Folksonomic explorations and community cultivation: special collections on Instagram

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Outline

Project:
explore the rare books community folksonomy on Instagram

Tool:
netlytic: “cloud-based text and social networks analyzer that can automatically summarize and discover communication networks from publicly available social media posts”

Status?
Half-way through data collection
Preliminary visualizations and questions

https://netlytic.org/home/. Social Media Lab, Ryerson University
McGill Library’s rare and special collections

ROAAr:
- Rare Books and Special Collections
- Osler Library of the History of Medicine
- Visual Arts Collection
- McGill University Archives

Plus other small collections in branch libraries
@mcgill_rare

Est. February 19, 2016

596 posts and 6,254 followers and counting!

Jean-Marc Tremblay, Archivist & Records Management Administrator
Jennifer Garland, Blackader-Lauterman Collection of Architecture & Art / Liaison Librarian
Sarah Severson, Digital Library Services Coordinator
Anna Dysert, Librarian-Cataloguer
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Research questions

What does the folksonomy for rare and special collections look like on Instagram?

How is this folksonomy used?

Who does this folksonomy reach?

How can tools like Netlytic help us answer these questions?
What is a folksonomy?

Dynamic, informal
Community-driven

How is the folksonomy used?
To describe
To locate
To connect

Towards an IG rare books folksonomy

**Combination of:**

- Wide-reaching tags like #tintytuesday
- Tags for days of the week and book content/description
- Monthly challenge tags (led by different accounts)
- IGLibraries as hub for hashtag information and promotion
Methodology

Query API using Netlytic
Popular hashtags that: describe, locate, connect
Sampling over several months

Social network and textual analysis
Netlytic’s built in tools
(for social network analysis)
Text analysis tools
What are we seeing?

#tinytuesday

#marbledmonday
#tinytuesday
#marbledmonday
Challenges

Increasingly restricted API
Algorithm changes
Influencers and influencing
Shadowbanning
Lessons?

Instagram API is a moving target, and soon to be replaced by Facebook Graph API

Big picture questions

What does “success” look like for a library Instagram account?

The cult of likes? Is our reach is less extensive than we’d like?

Thinking like marketers? Reach vs. engagement
Questions?
Thank you!

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