Managing your research photos with Tropy

Tropy IS...

- A desktop tool that will help you organize and describe photographs of research material.
- Not a perfect tool but it is free
- Open source software with an active developer community and responsive help team
- Developed by folks at the [Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media](#) at George Mason University (they also maintain Zotero and Omeka)

Tropy WILL...

- Allow you to sort and organize your photos
- Allow you to attribute useful metadata to individual photos; including bulk edits on multiple images
- Allow you to cluster related images into a single item (e.g. multiple pages of a letter)
- Allow you to add notes to an image, such as a transcription
- Allow you to search across your collection by metadata, tags and notes
- Allow you to export your descriptive metadata as JSON-LD, CSV or PDF.

Tropy WILL NOT...

- Edit your images
- Manage your citations (that's what Zotero is for)
- Help your write your thesis (alas)
- Present your content (that's what Omeka does)

Contingencies:

- Images must be in JPG/JPEG, PNG, SVG formats
- Tropy will not work with TIFF and GIF files
- Tropy will not work with PDF files or other non-image formats

Interested in Tropy? Let us know at the Libraries!
Email us at diginit@yorku.ca to register interest in a workshop to be held in early 2020.

Getting Started on Tropy

Tropy Documentation: https://docs.tropy.org/

Installing Tropy: https://infoguides.gmu.edu/tropy/installation

First Steps: https://infoguides.gmu.edu/tropy/firststeps

Screencasts and workshop videos: https://vimeo.com/user73164761

See also: [@tropy](#) | [Tropy.org](#)

Archival Fieldwork

A great deal of fieldwork still takes place in archival reading rooms over the summer and during research trips abroad.

Please do get in contact with the professional archivists at York (at both the Libraries and the Archives of Ontario) as we can recommend good tips and tricks for having productive research forays.

Archivists may also have suggestions of materials that are under utilized, freshly donated and available to the public, or more local.

Archivists can also prepare historians on best practices on gaining access to records held in different kinds of institutions and some of the cultural differences that could delay access to content. Send us an email at archives@yorku.ca and start a conversation!

Things to consider

- Are you keeping something that looks like field notes, a research log, a research trip diary, project documentation? Developing a reflexive practice in your work will enrich your outcomes, help organize your work, and hone your research practices
- Track your work, document your decisions, reflect on your experience.
- How is your word choice, disciplinary focus, preference for certain genres or formats influencing the outcome of your research?
- What limits and boundaries have I established for my work? Have I documented them?
- Do I have a system where I can put work down and come back to it? Can I easily tell where I left things off? Can estimate how much time it will take to complete the work?
- How are you preserving your work? Are your files downloaded in a secure directory? Are your file naming conventions logical and consistent? What (if any) subscription services do you need to be on top of? Is your research dependent on software that needs to be updated?
- If you are part of a research team, can you explain to another person your process and can you hand things off with minimal aggravation?
- Are you aware of your responsibilities as a scholar and the rights of other creators, communities, scholars and/or publishers you are drawing on? How are you tracking and documenting this?

Breadcrumbs in the reading room

- Always confirm the photography policy in the institution you're working at!
- Create a visual cue: take a photo of the call slip/retrieval request and the box label before you start your work
- If you are photographing a full file, photograph the unopened file and the back end of the file at the end so you have a visual cue of where things start and stop
- Ask for copies and/or photograph/pdf any reproduction request forms you fill out.
- Make a notation in your research log of when you start a new box/series/file
- Make sure you can provide a citation that will lead others directly back to the source.
- If you are keeping a research log, take a few minutes at the end of every session to make some point form notes of what you accomplished, mysteries left to solve, threads to follow up on etc.
- Keep track of what items you have retrieved. Keep track of call numbers/inventories/microfilm reels etc.