Major Assignment #1: Archival Rhetorical Context and Properties

Assignment Description
For your first major assignment this semester, you will select and explore a digital archive and produce a written summary of your findings. A digital archive, which scholars define as “any digital resource that collects and makes accessible materials for the purposes of research, knowledge building, or memory making” (Enoch and Van Haitsma 4), always has a rhetorical context. In other words, the materials in an archive are assembled for a particular purpose. Through deep exploration of your chosen archive, you will come to understand how its properties are related to that purpose. Who is its audience? What rhetorical situation does the archive document or address? When and where was it assembled, and why? How did the archive’s materials come to be there?

To prepare you to address these questions, during the course of this approximately 3-week unit, you will practice thinking, listening, and reading rhetorically. You will explore a variety of archives, and select one for further study that most interests you. You will compose a draft of your first major paper, receive feedback from your instructor, reflect on that feedback, and submit a final, revised version for evaluation. Formal in tone and style, the purpose of your paper will be to provide an accurate and detailed summary of your selected archive to an audience who is unfamiliar with its rhetorical context.

Assignment Form & Weight
Your final paper will take the form of a 900-1,200 word written summary of your selected archive, and must include at least 3 images/screenshots, with captions. This assignment is worth 100 points, or 10% of your total grade for the semester.

Important Dates
- Friday, February 3rd - Rough Draft and Homework 1 due to Dropbox by 5:00 P.M.
  - Rough draft must be complete
  - Homework 1 is worth 50 points, graded on completion
- Friday, February 9th - Annotated and Final Drafts due to Dropbox by 5:00 P.M.
  - Your Annotated Draft will be a revised version of your paper where I can see the revisions you have made in track changes. You may also insert comments in order to explain your revisions to me.
  - Your Final Draft is the completed version, with all changes finalized.

Evaluative Criteria
Your final draft will be evaluated using the following criteria:
- Identification of important rhetorical properties of the archive
- Summary of the archive's rhetorical context is detailed and accurate
- Organization is consistent and effective for the essay’s purpose
- Style is appropriate for the essay’s purpose and audience
- Images and captions effectively support the identification and summary of the archive’s rhetorical context and properties

**Note: A detailed rubric breaking down each criterion will be provided**