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The Post-custodial Model for Preserving At-risk Archives in Latin America

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Post-Custodial Theory of Archives

“The idea that archivists will no longer physically acquire and maintain records, but that they will provide management oversight for records that will remain in the custody of the record creators.”

Post-Custodial Archiving at LLILAS Benson

1. Archives remain locally accessible

2. Archival and digital capacity building

3. Collaborative, horizontal relationships among partners

4. Digital technologies for preservation and access

5. Focus on human rights documentation
Guatemalan National Police Historical Archive

- Physical archive discovered in 2005
- 80 million pages of archival material
- Documentation from Guatemala’s internal armed conflict
- Digital archive currently hosts 10 million documents and will continue to grow as more material is digitized

https://ahpn.lib.utexas.edu/
Mellon Foundation Pilot Project Partners

1. Centro de Investigación y Documentación de la Costa Atlántica – CIDCA (Bluefields, Nicaragua)
2. Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica – CIRMA (Antigua, Guatemala)
3. Museo de la Palabra y la Imagen – MUPI (San Salvador, El Salvador)
Mellon Foundation Pilot Project Collections
Welcome to the Latin American Digital Initiatives

Latin American Digital Initiatives (LADI) is a collaborative project between LILACS Benson and Latin American partner institutions that digitally preserves and provides access to unique archival documents from Latin America, with an emphasis on collections documenting human rights, race, ethnicity and social exclusion in the region. Read more about our work.

Source: Colección Confidencial del Museo de la Palabra y la Imagen
Institutionalizing Post-Custodial Praxis

1. New projects in Brazil, Colombia, & Mexico
2. Integration of scholars into project design and implementation
3. Ethical description of sensitive archival materials
4. Robust digital infrastructure for preservation and access
5. Blueprint for sustainable staffing structure & resource allocation
6. Use of collection materials in classroom teaching and digital scholarship
LLILAS Benson Post-Custodial Team

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