



Questions to consider when engaging with a digital collection:

- Why is this digitized rather than something else?
 - Digital collections have been largely grant-funded. What biases might that introduce?
 - Selection criteria often include use, value, format, copyright
- What is the provenance of these materials? And their description?
 - Who “owns” these materials or who sponsored the digital collection?
 - Who provided the description or transcription, and how reliable is it?
 - Digital collections often encourage searching instead of browsing, but what are you searching on?
- How do I contextualize what I’m seeing, in relation to the physical collection and to the larger information ecosystem?
 - Is the whole collection or selected materials?
 - Are there related materials? Remember, most archival materials are not online.
- Is the quality of the digital surrogates sufficient for my purposes?
 - What am I missing by relying on surrogates?
 - Do or should I care about the artefactual nature of these things?
- How does the digital collection interface impact my experience of the materials?
 - Search vs browse. Specificity vs. context.
 - Readability? Order, orientation, etc.