserving their history, and the history of the Deadheads. The donation of the archive to UCSC represents a shared belief in the band's historical and cultural importance and reflects the larger values of the band to create an archive that will serve not only their community, but the community at large.

<sup>14</sup> Archivists at the University of California at Santa Cruz have compiled a helpful list of publications, dissertations, and theses for Dead scholars, with the earliest publication listed dating back to 1972. This list does not include newspaper sources, which can be found in the archives themselves dating back to 1965 and the band's beginnings. See Nicholas Merriwether and Robert G. Weiner, "Reading the Dead: A Basic Grateful Dead Bibliography," *Grateful Dead Research Guides*, January 2011, <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead>.



## Chapter I: "History of the Grateful Dead"

In 1965, a young pop-rock group from San Francisco who called themselves "The Warlocks" were on the verge of signing a record deal with Warner Brothers Records. After discovering that there already was a group with the same name the members had to scramble to choose a new name. This group of musicians consisted of Jerry Garcia on guitar and lead vocals, Bill Kreutzman on drums, Phil Lesh on bass, Ron "Pigpen" McKern on organ, vocals, and harmonica, and 16-year-old Bob Weir on rhythm guitar and vocals.<sup>15</sup> In a conundrum as to what the band should call itself, they eventually settled upon The Grateful Dead. The name was chosen after a moment of serendipity when Garcia picked up a copy of *Funk and Wagnall's New Practical Standard Dictionary of the English Language, Vol. 1, 1955* and examined the first entry he came across. The definition for the term described the literary motif from the cycles of folk tales that depict a hero who encounters the corpse of someone who cannot pay their burial debts. The hero often sets forth in these tales with a traveling companion who purports to be a friend of the departed, and they embark on a journey to secure proper burial.<sup>16</sup> Later in the cycle, the traveling companion reveals himself to be the corpse and rewards the hero for his aid in honorable burial. This corpse-turned-supernatural traveling companion is referred to as The Grateful Dead, and has a rich history of uses across multiple cultures.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> David Shenk and Steve Silberman, *Skeleton Key: A Dictionary for Deadheads* (New York: Doubleday, 1994). 120.

<sup>16</sup> A retelling of this tale, both of the folk cycle and how the band obtained its name, was later published by Alan Trist, head of the Grateful Dead's Ice Nine Publishing Company in the 1980s. Alan Trist and Jim Carpenter, *The Water of Life: A Tale of the Grateful Dead, A Folk Story* (Eugene, OR: Hulogos'i, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> Shenk and Silberman, *Skeleton Key*, 121-122.



The name would become a powerful association tool among fans of the band, as many of the lyrics include imagery of life, death, rebirth, celebration, and hope. The members who were present at the naming, along with the later addition of second drummer Mickey Hart, would comprise the core group of the Grateful Dead. Other members would occasionally come and go throughout the 30 year period of the band's career when Garcia was still alive, but the core members of Garcia, Lesh, Kreutzman, Hart, and Weir formed the heart of the band and the organization that later developed around it.<sup>18</sup>

The Grateful Dead cut their musical teeth as part of Ken Kesey's Acid Tests during the two months of December, 1965 and January 1966, wherein they were free to play or not play to the crowd. At these Acid Tests, large groups of people gathered together to experiment with LSD, including the Grateful Dead themselves who would play improvisational free-form psychedelic jazz to enhance the trips of the attendees. The Dead relished in the freedom of not being the main focus of these events, and this unique perspective would be carried with them throughout their career, culminating in a unique rapport between the Deadheads and the band.<sup>19</sup> Over the next few years, the band started to notice that fans were following them from city to city as they toured, and decided to become involved directly with the community in the form of the initial Grateful Dead Fan Club that ran from 1967-68.<sup>20</sup> However, this first fan club was formed in a traditional manner that did not truly suit the growing community developing around the band, and so the Dead decided to take the notion further.

<sup>18</sup> Blair Jackson and David Gans, *This Is All A Dream We Dreamed: An Oral History Of The Grateful Dead* (New York: Flatiron Books, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Jerry Garcia, Dennis McNally, and Trixie Garcia, *Jerry on Jerry: The Unpublished Jerry Garcia Interviews*, (New York: Black Dog and Leventhal, 2015), 69-70.

<sup>20</sup> Jackson, *The Grateful Dead Reader*, 161.



In the gatefold liner notes to their 1971 album "Grateful Dead," the band reached out to this community: "DEAD FREAKS UNITE: Who are you? Where are you? How are you? Send us your name and address and we'll keep you informed."<sup>21</sup> Over 25,000 Deadheads responded to this initial message. In the subsequent newsletters that followed, the band would ask the community their thoughts on how the Dead should approach the growing success, and how best to reach them. The responses received from the community range from the serious to the whimsical, and were often reprinted and or addressed in the newsletter circulars that followed. In one issue a diagram depicted the legendary snake Urobouros as representative of the growing Grateful Dead corporation, whose seemingly endless cycle of greater demand leading to a bigger organization and larger venues to play. It was captioned with the questions "Urobouros is hungry, how do we feed him?" and "what else might we do?" One suggestion from the community was that the band should astrally project themselves to everywhere at once, while others represented more pressing concerns in the burgeoning community.

One such letter was written to the band during this period and encapsulates the unattainable standards the community was capable of holding the band to. "You are the only band that plays for the people and not money" is an idealistic sentiment that is almost impossible for a successful act to live up to.<sup>22</sup> While some Deadheads would like to believe that the Grateful Dead were a charity act, that is simply not the case, nor are the allegations from the community that the Dead were simply a moneymaking machine. But this latter perspective comes from an

<sup>21</sup> The Grateful Dead, in liner notes to *Grateful Dead*, The Grateful Dead, Warner Brothers Records, 2WS-1935, Vinyl LP, copyright 1971.

<sup>22</sup> Alan Trist "State of the Changes: How the Dragon Urobouros (Giga Exponential) Makes Us Go Round and Round" in *The Grateful Dead Reader*, edited by David G. Dodd and Diana Spaulding, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 99.



anti-corporate sentiment that Deadheads have always valued within the Grateful Dead, which would later play a role in the band's decision to house the GDA at UC Santa Cruz.

The success that the Grateful Dead achieved (and still does in its different incarnations after the death of Garcia) can be largely attributed to the unique dichotomy of collecting between the Deadheads and the band itself. The Grateful Dead and its community have always been a culture of collections, from the tapes of live concert performances, merchandise and memorabilia, and for the community itself being comprised of what biographer Dennis McNally has referred to as "a collection of families," adding that "solitary Deadheads are a rarity."<sup>23</sup> The Dead collected members of their community in a snowball effect, first developing in the Haight Ashbury district of San Francisco, and later while touring from city to city, giving unique performances sometimes numbering in the hundreds in a given year.<sup>24</sup> No two shows were ever the same. Drawing from a catalogue of hundreds of songs, they were able to never repeat a setlist once in their thirty-years of touring, and no song ever played the same way twice.<sup>25</sup> This approach engendered a sharing of collected experiences at their concerts, resulting in a long-lasting success that has been described as epicurean by some scholars.<sup>26</sup> The Dead's success was never due to popular radio hits or being commercially marketable to the masses as a pop group. If they were, it would have been viewed as alienating for Deadheads who viewed themselves and the band as outsiders. Bill Graham, the famous concert promoter who contributed not just to the

<sup>23</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 385-386.

<sup>24</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 385.

<sup>25</sup> "DeadBase Online Setlist Search," DeadBase Online Setlist Search, accessed November 27, 2016, <http://www.dharmarose.com/deadbase/dbsearch.html>.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Benson, *Why the Grateful Dead Matter* (Lebanon NH: ForeEdge, an imprint of University Press of New England, 2015), 16-18.



Dead's success, but to other acts such as Jefferson Airplane and Janis Joplin, was once asked what he thought drew people to the Dead: "They don't look right," he said. "They're not sexy, and they don't have a stage show, but they can just absorb you."<sup>27</sup>

Graham's summation of the outsider reputation that the Dead occupied is part of the large appeal that they had for their followers, and much of this can be attributed to the nature of collecting that the band nurtured through their fair use policies of recording and tape trading. John Perry Barlow, songwriting partner to Dead member Bob Weir, called the Dead's decision to allow audience members to record their performances "the single most important reason that we have the popularity that we have."<sup>28</sup> For most of the band's existence, audience members were allowed to bring in their personal audio recording devices and document each performance for the purpose of sharing the collected concert experiences. These fans were dedicated to recording the experience of Grateful Dead shows, and are known among the community as the tapers.

In their book *Skeleton Key: A Dictionary for Deadheads*, David Shank and Steve Silberman have compiled a list of terms and oral histories that constitute an entertaining and informative source of reference for Dead scholars. The entry listed under "tape exchanges" gives a brief example of how these tapes were collected and circulated beginning in the early 1970s. Tape-trading clubs were some of the first Deadhead-organized efforts to collect new members in the community. Meetings were held in both formal and informal gatherings, wherein fans could bring their blank cassettes and dub shows and trade amongst each other, sharing their collected experiences while exchanging Grateful Dead live performances. Another method utilized by fans

<sup>27</sup> David Gans and Peter Simon, *Playing in the Band: An Oral and Visual Portrait of the Grateful Dead* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 157.

<sup>28</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 385.



was the trading of tapes by post. Blank cassettes were mailed by Deadheads to a taper, and in time, that taper would fill your tape request for free and return you the specified show via U.S. Postal Service.<sup>29</sup> Possibly the first of these organizations was dubbed the Free Underground Grateful Dead Tape Exchange, who supplied the free sharing of recorded concerts for personal use in a fair use practice of collecting. This idea of fair use and sharing is part of the infrastructure of the Dead community's collecting culture, and would prove to be integral in how the band would later handle their archives by housing them at a public research institute.

The oral history under "tape exchanges" was provided by Les Kippel, founder of the Free Underground Grateful Dead Tape exchange. Here he describes the institution of tape trading as a way that the fans could collect part of the dynamic musical performances and lifestyle that they witnessed at every show. Further entries under "taper's section," "front of board," "getting your deck in," and "tapes" helps to provide us with the narrative of how tape-trading evolved in addition to a series of unique oral histories from fans and their individual experiences.<sup>30</sup> These oral histories presented in *Skeleton Key* provide whimsical accounts of sneaking in recording equipment when a venue (not the band themselves) disallowed the practice. In the words of band spokesperson and official biographer Dennis McNally "short of erasing tapes by putting electromagnets over every exit, taping can't be prevented."<sup>31</sup> This illuminates just how important collecting is to the Deadhead community, the lengths they would go to in order to ensure its continuance, and that the Dead recognized the importance of the practice.

<sup>29</sup> Shenk and Silberman, *Skeleton Key*, 277-27.

<sup>30</sup> Shenk and Silberman, *Skeleton Key*, 96, 106, 277-279.

<sup>31</sup> Shenk and Silberman, *Skeleton Key*, 106.



Taken as a whole, these entries document the taping phenomenon in a simple manner, without much mention of the tensions or growing pains of these practices. The band members themselves were mostly indifferent, and made no efforts to curb the practice, unless there were bootlegs of their concerts being sold for profit.<sup>32</sup> As long as the taper wasn't making money off of the shows, the Dead had no qualms. But while these entries in *Skeleton Key* allow for a sense of levity, this specific interaction of tape trading and the collecting of recorded experiences would be complicated on several fronts, as illustrated in the David A. Wallace's article, "Co-creation of the Grateful Dead Sound Archive: Control, Access and Curation Communities." Here, Wallace helps provide a nuanced account that more or less agrees with the history presented in *Skeleton Key*. What is congruent between the two accounts is the sense of community that developed as a result of these collecting and recording practices. In fact, Wallace references much of the literature and key terms that have been used elsewhere by scholars when speaking about the Grateful Dead to help cement this notion: the Deadheads as a nontraditional religious community, the band as shamans, and the concert recordings as "sacred talismans" and relics collected and passed around among this community.<sup>33</sup> One of the most important contributions to this mythos and language were the collecting of recordings and trading practices as a way to develop a community.

In 1985, after years of indifference to the practice of audience taping, the Grateful Dead began to sell special taper's section seats to their concerts. These seats were marked off and

<sup>32</sup> There are many cases where they would supposedly inform the tapers where to set up their microphones in order to achieve the best sound quality. For more on this see Shenk and Silberman, *Skeleton Key*, 106.

<sup>33</sup> David A. Wallace, "Co-creation of the Grateful Dead Sound Archive: Control, Access, and Curation Communities." in Jeannette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander, *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*. London: Facet, 2009. 172-193.



reserved only for those wishing to record the band. But this wasn't so much a premeditated act by the band and their organization, as it was more of a relenting or a compromise. The band members themselves began to record as a way to gain feedback on how the sound could best be utilized for the full enjoyment of the audience. Most members of the Grateful Dead had a personal history of collecting the recordings musical acts themselves before their tenure in the Grateful Dead, and as such were understanding of the practice. It was record companies who wanted the practice cracked down upon, but the band recognized that taping was vital to their success and promotion, and so began to work in the allowance of this practice into their recording contracts. Eventually, the implementation of the taper's section was seen as revolutionary in the realm of popular music, and helped establish a reputation publicly with the band and their organization as having pro-taping and tape trading policies. This is a large part of what makes the Dead community loyal to the band almost to a fault.<sup>34</sup> Taping also further represented the commitment by the band to Deadheads to constantly give unique performances that they could collect and share among other members in the tribe.

Conversations at Grateful Dead concerts among the audience members often involved a recap of what performances that an individual had witnessed, and which particular versions of each song they valued or judged to be best.<sup>35</sup> To be a Deadhead is to be a scholar of the band, and a collector of all Dead knowledge. The Grateful Dead, with their powerful iconography and proclivity for constant touring by playing long concerts filled with improvisational music that

<sup>34</sup> Wallace, David A. "Co-creation of the Grateful Dead Sound Archive: Control, Access, and Curation Communities." in Bastian, Jeannette A., and Ben Alexander, *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*. London: Facet, 2009. 172-193.

<sup>35</sup> Blair Jackson, "Dead Heads: A Strange Tale of Love, Devotion, and Surrender," ed. David G. Dodd and Diana Spaulding, in *The Grateful Dead Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2000). 153-164.



was never once repeated at their 2,318 shows, often attracted fans that were obsessive about their collected experiences.<sup>36</sup> These were collections of shared memories enabled by the trading of live performances. Deadheads classify these memories and experiences by categorizing each performance in a hierarchal manner, with their value often based upon the rarity of songs performed in the setlists (or how often they are played), the lengths of the performances, and unmeasurable aspects of each song (such as the energy levels of the band and audience for each specific version). In conversing with Deadheads, most would be able to give you the specifics of their favorites show(s), often adding in their own oral history as to what it was like to be there, or in the case of a generation of Deadheads too young to have been able to attend any shows during Jerry Garcia's life, what it means to them to discover them in the new era of online music sharing. Members of the Deadhead community relish the opportunity to share their wisdom rather if its in person at concerts or in online message boards (such as the ones provided by the Internet Archive). But how welcoming are these communities that have placed so much value on collected experiences?

Throughout the long career of the Grateful Dead's playing, there has always been tension in the community towards newcomers to the scene as the band's popularity grew by word of mouth, but it was more about a coveting of personal experiences that the Deadheads had collected than about the dismissal of those who were newly interested.<sup>37</sup> Deadheads are an elite group, but contrarily entry into this group is easy.<sup>38</sup> "Membership is chosen rather than forced or

<sup>36</sup> "DeadBase Online Setlist Search."

<sup>37</sup> Blair Jackson, "Dead Heads: A Strange Tale of Love, Devotion, and Surrender," in *The Grateful Dead Reader*, edited by David G. Dodd and Diana Spaulding, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 159.

<sup>38</sup> Jackson, *The Grateful Dead Reader*, 153.



enforced," as Rachel Wilgoren, Deadhead and scholar once put it.<sup>39</sup> In his 1994 dissertation entitled "Music as Symbolic Communication: The Grateful Dead and their Fans," Alan Robert Lehman discusses Deadheads in sociological terms as a self-concept, dependent on social comparisons to others in the group and self-attribution to inform one's own identity.<sup>40</sup> In a simplified manner of speaking, in order to become part of the Deadheads, one must first love the Grateful Dead, and the collecting and sharing of experiences will follow along with that love. Mickey Hart, one of the two drummers for the band who has served on the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center and has been issued Living Legend status by the Library of Congress, once said in a 1980 interview with noted Dead scholar Blair Jackson: "It's funny isn't it? It's just musical appreciation that's gotten out of control."<sup>41</sup> While Mickey's interpretation of the Dead's fanbase illustrates the playful self-deprecation and carefree attitudes that have attracted many to the Dead, it does not exemplify the depth of devotion that many Deadheads feel as members of this community. A quote from a pair of unidentified 17 year-old girls in 1980 summed up their commitment while waiting for the band to perform their annual New Year's Eve show at Oakland Coliseum, stating that "being a Dead Head involves a commitment to surrender your soul to the music...It's like a pact, we show up and give the Dead our good energy, and they fill us up in return."<sup>42</sup> This statement, while possibly sounding as if it could have been uttered by a converted cult member, captures the strength of the relationship between

<sup>39</sup> Rachel Wilgoren, "The Grateful Dead as Community" in *Perspectives on the Grateful Dead*, edited by Robert G. Weiner, (London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 93.

<sup>40</sup> Alan Robert Lehman, "Music as Symbolic Communication: The Grateful Dead and Their Fans," (PhD Dissertation, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1995), 30-31, 49.

<sup>41</sup> "Mickey Hart - Living Legends | Library of Congress," The Library of Congress, accessed November 27, 2016, <https://www.loc.gov/about/awards-and-honors/living-legends/mickey-hart/>; Jackson, *The Grateful Dead Reader*, 163.

<sup>42</sup> Jackson, *The Grateful Dead Reader*, 152.



the band and the community, and also speaks as to how Deadheads have been perceived in common American culture. That relationship is one that is symbiotic in nature, and is based upon the ability of the community to collect and cherish experiences.

Each show was a coveted experience of purity, and Deadheads did not want their collection of memories and experiences sullied by what they perceived as the evils of capitalistic greed. All of this began as a bohemian/hippie movement after all, and notions of greed were not welcome. During the Reagan era, when greed was a widespread cultural attitude among many in the United States, the Dead represented an alternative to the status quo based not upon material collections, but spiritual and emotional collections. As a result of this, their popularity exploded.<sup>43</sup> Deadheads were looking for a connection back to the hippie movement that the Dead represented, and they were often fearful that their beloved band would betray them by becoming commercial. Questions sent in to Grateful Dead headquarters asking "have you sold out?" and "is it sad to be one's own enemy?" were representative of the fears that the Dead might abandon the community that supported them in the face of their seemingly-new widespread success.<sup>44</sup> But the Grateful Dead relationship with capitalism was complicated due to large growth spurts in their success levels.

By the 1980s and 1990s, you could purchase almost any item imaginable with a Grateful Dead logo or icon printed on it. Cups, shirts, flags, bumper stickers, stuffed animals... if it could be marketed it is reasonable to assume that the Dead produced it. But this practice often came about not from marketing representatives. Many of these items were ideas from the Deadhead

<sup>43</sup> Dennis McNally, *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead* (New York, NY: Broadway Books, 2002), 396-397.

<sup>44</sup> Trist "State of the Changes," 95-98.



community themselves. The Grateful Dead Archives have many examples of prototype fan-made merchandise created by Deadheads and sent to the band and its organization. If they liked it, they often would buy the rights from the creator and then produce the items.<sup>45</sup> After all, the Grateful Dead community and experiences were predicated upon commitments from one another: the band would supply transcendent performances to be collected, and the audience would commit by following them around and paying to see them.<sup>46</sup> This philosophy also extends the notion further in that the Dead also produced more than just music and experiences for the Deadhead community to collect, they produced identity through physical artifacts as well. Most Deadheads have a collection of merchandise or at the very least t-shirts that they proudly wear. And while Deadheads were collecting spiritual experiences, merchandise, and performances, the Dead themselves were building a collection of their own, that would eventually become the Grateful Dead Archives.

The Dead's willingness to seek feedback in letter form and to use their ideas to market their iconography are evidence of the relationship between the band and community. The Grateful Dead organization did not think of the Deadhead community as simply fans. Eileen Law, who ran the Grateful Dead's outreach arm of the organization for most of the band's existence, played a huge roll in the amassing of the Grateful Dead Archives, and admits to saving almost every scrap of correspondence sent to the band from the years of 1967 to present. "I've

<sup>45</sup> In the unprocessed materials in the GDA, one of the items produced in such a way was a Yarmulke with the Grateful Dead's "Steal Your Face" symbol on it, illustrating the large variety of items that the band would place their stamp upon. Besides the obvious cultural and historical investigations into the band, there have also been a multitude of disciplines that have examined the Dead concerning business and marketing. For more about the business models of the Grateful Dead, see Barry Barnes, *Everything I Know About Business I Learned From The Grateful Dead: The Ten Most Innovative Lessons From A Long, Strange Trip* (New York: Business Plus, 2012) and David Meerman, Scott, Brian Halligan, and Jay Blakesberg, *Marketing Lessons From The Grateful Dead: What Every Business Can Learn From The Most Iconic Band In History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010); Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>46</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 386-387.



never considered the Deadheads a fan club," she stated in a 1980 interview.<sup>47</sup> The Dead have never been conventional in their approach to Deadhead community, and neither has the community been conventional towards them. Together they would build a strong grassroots following throughout the decades, playing bigger and more prestigious venues such as the Great Pyramids of Giza in 1978 (during a lunar eclipse no less) and stadiums built for NFL teams like Soldier Field in Chicago, where the band held its last performances shortly before Jerry passed away.<sup>48</sup> These are some of the many reasons that the Grateful Dead and the Deadheads have warranted a collection of this nature, as they truly had an impact on society and the GDA that are housed at UCSC reflect their significance. With the creation of the GDA, the influence of this specific community can no doubt be explored further by scholars to come.

<sup>47</sup> Jackson, *The Grateful Dead Reader*, 161.

<sup>48</sup> Benson, *Why the Grateful Dead Matter*, 27, 157-158.



## Chapter II: The Physical Archives

### Why Santa Cruz?

When the Grateful Dead organization decided to relinquish their hold on the archives that they had amassed after nearly fifty years, it had been rumored that several different universities and institutions were considered to become the new home for the collection.<sup>49</sup> Eventually the band decided on the Special Collections Department of the McHenry Library located at the University of California at Santa Cruz. Bob Weir, guitarist and vocalist for the band, was quoted as saying: "we looked around and UC Santa Cruz seems to be the best possible home."<sup>50</sup> From this we can infer that other locations were considered, but most likely out of politeness or posterity those institutions remain nameless. In deciding where to house the collection, The Grateful Dead must have had a list of priorities to consider in order to select a suitable facility. One of the most important criteria within the decision making process to house the GDA at UCSC had to have been location.

Taking the Grateful Dead Archives and housing them anywhere else but California would take the collection out of its proper context. While the popularity of the band can be witnessed on an international level, the band is and has always been a product of California subcultures in the last four decades of the twentieth century.<sup>51</sup> But since the band is not technically from the northern end of Monterey Bay and has been associated with San Francisco in popular culture, questions arise as to why Santa Cruz specifically was chosen as the recipient over other possible Bay Area universities such as UC Berkeley or San Jose State. First, the University of California

<sup>49</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>50</sup> UCSC Library, "Grateful Dead Donates Archives to UC Santa Cruz."

<sup>51</sup> Benson, *Why the Grateful Dead Matter*, 54-64.



at Santa Cruz has long had a history of counter-culture and unconventional education practices.<sup>52</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s the University attracted many politically charged counter-culture students to the area, based upon their policy of a "no-grade, low requirement, informal program" which went a long way in setting up a tradition for non-conventional attitudes to flourish in the north Monterey Bay community.<sup>52</sup> A long history of liberal education and proximity to the origins of the Grateful Dead made the University of California at Santa Cruz an ideal location for a collection of the world's premier and most successful counter-culture band and can be considered spiritually simpatico to the group's *raison d'être*.<sup>53</sup>

There are also questions as to why the collection was chosen to be donated to a public research facility instead of a museum, or why the materials were not auctioned off. One reason might be that due to its large size, most museums would have trouble finding storage for the collection. Another is the amount of work required to process and catalogue each individual item in a collection of this size, and then assess its value. Before the Museum of Modern Art acquired the Robert Rauschenberg work *Canyon* as a donation, the IRS levied a large tax upon the family that owned it even though it was never paid for and was a gift from the artist.<sup>54</sup> While UCSC was still required to produce a monetary value for the donation of the Grateful Dead Archives, it is considered a donation to a not-for-profit organization since the UC school system is ran by the

<sup>52</sup> Jerry Garcia, Setlist, Series One, Box 3, Folder 2, The Grateful Dead Archives, University of California at Santa Cruz.

<sup>52</sup> Joe Lutner, Peter Miller, and Sharman Murphy, "Resisting the Police Industrial Complex in Santa Cruz," *Crime and Social Justice*, no. 2 (1974).

<sup>53</sup> William Adams, "Getting Real: Santa Cruz and the Crisis of Liberal Education," *Change* 16, No. 4 (May & June 1984).

<sup>54</sup> For more on this interesting case of wildlife protection laws and their intersection with art acquisition and donation, see Hannah Kim, Marketing and Book Development Coordinator, Department of Publications, "MoMA | Diving into Rauschenberg's Canyon," *InsideOut*, accessed March 02, 2017, [https://www.moma.org/explore/inside\\_out/2014/01/24/diving-into-rauschenbergs-canyon/](https://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2014/01/24/diving-into-rauschenbergs-canyon/); arch 02, 2017, [https://jerrygarcia.com/ga44\\_1002/](https://jerrygarcia.com/ga44_1002/).



State of California.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps knowing the complications of selling or auctioning off the collection deterred the band as it might have been more complicated of a situation than they were looking for. Adding to this the advanced ages of the surviving band members, and it could easily be inferred that they may have wished to have their legacy settled in an attempt to avoid problematic legal struggles from themselves or family members upon the event of their passing.<sup>56</sup>

But even if the collection was sold to a private museum of popular culture such as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, this decision would have been a mistake, as the uniqueness of this collection is more than just a few relics that promote hero worship. Leadbelly's guitar being hung in a museum under the context that he served as an influence for Robert Plant from Led Zeppelin is an illustration of what separates this collection from the blockbuster exhibits of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.<sup>57</sup> Not only does this act undercut the significance of Leadbelly as an artist in his own right, it is the narrative that lesser-known artists in the public consciousness should only be considered in terms of multi-million dollar acts like Led Zeppelin that is the problem. There has been a long history of exploitation of black artists in American popular music by a white entertainment industry that has yet to be omitted fully from museum exhibits. In the labels at the Rock Hall there is little information provided to the viewers by the curators, which signifies that the exhibit itself is to be considered the context.

<sup>55</sup> "Research Policy Analysis and Coordination," Tax Status of the Regents of the University of California | UCOP, accessed March 02, 2017, <http://www.ucop.edu/research-policy-analysis-coordination/resources-tools/about-uc/tax-status-of-the-regents-of-the-university-of-california.html>.

<sup>56</sup> It must be noted that this is speculation on behalf of the author.

<sup>57</sup> Michael O'Malley. "The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Review," *The Journal of American History* 92, no. 2 (2005), 711.



Besides issues with label and museum narratives, an institution such as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is purely for entertainment purposes, and the GDA are too comprehensive to be anything but a research collection. While the exhibits there can serve as a glimpse into small pockets of historical popular cultural, it is beholden to the same tropes and rules of big museum culture: namely, that the artifacts contained within are to be looked at and admired, but not touched or handled. This is the big difference between a research collection and the collections of a museum. At the Grateful Dead Archives artifacts such as a handwritten setlist composed by Jerry Garcia complete with cigarette burns can be held by Deadheads, transmitting its sacredness to the holder.<sup>58</sup> The Grateful Dead Archives should not be classified with blockbuster museum exhibits that continue these old narratives and traditions, and should be considered for what it truly is: a research collection meant to be accessible to all.<sup>59</sup> To be fair, there are many significant items that Deadheads would treasure being able to handle, such as the guitars of Jerry Garcia that are missing from the Grateful Dead archives, but this does not detract from its specialness.<sup>60</sup> A lot of these musical instruments were most likely held by the specific families of the musicians or by the surviving members themselves, with several of Garcia's iconic guitars auctioned off after his death to various private owners and institutions.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> "Questions," Questions concerning Terrapin Station or Dead.net, accessed February 15, 2017, <https://web-beta.archive.org/web/20170518030146/http://www.dead.net/faq/faq.html>; "Terrapin Station," accessed March 02, 2017, <http://archives.ucsc.edu/GDead/gda/terr.html>

<sup>59</sup> Jerry Garcia, Setlist. Series One, Box 3, Folder 2, The Grateful Dead Archives, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.

<sup>60</sup> Engagement with the GDA are explained further in this chapter, as well as the following section concerning the online component, the Grateful Dead Archives Online (GDAO).

<sup>61</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>62</sup> One instance is Garcia's famous guitar "Tiger," constructed by luthier Doug Irwin was awarded to Irwin in a settlement suit after Garcia's death and sold to Jim Orsay, CEO and owner of the Indianapolis Colts for \$850,000. For more on the history of Garcia's guitars see the information available on Jerry Garcia's website, operated by the executors of his estate: "Guitars," Jerry Garcia, accessed March 02, 2017, <http://jerrygarcia.com/guitars/>



The motivations to donate the archives in the context of providing a research tool for scholars of the Grateful Dead phenomenon by the band are unknown at this time. What has been discovered are a few stipulations from the contract agreement between UCSC and the Grateful Dead that may tell us much regarding the Dead's motivations. Firstly, knowing that the archives would draw the attention of the community, the Dead wanted to ensure that wherever the archives ended up there would be an exhibit space open to the fans at all times.<sup>62</sup> This exhibition space perhaps played a key role in the Dead's decision making process, as other possible recipients of the donation could not provide such a space for the Deadhead community.<sup>63</sup> The Library at UCSC was able to provide this space, thanks to its recent expansion and renovations in 2011 and donations from the Brittingham Family Foundation in 2012.<sup>64</sup> Dead Central (the name of the exhibit space) is now located on the second and main floor of the McHenry Library, and serves as the first attraction to visitors of the archives.<sup>65</sup> The acquisition of a high visibility collection such as this perhaps also contributed to the funding for the library's expansion as well, with the collection becoming symbiotic with the library, as an exhibition space had been on the Dead's list of priorities dating back well before the 2008 announcement.

In fact, there is a long history of the archives having been conceived as something completely different as far back as 2000, when it was published on dead.net that the surviving members of the band were scouting locations for museum location designated specifically to the

<sup>62</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>63</sup> More of this is covered in the section devoted to the museum space at the McHenry Library, located on page 42 of this paper.

<sup>64</sup> "The Man Behind the Gift to 'Dead Central'" UC Santa Cruz News, accessed March 17, 2017, <http://news.ucsc.edu/2012/05/brittingham-dead-central.html>.

<sup>65</sup> "University Library," Donate | University Library, accessed November 27, 2016, <http://library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead-archive/donate>.



Grateful Dead phenomena. This facility was to be dubbed Terrapin Station, named after the title track to one of the Dead's most iconic albums from 1977.<sup>66</sup> In addition to acting as their own personal museum, it was also to serve as a concert venue, providing the surviving members of the Grateful Dead a home base for their concerts when not on the road touring. Phil Lesh, bassist for the Dead, seems to have been the main proponent for this venue, as it was he who made the announcement online when he and guitarist Bob Weir were performing together with other non-Dead members as "Further." At some point over the next eight years this idea was abandoned with Lesh choosing to open his own concert venue and restaurant called Terrapin Crossroads in San Rafael, CA on March 25, 2012, on his 72nd birthday.<sup>67</sup> With the inclusion of the museum space on the ground floor of the McHenry Library, the Grateful Dead have completed their vision of legacy preservation through a curated narrative, though perhaps on not as grand a scale as originally desired.<sup>68</sup>

Another boon to UCSC that perhaps helped influence the Grateful Dead in donating their collection to the university was personal ties to members of the faculty.<sup>69</sup> Fred Lieberman, an American ethnomusicologist who obtained a doctorate in the field from UCLA, was a professor at

<sup>66</sup> "Questions," Questions concerning Terrapin Station on Dead.net, accessed February 15, 2017, [https://web-beta.archive.org/web/20010603002617/http://dead.net:80/cavenweb/terrapin\\_site/questions.html](https://web-beta.archive.org/web/20010603002617/http://dead.net:80/cavenweb/terrapin_site/questions.html); David Dodd, "The Annotated "Terrapin Station," accessed March 02, 2017, <http://artsites.ucsc.edu/GDead/agdl/terr.html>

<sup>67</sup> There seems to have been a lot of resistance from locations scouted over the years as a home for this venue. In Fairfax, CA the community organized and posted signage declaring their opposition to the project. This might have been part of the reasons that the original concept was split up from a museum and concert venue into the archives and Lesh's own personal restaurant. See Richard Halstead, "Phil Lesh Scraps Plans for Terrapin Crossroads Music Hall in Fairfax," *Marin Independent Journal*, August 11, 2011, accessed January 21, 2017; "Terrapin Crossroads Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)," Terrapin Crossroads Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), accessed January 02, 2017, <http://www.terrapinlanding.com/terrapin-crossroads-faq/>.

<sup>68</sup> This desire for a large museum space dedicated solely to the Grateful Dead has more complications than just space or funding issues, it involves some confusion among Deadheads. This will be discussed in the chapter of this paper that discusses the physical archives and their contents.

<sup>69</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



of popular music at UC Santa Cruz and had been teaching courses on the Dead at the university since the 1970s. Eventually he came in contact with Mickey Hart, who brought Lieberman on tour with him researching percussion instruments across the world. The two would co-author three books together and formed a bond that lasted up until Lieberman's death in 2013.<sup>70</sup> These ties, when paired along with the reputation of Santa Cruz as a counter culture haven in California perhaps made the decision to choose UCSC as the home for the GDA an easy one for the band.

While an exclusive exhibition space and personal ties to the University could have formed strong incentives in the minds of the Grateful Dead, perhaps the most convincing element that helped UCSC acquire the collection was their commitment to providing sufficient processing labor and time for the collection without financial support from its donor. It is important to note here that this collection was indeed a donation, and not purchased by the university.<sup>71</sup> This is an important factor when considering why UCSC was chosen over other institutions, as common practice within research institutions that receive donated collections from private individuals or organizations is to request monetary assistance from the donor. This is often needed by the facility in order to cover the cost of processing labor, materials, and proper storage and management of a collection this size. If the collection was purchased, then it is often assumed that if the institution has enough assets to afford it they should be able to fund the work required. Perhaps some of the other universities that were being considered for the location had asked for assistance from the band in order to house the collection.<sup>72</sup> If this was the case, UCSC,

<sup>70</sup> Joshua Green, "Management Secrets of the Grateful Dead," *The Atlantic*, March 2010, accessed January 15, 2017, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/03/management-secrets-of-the-grateful-dead/307918/>.

<sup>71</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>72</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



who negotiated to have their own resources in place when the collection was acquired would have easily risen to the top of the list for locations. With the massive size of this collection, it is no wonder that the Grateful Dead chose to house it at a facility that could handle it and process with less fiscal responsibilities on behalf of the Grateful Dead.

Since UCSC could house, provide exhibit space, and offer labor to process the GDA at no cost to the Grateful Dead, it is not difficult to reason why the university was chosen. Since the collection was also valued at a specific amount, it may have been possible for the Dead to take a tax deduction for the donation of a collection to a public repository as well. If this was the case, then the Grateful Dead certainly would not have wished to negate this advantage by also paying to have the collection sustained and processed. All of these circumstances along with the association between Mickey Hart and faculty member Fred Lieberman as well the history of counter culture in Santa Cruz can help us piece together what the criteria were for choosing a location for their archives. All of this is evidence points to why the Grateful Dead chose UC Santa Cruz, but what circumstances lead to the decision by the Special Collections Department at the McHenry Library to pursue the collection? To answer this, we must examine the challenges that archive repositories face when taking on collections as large and prominent as this, and what specific challenges the Grateful Dead Archives presented to UCSC.

### Contents and Accruals

After The Grateful Dead had made negotiations and with UCSC to house the collection, arrangements were made to begin transferring the GDA to UCSC that arrived in two main accruals.<sup>73</sup> The first accrual of materials that the library received mainly consisted of

<sup>73</sup>Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



merchandise, set pieces, posters, framed materials, memorabilia, fan art, over 60,000 hand-decorated envelopes, t-shirts, and general ephemera.<sup>74</sup> These materials were stored in an off-campus warehouse estimated at around 3-4000 square feet upon delivery, and were slowly brought over to the library in smaller increments due to space restrictions in the McHenry Archive itself. The second accrual is where most of the business papers from the band and perhaps contains items of the most interest to scholars. As stated before, the contents of the archives are comprehensive, and contain a wealth of information on the business dealings of the Grateful Dead organization for over fifty years. Utility bills, equipment rentals, show contracts, and anything else that the Dead generated can be found inside the archive. A full listing of the files available for research is available at the Online Archives of California, but this listing is simply a general survey of the contents.<sup>75</sup> To reiterate, these materials have not been catalogued at the item level, as this act would extend the processing time exponentially, and so a complete inventory of each document contained in the archives requires sitting down with the documents in person at the McHenry Library by a researcher.

One of the first steps that an institution must do upon receiving a collection is to begin classifying its contents at the most basic level before the processing stage. Classification has been described by library scholar Lois Mai Chan as "organizing the universe into systematic order." With this collection, the Grateful Dead universe has been splintered into different series so that the materials can be easily accessed by the researcher.<sup>76</sup> This sorting is the basis of how

<sup>74</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>75</sup> "Grateful Dead Records Special Collections Request System Logon," Special Collections Request System Logon, accessed March 02, 2017, <https://aeon.library.ucsc.edu/nonshib/Aeon.dll?Action=10&Form=31&Value=http%3A%2F%2Fvoro.cdlib.org%2Foac-ead%2Fprime2002%2Fucsc%2Fspcoll%2Fms332s7.xml>.

<sup>76</sup> Lois Mai Chan and Athena Salaba, *Cataloging and Classification: An Introduction* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 259.



an archive is constructed. If a scholar arrived at UC Santa Cruz wishing to research the business papers of the Grateful Dead's Spring 1990 Tour and was presented with hundreds of boxes of unsorted business papers, their valuable research time would likely be wasted by opening and perusing each individual document. The series labels that are then applied to the materials act as a retrieval tool for the collection.<sup>77</sup> In order to best serve the public, the contents of the GDA have been arranged systematically into twelve different series following standard library science methods and are arranged by subject heading.<sup>78</sup>

A simple observation of these series that the McHenry Library Special Collections department has provided gives an idea of the types of materials that are contained within the GDA, but some clarification might be needed for a few of them. Series One, the History files, mostly consists of different manuscripts that official and unofficial biographers of the band have created over the years and sent to the Dead for their approval, which is why they have been categorized under the subject heading of History.<sup>79</sup> Series Two, the Business files series, contains most of what one would expect under this heading, contracts, utilities, bills, payments, bank statements, and more files that represent the day to day operation of the business side of the Grateful Dead.<sup>80</sup> Series Three: Show Files contains another aspect of the business papers, only on

<sup>77</sup> Chan and Salaba, *Cataloging and Classification*, 260.

<sup>78</sup> Chan and Salaba, *Cataloging and Classification*, 261; "Grateful Dead Records Special Collections Request System Logon," Special Collections Request System Logon, accessed March 02, 2017, <https://aeon.library.ucsc.edu/nonshib/Aeon.dll?Action=10&Form=31&Value=http%3A%2F%2Fvoro.cdlib.org%2Foc-ead%2Fprime2002%2Fucsc%2Fspcoll%2Fms332s7.xml>.

<sup>79</sup> Series One, Box 1, Folder 1, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.

<sup>80</sup> This series was closed for processing when I visited, and as of this time no specific locations are available in the finding aid to cite. However, I was allowed to survey a few boxes upon my visit thanks to the kindness of the archivists.



these are the papers associated with specific Grateful Dead performances.<sup>81</sup> With the Grateful Dead having played over 2,000 concerts in their career, it is clear that this classification would denote a separation into a series of its own. Series Four are the Press files, and as such consists of press junkets, magazine write ups, press clippings and other published materials covering the Grateful Dead.<sup>82</sup>

Series Five, Correspondence, is where almost every letter ever composed by a fan and sent to the Dead is contained, along with various office correspondences between the Dead and their organization. This series is a touching example of how valued the Deadheads were to the band and further illustrates the nature of collecting by the band itself. The Deadheads were not the only ones collecting experiences, the band apparently found the experiences of their fans important enough to save for decades. Furthermore, by creating this archive, the Grateful Dead have effectively collected the experiences of the community for use by the community. Inside this series are letters from Deadheads informing the band about the occurrences of their everyday lives, holiday greeting cards, and letters of sympathy at the passing of Dead keyboardist for the 1980s, Brent Mydland for example.<sup>83</sup> Series Six, Photographs, is a rich resource that documents the Dead's career visually, and much of these materials have been utilized for the exhibits in Dead Central as well as online exhibits for GDAO. Besides the professional photos taken by the media, this series also contains a large amount of photographs shot by amateurs of both the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community.

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<sup>81</sup> Series Three, Show Files, Box 2, Folder 18, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332 (Unpublished).

<sup>82</sup> Series Four, Press, Box 4 Folders 1-5, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.

<sup>83</sup> Series Five, Correspondence, Box 43, Folders 1-2, and Box 44, Folders 3-5, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.



Series Seven, the Media files, is currently closed for processing at the time of this writing, and is thought to contain audio and video interviews with the band conducted over the years. More information will undoubtedly surface about this series, but it is important to note that this series does not contain the Grateful Dead's sound archives of all of their concert performances (this confusion about the contents of the Dead sound vault is covered later in this section under Processing).<sup>84</sup> Series Eight is the Poster series, and has also been a popular visual reference for the band used by exhibits both at UC Santa Cruz and abroad. The Grateful Dead have had a powerful set of recognizable iconography in place throughout their career, as can be seen in the posters for their concert performances. Many of these concert posters are valued as much by the Art World as they are Deadheads, as some were created by popular counter-culture artists such as Stanley Mouse.<sup>85</sup>

Series Nine has been classified as the Artwork series, and consists mainly of fan created artwork (though a few prints of some of the band members' paintings and visual work are represented).<sup>86</sup> Jerry Garcia was visually as well as musically prolific, but much of his original works are now in the hands of his estate under the management of his daughter, Trixie Garcia.<sup>87</sup> Series Ten: Realia, contains many examples of merchandise and stage props produced by the Dead and the Deadhead community. Examples include dozens of official t-shirts and various marketed products with Dead iconography printed upon it.<sup>88</sup> Series Eleven, the Decorated

<sup>84</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>85</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist;" "The Grateful Dead Archive Online," accessed January 22, 2017, <https://www.gdao.org/exhibits/show/posters>

<sup>86</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>87</sup> Jerry Garcia Collection, "The Jerry Garcia Collection presented by StraxArt, accessed March 02, 2017, <https://www.jerrygarciacollection.com/>.

<sup>88</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



Envelopes, is another series that could have been contained under the artwork, but the sheer dominance of their numbers has caused the archivists to classify these works as their own series. These decorated envelopes were adorned by Deadheads and sent to the Dead along with money as a part of a mail-order ticketing system, and most of these can be found digitized on the GDAO website as well.<sup>89</sup> Series Twelve: Backstage Passes, Tickets, and Laminates, is another collection that has proved popular among the fans due to their visual uniqueness, and is currently the subject of an exhibition in Dead Central at the time of this writing.<sup>90</sup> These backstage passes were issued to individuals with access at Grateful Dead concerts and had special imagery placed upon them specific for each concert. Many of these were scenes from sci-fi and horror movies of the 1950s and 60s, as Jerry Garcia was a big fan of these film genres.<sup>91</sup>

Visitors to the GDA are presented with all of these series of subject headings on a computer that they can then peruse and select which items to view or have retrieved for them, helping them to narrow down an area of the archives they wish to explore. All of these series were created by the processing archivists who sorted through the materials in order to compose a general survey and observe what items are the most abundant and effectively warrant their own series. If a collection arrived that was composed of ten boxes of office files, and only contained two photographs, an archivist might not create an individual series to separate the photographs from the papers. Archivists must determine what the dominant subjects are in each collection and

<sup>89</sup> "Correspondence with Sue Chelsey Perry," e-mail interview by author, February 14, 2017; "The Grateful Dead Archive Online," March 02, 2017, accessed January 21, 2017, <https://www.gdao.org/fan-art>.

<sup>90</sup> "Now in Dead Central" | University Library. Accessed January 12, 2017. <http://library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead-archive/now-in-dead-central>.

<sup>91</sup> Jerry Garcia, Dennis McNally, and Trixie Garcia, *Jerry on Jerry: The Unpublished Jerry Garcia Interviews* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2015). Audiobook edition.



identify the principal concepts inside of them to accomplish the creation of these series.<sup>92</sup> This is known in the field as processing, and can be a long and complicated endeavor. As one librarian has phrased it, "simply collecting materials does not require a professional; making sense and use of these materials does."<sup>93</sup> This is the "art" of the professional archivist, to arrange these materials in a way that makes sense and to make them available for desired retrieval.<sup>94</sup>

### Processing

As many archivists are aware, the storage and processing of any collection this large represents a large effort that can span over many years. The estimated completion date for the processing of the Grateful Dead Archives is projected to be at one hundred percent in 2019 if not sooner.<sup>95</sup> This is a significant amount of time from when the materials first began to arrive at the McHenry Library after the Grateful Dead organization began relinquishing these items in 2009.<sup>96</sup> The accruals of the Grateful Dead Archives were sent to UCSC primarily in two shipments.<sup>97</sup> Due to the length of processing time, questions arise as to just how large the collection is, and how much of the processing has been completed as of this writing.<sup>98</sup> The archivists at UCSC estimate that perhaps more than 60% of the collection to be fully processed and open for public research. Scholars unfamiliar with the methods utilized in processing may inquire as to why it

<sup>92</sup> Chan and Salaba, *Cataloging and Classification* 262-265.

<sup>93</sup> R. David Lankes, *The Atlas of New Librarianship* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), 157.

<sup>94</sup> Chan and Salaba, *Cataloging and Classification*, 155, 260.

<sup>95</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>96</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>97</sup> According to an article in the Atlantic, this was an undisclosed location to prevent looting from the Deadhead community. Green, "Management Secrets of the Grateful Dead," *The Atlantic*.

<sup>98</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



has taken six years or more to reach this level. The answer for this is that the time needed for the processing of collections can be considerable.

Once a collection arrives at a facility, it first needs to be surveyed by an archivist as well as their assistants. To create an example, envisage that three standard records center boxes arrive at the repository. The dimensions of one of these boxes according to the Society of American Archivists is  $10 \times 12 \times 16$  inches, which is equivalent to one linear foot. This measurement of a linear foot is created by measuring the amount of space when placed upon a repository shelf from left to right. To conduct a general survey of the contents within these boxes means that the materials have to be removed and must undergo assessment, and then a brief summary is written. This is a timely aspect of processing collections, but it does not mean that every sheet of paper is read and described by the archivist. If the box arrives in pre-sorted file folders from the donor, then the archivist begins to categorize the file by whatever label might happen to be included in these files. All information that may help in classification of the materials is then recoded by the archivists. For theoretical purposes, say a box of business papers from an advertising company we shall name ADCO arrives. For explanatory purposes, let's say that the folders inside have been pre-listed by the donor in the order of month, date, and subject. One of these folders might read: "Radio Advertisements, March 1974." The folder is then examined to make sure that the contents concur with the label, and then a brief summary is written by the archivist. After the general survey is completed, the re-folding and housing of the items in safe containers such as acid-free folders and new document boxes occurs along with proper labelling of the items into a database. Also during this process, the materials are organized and classified as different sub-series inside of the whole. The finding aid that is created from these general processing surveys



and classification is then searchable through a specific filing system in order to make the contents retrievable upon request. To demonstrate what this might look like using our theoretical example, the finding aid that is searched by a visitor would read:

Mss (which stands for manuscripts) 319 (the collection number)

ADCO Collection

Series One: Advertisements

Box 1

File 10: Radio Advertisements, 1974, March

By examining the steps for just one folder in a collection, we begin to see just how lengthy processing a collection can be. This may also take a more considerable amount of time if the files are unsorted upon acquisition. On average, according to a study conducted at nine different University of California repositories between 1976 and 2011, the average time for the processing of one linear foot of documents is around 3.57 to 4 hours of archivist labor.<sup>99</sup> Multiply this average (4 hrs.) by the number of processed linear feet of the GDA published by UCSC through the Online Archives of California (roughly 650) and we arrive at an estimation of time for the filing, re-foldering, and shelving (2,600). This is only an estimated time of processing, and is dependent upon whether or not the materials contained within the collection had been

meticulously sorted and only required being placed into new folders. And this number is also for manuscripts only, and does not reflect the processing of artifacts in the Grateful Dead Archives

such as stage props or framed Gold Records, which require thorough measurements and

<sup>99</sup> For the sake of this research, these numbers do not reflect the processing of artifacts in the Grateful Dead Archives such as stage props or framed Gold Records. Emily R. Novak-Gustainis, "Processing Workflow Analysis for Special Collections: The Center for the History of Medicine, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine as Case Study," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 13, no. 2 (2012).



descriptions. The surveying of hundreds of boxes of mixed content and organization of those items increases this number exponentially. To further investigate why it often takes a large amount of time to complete the processing of the GDA, we must further examine the types of materials contained within the collection. One time consuming aspect that may add to the length of processing for the collection in the GDA is the sorting of sensitive materials. Many of the items in the GDA have included business documents containing susceptible information such as Social Security numbers, which have to be redacted by the archiving staff before they are allowed to be researched. While this material could prove exciting for Deadheads and researchers, it is safer to redact these items from the documents. But this does not mean that there are not numerous items of interest for both Deadhead and scholar.

For Grateful Dead historians there are numerous surprises to be discovered. This includes show riders and handwritten lyric sheets and musical cues by Jerry Garcia, guaranteed to stir the emotions of any Deadhead.<sup>100</sup> In addition to the massive Grateful Dead Archives, there are many supplemental collections housed at UCSC that are of interest to Dead scholars. One example that would be significant is the David Lemieux Collection, the figure in charge of the Grateful Dead's sound and video archives.<sup>101</sup> Lemieux has the one job that every Deadhead covets: he gets paid to listen to and watch the Grateful Dead's entire archive of live performances and choose which ones are the most special for commercial release on behalf of the band. This is an oversimplification of his work, as his official title in the Grateful Dead organization is

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<sup>100</sup> Series One, History, Box 3, Folder 2, Grateful Dead Records, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 332.

<sup>101</sup> David Lemieux Collection, University of California at Santa Cruz, Mss 347.



Audiovisual Archivist and Legacy Manager.<sup>102</sup> The mentioning of David Lemieux and the “vault” (as it is referred to by Deadheads and the Grateful Dead organization itself) is important due to its esteemed place in the minds and imaginations of the fans.<sup>103</sup> This is because the Dead still release quality versions of their performances every year that have been hand selected personally by Lemieux. These are a series of yearly releases dubbed “Dave’s Picks,” and fans often purchase yearly subscriptions for these releases much like one would for ordering a magazine subscription. But when it is time to compose the liner notes for these releases, Lemieux often relies on the materials contained in the Grateful Dead Archives at UCSC for his essays and write-ups on each individual show. This information is important in differentiating between the “vault” that Lemieux operates from and the GDA, as the two have often been confused with the Grateful Dead Archives among the Deadhead community.<sup>104</sup> As such this might lead them to feelings of disappointment upon visiting UCSC if they expected to see the legendary “vault” and where all of the music they covet is stored.<sup>105</sup> This confusion has become more apparent in my research process, as many in the Deadhead community are unaware of the difference between the “vault” of recordings and the GDA.<sup>106</sup> Since this disorientation exists, it is important to achieve a sufficient amount of community engagement with the physical archives. For examination of how UCSC has dealt with engagement with the GDA we must look further

<sup>102</sup> For more on how David Lemieux came about inheriting this job from previous vault-keeper Dick Latvala, see Nick Paumgarten, “Deadhead,” *The New Yorker*, December 16, 2016, accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/11/26/deadhead>.

<sup>103</sup> The Grateful Dead, *One From the Vault*, recorded August 13, 1975, Grateful Dead Productions, 1991, CD.

<sup>104</sup> Wyatt Young, “Grateful Dead Archives General Survey,” Survey Monkey, February 04, 2017, accessed March 2, 2017, [https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/?sm=P406\\_2FwAfULbUImvPIZbIKkf3EM43nbugEkTk\\_2Bg0ozY\\_3D](https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/?sm=P406_2FwAfULbUImvPIZbIKkf3EM43nbugEkTk_2Bg0ozY_3D).

<sup>105</sup> Dundon, “Conversation With Archivist.”

<sup>106</sup> Wyatt Young, “Grateful Dead Archives General Survey,” Survey Monkey.



into the donation process and policies that the McHenry Library and other institutions have employed.

### **Engagement**

Due to the size and scope of the Grateful Dead archives, the decision to pursue the GDA required careful planning on behalf of the archivists at UCSC. The act of donating historical collections to an archive carries with it connotations that the materials will be preserved and become part of a larger history or time.<sup>107</sup> Donation to a repository by private individuals is a valuable tool in the preserving of information for future and current historians. This causes archives to enact value judgements upon the materials that are offered, as not everything that is donated could be considered historically significant. This does not mean however that archives value certain collections or materials over others per se, but depending on the director and the mission of the specific institution some collections are chosen over others to fit specific needs. For instance, the archives that are maintained by one of the historical Missions in California might not be interested in the business papers and correspondence of a twentieth century politician from Vermont. That is, unless that politician has political, ancestral, or cultural ties to that specific Mission, it would not make sense for the Mission to utilize their funds and resources for this specific collection. But one of the thirteen National Archives funded by the federal government would be very interested in a collection of this nature, as they cater to scholars and historians wishing to research national political events and figures.<sup>108</sup> The Special Collections

<sup>107</sup> "Donating Your Personal or Family Records to a Repository," Donating Your Personal or Family Records to a Repository | Society of American Archivists, accessed March 02, 2017, <http://www2.archivists.org/publications/brochures/donating-familyrecs>.

<sup>108</sup> "National Archives Trust Fund Board," National Archives and Records Administration, , accessed January 022, 2017, <https://www.archives.gov/about/laws/nara-trust-fund-board.html>.



Department of university libraries can be more flexible in what they look for in a collection, and often these decisions as to what collections to pursue are made by the professional archivists or director of the repository. If the director of a Special Collections department located at a university in Virginia specializing in United States Civil War manuscripts was offered a collection of family papers from the era, a collection of this type would be very beneficial to their archives. But since universities are comprised of many different academic departments, the archives can be accepting of both the physics papers from a retired Professor who taught at the institution as well as the letters of correspondence from a local family during the Civil War.<sup>109</sup>

Since the cultural similarities between the Grateful Dead and the region of Santa Cruz has already been addressed in the previous section of this research, it is safe for us to assume that the Grateful Dead Archives fit in this context at UCSC. The mission of the McHenry Library's Special Collections department is first and foremost to serve the university and community while considering what is best for the department of Special Collections itself.<sup>110</sup> A crucial aspect of accepting a collection is consideration of engagement and how it might be utilized by a community or researcher. Besides the collection being utilized for research by the students of UCSC, the Deadhead community has been very visible at the archives as soon as part of the collection was open for research.<sup>111</sup> The Grateful Dead Archives are a high-visibility collection. It is not every day that the donation of a collection stimulates a public ceremony

<sup>109</sup> For more information about what repositories look for, the American Association of Archivists has an informative and digestible website addressing these interests. Society of American Archivists, "Donating Your Personal or Family Records to a Repository."

<sup>110</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>111</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



commemorating the occasion at a historical music venue like the Fillmore in San Francisco.<sup>112</sup> As discussed earlier, Deadheads were notorious for following the band while they toured performing live from city to city, year after year, so it is no stretch that they might travel to Santa Cruz on a pilgrimage in order to connect with the collection.<sup>113</sup> But while this is an achievement to attract the Deadhead community to the archives, it has also provided a unique challenge to the university archive staff, and one that has engendered a creative and simplified solution.

As mentioned before, to be a Deadhead is to be a scholar, but perhaps in a less traditional sense. While many Deadheads can recite the dates and setlists for the entire Spring 1990 tour or discuss the history of the Winterland Auditorium in San Francisco, they might not be familiar with the searching of finding aids for a collection housed in an archive. This has presented the archives with a conundrum of how to accommodate the many drop-in visitors that wish to "see the archives."<sup>114</sup> It seems as if many who make the trip are unaware of the concept of what an archive is, and instead are expecting a museum exhibition on the band.<sup>115</sup> Since the Dead themselves foresaw this situation and required a museum exhibit space known as "Dead Central" located on the second floor of the McHenry Library, that usually satisfies most visitors. But some spontaneous visitors unfamiliar with archives who make their way up to the third floor where Special Collections is located have come into some difficulty when attempting to view portions of the collection.

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<sup>112</sup> UCSC Library, *"Grateful Dead Donates Archives to UC Santa Cruz."*

<sup>113</sup> Jackson, "Dead Heads: A Strange Tale of Love, Devotion, and Surrender," 161.

<sup>114</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>115</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



Deadheads who are unfamiliar with the methods of archival research can often find the navigation of online finding aids quite intimidating. Searching through dozens of pages of itemized file folders in these aids has often caused visitors to become exasperated.<sup>116</sup> Even if they did sort through these and submit a request to view a box of show files, the materials contained in the box might not be as appealing to the average Deadhead. Contracts, legal forms, and tax information are not as attractive to the average person who are not conducting scholarly research as a photograph might be. In order to alleviate the potential disappointment of loyal Deadheads who are seen by the staff to be just as important as a visiting scholar, a simple solution was created. Set aside from the rest of the collection are several boxes that cover a generalized survey of the whole. This is a miniature sample collection consisting of photographs, backstage passes, manuscripts, posters, and seems to satisfy most visitors.<sup>117</sup> It is important to note that this experience of holding items in one's hands is a distinguishing feature of what separates an archive from a museum exhibition.

The power of place and space has long been an effective communicator of history.<sup>118</sup> Many visitors to the GDA may experience a sense of "discovery" while holding the items in their hand as opposed to having an object hung on a wall. This utilization of allowing visitors to experience the best of both worlds by viewing a curated exhibit in Dead Central and holding important documents in their hand is what truly sets the Grateful Dead Archives apart from museums like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. It enables members of the Deadhead community

<sup>116</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>117</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>118</sup> Randy Bergstrom, "Public History" (Lecture, Public History Course 192, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, May 24, 2016).



to connect with part of their history firsthand by touching it rather than seeing its context sterilized behind a piece of plexiglass.

The Special Collections Department and the McHenry library have achieved a balance in terms of community engagement, and this technique could be a beneficial tactic for institutions in the future. But this is not to say that other archives that exist in the United States do not enact similar possibilities of curating exhibits of their archives. On the contrary most of them do. What makes the GDA unique in the world of collections is the engagement ability with a popular culture phenomenon such as the Grateful Dead. For example, while Graceland, the former home and current private museum of Elvis Presley, has a full archive of materials relating to the artist, the archives are closed to the general public for research.<sup>119</sup> Contrarily all that is required in order to view the items inside the GDA is a photo ID and for the visitor to fill out of a general information form. Since we have discussed the specialness of sorting through the physical archives themselves as a form of engagement, it is time to turn to perhaps the most user-friendly form of engagement for the GDA: Dead Central, the exhibition space located on the second floor of the McHenry Library at UC Santa Cruz.

### **Dead Central: The Museum Space**

Mentioned earlier in the section on Contents and Accruals was the confusion on behalf of Deadheads in attempting to discern the Grateful Dead Archives from a museum exhibition and also from the audio/visual vault that the Grateful Dead still maintain control of.<sup>120</sup> The University

<sup>119</sup> "Graceland Archives," Graceland, , accessed January 14, 2017, [https://www.graceland.com/visit/history\\_of\\_graceland/graceland\\_archives.aspx](https://www.graceland.com/visit/history_of_graceland/graceland_archives.aspx); Graceland Information Operator, conversation with author, January 25, 2017 (1-800-238-2000).

<sup>120</sup> As of now it is unclear as to what the legacy of the Grateful Dead Vaults will include in the future after the passing of the surviving members.



has published a FAQ page online that clearly describes what Deadheads can expect upon visiting the site, but according to the experiences of the staff there it might not be utilized by visitors before arriving, as they are different ideas of what Dead Central is and what the Grateful Dead Archives are.<sup>121</sup> The Grateful Dead were prescient in their vision for an archive and museum space, and the exhibition space that the McHenry Library has allotted is indeed sufficient for the needs of a Dead curator. While being large enough to perhaps accommodate for the display of the sizable Grateful Dead set pieces from their live concerts, the space is not so large that a curator would have difficulty in designing a focused exhibit of archival materials.

Up until the point of this writing, all of the exhibits curated and displayed in Dead Central have been under the direction of Nicholas Merriwether, the archivist who was hired specifically to manage the Grateful Dead Archives on behalf of the University.<sup>122</sup> The exhibits last anywhere from one to two years, and so far have focused exclusively on Grateful Dead history. Merriwether has since moved on from his position with the GDA, which raises the question as to who will be in charge of curating the next exhibits at Dead Central. According to the staff on hand, the Special Collections department and the library wish to continue with important exhibits that ask new questions about the band and the surrounding phenomena. Currently there are plans to involve graduate students at the University in an attempt to engage the campus community as well as Deadheads.

<sup>121</sup> Dundon, "Conversation with Archivist," FAQs | University Library, accessed January 22, 2017, <https://library.ucsc.edu/grateful-dead-archive/faqs>.

<sup>122</sup> Wallace Baine, "Nicholas Merriwether Named Director of Grateful Dead Archive," *The Santa Cruz Sentinel*, August 04, 2010, accessed January 16, 2017, <http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/article/ZZ/20100408/NEWS/100408712>.



The current exhibit, *Imaging the Dead: Photographs and Photographers in the Grateful Dead Archive, 1965-1995* is a comprehensive narrative of the band through the eyes of their friends and media. Notable photographers from different eras of the band's career such as Herb Greene, Rosie McGee, and Susana Millman have been included to tell a visual history of the band. Many published books of photographs of the band are also on display denoting the contemporary fascination in pop culture that the Dead has engendered over three decades. In a large glass case are the life-sized marionette puppets from the band's shoot for "Touch of Grey," a music video that was instrumental in their popularity resurgence in the late 1980s and attracted a younger generation of fan base for the band.<sup>123</sup> The display of these marionettes goes a long way to produce the wow factor inside Deadheads that many blockbuster museum exhibits wish to portray. In fact, if any materials from the Grateful Dead Archives would be at home in an exhibit from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum in Cleveland, it would be these. They are instantly recognizable by those who were alive in that era and can be considered iconic. Also included in the current exhibit is a collection of backstage passes that were used by the band while touring that depict a number of artists and popular culture imagery, like the Bride of Frankenstein, since Jerry Garcia was a cinephile and lover of classic horror movies.<sup>124</sup>

To understand the need of an exhibition space, we must look into the important role that visual imagery has played in the band's career. The Grateful Dead, while never being completely mainstream, were just as much a visual band as they were musical. This is evident in thousands of items of merchandise that the Grateful Dead organization produced with Jerry Garcia's image

<sup>123</sup> *Tie-died: Rock 'n Roll's Most Deadicated Fans*. Dir. Andrew Behar. Arrowhead Entertainment, 1995. Film. YouTube. 17 June 2013. Web. 9 Oct. 2016; *Touch of Grey*, Music Video (United States, 1987), November 26, 2010, accessed March 02, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YSTeJOxiaw>.

<sup>124</sup> University Library, "Now in Dead Central;" Garcia, Garcia, and McNally, *Jerry on Jerry*, Audiobook.



incorporated during his life and over twenty years after his death.<sup>125</sup> Jerry Garcia was extremely famous and recognizable, and arguably had been elevated to near Mao-levels in the United States among Deadheads. His discomfort with this status led to years of drug addiction and poor health practices which resulted in his death in 1995.<sup>126</sup> Often he could not leave his hotel room without being recognized and mobbed due to his beloved status in the public eye.<sup>127</sup> Both Jerry and the Grateful Dead tread in the cult-of-personality waters and as such are visually important to Deadheads, which is why the Dead Central exhibit space is necessary for the institution that houses the Grateful Dead Archives. With all of the confusion surrounding the archives being misinterpreted as a museum or the audio vault where all of their music is stored, UCSC and the Dead have correctly anticipated the importance of the visual legacy in the Deadhead community, and Dead Central has been a success with visitors from the Deadhead community and beyond.<sup>128</sup>

### Conclusion

Examination of the history of the physical Grateful Dead Archives has led to questions such as when it was that the collection was thought to have been more suitable for a research institution rather than a museum. It is speculation to assume that the amassing of these materials by the Grateful Dead organization was for the specific purpose of creating an archival collection. During the course of this research, it appears that the current concept of the Grateful Dead Archives seems to have originated sometime between 2000 and 2008, either before or after Lesh decided to venture out on his own with a less ambitious endeavor than the proposed museum/

<sup>125</sup> "Jerry Garcia," website accessed March 02, 2017, <http://jerrygarcia.shop.musictoday.com/>.

<sup>126</sup> *The Other One: The Long, Strange Trip of Bob Weir*, dir. Mike Fleis, Netflix, 2014, accessed June 10, 2016, <https://www.netflix.com/title/80011852>.

<sup>127</sup> Garcia, Garcia, and McNally, *Jerry on Jerry*, Audiobook.

<sup>128</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



concert venue site Terrapin Station. But not only has this collection distinguished itself for being more suitable at a public research institution as opposed to a museum due to the unique culture of collecting and engagement between the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community, it also has lead to some confusion within the Deadhead community over what the Grateful Dead Archives actually are.

When discussing my research and subsequent visit to the GDA in Santa Cruz with an acquaintance who is also a Dead fan, the first question asked was "did you buy any cool shirts or posters?" This question is a core example of what the community may expect by visiting the archives. However this confusion is understandable, as it seems the Grateful Dead themselves had originally planned for the collection to be part of a museum space as well. Also, regarding merchandise, the Dead were a force when it came to marketing, and much of that is contained in the archives, although the materials are not for sale.<sup>129</sup> Included in the contract negotiations for UCSC to house the GDA is that the University would not sell officially licensed memorabilia, another example of what separates this collection from institutions like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame that sell T-shirts, posters, and cd's of the artists contained within.<sup>130</sup> The Grateful Dead still generate revenue from the sales of live concerts and memorabilia, so they wish to keep this income under their control. But in the history of the complex relationship of the Grateful Dead and the fans, Fair Use policies and methods have always been available to the Deadhead community, and as such it is to UCSC. Deadheads being allowed to record the Grateful Dead concerts and also to generate their own bootleg shirts and the selling of them are the evidence of

<sup>129</sup> Jackson, "Dead Heads: A Strange Tale of Love, Devotion, and Surrender," 161.

<sup>130</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



this. For decades fans created their own unique t-shirts and sold them in the parking lots of concerts.<sup>131</sup> These contained visual imagery inspired by the Dead's music and as long as the images weren't trademarked, the Dead seemed to have no problem with this as it didn't seem to slow down the sales of their official merchandise. UCSC, while not being able to use officially trademarked or licensed materials, has come up with their own. The Bay Tree Bookstore, located on campus, sells shirts containing the UCSC banana slug mascot wearing a tie-dyed t-shirt with the slogan "Grateful Slug" printed on it.<sup>132</sup> With this unofficial shirt, the spirit and practices of the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community seemed to be at UCSC as well.

In terms of dealing with the confusion of the archives, a prime tool that may assist with this issue has been the creation of the Grateful Dead Archives Online. GDAO is a socially constructed website where many of the items in the physical archives have been digitized and made available to the public online, but also includes the opportunity for members from the Deadhead community to contribute their own oral histories and artifacts online. The Grateful Dead, due to their connections with the Bay Area (which in addition to being associated with the counter culture movement is also known for its tech industries) as well as their early utilization of the internet for their own outreach purposes during the late 1980s and early 1990s, are the perfect band to attempt a unique endeavor like GDAO.

<sup>131</sup> Behar, *Tie-died*, film.

<sup>132</sup> "Slug Store," The Bay Tree Bookstore - Grateful Slug, accessed March 02, 2017, <http://slugstore.ucsc.edu/>



### Chapter III: GDAO

#### "To Get To Terrapin"

In an age when online reference culture is becoming increasingly more accepted and utilized by scholars, it makes sense that the McHenry Library, which houses the Grateful Dead Archives at UC Santa Cruz, would wish to pursue a unique form of engagement with their online community. If the physical collection was constructed through a unique culture of collecting and interaction between the band and its fans, then any online presence would have to match and exhibit this connection. According to the grant proposal filed by UCSC with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), their wish was to create a "unique and cutting edge website" that would allow the Deadhead community to contribute their own personal content. Like the motif of the unrealized museum and concert venue that would later become the Grateful Dead Archives, the website was dubbed Virtual Terrapin Station at the time of conception.<sup>133</sup> This Virtual Terrapin Station, which would later become the Grateful Dead Archives Online (GDAO), was meant to become a digital representation of significant portions of the physical archives, with community submission capabilities designed into it.<sup>134</sup> But where did an idea like this come from?

Traditionally archives at public research institutions have not undertaken the costly effort to convert the entirety of their physical archives into an accessible digital format, but there has

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<sup>133</sup> Creating a Virtual Terrapin Station: Blending Traditional and Socially Constructed Archives for Research, Teaching, and Cultural Enrichment, PhD diss., The University of California at Santa Cruz, 2009 (Santa Cruz, California: Unpublished IMLS Grant Proposal), 1.

<sup>134</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 5.



been a shift in the world of online digital references and humanities in recent years. In fact, it can often be seen as a detriment or backwards-thinking if an institution has a minimal or lackluster online presence. This reaction from the public has come about in the collections realm (which pertains to both libraries and museums, both of which the Grateful Dead Archives can count themselves as participants of) as a reaction to the ways that scholars, students, and community members utilize new methods of referencing information engendered by the internet. But for academic and public institutions of learning, this was not always the case. The shift towards having a mandatory online visual presence is the result of years of contemplation among academic and didactic institutions both public and private that wrestle with how best to keep up with the ease of online reference sites.

One such example of a website that has been controversial for its possible inclusion in the classroom setting has been Wikipedia. Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that "aims for anyone to edit its articles."<sup>135</sup> This methodology has drawn criticism from many in the academic community as it requires no scholarly training in order to be published and read by anyone with internet access.<sup>136</sup> The possibilities of misinformation have been seen to become dangerous in an age where the humanities have begun to become digitized during the internet revolution, and Wikipedia in particular has been met with resistance from the academic community in the past. But for all of its negative awareness among instructors, Wikipedia is seemingly here to stay.<sup>137</sup>

Students and professionals alike have been turning to Wikipedia more and more in recent years

<sup>135</sup> "Wikipedia," Wikipedia, February 14, 2017., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia>.

<sup>136</sup> Darren Crovitz and W. Scott Smoot, "Wikipedia: Friend Not Foe," *The English Journal* 98, no. 3 (January 2009): 92.

<sup>137</sup> Johnny Snyder, "Wikipedia: Librarians' Perspectives on Its Use as a Reference Source," *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2013): 155-156.



thanks to its ease of use and immediate access to linking sources.<sup>138</sup> In its early days, Wikipedia had been banned outright from use by certain schools as it was seen to be too risky due to its perception of having unregulated content.<sup>139</sup> Since then, Wikipedia has implemented policies that curtail anonymous article creation, perhaps assisting in a reluctant acknowledgement of its didactic possibilities among scholars.<sup>140</sup> In the current academic climate, instructors can no longer afford to ignore its presence, and instead have had to adapt by including lessons on how to "read" Wikipedia. This reading of the website is often accomplished by instructors through the direct comparison of Wikipedia entries to primary sources, denoting their differences as sources for research.<sup>141</sup>

But it is not just instructors and students that have labored with how to properly use online reference sources in tandem with traditional academic methods, librarians and collections managers have also had to reckon with this new technological innovation. In an anonymous survey that was issued to twenty-two libraries (at the public and university levels) composing a consortium in the Western United States in 2010 and compared with a previous survey of student engagement with Wikipedia, it was found that librarians and faculty of these institutions seem to be using the website more than students.<sup>142</sup> This a large departure in just a few years from a website that once garnered sneers from the academic community, and speaks to the power and importance of this new online reference medium. But while Wikipedia has been met with distrust

<sup>138</sup> Snyder, "Wikipedia: Librarians' Perspectives," 156.

<sup>139</sup> Crovitz and Smoot, "Wikipedia: Friend Not Foe," 92.

<sup>140</sup> Snyder, "Wikipedia: Librarians' Perspectives," 161.

<sup>141</sup> Verónica Castillo Muñoz, "Research Paper" (lecture, History 168B Chicana/o History, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, February 8, 2017)

<sup>142</sup> Snyder, "Wikipedia: Librarians' Perspectives," 161.



from the academic and collections community, another website that has been alternatively embraced by many institutions is the Internet Archive (archive.org), a site that intends to achieve the impossible not only by archiving the Internet with its "wayback machine," but is also in the process of attempting to provide "universal access to all knowledge."<sup>143</sup> These two organizations are examples of how websites may have set the precedent for online-community submission which GDAO is also attempting to utilize. But more than that, the Internet Archive has history with the Grateful Dead specifically, as nearly every live concert of the band can be found on the site and streamed for free. Many of these performances were uploaded by the tapers whose fair to share beliefs align perfectly with Kahle and archive.org.<sup>144</sup>

The aims of the Internet Archive website which was founded by technological philanthropist Brewster Kahle is to create a modern day Great Library at Alexandria.<sup>145</sup> But unlike the legends that surround the famous classical library which had supposedly burnt down along with over forty-thousand unique volumes of knowledge during antiquity, Kahle wishes to preserve the entirety of contemporary knowledge and culture for all time.<sup>146</sup> The ties to the Library of Alexandria are not just metaphorical, as Kahle donated a large portion of these internet archives to the current Bibliotheca Alexandria in Egypt upon its relaunch in 2002.<sup>147</sup> Along with archiving the internet through snapshots, archive.org has also expanded to include moving images, software, FBI national security letters (for which he sued the U.S. government

<sup>143</sup> Brewster Kahle, "Overview of the Internet Archive" (lecture, University of California, Santa Barbara, October 20, 2016).

<sup>144</sup> "Grateful Dead," Grateful Dead : Free Music : Free Audio : Download & Streaming : Internet Archive, accessed March 18, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/GratefulDead>; Kahle, "Overview of the Internet Archive."

<sup>145</sup> Kahle, "Overview of the Internet Archive."

<sup>146</sup> Stuart Murray, *The Library: An Illustrated History* (New York: Skyhorse, 2012), 17.

<sup>147</sup> Brendan I. Koerner, "Egypt's Digital Haven," *Foreign Policy*, no. 132 (Sept. & oct. 2002): 90.



and won the rights to do), texts, and music.<sup>148</sup> Kahle's mission has even extended into activism as he attempts to preserve the knowledge of entire cultures. In 2011, the Internet Archive digitized an estimated ninety percent of the Balinese literature, of which many writings date back hundreds of years and were written on treated and dried palm leaves. This undertaking by Kahle and associates makes it the first culture to have a near complete library of their literature available online for free.<sup>149</sup> This was a remarkable task, and along with its other efforts such as digitizing an estimated one thousand books a day, in eight different countries, and in a multitude of languages, the Internet Archive has been hailed by libraries and collections for its progressive approach to knowledge preservation.<sup>150</sup>

But despite the humanitarian efforts of internet philanthropists like Kahle, online reference sources have had a mixed reaction from collecting institutions, perhaps due to the fact that internet reference sites allow for instances of published misinformation. But along with the potential for misinformation there also are possibilities for great advancements in the accessibility of knowledge for all people that has been unmatched in history, and visual engagement plays a large role in today's society. This move towards a more visual interaction with knowledge has been adopted by institutions that house collections hoping to remain relevant and create new curatorial roles for the digital world. The "visual has become more fundamental, sometimes in tension with the textual" inside of these repositories.<sup>151</sup> For the upcoming

<sup>148</sup> "Top Collections at the Archive," *Internet Archive: Digital Library of Free Books, Movies, Music & Wayback Machine*, accessed February 15, 2017, <https://www.archive.org/>.

<sup>149</sup> "The Balinese Digital Library," *The Balinese Digital Library : Free Texts : Download & Streaming : Internet Archive*, accessed February 15, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/Bali&tab=about>.

<sup>150</sup> Kahle, "Overview of the Internet Archive."

<sup>151</sup> Anne Burdick, *Digital Humanities* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2016). 11.



generations of scholars inhabiting the twenty-first century, a "screen culture" has arisen in the halls of academia, and its effects are being felt by these institutions that feed research. One way in which archives have chosen to keep up with the internet revolution in an effort to remain relevant is to promote the importance of proper research and reference. This is accomplished by creating websites that have been designed for maximum engrossment of the public. Collecting institutions are attempting to find ways to use the art of website design as a tool to "expand the range of communicative tools" so that more user may be reached.<sup>152</sup> The art of website design has led to the rise of nonverbal communication and visually constructed realities on humanities sites in the hopes that the parent institutions can serve as a liaison between professional and the public.<sup>153</sup> Curation of these collections in a digital manner have now taken on an importance that perhaps was not truly evaluated by research facilities initially as they have tried to keep up with the needs of a public that has become more aware.<sup>154</sup> They have now recognized that a "new core" has arisen from modern users' "discomfort with inherited curricula" that have been based on traditional Eurocentric methods.<sup>155</sup> More and more, public users that belong to disenfranchised groups are realizing the absence of their own voices in history and have begun to seek inclusion in what materials are curated and presented to them. These members wish to see and hear their own voices in decision making processes, and the websites created by these institutions should at the very least practice consideration of these views if not look to them for

<sup>152</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 11.

<sup>153</sup> Terrance Newell. "Representing Library Users and Professionals on Websites: A Visual Grammar Approach for Library Image-Makers and Library Educators." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 45, no. 4 (2004): 307, accessed February 12, 2017. doi:10.2307/40323876.

<sup>154</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 17.

<sup>155</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 24.



consultation. It is partly this culmination of the times and experiences during the digital age that has lead to the decision to build a massive online component to the Grateful Dead Archives by the Digital Initiatives Department of the McHenry Library at UC Santa Cruz.

### The Institute of Museum and Library Services Grant

The age of online reference is proving to be a changing force in the library and collection fields. However, a simple online surrogate collection of the Grateful Dead Archives would not be the best route to take with a collection of this nature which was created through a culture of interactive collecting between band and community. Digitizing the GDA and posting it online would perhaps be too mundane and lessen its potential. When imagining a high-profile collection such as the Grateful Dead Archives are, the average twenty-first century user would assume that the archives would be deserving of a significant online presence. After all, the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community have had a significant presence on the internet due to their fair share policies of collecting sound and influencing the likes of Brewster Kahle.<sup>156</sup> In order to match the presence of the physical archives, the digital initiatives department of the McHenry Library applied for a lucrative grant with the Institute of Museum and Library Services in order to construct an online component that was more interactive than a simple webpage that denoted general information. This concept was in the minds of the archivists at UCSC once they pursued for the collection to be housed at the library, and in concept it fits with the mission of the Grateful Dead which is to be socially, audibly, and visually experimentative.<sup>157</sup> By extending this philosophy, the digital initiatives department also wished to create a new type of archival

<sup>156</sup> Kahle, "Overview of the Internet Archive."

<sup>157</sup> "Questions," Dead.net, Courtesy of the Wayback Machine, accessed February 15, 2017, [https://web-beta.archive.org/web/20010603002617/http://dead.net:80/cavenweb/terrapi\\_n\\_site/questions.html](https://web-beta.archive.org/web/20010603002617/http://dead.net:80/cavenweb/terrapi_n_site/questions.html).



reference website that would be accessible to all, and one that would in theory be ever-growing. In the field of collections development and construction during the information revolution, it has been asked as to why we collect physical objects at all anymore. R. David Lankes, Professor and Director of the Library and Information Science Program at Syracuse University has posited that institutions collect their community, not the physical objects themselves. With the Grateful Dead Archives Online (GDAO), the University of California at Santa Cruz has not only attempted to collect their community, they are seeking input from it.<sup>158</sup>

Following an approach adopted from the James Surowiecki book *The Wisdom of Crowds: Why the Many are Smarter Than the Few and How the Collective Wisdom Shapes Business, Economics, Societies, and Nations*, the Digital Initiatives Department chose to pursue a crowd-sourced website that would leverage input from the Deadhead community. This helps to inform us that the designers of the project have perhaps chosen to embrace the desires of the internet community in regards to the "new core" of digital humanities taking place today.<sup>159</sup> The digital initiatives division of the McHenry Library wished to create a distinctive component to the physical archives, allowing the Deadhead community to contribute and upload their own images and stories to Grateful Dead history. They recognized from the beginning the value that the Deadhead community might bring to a project such as this. The language and sources cited throughout the grant narrative supports this notion of Deadhead inclusion, which is what helps to separate GDAO from the physical archives. The decision to involve Deadheads is also evident by recognizing that a collection of this sort is unique, and that archives of famous personalities

<sup>158</sup> Lankes, *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, 159.

<sup>159</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 1; Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 23.



traditionally have been more exclusive with access provided only to a connected few.<sup>160</sup> In an attempt to predict potential desire of and to make use of the collection in a widespread manner, the online component was designed with community inclusion in mind. But such an endeavor may fall outside of the range of traditional funding budgets, and so financial assistance from outside of the University was needed in order to launch the website.

In order to construct the Grateful Dead Archives Online in a manner that coalesced with the vision of the digital initiatives team, funding had to be secured by the university. As discussed in the previous section regarding the contract negotiations the McHenry Library, which is a public institution funded largely by the State of California, has limited resources at their disposal. If they could not afford to purchase the collection outright (if indeed it ever was for sale), it is reasonable to assume that they would not have the funding to develop a website that accomplished their goals to "convert and make available a significant part of the traditional archive while simultaneously experimenting with the impact of fostering, creating, and curating a larger, socially constructed archive."<sup>161</sup> A project as ambitious as this can be a financial obstacle, as is evident by the library asking the IMLS for \$615,174 in their proposal for the thirty-month project.<sup>162</sup> This amount alone could not cover the complete cost of the project however, as UCSC also pledged to contribute \$795,549 to the project. Included in these costs would be the creation of several staff positions to develop and maintain the website, such as a web developer/

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<sup>160</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 2.

<sup>161</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 1.

<sup>162</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 8.



programmer, project manager, and an official Grateful Dead Archivist (which turned out to be Nicholas Merriwether, who is no longer associated with the archives).<sup>163</sup>

After potentially secure the funding to create GDAO, there was put forth a nearly three-year plan to construct the site which would have gone live sometime in 2012.<sup>164</sup> What can be learned from the IMLS Grant proposal and stressed is that GDAO was never meant to be a complete digitization of the physical archives, but instead to make a "significant" part of the traditional collection available online. If they were to attempt a complete digitization of the archives, due to the large amount of materials it would almost certainly take many more years to achieve on top of the already long processing time of the physical archives. For example, all of the show files for the concerts the Dead performed in February of 1989 would be contained in a boxes denoting the date and concerts performed during this period. These boxes contain hundreds of documents, all organized chronologically and classified by the archivists. Multiply this by the thousands of concerts the Grateful Dead performed in their 30 year history, and there would be hundreds of thousands of papers just for the Show Files series alone. One can imagine how unwieldy and costly this would be to individually scan, as processing at a general survey level has not yet been completed for the physical archives after more than six years of efforts from the Special Collections staff. For this reason alone perhaps the Digital Initiatives Division of the McHenry Library was offered the opportunity to creatively assess the uniqueness of the collection and discern what the best approach would be to obtain maximum engagement capabilities from the public. After deciding to have a unique interface with the Deadhead

<sup>163</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 8.

<sup>164</sup> These goals were met. Perry, E-mail Conversation.



community, a list of goals was created and placed into the grant proposal. But did they achieve their listed goals, or were they forced to compromise them due to unforeseen challenges and hurdles?

### Conception vs. Realization

In the conceptual phase that is detailed in the grant proposal, the proposal seems to have been written with the Deadheads in mind from the beginning, as the community is mentioned several times throughout the proposal as being sources of personal contributions to the site. Also listed in the proposal is the recognition from the authors that collections of this nature that stem from a unique community can be developed further and become more inclusive towards that community. Discussed under the heading "National Impact and Results," the archivists have recognized that there is real potential for this collection to be inventive and serve as a "successful model for institutions to make their collections more useful through collaboration with their audiences and the application of technology."<sup>165</sup> For GDAO, the intended audience is assumed to be scholars, students, and of course Deadheads. In concept the idea of having a perpetual dialogue with the existing community of Deadheads through individual contributions to the website is one that is not radical when compared to established online reference sites such as Wikipedia or the Internet Archives. But it is groundbreaking for a research institution to break away from traditional methods in order to attempt such a goal. What follows is a comparison of project goals listed in the conceptual phase and whether or not the success of these goals as revealed from a general browsing of the GDAO website. These project goals included the digitization of selected portions of the Grateful Dead Archive, the provision of teaching

<sup>165</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 3.



resources that illustrate the musical, social, & cultural impacts of the Grateful Dead, the identification of ancillary sources for inclusion into the Grateful Dead Archives Online (né Virtual Terrapin Station), and the Identification and resolution of rights clearance issues, including development of an online click-through permissions form.<sup>166</sup>

As discussed earlier regarding the digitization of selected portions from the Grateful Dead Archive, there are indeed a large number of documents from the archives posted in GDAO that lend themselves to a visual format. The majority of these items is located on the GDAO website under three distinct tabs: "Artists," "Online Exhibits," and "Fan Art."<sup>167</sup> Under the category of Artists are a great number of photographs and scans of concert posters and backstage passes searchable by artist name. The photographs mainly seem to consist of professional and amateur photographs of the band both onstage and off, as well as images of the Deadhead community. While the photos of more professional and widely known photographers such as Herb Greene comprise the majority of the image files (currently numbering over eight thousand), there are quite a few amateur photographs taken by unidentified Deadheads that represent their contribution to the site as well.

At this time it is unknown if all of the photographs and show posters that are located in the physical archives have been digitized and uploaded to GDAO, but it is safe to assume that a large portion of them have been. However, selections from several artists (both photographic and visual works) have had their access blocked to users of the website without proper UCSC login and affiliation, reserving them for students, on-site visitors, and faculty of the university. This

<sup>166</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 1.

<sup>167</sup> "Grateful Dead Archive Online," October 22, 2016, from <https://www.gdao.org/>.



restriction is perhaps due to copyright laws that prohibit the university from publishing their work, which could be off-putting to Deadheads unable or unwilling to travel to Santa Cruz and may contribute to dissatisfaction within the community. However, there is a considerable amount of content available on the site, and this should be considered an achievement of their goal to digitize a significant portion of the paper.

One location for digitized items from the archives that have been curated and rendered easily navigable is the Online Exhibits section of GDAO.<sup>168</sup> This section of the website also addresses another project goal, that of the provision of teaching resources that illustrate the musical, social, and cultural impact of the Grateful Dead. The didactic possibilities that emanate from the creation of museum exhibits have long been discussed and valued in the field of public history. Exhibits provide the possibility of a multi-faceted approach to learning through complex interaction and assessment of the visual, and are considered more complex than just transmitting information to a viewer.<sup>169</sup> The assessment of the visual as it is presented on a digital screen is a practice with which most individuals in the modern era are familiar with, reinforcing the importance of the GDAO's web presence.<sup>170</sup> The GDAO online exhibit section, while retaining many of the characteristics of the photographs and images that have been digitized goes a bit further in its presentation. Exhibits are meant to create a dialogue, and the way materials and works are presented to an audience are done so with the knowledge that the visitor has come of their own volition.<sup>171</sup> This means that curators can often feel an obligation to provide the

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<sup>168</sup> "The Grateful Dead Archive Online," Exhibits.

<sup>169</sup> Minda Borun. The Exhibit as Educator: Assessing the Impact. *Journal of Museum Education*, Volume 17, 3. (1992): 13.

<sup>170</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 8.

<sup>171</sup> Borun, "The Exhibit as Educator," 13.



museum goes with what it is they think the audience desires to see, and as such details and nuances can be left out of the labels and information provided for the materials on display.

The images that comprise the online exhibits of GDAO have been curated by a professional, and include more context than the simple labels of name, date, and location found on individual images of the website. Here is also where additional materials from the physical archives are more likely to pop up on GDAO as documents relating to the exhibit. To illustrate, when browsing the current "Europe '72" exhibit, aside from the images of the band performing onstage overseas during this iconic period of their career, there are telegrams, fan correspondence, office memos, and press clippings to flesh out the narrative and emphasize the importance of the period. All of these have been gathered under links that denote their classification, such as Tour History, Music, Press, Fan Correspondence, Business Records and Photographs. Whether or not these materials will remain online once the exhibit is changed remains to be seen. But there are currently only two exhibits: the aforementioned "Europe '72" and "The Posters of the Grateful Dead Archives."

The initial plan by the digital initiatives department was to have a digital version of each physical exhibit from Dead Central that would include samplings of digital representations of the physical artifacts on display. This was abandoned by the digital initiatives as a new physical exhibit is curated annually, and up until now a digital surrogate has not been created for most of these. The reasons for this deviation from the original plan possibly include the workload necessary and a discomfort by the previous archivist Nicholas Merriwether with the technological requirements of the digital platform. Dating from Merriwether's departure from the archives in 2016, these two exhibit formats will most likely remain separate, with the digital



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initiatives team focusing on the software and file management aspects for online exhibits. Another wish is to dig deeper by drawing connections with other ancillary collections to be used in conjunction with the online exhibits, such as implementing the photographs of Pirkle Jones and Ruth Marion Baruch who documented the residents of Haight Ashbury during the 1967 "Summer of Love," just in time for the 50th anniversary of the event. This collection, also housed at UCSC, is a perfect complement for the Grateful Dead Archives, and while not focusing on the band specifically, provides a larger historical context for its origins.<sup>172</sup> The effort of involving the Jones/Baruch collection in connection with the Grateful Dead will result in the accomplishment of another of the digital initiatives project goals to identify and incorporate these ancillary collections into GDAO, as well as the goal of providing didactic materials for educational use. The latter of these goals is also accomplished by the site's existence and content that is provided. When it comes to the development of an online click-through permissions form, we must examine the user's ability to make submissions to GDAO, as well as conduct a close analysis of the "Content Development and Copyright" section of the IMLS grant proposal.

The first stage of content development as it is described in the grant proposal was to "review and select existing web-based resources for initial inclusion in the Virtual Terrapin Station."<sup>173</sup> This is quite a formidable task, as in their project-planning and research the digital initiatives division found that there were "over 6 million websites with some degree of content, almost 10,000 videos available on YouTube alone, tens of thousands of audio files on sites such as Dead.net and in the Internet Archive, and over 21,000 articles and scholarly materials that cite

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<sup>172</sup> Perry, E-mail Conversation.

<sup>173</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 5.



the Grateful Dead."<sup>174</sup> Incorporating all of this content into GDAO would be impossible. Besides the numbers, the copyright issues associated with much of the material would be nightmarish and expensive to sort through. This means that the digital initiatives department had to be careful in selecting which sources to incorporate. One site that UCSC has decided to partner with, the Internet Archives, is the perfect match for the Grateful Dead Archives. In an interactive map of the world hosted on GDAO under the tab marked "Shows," the site has provided links to the specific audio files for complete Grateful Dead concerts on archive.org. By scrolling across the map powered by GoogleMyMaps, one encounters hundreds of rose icons denoting that the Grateful Dead had played in those cities.<sup>175</sup> If one clicks on a rose it brings up a list of venues and dates at which the Dead performed and these locations are linked to Internet Archives' database of taper recorded shows.<sup>176</sup> This is an invaluable tool for GDAO to use, as the music is first and foremost the glue that holds the Deadhead community together and helps connect all of the content on the site to its source.

The sheer amount of content already available for those in the Deadhead community means that in order to reach the Deadhead community, noticeable efforts must be made to stand out from the deluge of Dead-related materials. The Deadhead community learned about the presence of the Grateful Dead Archives through the press release from UCSC, however, four years would pass before the majority of the physical collection and GDAO were made available

<sup>174</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 5.

<sup>175</sup> American Beauty roses are part of the Grateful Dead iconography, along with skeletons, terrapin turtles, and colorful smiling bears.

<sup>176</sup> The soundboards for most of these concerts are held in the official Grateful Dead vaults, as they still sell official releases periodically throughout the year that have been curated by current Dead Vault archivist David Lemieux. These official releases are unaffiliated with the Grateful Dead Archives at UCSC.



for investigation.<sup>177</sup> Social media has served to bring additional awareness to the archives, as is evident by the official Grateful Dead Archives' Facebook page which has gathered over 150,000 followers at the time of this writing.<sup>178</sup> Partnering with outside sites such as Brewster Kahle's archives.org has undoubtedly assisted in raising the visibility of the site, as the Internet Archive is popular in the Deadhead community due to the thousands of Grateful Dead performances available there. This raises the question that since Grateful Dead content is so abundant for those seeking it online, how much traffic is GDAO receiving?

According to the digital initiatives department who are utilizing Google Analytics for the tracking of statistics, in 2016 GDAO garnered over 76,000 sessions, had 56,000 users, and 282,504 page views.<sup>179</sup> These numbers indicate that there is a substantial proportion of the Deadhead community is engaged with the site. Since there are no definite numbers regarding the total amount of Deadheads in the world, we cannot know what percentage of them are using the site. We can, however, compare these numbers to the number of followers from the Facebook profile page. By using the numbers of followers on the Grateful Dead Archives Facebook Page (150,000) and calculating that against the numbers of users in 2016 (56,000), we can estimate that roughly 37 percent of Deadheads that are aware of the archives are using the site. This is only an estimation, but it still should be considered an achievement on behalf of the digital initiatives department. After all, there is the possibility that a large percentage of the Deadhead population that came up with the band during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s might not be as

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<sup>177</sup> UCSC Library, "Grateful Dead Donates Archives to UC Santa Cruz."

<sup>178</sup> "Grateful Dead Archive - Likes | Facebook," Grateful Dead Archive - Likes | Facebook, , accessed February 12, 2017, [https://www.facebook.com/pg/gratefuldeadarchive/likes/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/gratefuldeadarchive/likes/?ref=page_internal).

<sup>179</sup> Perry, E-mail Conversation.



connected as the newer generation of Deadheads to the new technological revolution, and as such this group might be hesitant to contribute their materials to GDAO. It seems that the demographic of physical visitors to the UCSC Grateful Dead seem to be older members of the community, and many of these wish to have their items stored physically at the archives.<sup>180</sup> This raises the question as to what types of materials are being submitted, and how the copyright and clearance issues have been resolved by GDAO.

Since collecting is ingrained in the culture of Deadheads, the amassing of live concert cassette tapes, posters, art, t-shirts, memorabilia, and ephemera can be found inside the homes of nearly every Deadhead. Items that are often offered for submission at the physical archives seems to be the tape collections of individual Deadheads. But since the Grateful Dead have the physical vault from which they still commercially release out of occasionally, there is not much need for these personal tapes in the Grateful Dead Archives.<sup>181</sup> Not only that, but the Internet Archives have nearly every live Grateful Dead performance available to stream online for free, therefore there is no reason for the GDA or GDAO to seek personal tape collections from Deadheads unless these tapes can contribute to the archives in another fashion. This alternative contribution for the tape collections of fans would likely be image related, as fans would often decorate the label inserts of the cassettes for shows that have been circulated and traded in the community for decades, falling under the category of Fan Art. And while the physical archives may not have the room or resources to house all of these, GDAO is the perfect home for these types of submissions. Online submissions to the website include a brief rights clearance form

<sup>180</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."

<sup>181</sup> Dundon, "Conversation With Archivist."



that the user must agree with and will be discussed shortly. But first the question is raised as to how the library has published the various materials within the GDA that are copyrighted by other entities (such as photographs and posters).

In order to obtain clearance rights to publish materials from the physical archives online, the digital development department had to contact many of the artists and photographers individually during the 30-month development phase. While most of them agreed to let their works to be made available under the context of the Grateful Dead archives, some perhaps were not so keen, which is why the materials are only available on-site or limited to UCSC students only. For the management and solicitation of submissions from the online community, there would need to be an assessment of techniques that have been used successfully by institutions in the past. One such example is the leveraging of Flickr Commons for use in the PictureAustralia project, which sought user-contributed images and content description.<sup>182</sup> This ongoing project took submissions from 43 different institutions in Australia, allowing users to utilize a single search engine across all of these institutions simultaneously.<sup>183</sup> But since GDAO is seeking submissions from potentially thousands of users, a simplified process had to be developed. This submission process is located on GDAO under the bright-red tab listed as "Add Content." Upon clicking, Deadheads are allowed to contribute after a simple and conventional registration process, with expected fields for email, username, and password. After registering, users must choose from one of six categories of classification for the items they wish to upload: Audio, Article, Image, Video, Ticket, and Story. This is problematic for the website as it might place

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<sup>182</sup> UCSC, IMLS Grant Proposal, 5.

<sup>183</sup> "PictureAustralia," accessed February 17, 2017, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/r/29/index.html>.



constrictions on potential uploads concerning their submissions. One such problem arose personally when I attempted to upload a Grateful Dead inspired painting created by an acquaintance. Not knowing in which category to place the artwork, I chose "Image." I was then prompted to fill out information fields that inquired about which show, venue, and concert date for the image, which is information that is irrelevant to this item since it is a work of art not created at a Dead show. Further, the dialogue box also had no fields for the artist and materials information, and so I submitted this information as best I could in order to give artist Mac Duncan credit. The site then incorrectly listed the work as being created by "anonymous," which is incorrect. However it also listed my name as the contributor, which is indeed correct. In order to view the artist's name, one must click on an expanded information field that is not plainly displayed on the site.<sup>184</sup> Despite this confusion, however, after submitting the item, an email response was sent two minutes later, and within five minutes the painting was uploaded on GDAO for all to see.<sup>185</sup>

After filling in the description fields and before submission, the user must also agree to the terms and conditions of release, stating that they are the owners of the material, and if the material is copyrighted then they must declare that it falls under the Fair Use policy posted on the site:

Items from Grateful Dead Archive (GDA) have been added to GDAO by the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Library only when we have received permission, we have determined a work to be in the public domain, or we believe the way we have posted the item to be **fair use** as part of a non-commercial, educational site. The items represent the individual and collective creativity of the band, artists, photographers and

<sup>184</sup> Mac Duncan, *Self Portrait/Bertha*, 2017, Private Collection, Santa Barbara, California, in *Grateful Dead Archives Online* (The University of California at Santa Cruz), accessed February 28, 2017, <https://www.gdao.org/items/show/1696884>.

<sup>185</sup> "Your Grateful Dead Archive Online Contribution," e-mail message to author, February 28, 2017.



fans. Highly valuing the creative works in the collection donated by the GDP, we have labored diligently to identify, locate and contact rights holders informing them of our intentions to support scholarship and our desires to license their works non-exclusively for nonprofit educational, scholarly or private uses. This process will be ongoing. The results of this diligent search for potential rights holders are incorporated in the metadata accompanying each work displayed. The Copyright Information and/or Copyright Statements displayed, including public domain status, are based on a diligent, good faith, and reasonable research and analysis of each work. Despite significant and reasonable efforts, in some cases it has proved impossible to identify and make contact with rights holders. In some cases, we are surfacing the works on GDAO amongst the community to facilitate contact with rights holders who remain undiscoverable.<sup>186</sup>

Once the user has agreed to the terms, and completed the forms, the submission is then sent to the digital initiatives department to be approved or disapproved. Users also have the opportunity to remain anonymous or be cited for their contributions during the process. According to staff at the McHenry Library, the percentage of materials submitted that have been accepted and posted online is around 99%. The items that have not been accepted are mostly newspaper articles that do not seem to have any relevance to the band.<sup>187</sup> Perhaps knowing these acceptance rates might persuade Deadhead members to contribute more often to the online collection. In order to gauge the willingness of the community to upload their own materials to GDAO, an online survey question was posted to social media site Reddit's Grateful Dead forum. This question measured the enthusiasm on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest level of enthusiasm, and 5 being the lowest. The responses received were generally favorable, but 25% chose 5, the lowest level, and also received the largest share of answers to this question.<sup>188</sup> Further, in a blank field where respondents could voice any comments or concerns, many seemed to be unclear as to what

<sup>186</sup> "The Grateful Dead Archive Online."

<sup>187</sup> Perry, E-mail Conversation.

<sup>188</sup> Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.



materials GDAO was looking for.<sup>189</sup> Regardless of GDAO's issues of an awkward interface, by implementing procedures for the obtaining of rights clearance and including the development of an online click-through permissions form the GDAO website has achieved all of its goals of wishing to digitize selected portions of the Grateful Dead Archive and provide teaching resources in the form of online exhibits that illustrate the musical, social, & cultural impacts of the Grateful Dead, the identification of ancillary sources from the Deadhead community for inclusion into the website, and the resolution of rights clearance issues by contacting copyright holders. By contrast, where the site seems to be lacking is in terms of design aesthetic, representation, and interface.

### Touch of Grey: Design

For the design work of GDAO the University chose to use locally based design-firm Cosmic for the construction of the interface.<sup>190</sup> For a website that is meant to represent one of the most colorful, tie-dyed, psychedelic communities in history, the color schemes of dark grey and black are immediately jarring. The Dead were not so much about colors associated with death in Western culture as they were about the celebration of experiences and connections in life, which is evident among the majority of the color schemes for their merchandise. The color scheme chosen would have been better suited for a Nine Inch Nails or other industrial heavy metal band. And while we have no indications as to who chose these palettes or why, nevertheless it allows for an off-putting initial reaction from visitors. This response is then furthered by the website in the forms of its awkward interface and confusing search fields.

<sup>189</sup> Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.

<sup>190</sup> "Cosmic," Design by Cosmic, accessed February 12, 2017, <https://designbycosmic.com>.



Besides the three links designating Artists, Media, and Fan Art that are displayed on the home page, it is difficult to navigate to more specifically classified items.<sup>191</sup> Fans who responded to the online survey mentioned in the previous section took the opportunity to convey their disappointment and frustration stating that when they visited GDAO they wished for "a user interface that worked."<sup>192</sup> Another respondent to the survey also complained that the Media tab located on GDAO only brings up a link to a few selected concerts that are kept on archive.org, and nothing on the website itself.<sup>193</sup> One complaint a respondent made that is indicative of the awkward design of GDAO is that they would rather visit the archives in person than view materials online, because they found the site too difficult to navigate.<sup>194</sup> This is troubling information, as it leads us to believe that the website is not succeeding in its function of sharing digitized versions of the physical archives with Deadheads who are unable to visit UC Santa Cruz.

There are also no fan-made videos of parking lot scenes or experiences. This may not be the fault of the digital initiatives or designers, as they may have had no submissions from the Deadhead community of this type. And any fan-shot concert footage (with which YouTube is riddled) might fall into the copyright grey-area that would not allow GDAO to link to. But it is hard to believe that the Deadhead community who is capable of producing a feature length documentary based on the Fall Tour of 1993 would have trouble locating any personal videos to

<sup>191</sup> "Grateful Dead Archive Online," accessed October 22, 2016, <https://www.gdao.org/>.

<sup>192</sup> Survey Respondent at 7:50 pm on February 4, 2017. Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.

<sup>193</sup> Survey Respondent at 9:54 AM, February 05, 2017. Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.

<sup>194</sup> Survey Respondent at 7:53 PM, February 04, 2017 Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.



upload to GDAO.<sup>195</sup> Perhaps this area weakness might be easily rectified through a social media approach calling for specific content to be contributed by users.

While some of the tabs that one can click link to entertaining and informative features such as the Shows link which contains an interactive map, or the Milestones tab that allows users to scroll through Grateful Dead history and denoting significant events, most of the emphasis of GDAO seems to be placed on the visual materials contained in the site. This is understandable for a modern day site, and has been discussed previously in this section. However, if one wishes to find any other formats of materials they must go to a confusing "advanced search" tab and scroll through a tab that lists the digitized materials in the order of Album Cover, Article, Backstage Pass, Envelope, Fan Art, Fan Tape, Fanzine, Image, Laminate, Newsletter, Notebook, Poster, Program, Story, T-Shirt, Ticket, Sound, Video, and Website, respectively. This is a very counterintuitive approach to browsing the rich levels of content the site has to offer, and it may have an effect on the regular number of users for the GDAO website.

Another factor that might contribute to the site not performing to its potential is that on the home page, there is a noticeable absence of links that deal with the stories or oral histories of the Deadhead community. The oral history and word of mouth approach that the Grateful Dead leveraged in their career to build a large following of Deadheads is a glaring omission on GDAO, and downplays their importance in twentieth century American culture. There are currently only 15 items that fall into the stories department, and this is a number that could be boosted by simple outreach methods through social media. Another element of which GDAO does not take

advantage of is to allow members to gather on the site socially in the forms of message boards,

<sup>195</sup> Behar, *Tie-died*, film.



nor does it display user names and provide methods of interaction between members on the site. If the Grateful Dead was considered a cultural and social experiment between the band and the Deadhead community that created a bubble of counter-culture existing outside of social norms, then this emphasis could be more prominent on a website that is meant to detail their history, as the Grateful Dead Archives and GDAO are representations of a culturally and socially significant historical phenomenon that occurred in U.S. History.

While some of these concerns can be easily fixed, such as the outreach on social media for different types of content, some can be quite expensive. The McHenry library has already noticed that any posting onto the Dead Central Facebook page increases the site traffic significantly, so this might be a viable and cost-efficient solution to specific content omissions as well.<sup>196</sup> But for the interface and design concerns, one problem that many historical institutions struggle with is when to redesign a website.<sup>197</sup> In the age of screen culture, rapid advancements and trends in design can lead to an outdated feel in just a few short years.<sup>198</sup> Another factor that can lead to change along with an outdated look is a change in management or an addition of a new facility or exhibit, such as was the case in the organization that runs Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. With the construction of a new visitor's center and a new President of the organization, they decided that a new look was warranted in order to increase visitor traffic both to the physical location and the website.<sup>199</sup> After this assessment, the website was updated, so

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<sup>196</sup> Perry, E-mail Conversation.

<sup>197</sup> Tim Grove, "History Bytes: Website Redesign," *History News* 66, no. 2 (2011), 5.

<sup>198</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 11; Grove, "History Bytes: Website Redesign," 5.

<sup>199</sup> Grove, "History Bytes: Website Redesign," 5.



that the Monticello website feels relevant and looks fresh.<sup>200</sup> Historical websites must wrestle with the fact that as soon as a site is uploaded, it is almost instantaneously degraded and begins to date itself.<sup>201</sup> Due to the concerns of awkward interface and the confusing search options on GDAO, it might be time for the library to consider updating the aesthetic. This can be costly, but since the design firm Cosmic, which is currently employed by UCSC and many other notable sites, they should be more than capable of updating it to community standards. But before they do, it would be beneficial if both the library and the design firm reached out to the community and find out where exactly GDAO's strengths and weaknesses lie, and then address them.

### Reaction From the Community

What has not been covered in depth thus far is the reaction from the Deadhead community itself. To fill this gap, an online survey was created on the website Survey Monkey, and was distributed over the popular social networks Facebook and Reddit, appearing in the Grateful Dead fan groups for both communities respectively. Six basic questions were created in an attempt to determine the community's awareness of the GDA and GDAO, and to gain a feel for how many have had direct interactions with the collection or their willingness to engage. As of this writing there have been 157 responses to the survey.<sup>202</sup> This number, while small, helps illustrate the previous conclusion that there may be a large number of Deadheads who are not as active online as others. Whether this is the result of generational divides within the Deadhead community or not remains to be seen. The responses vary from question to question, as the

<sup>200</sup> "Thomas Jefferson's Monticello," Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, , accessed February 17, 2017, <https://www.monticello.org/>.

<sup>201</sup> Joe Hoover, "Web Development Smackdown," November 12, 2010, , accessed February 16, 2017, <http://discussions.mnhs.org/mnlocalhistory/blog/2010/11/12/web-development-smackdown/>.

<sup>202</sup> Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.



respondents seem to be more excited about the physical archives rather than the socially constructed GDAO website. This is not a surprise, since the American Association of Museums estimates that there are approximately 850 million visits to American museums per year, and as discussed earlier there is some confusion among Deadheads as many believe that the Grateful Dead Archives are primarily a museum space.<sup>203</sup>

Question One of the survey directly asked if the participants were aware of the existence of the Grateful Dead Archives physically housed at UCSC. The responses to this question consisted of "yes," "no," and "other" in which field they were able to supply anonymous comments. Over 74% of the respondents replied that they were aware of the archives, which is not a surprise due to media coverage on popular television shows such as *The Daily Show*.<sup>204</sup> However, one participant who replied stated that they thought the collection was located at UC Berkeley. This response, along with the 23% who were not aware of the GDA's existence, reveals that there are some gray areas within the community about the collection. Question Two asked if any of the participants had visited GDAO before. A slight majority of 51% responded that they had not visited the website, meaning that they may not have been aware of its existence, or were aware and did not wish to visit. Question Three inquired if a trip to UCSC to visit the archives would be considered, to which 86% replied that they would, while only 6% answered that they were not interested. Most of the comments left regarding the negative answers state that they would consider a trip to the archives if they were in Santa Cruz for other

<sup>203</sup> "Museum Facts," American Association of Museums website, accessed March 03, 2017, <http://aam-us.org/about-museums/museum-facts>.

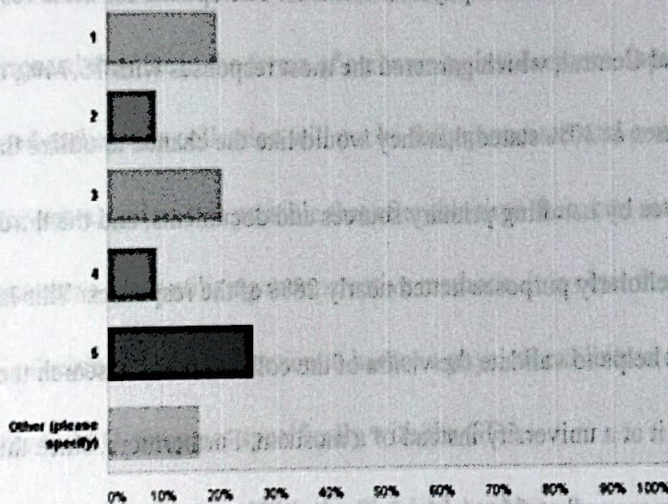
<sup>204</sup> "Want Ads: Grateful Dead Archivist," in *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, Comedy Central, November 11, 2009, accessed October 15, 2016, <http://www.cc.com/video-clips/0rfgm0/the-daily-show-with-jon-stewart-want-ads-grateful-dead-archivist>.



reasons, but would not travel specifically for the archives. While the negative responses are minimal, these numbers are further evidence that physical sites hold powerful connections within us, but it may also serve to illustrate the confusion as to what the Grateful Dead Archives are.<sup>205</sup> Question Four of the survey dealt directly with the GDAO, which can potentially assist members within the Deadhead community who cannot or do not wish to visit the archives in continuing to collect experiences with the Grateful Dead from afar. On a scale from 1 to 5, the survey asks for enthusiasm levels for submitting materials of their own to GDAO.

**Q4 On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the highest amount of enthusiasm and 5 being the lowest) how likely are you to consider submitting your own materials to the Grateful Dead Archives Online so that they may be incorporated into the Grateful Dead community's history?**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 8



<sup>205</sup> 4% of respondents mentioned that they had already visited the archives, which is not a surprising number considering that the GDA are not technically a tourist draw.



These responses seem to be evenly distributed, with a large population of respondents answering that they felt they did not have anything of value to contribute. This is an area where GDAO can greatly improve. As discussed earlier in this paper, there are no guidelines as to what the site values in terms of contributions, and it also seems to downplay original creations by making the submission process slightly confusing. One area that many Deadheads might appreciate would be an oral history section of GDAO, where the experiences and memories of the community can be gathered and promoted as valuable, as this type of format is currently available only on message boards of social media sites. There is a real opportunity to expand the format of this socially constructed site, and to help define possibilities for oral histories available online for specific communities.<sup>206</sup>

Question Five of the survey asked for which motivations they would rate the highest to compel the participants to visit the physical archives. The options for these responses were to see the exhibit at Dead Central, which garnered the most responses with 75.74%, the second highest number of responses at 30% stated that they would like the chance to utilize the physical archives themselves by handling primary sources and documents, and the third response of a research trip for scholarly purposes netted nearly 28% of the responses. This last statistic is encouraging, as it helps to validate the vision of the collection as a research tool as well as the decision to house it at a university instead of a museum. Furthermore, since this collection is unique, it could be groundbreaking in the formation of other collections of this type in the future. The final question in the survey asks about the expectations that the Deadhead community have

<sup>206</sup> Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey, February 04, 2017, , accessed March 2, 2017, [https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/?sm=P406\\_2FwAfULbUImvPlZbIKkf3EM43nbugEkTk\\_2Bg0ozY\\_3D](https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/?sm=P406_2FwAfULbUImvPlZbIKkf3EM43nbugEkTk_2Bg0ozY_3D).



for the GDA, with an overwhelming 83% stating that they wished to visit an interesting exhibit at Dead Central. As stated several times throughout this research, this is not a surprising fact given the popularity of museums in U.S. culture. But what is telling are the responses that illicit 40% of the votes stating that they would wish to connect with Grateful Dead history first-hand by connecting with historical documents and materials.<sup>207</sup> This confirms that Deadheads can be considered scholars of their own history, and that they wish to engage with this history in new and exciting ways both visual and physical.

Now that some evidence is put forth from the Deadhead community regarding the GDA, we can begin to assess the importance of the archives in the Deadhead community. While there is some confusion regarding the GDA and GDAO, there is evidence that the community is excited about the collection. What remains is how UCSC can further increase these positive responses in the future. This evidence of confusion should in no way detract from the successes that the archives have experienced thus far in the forms of community involvement, input, and engagement. As stated earlier, this collection will not be fully processed and complete for perhaps another three years, and so it is possible that after this time there can be more energy and resources put into these areas utilizing more creative methods. It is clear that the Grateful Dead were correct in desiring for this collection to harbor a physical exhibition space, and what is left is to examine how GDAO compares specifically with the GDA.

### Comparison With the Physical Archives

The major difference between the physical archives and the online component GDAO is the ability of the fans to persistently contribute content. It is much easier for single submissions

<sup>207</sup> For this question respondents were allowed to choose more than one response, which explains the miscorrelation of response percentages. Wyatt Young, "Grateful Dead Archives General Survey," Survey Monkey.



to be uploaded to the website than it is to have them included in the physical vaults. The reason for this is that the members of the Special Collections department, which is in charge of the physical accruals, is mostly looking for complete collections that it deems to be valuable and useful enough to merit the funding necessary to process and maintain. This means that individual photos and stories would require too many layers of processing to warrant the expense of labor and materials. Also, the physical archives, as they are contained right now at UCSC, are seemingly finite. According to the archivists employed there, they do not foresee any further accruals from the Grateful Dead themselves, but smaller satellite collections are still a possibility depending on the content and relevance. While the physical archives and the exhibition space Dead Central operate in the realm of a traditional archive and museum, GDAO was created specifically with the extended Deadhead community in mind. While GDAO includes a significant portion of the archives in digital format, it seems to have only published materials that lend themselves to a visual online interface.<sup>208</sup> As mentioned throughout, there is a precedent in the current collection climate for this, but the other forms of content would be well served for future scholars of the Grateful Dead phenomenon, such as the oral histories and personal home videos of the concert experiences. Another difference between the two collections is that items that are most abundant in the physical archives, such as business papers and personal manuscripts, are mostly absent from GDAO. This is due to the traditional natures of an archive, and the costly process of digitizing and making them available on the web.

With the importance of establishing a visual and online presence being paramount in the today's institutions, The University of California at Santa Cruz developed a solid plan to execute

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<sup>208</sup> "The Grateful Dead Archive Online."



their project of taking the Grateful Dead Archives live on the internet. By composing several strong goals for such a project in a grant proposal to the Institute of Museum and Library Services and gaining the funding for GDAO, the Digital Initiatives Department has successfully set an example for how collections of this nature might construct a digital outlet for their materials. This can be accomplished from crowd sourcing ancillary items from specific communities in an attempt to fill in holes that collections might have. But while the initial stages of development goals were met, in the ensuing years other challenges have arisen that need to be addressed. Since this collection is considered unique due to the nature of collecting that has accompanied the culture surrounding the Grateful Dead, there is a real potential to set an example in the field of collecting institutions regarding not only how to build and manage the collection, but how to handle submissions from outside with the goal of building upon that collection in perpetuity. In order to progress, the staff of the McHenry Library must not only receive assistance from their strongest asset, in this instance the Deadhead community, but they must find ways to reach out to them for advice. While the site has already achieved significant goals in the field, they must continue with these progressions in order to keep the collection relevant in the digital age.



## **CONCLUSION**

### **It Must Have Been the Roses: Thoughts on Collecting Motivations**

Much has been written concerning the human proclivity to collect. The act of collecting has been described as a pastime, and through collecting we are attempting to defy and abolish time by pulling objects out of the time stream and augmenting their functionality into something other than for what they were created.<sup>209</sup> The motives for collecting can vary from person to person. Often people fall in love with objects and wish to possess them, or often it is the threat of absence of objects that drive us to collect. By setting up and establishing a collection we are displacing real time, but perhaps not in an attempt to live forever. Collections are more nuanced than that. The concept of collecting can be expanded past the boundaries of objects. But in discussing the historiography of collections, most of what has been written has been focused upon concerns the objects themselves. It has been argued by philosophers such as William James however that we as humans are the reflection of a collection of experiences that inform our behaviors.<sup>210</sup> This view enables us to view collections and collecting in a different manner, but is still directly linked to our need to collect and possess. It can be argued that it is this collecting of experiences that gives us purpose and meaning in life. We collect in an attempt to discover who we are as individuals, and compare these collections of objects or experiences to those of others. This is how knowledge develops, and knowledge is much more than information.<sup>211</sup> We can read information about life in other countries, but some argue that it cannot truly be experienced

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<sup>209</sup> Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. Roger Cardinal and John Elsner (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 7-9.

<sup>210</sup> Russell Goodman, "William James," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, September 07, 2000, accessed March 03, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/james/>.

<sup>211</sup> R. David Lankes, *The Atlas of New Librarianship* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), 157.



unless one is physically present in the environment. The same can be said about time and history. But since we cannot traverse through time and experience life in the past as it was, collections are one way that we can gain knowledge about ideas and experiences that are both foreign to us while simultaneously comprising us. When institutions such as the McHenry Library at the University of California at Santa Cruz create archives for public use, they are in essence collecting their community by acquiring materials that draw the public to them, proving that collections are more than just an accumulation of objects.<sup>212</sup>

The French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard, described collections as a system of piecing together a world or microcosm, and held that by collecting we are creating our own representation of these worlds.<sup>213</sup> Both the Grateful Dead Archives and its online component GDAO have accomplished this to a degree, but as with any collection, they are never truly finished or complete. The archives at UC Santa Cruz also represent so much more than the materials of which they are composed, just as all collections are greater than simply the sum of their parts. They offer us a perspective of knowledge within the objects and experiences. If the GDA are an attempt to collect the Deadhead community, then the Library should also "be willing to use members in answering questions and cultivating (the) collection."<sup>214</sup> With the museum space Dead Central located on the second floor of the library and the implementation of the online component GDAO, the Special Collections and Digital Initiatives Department have begun this process of community involvement and engagement. This collection is unique because it was created because of the nature of collecting that is inherent in the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead

<sup>212</sup> Lankes, *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, 159.

<sup>213</sup> Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," 7.

<sup>214</sup> Lankes, *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, 159.



community. These archives are more than just the amassing of papers and photographs of a rock and roll group. The community itself can be seen in the collection, and this collection could not or would not exist if without Deadhead involvement. They supplied the band with the motivation to continue playing and exploring their special form of music and lifestyle, and the Grateful Dead supplied the community with the commitment of constant touring and possibilities of new experiences to be collected by Deadheads.<sup>215</sup>

### Help on the Way: Moving Forward

The Grateful Dead Archives at UC Santa Cruz are the culmination of the collecting culture within the Grateful Dead community. In this new information age, we must not forget the importance of knowledge, and visual reference materials are going to become more crucial as we navigate our way through a modern era wherein we have a difficult time discerning what is real information and what is not.<sup>216</sup> These are questions that physical and visual evidence from archival collections can help us to answer. This collection is important because it was created not as the result of an obsession of one individual, but of an entire community to collect itself. It also serves as evidence that both the band and their community were aware of their historical potential and legacy from early on in their existence.

The GDA archives have much room for improvement, but they occupy a space that has been so far unprecedented in the professional field of collections. It also serves to validate the collected experiences by the Grateful Dead and the Deadhead community so that they may move away from their previous historiography and treatments in the past. While this community has

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<sup>215</sup> McNally, *A Long Strange Trip*, 386.

<sup>216</sup> Burdick, *Digital Humanities*, 11.



been investigated by numerous disciplines there has been a tendency in the field of history to treat the Dead, and Jerry Garcia specifically, with a form of hero worship.<sup>217</sup> In 2015, True Crime author Michael Benson published a book entitled *Why the Grateful Dead Matter*, wherein much of the material is based upon speculation and opinion. While being a fun read and offering some insight into the importance of the community, it still treats the phenomenon of Deadheads as entertainment. With the creation of the GDA and its availability for public use, we can now begin answering more sophisticated questions and pull them into the historical spotlight. Much can also be learned from the Deadhead community in terms of how we view collections, and how they are started. By using the Deadheads and the GDA as a framework, we can begin to examine archives as more than the accumulation of objects and start asking questions that concern both the identity of the collector and the collection. It has been said in the past that "archivists tend to collect the same things and neglect others."<sup>218</sup> But this may not be the case, as the Grateful Dead Archives at UCSC represent a new type of collection in the field, proving that institutions are not restricted to following the trend of an individual's interests, but that they can follow the interests of the communities they collect. Collections can be the result of democracy within a community, and these archives may represent a shift in traditions. Throughout the course of my investigation I attempted to answer questions concerning how the collection came to be, why UCSC was chosen to house them, what can this specific collection teach us regarding methods of practice and engagement, and what types of materials are contained within the GDA. I feel that I have

explored those topics, but more than that this research has also raised questions about how the

<sup>217</sup> For examples of different research approaches to the Dead see Robert G. Weiner, *Perspectives on the Grateful Dead: Critical Writings* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999).

<sup>218</sup> Judith Endelman, "Looking Backward to Plan for the Future: Collection Analysis for Manuscript Repositories," *The American Archivist* 50, no. 3 (1987): 345, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40293133>.



GDA will be interpreted by other institutions moving forward. Some of these questions will have to be answered in time, but a hint occurred during the process of writing this paper. On January 11, 2017, it was announced that Bruce Springsteen's Archives will be donated to Monmouth University in New Jersey, indicating that the GDA and collections like it may represent an upcoming trend in the field.<sup>219</sup> But UCSC's decision to acquire the collection already speaks volumes as to how they feel the Deadhead community could be viewed in academic settings and also goes a long way to help them break from traditional novelty writings and biases from media interpretation that have come before.

As notable Grateful Dead scholar Steve Silberman once phrased it: "memories of ecstatic experiences 25 years past are notoriously unreliable. The power and grace of the music played on those nights remain inarguable."<sup>220</sup> But now with the creation of the Grateful Dead Archives at UC Santa Cruz, Deadheads not only have the majority of the music to argue with thanks to sites like archive.org, they now can begin arguing with the voices of the community itself, which the Grateful Dead was prescient enough to gather on their long, strange, trip.

<sup>219</sup> Susan Svrluga, "Bruce Springsteen's Archives will go to Monmouth University on the Jersey Shore," *The Washington Post*, January 11, 2017, accessed March 19, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2017/01/11/bruce-springsteens-archives-will-go-to-monmouth-university-on-the-jersey-shore/?utm\\_term=.ebf80a734312](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2017/01/11/bruce-springsteens-archives-will-go-to-monmouth-university-on-the-jersey-shore/?utm_term=.ebf80a734312).

<sup>220</sup> Steve Silberman, "Primal Dead at the Fillmore East," ed. David Dodd and Diana Spaulding, in *The Grateful Dead Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 49.



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