

Dean's Proposal  
to ANRL  
2008

# American Nudist Research Library

## Digitizing Project – Project Description

### Introduction

The American Nudist Research Library (ANRL) has the most extensive collection of nudist history that exists anywhere in the world. It consists of nearly one million pages of books, magazines, club newsletters, Who's Who files, photographs and audio & video recordings. This collection was acquired over the Library's 27 year history.

The collection is housed in the Library's modern, climate-controlled, wood-frame building. Some of the documents date back into the 1930's, and despite efforts at preservation, they are becoming quite fragile. Although all reasonable efforts are made to protect the building and its contents, both are still vulnerable to normal deterioration and destruction from natural and man-made disasters such as fires and hurricanes.

Detailed nudist history is recorded primarily in magazines and club newsletters, neither of which is likely to be indexed or designed for convenient research. They often deal with many unrelated events that occur around the time of publication. Thus it can be very difficult to locate specific information in those documents.

The Library collection is not always conveniently available to potential users. The Library is open to the public, but operating hours are limited by the availability of volunteer librarians. Special arrangements are made to also open the Library by appointment for out-of-town authors, historians and researchers. The Library's single physical location limits its accessibility for users in other parts of the country.

### Digitizing Project

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The Library leadership has been aware of the above limitations for some time but, until recently, there hasn't been a feasible way to deal with any of them. That changed with the discovery of the recently introduced Kirtas Bookscan 1200 high speed automatic page-turning scanner. That scanner is designed for production scanning of fragile bound historic documents and is just what the Library needs to scan its numerous bound volumes.

The scanner will bring the Library into the digital age and make it practical to solve the protection, preservation and accessibility issues described above. First, the Library's written collections can be scanned and the scanned images archived on multiple sets of DVDs. The DVD sets can be stored in geographically diverse locations so the history is safe from deterioration and natural and man-made disasters.

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Second, the scanned images of printed documents can be processed with optical character recognition software to produce documents that are suitable for computerized searching for specific words and phrases. That will provide a quantum improvement in the ability to access specific information and will solve the accessibility of information issue.

Third, secure internet connections can be used to make the collection available for viewing and searching at selected nudist clubs around the country and to authorized historians, authors and researchers.

When Library leadership recognized the potential benefits of digitizing the collection, they immediately created the digitizing project, appointed a team to implement it and provided seed money to initially fund the efforts.

## ***Project Phases***

The project team immediately recognized the need to prioritize various aspects of the project and divided it into two phases. The first phase involves the scanning and archiving of the collection and the optical character recognition processing of the scanned images. The second phase involves making the collection accessible to users in multiple locations around the country.

### ***Phase I*** *in process*

The team assigned very high priority to Phase I because every day it takes to complete the archiving is another day that decades of nudist history is vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters. If the archiving is not accomplished before such a disaster, any efforts expended on phase II would be wasted.

The relatively small size of the Library's bound collection does not justify the high purchase price of the Kirtas scanner. A limited-term rental is more appropriate and will accomplish the scanning at a very favorable cost compared to commercial alternatives. However, even rental is very expensive and greatly exceeds the Library's ability to fund the project. Thus the first part of Phase I is fundraising.

Factors that are of minor importance when scanning a few pages become crucial when scanning nearly a million pages. Those factors include file format, resolution, compression, file naming conventions, storage architecture, quality control, work flow and in-process backup at every stage of the operation. Before full scale scanning begins, all of these protocols must be established and their appropriateness verified by completion of a small test project.

Once sufficient funds have been raised and the adequacy of these protocols has been demonstrated, the scanner will be rented and the project focus will shift to high-volume production scanning.

### ***Phase II***

Phase II deals with making the collection readily available to nudists, authors, historians, researchers and other appropriate users. The Library's goal is to make the entire collection as accessible as possible without violating the privacy expectations of those whose names or images appear in nudist publications and without violating the rights of publication copyright holders. We hope to use secure Internet connections to make the collection available for viewing at selected nudist clubs around the country. These clubs will be required to agree to strict security provisions to prevent printing, copying, emailing, etc. of the images. It should also be possible to make the collection available on a tightly controlled basis to authors, historians and researchers who demonstrate a valid need for access to the information.

## ***Conclusion***

Once this project is completed, the Library's extensive collection of nudist history will be readily available to everyone who has legitimate interests in accessing it. That will make it easy for authors of nudist articles and publications to research nudist history and provide more robust and interesting information to their nudist and non-nudist readers. It will also make vast amounts of primary information conveniently available to sociologists and other researchers who want to gain a better understanding of the psychological and sociological aspects of nudism. The efforts of these individuals will undoubtedly lead to better public understanding and greater acceptance of nudism as a way of life.