Evaluation Process and Criteria for Appraising Home Movie VHS Collections at TAMI

This set of criteria will serve as a flexible but consistent set of guidelines for appraising VHS collections or VHS *in* collections at the Texas Archive of the Moving Image. These criteria will be used to more narrowly focus the scope of TAMI's collections, in addition to the existing broad criteria that all videos be about Texas, filmed in Texas, or filmed by Texans.

For the first round of appraisal, videos are to be evaluated only against other VHS within its collection, not against videos in other collections in TAMI's holdings. After potential candidates for the online library have been identified and cataloged, selection against the online library's larger holdings should be assessed (see step 5).

Assessment Process:

1. Use data gathered from donor and box/tape labels to compile information about the family. If the family includes prominent citizens or notable Texans, or if the family belongs to a underrepresented social or ethnic group, special attention to content should be paid. Exceptions on guidelines for a 20% representation cap of the collection will be made in these instances if warranted.

2. Create a record in the Filemaker Pro database for each VHS in the collection, one at a time, giving the digitzed video of each VHS a cursory viewing at a high speed to evaluate the general content of the video. Write a brief descriptive abstract in the record, noting any obvious people, places, and events.

3. During the cursory viewing, notate the timestamps for any segments that have obvious informational value or high quality content for possible inclusion in the online library. Consider the context of the video and comparative examples in the library, assessing the video against the appraisal criteria detailed below. If unfamiliar with TAMI's online library, use the categories page as a starting point to familiarize yourself with its online holdings, noting video subjects, places, or time periods that either are or are not well-represented in the library.

4. Eliminate any videos that are without question unusable for the library based on inappropriate or offensive material, as well as videos whose content would not enrich the digital library. This includes videos that are unwatchable--dark, shaky, extremely deteriorated, etc. (see Criteria 7).

5. Using the criteria and notations, revisit the videos and select approximately 20% of the collection for inclusion in online library. No more than **one** of any type of event (Christmas, Easter, birthday, school play, etc.) should be chosen from a collection unless some unusual or notable interpretive potential is recognized. Further exceptions to the 20% representation cap may be made if videos contain exceptional content or consistency with the criteria.

6. Create individual database records for each selected segment, giving each one an in-depth viewing (in real time) in order to perform indexing and thorough descriptive cataloging.

Appraisal Criteria:

1. Historic- both state history (historical event, historical figures, etc.) and film and media history (broadcasting milestones or notable media trends) should be considered.

2. Social or Cultural- popular culture, Texas culture, regional culture, ethnic culture, religious culture, community culture, social phenomena, social celebrations, social rites of passage, etc.

3. Educational Value- could be used for either informal or formal learning structures.

4. Appropriateness for public audience- should answer "yes" to blanket curation question, "Is this appropriate for a 4th grader?"

5. Representativeness- this includes representation of regions, social groups, time periods, etc.

6. Rarity- underrepresented entities: groups of people, locations, years, eras, religions, recording technique; this is a fluid criteria based on the current state of TAMI's online library. It depends on the types of collections TAMI has received and is receiving from donors at the time of appraisal. What was once rare in the collection may not remain rare.

7. Watchability- Is the video well-lit? Is the camera steady? Can you hear the subjects of the video clearly, or is there excessive white noise or background noise? If it is especially aesthetically pleasing, special attention should be paid.