Open-Source Email Curation Software Designed for Reusability

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UNC Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science

17th International Digital Curation Conference

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VIEW THESE SLIDES AT: https://bit.ly/idcc-ratom-2022

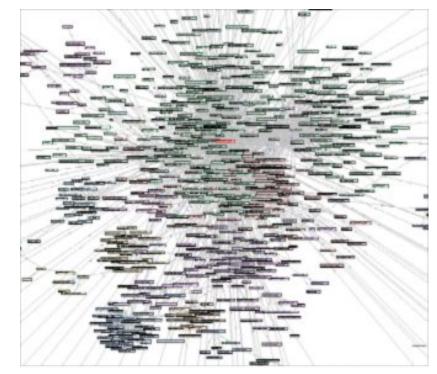


Motivation - Selection/Appraisal

- Despite progress on various technologies to support data management and digital preservation of email, software support for the core activities of selection and appraisal remains limited
- Selection/appraisal decisions are based on various patterns
- When patterns can be identified algorithmically, software can assist the process
- LAMs frequently want to take actions that reflect contextual relationships
- Timeline representations and visualizations can also provide useful, high-level views of materials

Motivation - Email

- About 50 years of email creation
- Hundreds of billions of messages generated every day
- Most has little long-term retention value, but some absolutely does
- Despite presence of numerous other modalities, email still deeply embedded in activities, serving as massive source of evidence and information
- Often found in collections and acquisitions with other types of materials



Review, Appraisal, and Triage of Mail (RATOM)

- Funded by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2019-2021)
- Developing and repurposing software (including NLP and machine learning) for selection/appraisal in BitCurator environment with hooks and enhancements to TOMES output
- Support iterative processing information discovered at various points in the processing workflow can support further selection, redaction or description actions
- Mapping of timestamp, entity, sensitive features and other elements across the tools



Ray Tomlinson

Implemented first email program on ARPANET. Credited with invention of first email system.

Team Members



Cal Lee Pl



Camille Tyndall Watson Co-Pl



Antoine De Torcy Software Engineer



Jamie Patrick-Burns Investigator



Eliscia Kinder Project Manager



Sangeeta Desai Technical Lead (NC DAR)



Kam Woods Technical Lead (UNC)



Caktus Group Software Development 5

Scope of the project

The RATOM project has had specific development goals designed to serve the needs of collecting institutions tasked with preparing email collections for public access:

- Development of an integrated Python library to simplify parsing and processing PST, OST, and mbox email formats
- Building utilities to support entity identification and export reports suitable for conducting automated and human-directed redaction actions at scale
- Creating an interface allowing processing archivists to browse email collections and mark messages as suitable for retention
- Exploring methods apply machine learning techniques (by training on annotated message collections) to recognize candidate materials for retention

RATOM tools - libratom

Python library to parse and analyze **PST**, **OST**, and **mbox** email formats

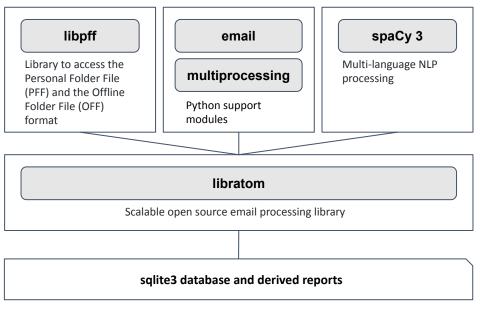
Wraps functionality from **libpff**, Python **mailbox**, and **spaCy 3**

Extracts and analyzes email message content and headers; **identifies and classifies entities** identified in email bodies via **spaCy**

Performance scales with processor core count; per-core memory usage never exceeds 1.6GB in default configuration, irrespective of input size

Current release: 0.6.0

https://www.github.com/libratom/libratom



Features generated and stored are VERIFIABLE, REPRODUCIBLE, AND REUSABLE

This facilitates understanding changes in assessments of materials over time.

RATOM tools - Iterative Processing Interface

Assist archivists in reviewing email materials for retention and/or release.

- Import of email accounts from PSTs and entity identification via libratom
- Creation of processing accounts associated with individual email users
- Interactive review and tagging of email messages within these accounts (e.g. "record", "non-record", "redact")
- Export of selected messages as EML for retention or release

	edu/accounts/1	* 🖣 🗎 🖗
RATOM		Logo
< Back	Albert Meyers Inclusive Dates: 2001-04-06 - 2002-02-07	I,162 1,162 Unprocessed □ 1 Last Modified 2020-05-15
Keywords	Displaying 12 of 1,162 results	Export as Records Requ
+	Dates to Keep in mind From: Meyers capit	
Folders Add Folders	WORK GPE	L.OF_ART
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Processed status	CPE	MONEY
All Processed (0)	From: Meyers PERSC TIME ORG	CREDINAL LAW Status View
Unprocessed (1,162)	0 selected	

https://github.com/StateArchivesOfNorthCarolina/ratom-deploy

Data analysis and comparison across time and corpora versions

Engineering for extensibility and ease of maintenance

libratom uses SQLAlchemy for SQL / ORM handling, decoupling the underlying data model from the schema and sqlite3 databases generated by the CLI tool

A schema to support common use cases

The current schema focuses on initial triage and assessment, providing a map of 18 unique entity types to their locations (message and file) within a corpus.

				header_field_	type
				id	INTEGER
entity		message		name	VARCHAR
ld	INTEGER	Id	INTEGER	header_field	
text	VARCHAR	pff_identifier	INTEGER	Id	INTEGER
label_	VARCHAR	date	DATETIME	value	VARCHAR
filepath	VARCHAR	headers	VARCHAR	header_field_t	
message_id	INTEGER	body	VARCHAR	message_id	INTEGER
file_report_id		processing_start_time	DATETIME		
		processing_end_time	DATETIME	attachment	
		file_report_id	INTEGER	ld	INTEGER
ille_report				name	VARCHAR
d	INTEGER			mime_type	VARCHAR
oath	VARCHAR			size	INTEGER
name	VARCHAR			message_id	INTEGER
size	INTEGER			file_report_id	INTEGER
nd5	VARCHAR				
sha256	VARCHAR			configuration	
error	VARCHAR			id	INTEGER
msg_count	INTEGER			name	VARCHAR

entity Id text Iabel_	INTEGER VARCHAR	message Id pff identifier	INTEGER		ed header
ld text label_		id	INTEGER	nam Extract	ed header
text label_			INTEGER		
label_	VARCHAR	off identifier		head fields a	nd values
_		pii_identilier	INTEGER	ld	INTEGER
filosofi	VARCHAR	date	DATETIME	value	VARCHAR
filepath	VARCHAR	headers	VARCHAR	header field type id	INTEGER -
tracted ent	ity	body	VARCHAR	message_id	INTEGER
stances (18	-	processing_start_time	DATETIME		
Itegories via	(spacy)	lile	metadata ly contains body)	id name	INTEGER VARCHAR
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name V	VARCHAR				alidated
size	INTEGER			mo	IANA conter
Origin	ating file				
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0	ananan Ciclular			value VAR	CHAR

883381 | the Department of Environmental Protection | ORG | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883382 | Cellucci | PERSON | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883383 | the United States | GPE | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883384 | five | CARDINAL | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883385 | six | CARDINAL | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883386 | Jane Swift | PERSON | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883387 | the Department of Environmental Protection | ORG | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883388 | six | CARDINAL | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883389 | the next few months | DATE | david delainey 000 1 2.pst | 2325380 883390 | 1.5 | CARDINAL | david delainey 000 1 2 nst | w2325380 883391 | **3 pounds** | QUANTITY | Results with the smallest pre-trained model available. 883392 | megawatt-hour | TIME | Accuracy is closer to 90% when using the most recent 883393 | five | CARDINAL | david transformer-based models 883394 | Sithe Energies, Inc. | ORG | david_delainey_000_1_2.pst | 2325380 Named entities (precision) ENTS P 0.84 Model: Spacy en core web sm, trained on Named entities (recall) ENTS R 0.83 OntoNotes 5, accuracy ENTS_F Named entities (F-score) 0.84 evaluation:

With the libratom CLI, we can load different models (including user trained models) on demand for tasks / languages

libratom commands

entities command generates structured db output from mbox, PST, and OST sources, performing a full source scan and NER processing

model command provides granular control of entity identification model(s) in use, including access to previously released models

report command generates a fast report, populating the sqlite3 schema without entities (but optionally including message text and headers)

emidump provides a mechanism for generating EML files using JSON structured message id lists produced by the web app (may also be used standalone)

ΓŦ	kamwoods@blueash: ~/Research	Q		8
	ds@blueash <mark>~/Research</mark> ratom -h DPTIONS] COMMAND [ARGS]			
Main command				
	Show the version and exit. Show this message and exit.			
	nerate .eml files from pst/mbox files. tract named entities.			
report Gei	nage spaCy models. nerate mailbox contents report. ds@blueash/Research			

J+J



(venv) kamwoods@blueash >=/Research ratom entities -h
Usage: ratom entities [OPTIONS] [SOURCE]

Extract named entities from a PST or mbox file, or a directory of one or more PST and mbox files.

If SOURCE is a directory it will be walked recursively. Non-PST and nonmbox files will be skipped.

Upon success the result will be a new .sqlite3 database file. If an output path is provided it will be either the output file's parent directory or the file itself.

If no output path is provided the file will be written in the current working directory.

Options:

-o,out <path></path>	Write the output to <path>.</path>
<pre>spacy-model <model></model></pre>	Use a given spaCy model to extract entities.
-m,include-message-content	s Also extract message headers and bodies.
-j,jobs <n></n>	Use <n> concurrent jobs.</n>
-v,verbose	Increase verbosity (can be repeated).
-p,progress	Show progress.
-h,help	Show this message and exit.
(venv) kamwoods@blueash >=/Re	search

[+]	kamwoods@l	blueash: ~/Research	Q =			8
(venv) kamwoods@blueash Usage: ratom model [OPTI	N <mark>OR/Research</mark> ratom model -h CONS]					
Manage spaCy models.						
	ade currently installed models. Use her to install a previously released					
Dptions: -l,list -i,install <model> -u,upgrade <model> version <version></version></model></model>						
-h,help (venv) kamwoods@blueash	Show this message and exit.					
		Note: This functionality has also be standalone tool for use with othe projects. See <u>https://github.com/carascap/space</u>	r spaCy-de	pend	ent	а

kamwoods@aza	lea: ~/R	esearch
Kunne oogs@uzu		cacarer

hd	S	ิด	a	7.3	lea	~1

<pre>(venv) kamwoods@azalea:~/Research spaCy model</pre>	installed version	available versions
da_core_news_lg		3.0.0, 2.3.0
da_core_news_md		3.0.0, 2.3.0
da_core_news_sm		3.0.0, 2.3.0
de_core_news_lg		3.0.0, 2.3.0
de_core_news_md		3.0.0, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 1.0.0
de_core_news_sm		3.0.0, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 2.0.0
de_dep_news_trf		3.0.0
de_pytt_bertbasecased_lg		2.1.1, 2.1.0
de_trf_bertbasecased_lg		2.3.0, 2.2.0
el_core_news_lg		3.0.0, 2.3.0
el_core_news_md		3.0.0, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.3, 2.2.2, 2.2.0, 2.1.0
el_core_news_sm en core web lg		3.0.0, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.3, 2.2.2, 2.2.0, 2.1.0
en core web md		3.0.0, 2.3.1, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 2.0.0 3.0.0, 2.3.1, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 2.0.0, 1.2.1, 1.2.0
en_core_web_m	300	<u>3 0 0 2 3 1 2 3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 2.0.0, 1.2.0</u>
en_core_web_trf		3.0.0
en_pytt_bertbaseuncased_lg		2.1.1, 2.1.0
<pre>en_pytt_distilbertbaseuncased_lg</pre>		2.1.0
en_pytt_robertabase_lg		2.1.0 Transformer-based models in spaCy 3.x provide better N
en_pytt_xlnetbasecased_lg		
en_trf_bertbaseuncased_lg		2.3.0 accuracy. The en core web sm model is loaded by defa
en_trf_distilbertbaseuncased_lg		
en_trf_robertabase_lg en trf xlnetbasecased lg		2.3.0 when running the CLI provided by libratom 0.6.x (for
en vectors glove md		
en vectors web lg		2.3.0 minimum download overhead) but any other available n
es core news lg		
es core news md		3.0.0 can be loaded on demand.
es core news sm		3.0.0
es core web md		1.0.0
es dep news trf		3.0.0
fr core news lg		3.0.0 https://spacy.io/models/en#en_core_web_trf
fr_core_news_md		3.0.0
fr_core_news_sm		3.0.0, 2.3.0, 2.2.5, 2.2.0, 2.1.0, 2.0.0
fr_dep_news_trf		3.0.0
fr_depvec_web_lg		1.0.0
it_core_news_lg		3.0.0, 2.3.0
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libratom 0.6.0 processing the Gov. Kaine (Library of Virginia) sample corpus

Kaine sample corpus: Approximately **12.3GB**, includes **1 PST** file containing **79,538 messages**

Entity extraction from all 79.5K messages (spaCy en_core_web_sm model):

16-core Threadripper 2950X: **~24 minutes** 32-core Threadripper 3970X: **~13 minutes**

Memory usage is bounded for the **spaCy** configuration and number of processes. For 32 processes, accessible memory is **~1.6GB/process**, resident memory is **~500MB/process** on average.

In libratom 0.6.0, this run yields a **547MB sqlite3** file (including plaintext message bodies and parsed headers), containing **3,260,781** entity instances.



Processing messages 100%| Generating message reports 100%| 79538/79538 [13:16<00:00, 99.94 msg/s] 79538/79538 [13:16<00:00, 99.94 msg/s]

Exploring the output (LVA Kaine corpus sample)

Example 1:

Entity groups by type, ordered by count.

sqlite> select count(*), label from entity group by label_ order by count(*) DESC; 1288056 | PERSON 686345 | ORG 444841 DATE 362347 CARDINAL 257576 GPE 173187 | TIME 60158 MONEY 32378 NORP 31311 ORDINAL 27683 | FAC 27122 LOC 24327 PERCENT 23698 WORK OF ART 22738 PRODUCT 14511 LAW 11194 | EVENT 8163 OUANTITY 586 LANGUAGE salite>

Example 2:

Individual text elements identified by spaCy as "PERSON" that appear more than 10,000 times

Note that the NER processor will return full names as entities when they are encountered.

This particular group of entities was simply mentioned only by first or last name a large number of times in the collection.

Entity =/= Identity!

sqlite> select count(*), text from entity where label = 'PERSON' group by text having count(*) > 10000 order by count(*) DESC: 41480|Gail 35978 Marilvn 29690 Jaspen 19033 Tavenner 18462|Bill 17264 Barbara 17077|Mark 13858 Wayne 13434|Brian 12723 Rubin 10933 Craig 10767 Leighty 10761 Burns 10371|Heidi sqlite>

Exploring the output (LVA Kaine corpus sample)

Example 3:

We can use this database to explore data that might pose issues for processing.. For example:

All attachments with identical names that appear in the collection more than 60 times

sqlite> select count(*), name from attachment group by name having count(*) > 60 order by count(*) DESC; 1005 | image001. jpg 729 image001.gif 303 Document.pdf 161 Scan001.PDF 157 image002.jpg 152 image002.gif 108 | IQFormatFile.txt 85 Blank Bkgrd.gif 82|Jane Woods.vcf 79/image003.gif 74 Karen Remley (karen.remley@vdh.virginia.gov).vcf 68 Robert A Nebiker.vcf 64 image003.jpg 63|sg-0.gif 61 janderson.vcf

Example 4:

Duplicate names don't always mean duplicate files.

Refining the previous query, we get a better sense of the degree of (possible) duplication.

Of the 1005 "image001.jpg" files identified in the original query, 262 have an identical size of 2,950 bytes. 61 have an identical size of 3,126 bytes.

Of the 303 "Document.pdf" files identified in the original query, 27 have an identical size of 710,730 bytes.

sqlite> select count(*), name, size from attachment group by name, size having count(*) > 25 order by count(*)DESC; 262|image001.jpg|2950 134|image001.gif|1564 106 | IOFormatFile.txt | 199 85|Blank Bkgrd.gif|145 82 Jane Woods.vcf 163 80|image001.gif|3725 79|image001.jpg|2743 74 Karen Remley (karen.remley@vdh.virginia.gov).vcf|51 9 68 Robert A Nebiker.vcf 574 35|image002.gif|73 34|jim.burns.vcf|348 27 Document.pdf 710730 27 Glazer, Melinda.vcf 294

RATOM tools - Iterative Processing Interface

Assist archivists in reviewing email materials for retention and/or release.

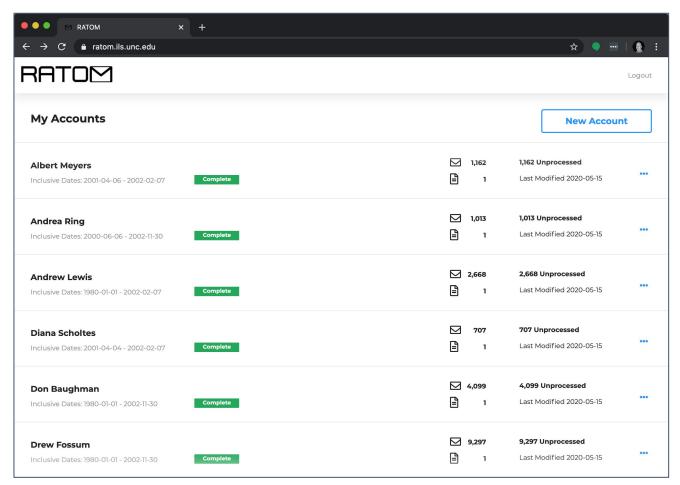
- Import of email accounts from PSTs and entity identification via libratom
- Creation of processing accounts associated with individual email users
- Interactive review and tagging of email messages within these accounts (e.g. "record", "non-record", "redact")
- Export of selected messages as EML for retention or release

RATOM		Log
Back	Albert Meyers Inclusive Dates: 2001-04-06 - 2002-02-07	1,162 1,162 Unprocessed Image: 1 Last Modified 2020-05-15
Keywords	Displaying 12 of 1,162 results	Export as Records Requ
Folders	From: Meyers PERSO CARD	INAL ORG Status View
Add Folders	Accomplishments and Goals 2001 From: Meyers CARD Law work	
Processed status All Processed (0)	CPE LV Cogen cut for HE 19 From: Meyers Twe Offic word	NONEY ON DATE CARDINAL LAW Status View Con Jant
Unprocessed (1,162)	0 selected	

https://github.com/StateArchivesOfNorthCarolina/ratom-deploy

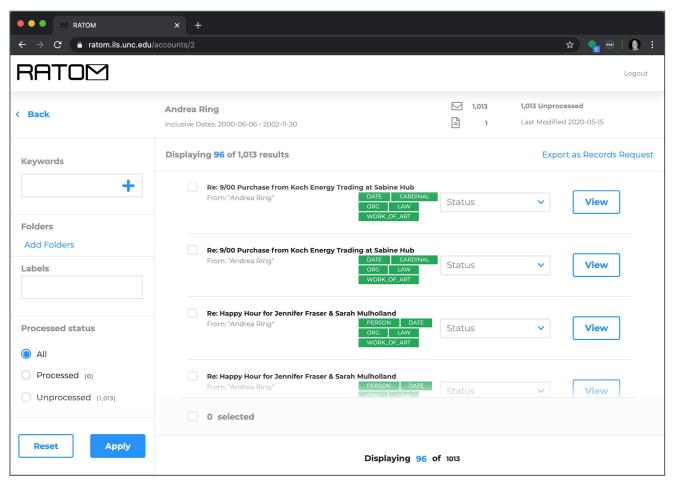
Accounts View

- Allows users to view all accounts loaded into the interface
- Multiple .psts can be associated with an individual account
- Allows view of inclusive dates, number of messages (including number processed), number of .psts associated with the account, and last modified date on one screen



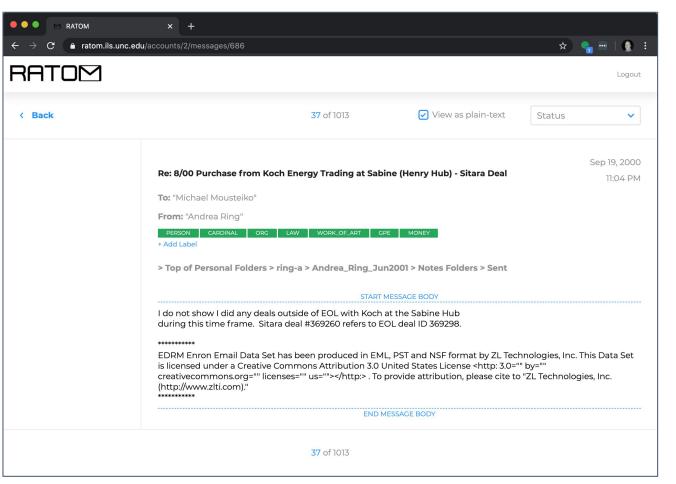
Individual Account

- Selecting an account displays an infinite-scroll view of individual messages associated with that account.
- Green tags indicate entity classes identified during processing.
- Blue tags indicate
 user-generated classes
- Status dropdown allows messages to be marked for retention or redaction (also appears in individual message view).



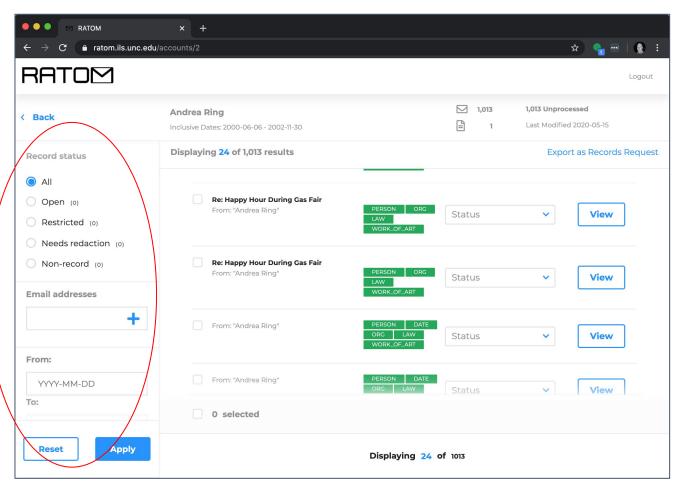
Message View

- Header information
- Libratom generated tags (green)
- User created tags (blue)
- Message body (can be viewed as plain text or with HTML markup)
- Attachments are indicated by file name



Tagging and Search

- Fields Searched:
- Keyword
- Folder
- Label
- Processing status (processed v. unprocessed)
- Record status (open, restricted, needs redaction, non-record)
- Email addresses
- Date range



Audit History

- Audit histories for individual messages are retained.
- This ensures a clear record of initial processing actions and potential changes over time.
- Includes action takens and who performed the action

•	● ● M Select message audit to chang X +							
÷		C 🔒	ratom.ils.unc.edu/admin/core/messageaudit/					🖈 👇 🖻 🌒 🗄
	Dja	ingo a	dministration			WELCOME, RA	TOM@PROTONMAIL.(COM. VIEW SITE / CHANGE PASSWORD / LOG OUT
	Hom	e⇒ Core⇒ i	Message audits					
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	Sele	ectmes	sage audit to change					
	Q		Search					FILTER
								By is record
	Acti	ion:	Go 0 of 100 selecte	d				Yes
		РК	MESSAGE	PROCESSED	IS RECORD	DATE PROCESSED	UPDATED BY	No
		22035	Re: AGC Job Posting	0	•	-		By processed
		22034	Revised Draft	0	0	-	-	All Yes
		22033	Re: Article	0	•	-	-	No
		22032	Re: New Revised Draft Answer - Ignore Pr	0	0	-	-	By account
		22031		0	0	-	-	All
		22030	Lodi Storage	0	٢	-		Albert Meyers Andrea Ring
		22029	FW: CONFIRMATION: April 20, 2001 Executi	0	0			Andrew Lewis
		22028	Houston	0	0	-	-	Diana Scholtes Don Baughman
		22027	Re: Your Law Conference RSVP Form	8	•	-	-	Drew Fossum Dutch Quigley
		22026	Submit Your Law Conference RSVP Form	0	•	-	-	Daten Quigley
		22025		0	0	-	*	
		22024	Re: FW: Draft Transwestern Response to F	0	•	-	-	
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		22022	Po: Chicagaga undato	0			_	

RATOM

Project info, news, and blog posts:

https://ratom.web.unc.edu/

Core library:

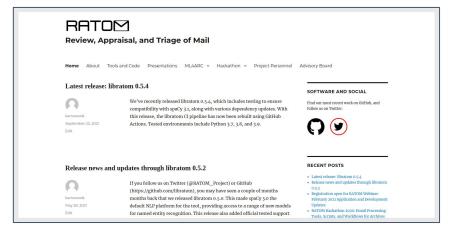
https://github.com/libratom/libratom

Sample Jupyter notebooks:

https://github.com/libratom/ratom-notebooks

Web Service + Interface:

https://github.com/StateArchivesOfNorthCarolina/ratom-deploy





Releases and Code Quality

Updates and improvements as of 0.6.0:

Releases have been generated in tandem with tags on GitHub main branch, tracking all minor and patch updates (currently 0.6.0).

All releases automatically pushed to PyPI.

CI via GitHub Actions, multi-platform support, Python 3.8, 3.9, and 3.10.

Codebase tracked with codeclimate to assess maintainability

Code coverage tracked via codecov (currently 96%) - effectively all core code is exercised by the test suite

Routine dependency tree checks via dependabot

Search projects	Q Help Sponsors Login Register
libratom 0.6.0	Latest version Released: Jun 7, 2022
Python library and supporting utilitie	s to parse and process PST and mbox email sources
Navigation E Project description * O Release history	
🛓 Download files	libratom
Project links	pypi package 0.6.0 📿 Build, Test, Release passing 🔄 codecov 190% 🖍 maintainability B 💓 Pation (19) Python library and supporting utilities to parse and process PST and mbox email sources.
Statistics GitHub statistics:	Libratom requires Python 3.8 or newer, and can be installed from the Python Package Index. Installing with pip will automatically install all required dependencies. These dependencies include a version of li bpff that will be compiled automatically with C tooling during install. A selection of environments we have tested follows:
 Porks: 6 Open issues/PRs: 1 View statistics for this project via Libraries io g, or by using our public dataset on Google BigQuery g 	Ubuntu 18.04LTS and 20.04LTS releases require build-essential, python3, python3-pip, and python3-venv packages macOS 10.14 (and newer) releases require Xcode 11 (or newer), Xcode CLI tools, and Python 3 installed using Homebrew (or your preferred method) Windows 10 releases require Visual Studio Code, Build Tools for Visual Studio, and Python 3 installed using Anaconda 3 (or your preferred method)