**DIGITIZING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY:**

**SCHOLARLY EDITING, INTERFACE DESIGN, AND**

**AFFORDANCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP**

by

Meg Meiman

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
English

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**ABSTRACT**


Over the course of this dissertation, I argue that digital thematic literary collections provoke questions about authorship, editorship, and readerly engagement via their structure and design, and in ways that prompt reconsiderations about the nature of print and digital texts, as well as what these reconsiderations mean for literary scholarship.

By providing a critical look at the arguments implicit in the interface design, the editorial and textual practices, and the literary theories underwriting the structure and presentation of these digital collections, I contend they provide connections between the "literary" and the "digital" in a way that helps realize D.F. McKenzie's vision of a history of texts that can account for the meanings those texts acquire over time. More importantly, I show how these collections serve as representative examples of the way in which the digital literary studies may continue to provide avenues for engagement with a wider public in the twenty-first century.

# INTRODUCTION

"My own view is that no such border [between bibliography and textual criticism on the one hand and literary criticism and literature on the other] exists.  In the pursuit of historical meanings, we move from the most minute feature of the material form of the book to questions of authorial, literary, and social context. These all bear in turn on the ways in which texts are then re-read, re-edited, re-designed, re-printed, and re-published.  If a history of readings is made possible only by a comparative history of books, it is equally true that a history of books will have no point if it fails to account for the meanings they later come to make."
D.F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*

"What separates wisdom and madness in a project that sets out to represent everything?"
Kenneth Price, "Electronic Scholarly Editions"

In the mid-1990's literary scholars Kenneth Price, Ed Folsom, and others laid the groundwork for what is now known as the *Walt Whitman Archive*.  Initially published in 1995 and now nearly twenty years old, this online collection prominently features Whitman's published works, particularly several editions of *Leaves of Grass,* which form the basis of the collection and were among the first of his materials to be digitized and made available on the site.  As with other literary collections now available online, *The Whitman Archive* has undergone a significant redesign of its home page.  In its current iteration *The Whitman Archive* resembles the table of contents for a book, with the first "chapter" leading the reader/user to Whitman's published works, and with the site's author and editors featured

prominently at the top of the home ("title") page.[1]  While the site's design

highlights the phenomenon of newer forms of media adapting features from older

media—think of the web page scroll as a kind of atavistic adaptation of early

scrolls—it also remediates affordances[2] of book design.

These two features of the collection—the centrality of *Leaves of Grass* and

the site's remediation of the affordances of book design—also point to a significant

tension that *The Whitman Archive* embodies.  As Kenneth Price notes in the

epigraph above, digital collections theoretically have the maddening capacity to

encompass everything—not only every manuscript, edition, and scrap of paper

that bears Whitman's writing, but also every re-editing of and response to

Whitman's writings.  To paraphrase D.F. McKenzie, *The Walt Whitman Archive*

potentially can encompass the most minute features of its literary artifacts, and

provoke questions about each artifact's authorial, literary, and social context.

Moreover, this collection and digital literary collections in general represent the

ways in which those artifacts have been re-read, re-edited, re-designed, and—I

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[1] Meredith McGill notes the "table-of-contents" design when she observes that
*Leaves of Grass* serves as the "centripetal force" around which the collection is
[2] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "affordance" describes "a property of
an object or an aspect of the environment, especially relating to its potential utility,
which can be inferred from visual or other perceptual signals" (*OED Online*, March
2013).  For example, a doorknob affords twisting, and a handle affords grasping or
pulling.

would add—remediated,[3] all of which contributes to the meanings these artifacts

have made and will continue to make.  In this regard, McKenzie's dream of a

complete history of texts would now seem to be a tantalizingly approachable

reality.

And yet, in order to maintain its coherence as a collection and remain

financially sustainable, particularly given the long-term costs of maintaining digital

collections, the *Archive*'s editors must be selective in their inclusion and

representation of Whitman's works.  As such, the *Walt Whitman Archive*, and

digital literary collections in general, are continually shaped by the persistent

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[3] Throughout the dissertation, I use the term "remediation" as defined by Jay David
Bolter and Richard Grusin, who describe remediation as the phenomenon by
which media always represent one medium via another.  They further describe this
phenomenon as governed by the twin logics of immediacy and hypermediacy.
Immediacy evokes the "you are here right now" effect, in that it seeks to erase all
traces of mediation, and relies on the "belief in some necessary contact point
between the medium and what it represents" (*Remediation*, 30).  At the same time,
media also tend toward hypermediacy, roughly described as the directive  "look at
all this other media," since one medium evokes other forms of media in striving for
its own version of immediacy, and expresses itself as multiplicity, as multiple acts
of representation (34).  Applying this idea to digital thematic research collections,
one could argue, for example, that the site *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture*
at once remediates other forms of media (e.g., Hammett Billings' engravings of the
novel) by simultaneously representing them via another medium (my computer),
seeking to erase all traces of that mediation (I'm only looking at the engravings, not
the jpegs of the engravings rendered via HTML and my browser), *and* at the same
time calling attention to those other mediating forms (the original engravings, the
jpegs, the HTML, and my browser).  See Bolter and Grusin's *Remediation:
Understanding New Media.*  Cambridge:  MIT Press, 1999.

compromises between D.F. McKenzie's dream of a complete history of texts and the real-world inevitability of selection.[4]

But McKenzie's dream is not entirely out of reach.  Since their inception in the early 1990s, digital collections of American literature, especially nineteenth-century literature have grown in number, scope and complexity.  One reason for their growth in number stems from the fact that collections of nineteenth-century literature lend themselves well to digitization because they're usually unconstrained by copyright law.  Moreover, they often encompass drafts of works and multimedia artifacts ideal for digitization, and they tend to be well-funded.[5]  In terms of scope and complexity, these collections rely on teams rather than one individual, prompting an overlap of roles among editors, scholars, programmers, and librarians, and allowing for the kind of documentation that gestures toward Mackenzie's social history of texts.  For example, the XML files in *The Walt Whitman Archive* reveal the names of multiple editors reviewing and recording changes, including dates and times of those changes, to the markup that an editor initially provides for an individual text, thus documenting the social processes of editing.[6]  These social processes, in turn, inform part of the structure that not only

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[4] I am indebted to Clay Colmon for this insight.
[5] From 2010-2012 the Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for Humanities' Office of Digital Humanities awarded the greatest proportion of their funding to medieval and nineteenth-century literary collections.
[6] This is not to suggest that editorial decisions for printed scholarly collections lack a social dimension, but instead to emphasize the *visibility* of (and thus, the ability

underwrites (often literally) the foundation of a collection, but can also determine how a reader interacts with the collection. In terms of their public display—the interface—digital collections adopt/adapt several forms of media within one collection (the printed codex, illustrations, maps, audio recordings) and organize these forms via the layout, design, and navigational markers of an interface. Thus, digital collections structure a reader's experience of that literary artifact and that collection by directing their attention in specific ways to particular content—just as a book's table of contents or a web page's scroll directs a reader's engagement in specific ways.

Over the course of this dissertation, I argue that digital literary collections provoke questions about authorship, editorship, and readerly engagement via their structure and design, and in ways that prompt reconsiderations about the nature of print and digital texts, as well as what these reconsiderations mean for literary scholarship. By examining these reconsiderations, my dissertation endeavors to make a three-fold contribution to the field of American literary studies and digital humanities. First, it will address the critical silence surrounding digital literary collections as *literary* collections, by analyzing the literary and editorial theories they adapt and employ in their structure (markup

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to analyze) the social process involved in editing digital texts. Editorial decisions regarding printed collections, however social they may be, tend to be obscured by the imprimatur of a collection's main editor(s) or segregated in the acknowledgements section of the book.

code), organization and design (interface).  Second, it will address the extent to

which these collections uphold or challenge, in varying degrees, the literary canon

of nineteenth-century American literature.  Indeed, the canon wars of the 1980s

mark a precedent for some scholars' recent turn (or return) in noting the

importance of focusing on less canonical and under-represented authors when

creating digital collections,[7] and their critical discussion will inform my analysis of

my chosen digital collections. Third, my dissertation will address what has only

recently begun to surface in humanities criticism:  the significance of

collaboratively-authored and collaboratively-edited forms of digital scholarship for

the field of the humanities *and* the general public.[8]  Digital thematic research

collections that are publicly available—as is the case with all the collections in this

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[7] See Amanda Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing," and Stephanie Browner's
"Digital Humanities and the Study of Race and Ethnicity," in *The American
Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell; Ann
Arbor:  University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan Library, 2011,
125-144 and 209-227, respectively.   See also Amy Earhart's "Can Information be
Unfettered?  Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon," in *Debates in the Digital
Humanities*.  Ed. Matthew K. Gold.  Minneapolis:  University of Minnesota Press,
2012, 309-318.  Finally, see Susan Belasco's "The Responsibility is Ours:  The
Failure of Infrastructure and the Limits of Scholarship." *Legacy: A Journal of
American Women Writers*.  26.2 (2009): 329-336.
[8] See Gregory Crane's "Historical Perspectives on the Book and Information
Technology." *Rethinking Media Change*. Eds. Henry Jenkins and David Thorburn.
Boston:  MIT Press, 2003, 117-136.  See also Kenneth Price's "Collaborative Work
and the Conditions for American Literary Scholarship in a Digital Age." *The
American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew
Jewell; Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan
Library, 2011, 9-26.

dissertation—bear not only a connection with but also a responsibility to their public audience by offering a form of civic education that actively engages audiences beyond academic circles.

In the course of elaborating on these assertions about digital thematic research collections, I intend to address the following questions: First, to what extent do different digital thematic collections foreground their approaches to the unique affordances of digital media, particularly in the realm of interface design? Second, how does a digital collection's interface design correspond with those of other "interfaces"—particularly the scroll and the codex—and what are the effects of this correspondence on the relationship between the form and content of an artifact within a digital environment? What are the implications of the changes for authorship, editing, and reading that digital collections pose for humanities scholarship? Finally, what avenues of engagement can (or do) these publicly-available collections provide for audiences inside *and* beyond academia? This final question springs directly from my disciplinary background and practice as a research librarian who has witnessed first-hand the benefit digital collections have for students, scholars, and especially for individuals outside of academia. Therefore, I believe each collection's affordances for engagement are an essential component for analysis. This area is ripe for study, and a closer examination of

how various audiences use digital collections often has a direct bearing, as we will

see, on their re-design, re-editing, and re-use by *all* audiences.[9]

Addressing these questions requires both a brief definition of terms and an

analysis of specific digital collections, which are organized within this dissertation

as a series of case studies comprised of individual digital collections.  Regarding

terminology, I use the term "digital collections" and "digital literary collections"

interchangeably throughout this dissertation as a shorthand referring to what John

Unsworth describes as "digital thematic research collections."[10]  Unsworth

identifies these collections as having a common list of characteristics:  they are

electronic and multimedia in nature, extensive but thematically coherent,

structured but expandable, designed to support research, and they represent

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[9] As Matt Cohen insists, collections such as the *Walt Whitman Archive* prompt hard
questions about what they contain, who designs them, and the level of interactivity
they allow for individuals who use them, and these questions emerge from
critiques—such as McKenzie's—of traditional editing and bibliography.  While I
whole-heartedly agree with Cohen, my endeavor is to shift or extend these
questions to a collection's readers, examining what parts of a collection they use,
the impact design may have on their use, and what forms of use result from the
level of interactivity each collection provides.  See Cohen's "The New Life of New
Forms:  American Literary Studies and the Digital Humanities."  *A Companion to
American Literary Studies*, ed. Caroline Levander.  London:  Wiley & Sons, 2011,
532-548.
[10] Unsworth, John. "Thematic Research Collections."  Paper presented at the
Modern Language Association Annual Conference, Washington D.C., 28 December
2000.  See also Carole Palmer's "Thematic Research Collections."  *A Companion to
Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth.
Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. Unsworth's paper is available at
http://people.brandeis.edu/~unsworth/MLA.00/  Palmer's chapter is available at
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/

collections of digital primary resources, which are often second-generation digital

resources.  He and other scholars[11] share the critical assumption that digital

thematic research collections produce knowledge because of the rigor involved in

creating introductions, notes, and other scholarly commentary.  As such, digital

thematic research collections can be posited at one end of a spectrum, with digital

repositories at the other end, since they contain little markup or encoding, and few

(if any) explicitly stated editorial guidelines.[12]  In short, the use of standards—

editorial, scholarly, markup, and metadata-related standards—serves as a crucial

operative element in distinguishing a digital thematic research collection from a

repository of texts and images. In using the phrase "digital thematic research

collections" rather than "archives" or "digital archives"[13] to describe my chosen

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[11] Scholars adopting this view include Jerome McGann, Julia Flanders, Matt
Dalström, and Kenneth Price.  See Jerome McGann's *Radiant Textuality: Literature
after the World Wide Web*.  New York:  Palgrave, 2001; Julia Flanders, "Trusting the
Electronic Edition," *Computers and the Humanities* 31 (1998): 301–310; Matt
Dalström's "The Compleat Edition," in *Text Editing, Print and the Digital World*.
Eds. Marilyn Deegan and Kathryn Sutherland. Surrey, England:  Ashgate
Publishing, 2009, 27-44.  And see Kenneth Price's "Edition, Project, Database,
Archive, Thematic Research Collection:  What's in a Name?" *DHQ:  Digital
Humanities Quarterly*.  3.3 (Summer 2009).  Available at
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html
[12] The term "digital repositories" frequently refers to a digital space (platform) for
storing digital content, and may be subject-based—such as the *Making of America
Collection*—or institution-based.  Because repositories store and often provide
public access to a variety of materials, they are often used interchangeably with
the term "digital archive" and "digital library."
[13] Kenneth Price argues the term "archive" has, in a digital environment, come to
refer to a "purposeful collection of digital surrogates" that blends features of
editing and archiving.  I acknowledge (as he does) that words such as "archive"

case studies, I am purposely maintaining the distinction between these terms for

the sake of precision, notwithstanding the titles of three of my case studies.  As

Kenneth Price argues, digital thematic collections incorporate features of the

archive, the scholarly edition, and the library but aren't adequately described by

any single one of these terms.[14]  And while the phrase "digital thematic collections"

isn't nearly as mellifluous as "archives," the former phrase best encompasses, I

think, the hybrid nature of a purposeful collection of artifacts.[15]

　　This focus on standards not only serves to help distinguish thematic

research collections from repositories, but also relates directly to the organization

and structure of a collection, and, in turn, the potential it offers readers.  That is,

the more editorial oversight and markup a collection contains, the more structure

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take on new meanings over time—indeed, this term has already acquired new
meanings—but in this dissertation I adhere to "digital thematic collections," in
order to emphasize two of their primary characteristics: editorial standards and
generic hybridity.  See Kenneth Price, "Electronic Scholarly Editions," 435.

[14] See Price's "Electronic Scholarly Editions," in *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*. Eds. Ray Siemens and Susan Schreibman.  London:  Blackwell, 2007, 434-450.

[15] Situating digital thematic collections within the vast theoretical and critical literature about the archive as a genre lies somewhat beyond the scope of this dissertation, though this is another avenue certainly worth pursuing, given recent debates in the archival and digital humanities communities about the significance of defining these terms.  For more about these debates, see Price's "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection:  What's in a Name?"; Kate Theimer's "Archives in Context and as Context," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1.2 (Spring 2002): http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-2/archives-in-context-and-as-context-by-kate-theimer/; and Tanya Clement, Wendy Hagenmeier, and Jenny Knies' "Toward a Notion of the Archive of the Future: Impressions of Practice by Librarians, Archivists, and Digital Humanities Scholars," *The Library Quarterly* 83.2 (April 2013): 112-130.

(as Unsworth defines it) it amasses, thereby providing a level of search and interpretation that may be unfeasible in a printed work.

In turn, these standards—editorial oversight, organization, and structure— inform my rationale for choosing to focus on the following digital thematic research collections: *Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture: A Multimedia Archive*; the *Walt Whitman Archive*; *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk: Race and Ethnic Images in Children's Literature, 1880-1939*; and *The Vault at Pfaff's: An Archive of Art and Literature by the Bohemians of Antebellum New York*. These collections serve as representative examples of digital thematic collections that exhibit various degrees of openness, such as explicitly stated editorial policies, and employ a great deal of structure in their use of markup language and metadata. Moreover, these specific collections range from the early generation collection *Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture* (created in 1998) with its overall adherence to a repository model, to *The Walt Whitman Archive* with its downloadable files that document the editorial work for each artifact, to *The Vault at Pfaff's*, with its ability to map connections among people, places and events in a way that is unfeasible in print.

While many literary critics have begun to discuss how digital collections fit into the broader scope of digital scholarship in the humanities, specifically with regard to how the creation of and contributions to these digital collections "count"

as a form of scholarship,[16] few have analyzed digital collections within the context

of literary studies.  Only during the past few years have critics begun to address

the ways in which digital thematic collections prompt questions about, and even

reconsiderations of authorship, editing, and affordances for public engagement

within the context of literary studies.[17]

In exploring how these questions of authorship, editing, and readerly

engagement play out within certain digital collections, I will focus on three aspects

of each collection:  editorial practices, mark-up language, and interface design.  The

first aspect centers on the collaborative editorial practices documented in the

publicly-available files of digital collections, which blur the boundaries among the

literary author, the editors, and in some cases (albeit in a more limited fashion) the

readers.  For example, the collection *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* allows

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[16] As representative examples, see Geoffrey Rockwell's "On the Evaluation of
Digital Media as Scholarship," *Profession* 2011, 152–168. Also available at
http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1632/prof.2011.2011.1.152  See also the MLA's
"Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media," available
at http://www.mla.org/guidelines_evaluation_digital.

[17] Critics who have begun to address these questions, primarily from the
perspective of editing, include Gregory Crane, Amanda Gailey, Martha Nell Smith,
and Kenneth Price.  See Crane's "Give Us Editors! Re-inventing the Edition and Re-
thinking the Humanities," *Online Humanities Scholarship: The Shape of Things to
Come*.  Houston:  Rice UP, 2010, 137–69.  Amanda Gailey's "Editing in an Age of
Automation," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.3 (Fall 2012):  340-356.
Martha Nell Smith's "Electronic Scholarly Editing," *A Companion to Digital
Humanities*.  Eds.  Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemans, and John Unsworth.  London:
Blackwell, 2004, 306-322.  Also available at
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/. See also Kenneth Price's
"Collaborative Work and the Conditions for American Literary Scholarship in a
Digital Age."

readers to "turn on" or "turn off" regularized spellings of words, allowing for a

form of readerly engagement that aligns with McKenzie's approach to book

history, in which the history of a book (or image, or computer file) must account

for the meanings it generates over time, including the meanings generated by a

text's editors and readers.

The second aspect centers on the markup language of two digital

collections, *The Walt Whitman Archive* and *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*.  This

markup language, known as TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) is analogous to the

editorial emendations that editors provide when working on a scholarly edition of

a text.  TEI determines not only the form of a text in a digital medium (e.g., where

line breaks appear in a poem), but in the case of interpretive markup, can also

provide suggested meanings for the words themselves.  Encoding, then, is always

an interpretive act that ensures a text is not only legible for a reader, but also

exponentially increases an encoder's editorial responsibility both to the text she

works with and ultimately to her reader, because every decision to tag (or not tag)

a word or passage with a suggested meaning directly affects a reader's ability to

search for and encounter those tags—and thus, those suggested meanings—in a

text.  Following N. Katherine Hayles' assertion that digital texts are processural,

because their materiality depends upon their coding (as well as software,

hardware, packet switches, and a computer's processing speed), any study of a

digital text necessitates an examination of its markup language, to understand both

the editorial interpretations that instantiate the text, and one aspect by which the

digital text is constituted.[18]

For the third aspect of my analysis, I consider the medium through which

one encounters the text:  the interface.  Drawing on Johanna Drucker's assertion

that "design is information,"[19] I argue that interface design represents the choices

a collection's editors have made in terms of what will be included in that collection,

what to highlight within those inclusions, and how a reader may navigate it.

Throughout this dissertation I use the term "interface" to refer solely to the terms

"user interface," "human-computer interface," (HCI) and "graphical user interface"

(GUI), all of which refer to the part of a computer system that communicates with a

person, and which employs icons (menus, scrollbars, links) that allow a person to

manipulate or engage with the files and programs represented by those icons.

Despite this interchangeability of terms, I restrict my use of "interface" to the

context of human-computer interactions in order to differentiate it from other

definitions of interface, which include hardware that connects users to other

hardware, hardware that connects hardware to other hardware, software that

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[18] See Hayles' "Intermediation:  the Pursuit of a Vision," *New Literary History* 38 (2007):  99-125.

[19] See Drucker's *SpecLab:  Digital Aesthetics and Projects in Speculative Computing*, Chicago:  University of Chicago Press, 2009, 17.  Drucker and other scholars make a similar point when they state "understanding the rhetoric of design, its persuasive force and central role in the shaping of arguments, is a critical tool for digital work in all disciplines."  See Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, et.al in *Digital_Humanities*, Cambridge, MA:  MIT Press, 2012, 13.

connects hardware to other software, and protocols connecting software to other

software.[20]

By showing how the interface for each of these collections organizes the

form and content of multimedia artifacts, as well as the overall collection in which

they reside, I will demonstrate how the interface functions as a constitutive

force—as with coding, interface comprises part of the text—and determines the

method by which one reads that text.  Contrary to some scholars' suspicions about

the visual design of such collections,[21] the interface not only constitutes the

"window" into a particular collection, but also the field of relations that

simultaneously determines what we read and how we read it.  Just as a book

employs features such as titles, typefaces, and footnotes to provide interpretive

cues for readers, a digital collection also incorporates into its design aspects of

print culture such as typography and (in some cases) a table-of-contents

navigation system.  Indeed, the remediation of book design in digital thematic

research collections prompts questions about the relationship between the

---

[20] My definition of "user interface," which include definitions of HCI and GUI, is courtesy of the *Encyclopedia of Computer Science*; for other definitions of interface, see Florian Cramer's entry for "Interface."  *Software Studies: A Lexicon*.  Ed. Matthew Fuller.  Cambridge MA:  MIT Press, 2008.

[21] Matthew Kirschenbaum's essay "So the Colors Cover the Wires: Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability" briefly addresses the distrust many scholars harbor about the interface of a digital collection as appearing "too glitzy." In *A Companion to Digital Humanities*.  Ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, 532.  Also available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/.

interface of a digital collection and the interface of a book that are, I will argue,

central to understanding digital thematic collections. The interface can also be

viewed as a kind of theorized praxis, [22] incorporating elements of literary theories

such as New Criticism[23] and material features that encourage readers to engage in

an array of late twentieth-century practices such as keyword searching, copying,

and downloading.  Whether well-wrought or hastily assembled as grant funding

runs out,[24] the design of a digital collection's interface represents what Alan Galey

describes as "the threshold between the surfaces of texts and their mysterious

depths," the surface of what a reader sees and the markup, encoding, and editing

that constitute the depths of digital artifacts.[25]  Scholarship in the field of print

culture abounds with examples of how the design and material nature of a printed

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[22] Kathleen Fitzpatrick defines the digital humanities as "theorized praxis," as the potentially productive space where theory meets practice.  See "The Humanities, Done Digitally." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 13 May 2011:  B26.
[23] New Criticism describes a mid-twentieth century literary method that focuses on a work of art as an object in itself, and promotes the process of close reading as a means of discovering how the work functions as a self-contained, self-referential object, independent of authorial intent, historical and cultural contexts, and readers' responses.  For a brief definition of New Criticism, see Harman and Holman's *A Handbook to Literature*.  For more in-depth discussions and examples of this interpretive method, see John Crowe Ransom's *The New Criticism*, Cleanth Brooks' *The Well-Wrought Urn*, and T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent."
[24] Matthew Kirschenbaum notes that interface design tends to come very late (if not last) in a project's development.  See Kirschenbaum's "'So the Colors Cover the Wires,'" 538.
[25] See Alan Galey's "The Human Presence in Digital Artifacts," in *Text and Genre in Reconstruction: Effects of Digitalization on Ideas, Behaviours, Products, and Institutions*, Ed. Willard McCarty. Cambridge: Open Book, 2010, 107.  Also available at http://books.openedition.org/obp/652

artifact bears on its interpretation as an object,[26] but this interpretive work has

only begun to extend to digital collections, where the interface design of a digital

collection serves as a site of critical inquiry, evoking questions about how a digital

artifact's design and the larger collection that encompasses it affect their

interpretation and provide affordances for readerly engagement.[27]  As Matthew

Kirschenbaum asserts, "today's platforms of pixels and plastic are as much a part

of [book history] studies as paper and papyrus.  How many of us encounter the

objects of our study unmediated through subsequent technologies?...We all

experience this [remediation], even if we do not always theorize it.  But what might

we learn if we do think about the entrance of old media into the platforms of new

media?"[28]  Analyzing digital thematic collections as forms of intermediation

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[26] I am indebted to Marcy Dinius for this insight.  For a highly selective example of
this abundant scholarship, see Andrew Piper's *Book Was There*, David McKittrick's
*Book, Manuscript, and the Search for Order*, and on a smaller scale, D.F. McKenzie's
analysis of how changes in the typography and layout of Congreve's epitaph in *The
Way of the World* affects its interpretation in his essay "The book as an expressive
form," in *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*.  See Piper's *Book Was There:
Reading in Electronic Times*.  Chicago:  University of Chicago Press, 2012; David
McKittrick's *Book, Manuscript, and the Search for Order*.  Cambridge:  Cambridge
University Press, 2005; and D. F. McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of
Texts*.  Cambridge:  Cambridge University Press: 1999.
[27] See Alan Galey and Stan Ruecker's "How a Prototype Argues," *Literary and
Linguistic Computing*  25.4 (2010); 411-412.  While Galey and Ruecker argue that
the concept of design has a more complicated relation to *materiality* and
authorship, I would add that design evokes (provokes?) an equally interesting and
complex relationship with *readerly* engagement—since, after all, the design
informs the interface or field of relations with which readers engage.
[28] See Matthew Kirschenbaum's and Sarah Werner's "Digital Scholarship and
Digital Studies: The State of the Discipline," *Book History* 17 (2014), 451.

between "old media" and "new media," and as forms that prompt critical inquiry about the relationship among paper, pixels, and the resulting affordances that engage readerly use, will constitute a central approach of my dissertation.

**The role of the interface**

This potential for engagement in a digital context begins, I believe, with each collection's interface. As the field of relations that both organizes a digital collection and structures a reader's experience of it, the interface also serves as the literal entrée into each collection, thus providing an ideal starting point for analyzing larger questions about authorship, editorship, and public engagement. Critical literature on the role and concept of the interface springs historically from the field of engineering and, more specifically, from studies of human-computer interaction (HCI), where values such as transparency, ease of navigation, utility, and the ability to move efficiently within a site govern interface design.[29] The initial process of creating an interface begins with the designer, who designs for him/herself, or perhaps creates an imaginary user toward which the interface is aimed. According to Thierry Bardini, this imaginary user results from the thought process of a designer anticipating how that user will navigate the site.[30]

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[29] See Jakob Nielsen's "Definitions and Fundamentals of Usability," http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html.

[30] See Bardini's "Inventing the Virtual User," *Bootstrapping: Douglas Engelbart, Coevolution, and the Origins of Personal Computing*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000, 106-107.

Some critics, including Kathleen Fitzpatrick, argue this approach can lead to an interface that limits *actual* users, because the interface design—or more precisely, the HTML links used to structure that design—represents one person's or group's imposition of knowledge on others, thus "effectively reinscribing the author-reader hierarchy at an even higher level."[31]  Alternatively, Johanna Drucker conceives of the interface as a dynamic space in which reading takes place.  As she states, "we do not look rather through [the interface]…or past it…The surface of the screen is not merely a portal for access to something that lies beyond or behind this display.  Intellectual content and activities do not exist independent of these embodied representations.  Interface…is an artifact of complex processes and protocols, a zone in which our behaviors and actions take place.   Interface *is what we read* and *how we read*, combined through engagement."[32]  This tension between Drucker's delineation of the interface as a zone of reading and cognition, and Fitzpatrick's observation of the hierarchical effects of HTML points to a larger issue—namely, the ways that current digital thematic collections enact and negotiate this author-reader *and* editor-author-reader relationship, with or without full consciousness of the editorial and literary theories they adapt and employ.

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[31] See Fitzpatrick's *Planned Obsolescence:  Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy.*  New York:  NYU Press, 2011, 98.

[32] See Drucker's "Humanities Approaches to Interface Theory," *Culture Machine* 12 (2011), 9.  Emphasis in original.  Available at http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/434/462

**The role of editing and markup (structure and organization)**

Just as the interface signals one aspect by which digital collections enact

relationships among authors, editors, and readers, so too do the editorial practices

and markup languages that comprise each digital collection.  Two of the most

predominant forms of markup used in creating digital thematic collections are

XML and TEI.  Briefly, XML, or eXtensible Markup Language, is a generalized

language used to describe any digital document in formal terms.  It can be applied

to anything—poems, shoes, cookies (hence its extensibility or flexibility)—and it

provides a set of rules for labeling or "tagging" whatever poem, shoe, or cookie

needs to be described.  One important rule for XML is that an opened tag must be

properly closed, and a tag opened inside another tag must be properly "nested";

otherwise the software program processing the XML file cannot read it.  For

example, a properly nested set of tags for a Toll House cookie might read as

follows:

&lt;cookie&gt;&lt;chocolate chip&gt;Toll House cookie&lt;/chocolate chip&gt;&lt;/cookie&gt;

If XML provides the syntax for an artifact, then TEI, or Text Encoding Initiative,

provides the semantics.[33]  As a series of general guidelines, TEI describes the

structural or formal features of a particular text, and directs humanities scholars

on which set of tags to use when marking up or "tagging" texts, while also setting

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[33] See Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing," 130.

certain constraints on the vocabulary of those tags. For example, TEI mandates that poetic lines <l> may fall within a line group <lg>, but line groups cannot nest within a poetic line.  The first stanza of Elizabeth Bishop's poem "One Art" provides a good example:

```
<lg type="stanza">
        <l>The art of losing isn't hard to master;</l>
        <l>so many things seem filled with the intent</l>
        <l>to be lost that their loss is no disaster.</l>
</lg>
```

Thus, TEI helps determines what a text *is*, such as which part of a poem comprises a stanza, which parts are lines, and where line breaks occur in a poem.  In essence, TEI describes a text for the digital environment just as an editor marks up a text with emendations and footnotes for a printed scholarly edition.  Indeed, the use of TEI to mark up texts for a digital environment constitutes a form of interpretation, since an editor's decision to mark up any part of a text with a suggested meaning affects a reader's ability to find it.

However, given its emphasis on describing the formal features of a text, as well as its adherence to XML's hierarchical structure (such as the rule of nesting tags), TEI has given rise to recent debates about its application to literary texts. These debates fall into two camps:  the Ordered Hierarchy of Content Objects (OHCO) approach, which views markup as the hierarchically-structuring force that represents the intellectual content of the text, and the interpretive approach, which

views markup as a critical, interpretive method of transcribing a text's formal and

material features that contributes to the emergent materiality of a digital text.[34]

As a proponent of the OHCO approach, Allen Renear asserts that "a text

consists of objects...structured in a certain way, [such as] chapters, sections,

paragraphs, titles,...and so on.  But they are *not* things like pages, columns,

(typographical) lines, font shifts...and so on.  The objects indicated by descriptive

markup have an intrinsic, direct connection with the intellectual content of the

text."[35]  This approach presumes a Platonic view of texts, where the intellectual

content is separate from its physical form—or more accurately, it presumes that

the Platonic reality of a text is its existence as a hierarchically-organized object.

Renear's assumption poses two problems:  first, it elides the interpretive nature of

tagging, where the decision to mark up something as seemingly obvious as a table

of contents can pose formidable difficulties.[36]  Second, Renear's assumption effaces

what Hayles regards as the emergent materiality of a text.  As she defines it, the

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[34] For similar views of the interpretive approach, see Hockey's *Electronic Texts in the Humanities*.  Oxford:  Oxford University Press, 2001.  See also Jerome McGann's "Marking Texts of Many Dimensions" (198-217); C.M. Sperberg-McQueen's "Classification and its Structures" (161-176), and Martha Nell Smith's "Electronic Scholarly Editing" (306-322) in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*.  Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.  Finally, see James Cummings' "The Text Encoding Initiative and the Study of Literature" in *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*. Eds. Ray Siemens and Susan Schreibman.  Oxford:  Blackwell, 2007, 451-76.
[35] Renear, "Text Encoding," *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, 224-225.
[36] Brett Barney recounts this and other interpretive challenges in coding Whitman's 1867 *Leaves of Grass* in his essay "'Each Part and Tag of Me is a Miracle': Reflections after Tagging the 1867 Leaves of Grass."  Available at http://www.whitmanarchive.org/about/articles/anc.00002.html.

materiality of an embodied text is "the interaction of its physical characteristics with its signifying strategies."[37]  Citing D. F. McKenzie, Hayles asserts that because materiality is—as both she and McKenzie see it— bound up with the text's content, "it cannot be specified in advance…Rather, it is an *emergent* property."[38]

Within the context of digital literary collections, these debates underscore a compelling tension between the nature of these markup languages and the way editors use them.  That is, XML's syntax and TEI's limitations as an interpretive form of markup generally confine editors to representing literary texts as hierarchically organized, discrete entities characterized by their formal features. Yet editorial uses of XML are often highly collaborative, as is the case with the *Walt Whitman Archive*, since XML files may be used to document editors' emendations when marking up a text for a digital environment.  Further, TEI's tag structure allows for greater searchability within a text, and can be used to contextualize literary texts—albeit in a limited way—in order to foster a reader's active engagement with the collection, as is the case with *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk.*

These particular uses of XML and TEI—to foster collaborative editorial approaches and to contextualize literary works—differ dramatically from previous theories and practices put forth by W.W. Greg, Fredson Bowers, and G. Thomas

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[37] See Hayles's *My Mother Was a Computer*, 104 (italics removed from original quotation).
[38] Ibid.

Tanselle, in which editors, usually working alone, have exercised their best

judgment to produce a text that most accurately represents an author's

intentions.[39]  Jerome McGann and D.F. McKenzie, in writing against this approach,

sought to illuminate the sociological processes inherent in textual composition and

production, including the role of human agents, in order to cope with the challenge

of multiple versions of a text, and to expand (or explode) the borders between

bibliography, textual criticism, literature, and literary criticism.[40]  McKenzie's

formulation, in particular, contrasts with more traditional forms of scholarly

editing in a print medium where an editor, often working alone when editing, puts

forth an edition—with collaboration from copyeditors, book designers, and

publishers—directed at a specific audience.  Indeed, his assertion that new readers

make new texts, and that the textual issue at hand is "no longer a claim for truth,

but rather the testimony each text provides, as defined by its historical use" posits

a sociological theory of editing that has already been in practice, in the form of

collaborative editing, for several years within some digital collections, and is one

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[39] See Greg's "The Rationale of Copy-Text," *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950): 19-36.
See also Bowers' *Essays in Bibliography, Text, and Editing*, Charlottesville:
University of Virginia Press, 1975.  Finally, see Tanselle's *A Rationale of Textual
Criticism.*  Philadelphia:  University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989, and "The Varieties
of Scholarly Editing," in *Scholarly Editing:  A Guide to Research.*  Ed. D.C. Greetham.
New York:  Modern Language Association, 1995; 9-32.
[40] See McGann's *Critique of Textual Criticism*, Charlottesville: University of Virginia
Press, 1983.  See also McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*,
Cambridge:  Cambridge University Press: 1999, 23.

development I will explore in two of my case studies.[41]  Indeed, the digital

collections examined in this dissertation reveal a variety of editorial practices that

range from the New Critical presentation of texts, to more collaboratively and

*visibly* edited texts, each of which has implications for literary studies and for the

audience of readers—specialist and non-specialist alike—who engage with these

digital collections.

The following chapters are arranged in loose chronological order not with

the intent of arguing for any kind of progression among digital collections, but to

highlight the correspondences and differences among each collection.  For

example, two early-generation digital collections—*Uncle Tom's Cabin and

American Culture: A Multimedia Archive* and the *Walt Whitman Archive*—each have

a well-established readership given their respective ages, yet their editorial

practices differ widely.  Both the *Whitman Archive* and *The Tar Baby and the

Tomahawk* use TEI to show the visibly collaborative editorial practices that help

underwrite the basis for each of their collections.  And the thematic organization of

*The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* and *The Vault at Pfaff's* each compel us to

consider the objects of literary study and literary history, respectively, in ways that

challenge the American literary canon.

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[41] *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 23.  McKenzie's sociological theory of editing also underscores the importance of affordances such as crowdsourcing that allow readers to transcribe and annotate digitized texts, since these affordances can provide further documentary evidence of a text's historical *and* contemporary use.

With regard to methodology, I use the case study approach in analyzing each collection. While they all share a focus on nineteenth-century literature and literary history, the argument each collection makes for these fields is inextricably tied to the elements that comprise it, and therefore necessarily specific. As Lisa Gitelman argues, specificity is key. Given how quickly some of these individual collections have changed over time, analyzing them as sites of "very particular, importantly social…[and] culturally specific experiences of meaning" remains crucial to my project, and comprises the foundation of my methodological approach.[42]

Chapter 1 focuses on an early generation digital thematic collection, *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture: A Multimedia Archive*. With an interface design that has not changed significantly since its launch in 1998, this collection incorporates particular literary and editorial theories, such as New Criticism and a clear-text approach to editing, that both inform the design of its collection and promote the ongoing discovery of knowledge about the novel. Further, its relative lack of documentation about itself as a collection, its codex-like remediation of Stowe's novel within a digital environment, and the multimedia artifacts associated with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* all structure a readers' experiences of the collection in specific ways. Ultimately, this collection strengthens the place of

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[42] See Lisa Gitelman's *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*. Boston: MIT Press, 2006, 8.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the American literary canon by foregrounding not the novel but rather the artifacts and anti-slavery texts related to the cultural and historical contexts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

*The Walt Whitman Archive*, launched in 1995, comprises Chapter 2. This collection, I argue, draws on McKenzie's sociological theory of editing and N. Katherine Hayles' concept of intermediation to analyze the ways in which the genres of "edition" and "archive," as well as the roles of author, editor and reader become reimagined within the *WWA*. The basis of my approach to the *Whitman Archive*'s collaborative editorial practices and its conditions of use draws first from McKenzie's view that material artifacts and their authorial, literary, and social contexts impact the ways those artifacts are re-read, re-edited, and re-published. Additionally, Hayles' focus on the interactions among genres and roles points to ways in which the *WWA* reimagines the relationships among authors, editors, and readers. Through its layout and design, its intermediation of genres and roles, and its publicly accessible scholarship about Whitman as well as primary works by him, the *Walt Whitman Archive* incorporates Whitman's idea of the democratic in its very structure, and argues for more democratized forms of digital literary collections.

Chapter 3 focuses on *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk: Race and Ethnic Images in American Children's Literature, 1880-1939,* launched in 2012. In contrast with other digital collections organized around a single author or work, this

collection uses a thesis-based organization to present a selection of once-popular children's literature representing a range of racial depictions of African American and Native American children.  As a project that recovers a forgotten period of literary history, the *TBT* includes literary works that preserve white attitudes toward African-American and Native American children alongside literature created by African-American and Native American authors to counteract these negative stereotypes.  The *TBT* historically contextualizes these varied literary works by putting them in conversation with each other.  Additionally, the *TBT*'s use of TEI to provide interpretive markup for the texts in its collection further contextualizes the racially problematic language of Joel Chandler Harris's stories, and provides an affordance for readerly engagement with the collection.  This use of TEI, along with the *TBT*'s inclusion of interpretive essays and introductions for each group of stories, the range of artifacts it presents (digitized books, images, and periodicals), and its thematic organization of them collectively show how *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* argues for the necessity of moving beyond the literary canon, in order to understand more fully its significance as a recovery project.

While the *TBT* centers on a group of stories, *The Vault at Pfaff's*, discussed in Chapter 4, focuses on a group of writers, actors and artists who gathered at Charles Pfaff's New York bar in the mid-nineteenth century.  Launched in 2006, this collection features biographical sketches about these "Pfaffian" bohemians, along with artwork, manuscripts, and digitized images of *The New York Saturday Press*,

the short-lived literary journal to which many writers and artists contributed.

Through its structure and design, *The Vault* represents this period in American

literary history as a series of connections, and as a network of relationships among

people. Further, by including a range of materials—periodicals, diaries, maps, and

artwork—not often included in other digital collections, and by linking outside of

its own collection to other sources related to this literary community, *The Vault*

challenges the author-centered focus of the literary canon by arguing instead for a

networked approach in representing literary history, and serves as an important

model for current and future digital collections.

In choosing to focus on the affordances for public engagement that these

particular nineteenth-century American digital literary collections can provide, I

would like to acknowledge certain assumptions implicit in the phrase "public

engagement." My analysis of each collection's affordances for public interaction

includes the qualifications "opportunity" and "possibility," to acknowledge the fact

that just because a collection is publicly available does not mean it will

automatically engage a multitude of users (akin to the idea of "if you build it they

will come"). On the contrary, engaging audiences beyond academic circles is an

endeavor that requires continuous attention and must be built over time.

Additionally, I am aware that my use of the terms "public" and "reader"

within the context of this dissertation refers to a somewhat proscribed group of

people: those with an understanding of the English language (because the

collections I analyze are in English) and who can access these collections via a computer or other device.  While these observations may seem blindingly obvious, they are important to recognize as limitations of as well as qualifications for this dissertation, in light of the significant number of digital collections and projects in other languages, and because there are many readers who do not have at their disposal the means to access these collections.[43]

Despite these limitations, the nineteenth-century digital literary collections I analyze represent varying degrees of openness through their online accessibility, editorial documentation, and in some cases, file-sharing. [44]  Such openness points to what I believe are three inter-related trends in humanities scholarship.  The first is the continued collaboration among scholars, librarians, computer programmers, and others in the creation and sustainability of digital works, especially as the economic model for scholarly publishing becomes increasingly unsustainable for universities.  Second, humanities scholars have a responsibility for engaging with a broader audience, a point which Dan Cohen, John Unsworth, and other scholars

[43] One group addressing these issues is the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organization's special interest group Global Outlook::Digital Humanities, which leverages the "complementary strengths, interests, abilities and experiences of Digital Arts, Humanities, and Cultural Heritage participants through special projects and events," and encourages collaboration "among individual projects, institutions, and researchers…. in High, Mid, and Low Income Economies."  See http://www.globaloutlookdh.org/

[44] This openness hinges, to a great degree, on funding.  The NEH's Office of Digital Humanities, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the National Historical Publications & Records Commission all mandate varying levels of public access or involvement of the public in the creation of digital collections.

have recently argued.[45]  Finally, digital humanities and the collections they

encompass have the potential to align with the field of public humanities, a form of

scholarship that Kathleen Woodward describes as "reduc[ing] the distance

between university and life, and offer[ing] civic education for all involved."[46]  This

alignment seems particularly urgent in light of the increasing corporatization of

digital collections, which has serious implications for both the canon of nineteenth-

century American literature and the study of American print culture, given some

vendors' recent acquisitions of less canonical literature.[47]

By providing a critical look at the arguments implicit in the interface design,

the editorial and textual practices, and the literary theories underwriting the

structure and presentation of these digital collections, I hope to reveal connections

between the "literary" and the "digital" in a way that helps realize McKenzie's

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[45] See Gregory Crane's "Historical Perspectives on the Book and Information
Technology," 130-131; see also Dan Cohen's December 2010 talk "The Ivory Tower
and the Open Web," and John Unsworth's "The Crisis of Audience and the Open
Access Solution."  Dan Cohen, "The Ivory Tower and the Open Web," Coalition for
Networked Information, 2010.  Video available at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeNjiuw-6gQ.  John Unsworth, "The Crisis of
Audience and the Open Access Solution."  *Hacking the Academy*.  Eds. Dan Cohen
and Tom Scheinfeldt. Ann Arbor, MPublishing (online, 2011) and the University of
Michigan Press (print, 2013).
Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dh.12172434.0001.001.
[46] See Woodward's "The future of the humanities—in the present & in public,"
*Daedalus* 138.1 (Winter 2009), 123.
[47] Two recent examples include EBSCO's digitization and acquisition of the
American Antiquarian Society's *Historical Periodicals Collection* (1691-1887) and
Readex's acquisition of The Library Company of Philadelphia's Afro-Americana
collection of books, broadsides, and other material (1535-1922).

vision of a history of texts that can account for the meanings those texts acquire over time.  More importantly, I hope to show how these collections serve as representative examples of the way in which the digital humanities may continue to provide avenues for engagement with a wider public, and how these collections may compel us to think more expansively about the role of nineteenth-century American literature in the twenty-first century.

**Chapter 1**

***UNCLE TOM'S CABIN AND AMERICAN CULTURE*: TEXTUAL AND THEORETICAL TENSIONS WITHIN AN EARLY-GENERATION DIGITAL THEMATIC RESEARCH COLLECTION**

On April 1, 1852 the final installment of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin: or, Life Among the Lowly* was published in the anti-slavery weekly *The National Era*. For the better part of a year, Stowe had written and then immediately published each installment.[48]  During and after the publication of the serial and the first hardcover edition, Stowe's work inspired songs, poems, plays, and movies based on her story.  One hundred and forty-six years later, Stephen Railton assembled these installments, along with images of subsequent editions and other forms of media generated by her work into one website, *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture:  A Multimedia Archive*.  Available to the public since 1998, this website comprises one of the earliest digital thematic research collections of nineteenth-century American literature, providing important insights about the theoretical constructs at work within its collection.  Yet

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[48] According to Michael Winship, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published as a novel on March 20, 1852, twelve days before the serial publication was complete.  See Winship's essay "Uncle Tom's Cabin: History of the Book in the 19th-Century United States." Available at
http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/interpret/exhibits/winship/winship.html

scholarship about this collection *as* a thematic research collection is fairly

minimal.[49]

This chapter addresses that critical gap by analyzing the theoretical

perspectives—literary, editorial, and new media—embodied in and expressed by

*Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture: a Multimedia Archive*, with two interrelated

goals in mind.  First, such an analysis will consider how *UTC&AC* remediates[50]

Stowe's texts—both the installments from *The National Era* and the 1852 Jewett

edition hosted on the site.  Second, my analysis will address the role of interface

design in simultaneously structuring the collection and a reader's experience of it.

I am interested in how *Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture* incorporates

particular literary and editorial theories that both inform the design of its

collection, and that promote the ongoing discovery of knowledge[51] about *Uncle*

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[49] Claire Parfait, Meredith McGill, and Andrew Parker cite specific artifacts from
this site, but aside from McGill and Parker's minimal critique in the footnotes of
their article, I know of no extensive analysis about *UTC&AC* as a collection.  See
Parfait's *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin*:  *1852-2002*, Aldershot:
Ashgate Publishing, 2007; see also McGill and Parker's "The Future of the Literary
Past," *PMLA* 125.4 (October 2010):  959-967.
[50] As I mention in the introduction, I use the term "remediation" and its variants as
defined by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, who describe remediation as the
phenomenon by which media always represent one medium via another.  In the
most basic sense, digital thematic research collections remediate literary texts and
images through other forms of media, including (but not limited to) a collection's
graphical user interface, through files hosted on a collection's site, and through a
reader's web browser.
[51] In his recent *PMLA* article Alan Liu calls for digital humanists to use design as a
"principle of knowledge discovery and generation," a point I'll return to below.  See

*Tom's Cabin.* By approaching this digital collection with a tandem emphasis on the phenomenon of remediation and the role of interface design in structuring a reader's experience of it, and by analyzing actual readers' engagements with the collection, I argue that *UTC&AC* strengthens the place of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the American literary canon, in part by foregrounding the artifacts and anti-slavery texts related to the cultural and historical contexts of the novel.

Now fifteen years old, the *UTC&AC* represents an early generation digital thematic collection characterized by its relative lack of documentation about itself as a collection—a feature that corresponds with other contemporary (mid-1990s) digital collections that were structured as repositories with little markup or encoding, and few, if any, explicitly stated editorial guidelines.[52] Further, the site makes little mention of the recently updated Jewett edition that it hosts, which is the most textually accurate edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to date.[53] The lack of

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Liu's "The Meaning of the Digital Humanities," *PMLA* 128:2 (March 2013): 409-423.

[52] Three exceptions include *The Walt Whitman Archive*, which uses XML and TEI to encode all of Whitman' works; Railton's inclusion within *UTC&AC* of Wesley Raabe's historical introduction to *The National Era* text; and Raabe's use of TEI-conformant XML in marking up this text. In his introduction to *The National Era* text, Raabe details his editorial process in creating the *National Era* text, but his editorial mark-up in TEI is only available upon request, rather than being publicly viewable in *UTC&AC*. See Raabe's "The *National Era* version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: Historical and Textual Introduction." Available at
http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/uncletom/eraintro.html

[53] The only mention of the electronic edition's provenance is at the bottom page of each First Edition chapter, tucked behind a link titled "About This Text." Wesley Raabe provides an outstanding history of the novel's textual transmission and its

context denoting the editorial changes to the Jewett edition suggests the

collection's adherence to a repository model that provides little background about

or reflection on itself as a collection, obscuring its own participation in the

scholarly enterprise of editing.[54]  In one respect, this obfuscation has significant

ramifications for scholarship about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a point to which I will

return at the end of the chapter.[55]  In another respect, however, *UTC&AC* serves as

an early, important example of how digital thematic literary collections are

inextricably tied to the affordances of both a print and a digital medium (browsing,

searching), while at the same time expressing—and being informed by—literary

and new media theories that require further inquiry in order to fully understand

digital literary collections.  One media theory that underscores the ways in which

*UTC&AC* adapts other forms of media is remediation.

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permutations in print and digital form. See Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin:* A Case Study in Textual Transmission."  From *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell; Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan Library, 2011; 63-83.  Available online at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001
[54] As I mention in the introduction, the *UTC&AC*'s lack of documentation about itself implicitly points to a "best practice" among more recent and robust digital thematic collections—namely, a collection's explicit documentation about its own history and editorial practices, which I outline in Chapter Two.  For more about the editorial accuracy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, see Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin:*  A Case Study in Textual Transmission."
[55] In outlining the ramifications of these editorial omissions, I want to be careful to avoid construing *UTC&AC* solely in terms of what it lacks, and therefore *should* include, in light of features in more recent digital thematic collections.

**Remediation and interface—design elements within *UTC&AC***

In their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Jay Bolter and

Richard Grusin provide a compelling theory of remediation, which they describe as

the phenomenon by which media always represent one medium via another, a

phenomenon further defined by the twin logics of immediacy and hypermediacy.

Briefly, immediacy evokes the "you are here right now" effect, in that it seeks to

erase all traces of mediation, and relies on the belief in some necessary contact

point between the medium and what it represents.[56]  At the same time, media also

tend toward hypermediacy, described most simply as the directive  "look at all this

other media," since one medium evokes other forms of media in striving for its

own version of immediacy, and expresses itself as multiplicity, as multiple acts of

representation.[57]   Applying this idea to *UTC&AC*, the collection at once remediates

other forms of media (e.g., Hammatt Billings' engravings) by representing them via

another medium (my computer), and seeking to erase all traces of that mediation

(I am only looking at the engravings, not the jpegs of the engravings rendered via

HTML and my browser).  At the same time, these forms of media call attention to

those other mediating forms (the original engravings, the jpegs, the HTML, and my

browser).

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[56] Bolter, Jay David and Richard Grusin.  *Remediation:  Understanding New Media.*  Cambridge:  MIT Press, 1999, 30.
[57] Ibid, 34.

While *UTC&AC* remediates dozens of images and illustrations, the collection

relies most on the codex as both a remediating form and an organizational rubric

for the site.  On the "Browse Mode" page, for example, the cultural and historical

contexts laid out around the texts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* resemble a table of

contents, or perhaps a block of text organized chronologically from top to bottom

(see Figure 1 below).  In the section "Stowe's Uncle Toms," the "Editions" page

includes an interactive element allowing readers to "select" different editions of

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* from a virtual bookshelf, "open" those editions, and read their

title pages.  Even within individual sections on the Browse Mode page—"Anti-

Slavery Texts," "Songs & Poems"—artifacts are organized into hyperlinked lists,

often accompanied by a scanned image of an illustration or a book.  By remediating

the affordances and organizational features of a codex, the Browse Mode interface

and its individual sections reveal the extent to which the codex is remediated

within and continues to mediate the design of *UTC&AC*.
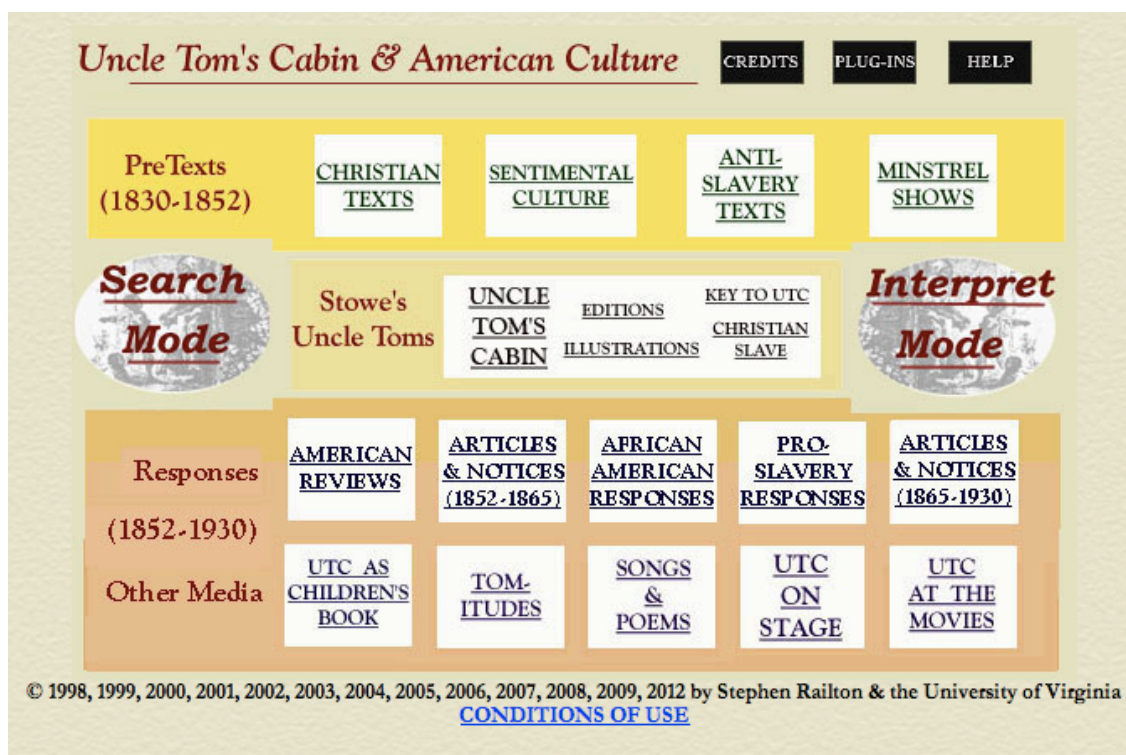
**Figure 1.1  Screen shot of the Browse Mode page of *UTC&AC*.**

Yet while Bolter and Grusin's theory elucidates the phenomenon of remediation in *UTC&AC*, their theory only tangentially addresses the importance of the design and the means by which a user *experiences* remediation:  the interface. For *UTC&AC*, this interface refers to the 'Browse Mode' of the collection and the interfaces displaying transcriptions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.  As the medium that connects a reader with a digital artifact, the interface not only comprises the means of accessing an artifact, but also—through its design—structures the form and content of that artifact, as well as the collection of which it is a part.  As Joanna Drucker explains, a digital collection's interface design constitutes its information as well as its functionality; thus, interface design must be analyzed as a "rhetorical

and aesthetic representation of knowledge."[58]  Analyzing the interface of a digital

collection, then, requires an approach that presumes the interface is less a 'thing'

or a 'window' into a particular collection—although it does serve that purpose—

but rather a field of relations that determines what we read and how we read it.  In

other words, the field of relations that comprises an interface not only maps onto

questions about content (what we read) and form (how that content is expressed,

which in turn determines how we read it).  It also expresses the argument

(rhetoric) and design (aesthetics) of the knowledge it represents.

From an aesthetic perspective, *UTC&AC*'s interface could be described as

"Web 1.0," as it resembles the design of other digital collections created about the

same time, relying heavily on hypertext links organized in a modular or list format.

The *William Blake Archive*'s home page, for example, uses the same 'table of

contents' layout, and the *Valley of the Shadow* collection uses a similar

chronological structure in organizing the materials on its site.[59]  From a rhetorical

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[58] See Drucker's *Speclab*, 17. Alan Galey and Stan Ruecker make a similar point by positing interface design as a site of critical inquiry, akin to the way book historians interpret the design decisions of printed artifacts as interpretive objects. For digital artifacts, "the concept of design has developed beyond pure utilitarianism or creative expressiveness to take on a status equal to critical inquiry, albeit with a more complicated relation to materiality and authorship." See Galey and Ruecker's "How a Prototype Argues," 411-412.

[59] The *Valley of the Shadow*, which collects letters, diaries, and other primary documents from two American communities and spans 1859-1870, uses a blueprint layout of 'rooms' with each 'room' leading to a particular kind of document (letters, newspapers, etc.).  The *UTC&AC* uses modules to organize its materials (links to anti-slavery texts, Christian tracts, etc.)  Interestingly, all three

standpoint, the *UTC&AC* in general, and the 'Browse Mode' in particular, could

initially be read as arguing for a highly contextualized view of *Uncle Tom's Cabin,*

given the number of cultural artifacts on the site.  If we conceive of the interface as

a field of relations, however—not merely as the 'window' into these artifacts—the

'Browse Mode' presents these artifacts as highly atomized.  Granted, this

atomization stems partly from the nature of digitization, in which individual forms

of media (images, texts, video clips) must be materially rendered into binary

format and then re-contextualized for a digital environment.  By organizing

historical artifacts disparately as an arrangement of hyperlinks, however, the

*UTC&AC* reinforces this atomization, creating a tension between the broad

historical context the collection strives for as a whole, and the dispersed

organization of those historical artifacts.

For example, the weekly installments and book chapters of *Uncle Tom's*

*Cabin* are accompanied by some historical context, but this context is primarily

maintained on separate web pages, rather than integrated within or positioned

immediately alongside the texts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.  Moreover, the collection's

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collections use the Garamond typeface, suggesting that typeface might be a textual
method of bibliographic 'carbon dating'—i.e., one way to identify when, and even
where, digital collections were created.  Both *Valley of the Shadow* and *UTC&AC*, for
example, were created at the University of Virginia in the early 1990's.  (This
method of dating assumes, of course, a collection's graphical interface isn't
significantly redesigned over time.)  See Ayers' *Valley of the Shadow* collection at
http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/; see the *William Blake Archive* at
http://www.blakearchive.org/blake/.

minimal navigational points and its use of JavaScript to open successive tabs in

order to view artifacts one at a time, inhibit a reader's sense of where she is in

relation to the rest of the collection; it tends to be highly directive, rather than

encouraging spontaneous browsing within different sets of artifacts or within the

site overall.  Kathleen Fitzpatrick, in describing her students' resistance to

hypertext, characterizes this directedness as manipulation, observing that

"hypertext only gives the *illusion* of reader involvement—and certainly only the

illusion that the hierarchy of author and reader has been leveled…In fact, hypertext

caters not to the navigational and compositional desires of the reader, but to the

thought processes of the author."[60]  As with other digital collections designed

primarily as hypertext links, the 'Browse" interface of *UTC&AC* not only expresses a

tension between the drive toward contextualization and an atomized, highly

controlled reading experience, but also registers a friction between the illusion of

readerly engagement and the reality of an author-editor-reader hierarchy.

What we see among these interfaces, then, are a series of aesthetic and

rhetorical tensions between contextualization and atomization, between the

illusion of engagement and the reality of editorial-as-authorial control.  Despite, or

perhaps because of these tensions, I want to emphasize the importance of reading

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[60] Susan Schreibman makes a similar point in observing the rigidity of hypertext
archives, which "force readers into tightly controlled hyperlinked paths created by
the editor."  See Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Planned Obsolescence*, 98; see also
Schreibman's "Computer-Mediated Texts and Textuality:  Theory and Practice."
*Computers and the Humanities*.  36.6 (2002): 285.

*UTC&AC*'s interface as a constellation of rhetorical and aesthetic tensions that work *in conjunction* with the phenomenon of remediation.  These tensions need to be analyzed carefully in tandem with *UTC&AC*'s remediation of the codex.  Otherwise, we run the risk of dismissing its interface as merely outdated digital design, or as an inferior version of both Stowe's texts as they appear in the collection and the historical artifacts that surround them.

My argument for a greater focus on these tensions is somewhat at odds with more recent critical discussions about interface design.  Drucker, for example, asserts that large textual corpora and archives require attention because "the conventions of way-finding and navigation that are part of print media and its institutional structures are not yet reworked in a digital environment meant to address the shifts in scale and experience brought on by new media."[61]  Her point about the necessity of creating new design conventions to meet the scope of new media—both for creative and scholarly purposes—is understandable.  But it risks overlooking the importance of analyzing the extent to which print-based conventions *already* inform many digital collections, even—especially—early-generation collections such as *UTC&AC*.  Similarly, Alan Liu argues that digital humanists should "aim for design as a principle of knowledge discovery and generation, rather than…as an after-the fact rendering of data in scatter plots,

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[61] See Drucker's "Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display."  *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 5.1  (2011): paragraph 48.  Available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/5/1/000091/000091.html

social network graphs, and other stale visualizations, or *equally tired, book-like or blog-like publication interfaces.*"[62]

Certainly, creators of digital thematic collections should be mindful of how interface design contributes to the discovery and generation of the knowledge it represents, and should incorporate design principles earlier in the process of creating digital collections.  But Liu's dismissal of book-like interfaces is problematic for digital thematic research collections in several ways.  First, his view discounts the phenomenon of remediation, which *by definition* incorporates affordances of other media, and seems to dismiss the possibility that "stale, book-like interfaces" may exert an aesthetic and rhetorical force that Drucker eloquently argues for elsewhere.[63]  Second, he appears to discount the possibility for and the reality of "knowledge discovery" that collections such as *UTC&AC* have already generated over time, as evidenced by users' feedback.  Finally, in advocating for more innovative interface designs, both Liu and Drucker seem to argue for a kind of design that may be impossible with regard to digitized literary artifacts, since

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[62] See Alan Liu's "The Meaning of the Digital Humanities," 416; emphasis is mine.
[63] Somewhat in alignment with Liu, Alan Galey claims that book history is historical and interface design is geared toward the future.  However, the *UTC&AC* reverses this conceptual configuration, since its interface has changed very little over time, and it uses graphical cues from a codex (e.g. a book spine) to organize and structure the site, while Railton has also enacted significant editorial changes to the 1852 Jewett edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that remain invisible to the average reader.  See Galey's "The Human Presence in Digital Artifacts." *Text and Genre in Reconstruction: Effects of Digitalization on Ideas, Behaviours, Products, and Institutions*. Ed. Willard McCarty. Cambridge: Open Book, 2010, paragraph 23. Available at http://books.openedition.org/obp/652

they inevitably carry with them traces of their print-based affordances.  In other words, it would seem almost impossible—or at least incredibly challenging—to design an interface of a digital *literary* collection without using or evoking some of the material features and affordances of a literary text (page images, typeface, browsing).

By examining affordances that span both print and digital texts, along with the affordances that get suppressed via the phenomenon of remediation, and the literary and textual theories that inform their expression, we may better understand the aesthetic and rhetorical force of older interfaces such as *UTC&AC*. This kind of focus can, in turn, elucidate the argument the digital collection makes for the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as well as helping to inform the interface design of current and future digital collections.

**Literary and textual theory as rhetorical force in *UTC&AC***

As mentioned previously, *UTC&AC*'s lack of documentation about both its own history as a digital collection and about the 1852 Jewett edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* hosted on its site contrasts with its inclusion of contemporary responses to the novel, interpretive essays, and subsequent works (songs, illustrations, video clips) inspired by Stowe's novel (see Figure 1.1 above).  This contrast, in turn, points to a theoretical tension that *UTC&AC* incorporates within its content and design:  its New Critical representation of Stowe's texts are separated on the site

from the historical artifacts that endeavor to ground the texts in the literary and cultural contexts that produced them. From a literary standpoint, the collection employs a New Critical approach to its representation of Stowe's texts – in this case, the installments for *The National Era* and the revised 1852 Jewett edition – by foregrounding them as discrete textual segments while eliding its own editorial involvement in the representation of those texts. From a historical standpoint, *UTC&AC*'s inclusion of Christian tracts, anti-slavery texts, minstrel songs, and contemporary reviews of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* provide artifacts through which a reader may seek to understand the cultural contexts of Stowe's text.

As a literary critical method that gained prominence in the mid-twentieth century, New Criticism focuses on a work of art as an object in itself, and promotes the process of close reading as a means of discovering how the work functions as a self-contained, self-referential object, independent of authorial intent, historical and cultural contexts, and readers' responses. At about the same time that New Criticism gained prominence in literary studies, textual scholar Fredson Bowers promoted a form of textual criticism that relegated editorial changes to a literary text to appendices, leaving the text free of any signs of editorial changes.[64]

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[64] Bowers' rationale for his approach draws on W.W. Greg's foundational essay "The Rationale of Copy-Text," where Greg argues that the production of a critically-edited text, or copy-text, relies on editorial considerations of substantives (readings that affect the author's intended meaning of a text), and accidentals (spelling, punctuation, and anything related to the formal presentation of the text). Greg's rationale emphasizes the importance of sound editorial judgment backed by

Informally known as a "clear text" approach, Bowers' editorial theory stems from

the idea that editors serve as agents working to ensure the originality of a text by

relegating any changes (especially accidentals) to an appendix.  In cordoning off

these emendations, editors render a text more legible for readers and ensure the

purity and originality of an author's intended text.  Put simply, representational

clarity equates with textual purity.[65]

These New Critical and editorial approaches emerge most visibly in how

*UTC&AC* represents both the *National Era* and Jewett texts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*,

with both sets of texts appearing segmented and entirely self-contained (see

Figures 1.2 and 1.3 below).  For example, each text's table of contents represents

individual chapters as segmented links.  In Figure 1.3, the Jewett edition is titled

"Uncle Tom's Cabin:  The Text," with scant mention of its provenance and no

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a knowledge of analytical bibliography to produce a copy-text that most closely
reflects authorial intent.  Bowers, taking Greg's rationale one step further, asserts
that editors are agents who ensure the purity and originality of an author's
intended text.  See Greg's "The Rationale of Copy-Text," *Studies in Bibliography* 3
(1950), 2; Bowers' "Established Texts and Definitive Editions," *Essays in
Bibliography, Text, and Editing*.  Charlottesville:  University of Virginia Press, 1975,
367; and Bowers' "Textual Criticism and the Literary Critic," *Textual and Literary
Criticism*.  Cambridge:  Cambridge University Press, 1959, 7.  David Greetham and
Joel Myerson have noted the mutual reinforcement of New Criticism and the Greg-
Bowers clear-text approach to textual editing, but do not posit a cause-effect
relationship between them.  See Greetham's "Textual and Literary Theory:
Redrawing the Matrix," *Studies in Bibliography*, Vol. 42 (1989), 7; Greetham's
*Textual Transgressions:  Essays Toward the Construction of a Bibliography*, New
York:  Garland Publishing, 1998, 536; and Myerson's "Colonial and Nineteenth
Century American Literature," *Scholarly Editing:  A Guide to Research*.  Ed. D.C.
Greetham.  New York:  MLA, 1995, 355.
[65] I owe this insight about legibility to Marcy Dinius.

mention of its recent editorial emendations.[66]  By proclaiming itself as "*The* Text"

(my emphasis), this entrée to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* underscores—perhaps

unintentionally—the degree to which New Critical interpretive values and Bowers'

"clear text" editorial approach not only represent but also implicitly structure the

site's presentation of the two texts, as well as its overall design and organization.

Further, the lack of an appendix recording the editorial changes to each version of

*Uncle Tom's Cabin*—i.e., the lack of evidence documenting (in Bowers' terms) an

editor's attempt to reveal the author's intended text—unintentionally reinforces

the self-contained, self-referential nature of each text, and erases the possibility for

considering the ways in which these two texts have been editorially remediated for

a digital environment.

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[66] As Raabe recounts, Stephen Railton used Raabe's findings to correct the errors in the 1852 Jewett edition for the *UTC&AC* in early 2006, and for the 2007 print edition published by St. Martin's Press.  These were errors that Raabe discovered when comparing transcriptions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on both Railton's site and on the *Early American Fiction* site, but there is no mention of this correction anywhere on the *UTC&AC* site.  See Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," 75.

**Uncle Tom's Cabin: The National Era Text**

**Figure 1.2. Screen shot of the table of contents for the *National Era*.**



**Uncle Tom's Cabin: The Text**

**CONTENTS**

Volume One

**Figure 1.3. Screen shot of the table of contents for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.**

This editorial elision is reproduced in the interface design for the individual chapters/installments within each text, which are represented as discrete transcriptions devoid of any immediate authorial, historical, or editorial contexts (see Figures 1.4 and 1.5). Two of the most striking features of these texts include the skeuomorphic[67] design of the navigational links in the upper left-hand corner, and the fact that both texts are several links away from the home page of *UTC&AC.* (The Jewett edition text is four links in from the home page, and *The National Era* text is five links in—with the final link to that text appearing only at the bottom of the introductory page to the *National Era* text).

The first feature, the use of a book spine as a main navigational link, represents Bolter and Grusin's theory of remediation writ large:  it presents the user with "a heterogeneous space" that continually calls to mind the codex along with the HTML-rendered text of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* represented in a web browser (hypermediacy), and that functions as a counterpoint to the largely "unified visual space" (immediacy) of Stowe's texts.  Further, the book spine's persistent appearance as *the* navigational point for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* serves as a form of visual rhetoric, by attributing a codex-like authority to the texts.  It also seems to

[67] According to Oxford Dictionaries, a skeuomorph is "an object or feature that imitates the design of a similar artifact made from another material."  In computing, a skeuomorph is "an element of a graphical user interface that mimics a physical object," which many interfaces and software programs incorporate into their design (for example, folders and files on a user's desktop, and even the notion of a desktop itself).  Definition courtesy of Oxford Dictionaries: http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/skeuomorph

suggest the texts can be read almost as immersively on the screen as they would in

a physical book—a suggestion reinforced by the navigational points that

encourage a reader to move sequentially and unilaterally through the text, but not

backward or non-sequentially.  The design, in short, presents both an aesthetic and

rhetorical argument for the authority, if not the reading affordances of the book,

while at the same time suppressing the material differences between the printed

serialized version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the codex version of the Jewett edition.

This argument for the authority of the codex is further emphasized on the "Uncle

Tom Main Page," the page preceding the stand-alone transcriptions, where a

picture carousel cycles through images showing the different versions of *Uncle

Tom's Cabin*—manuscript, serial, book, play, and movie—before stopping at a

scanned cover image of the 1852 Jewett edition.

　　Interestingly, we see a tension between this visual argument and the New

Critical/editorial presentations of both versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the

digital collection, which relegates Stowe's preface for the 1852 edition and her

farewell to her *National Era* readers on a separate web page, "Stowe's Prefaces

&c."  These two parts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* remain together in their printed

counterparts, with the preface included with the 1852 Jewett edition, and the

farewell included in Wesley Raabe's transcribed online edition of *Uncle Tom's*

*Cabin* as it appears in *The National Era*.[68]  By separating the preface and farewell from the text's chapters/installments, *UTC&AC* promotes two versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as self-contained, self-referential objects, independent not just of authorial intent, but also any immediate sense of the author herself, thereby reinforcing the New Critical tendencies of the collection.

The second feature—the "buried" aspect of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the collection—suggests that despite the word order of the collection's title, the text harbors less importance than the *American Culture* surrounding it, or is visually indistinct from the other historical artifacts in the collection.  If we return to the Browse Mode page, we can see that its design recalls Bolter and Grusin's description of hypermediacy, in that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (the text) competes for a reader's attention with the other numerous forms of media that surround these two texts—a phenomenon reinforced by the consistent typeface used for the three horizontally defined sections ("Pre-texts," "Stowe's Uncle Toms," and "Responses/Other Media"). Stowe's texts are visually central yet typographically indistinct from other artifacts that surround it.  Further, both versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are embedded several pages within the site.  This, in addition to their

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[68] See Raabe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin in the National Era*, http://nationalera.wordpress.com.  To the best of my understanding, the *National Era* transcript of *UTC* on Raabe's site is identical to the *National Era* transcript on Railton's site, which may be found at http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/uncletom/eratoc.html

New Critical and "clear text" interpretive strategies, minimizes the presence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the multimedia archive. Put another way, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* becomes the nominal occasion for the multimedia artifacts it promotes on its site. And it does so through the contradictory arguments embodied in its design, which makes a visual and rhetorical argument for the authority of the codex, yet simultaneously disperses or dispenses altogether with the novel's material proximities—e.g., paratextual artifacts and editorial emendations—that would normally be sustained by a print artifact.[69]
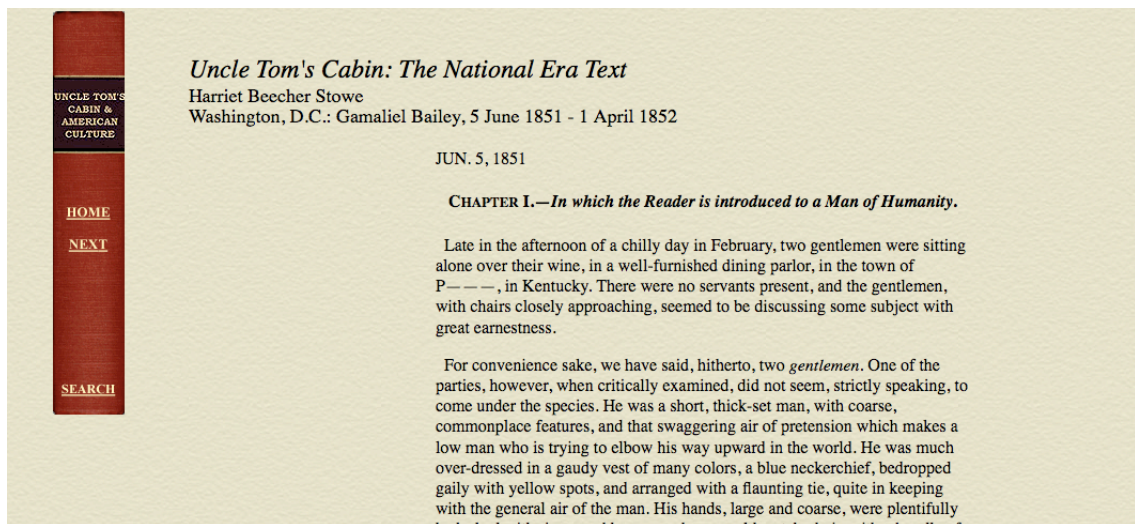


**Figure 1.4. Screen shot of the *National Era Text* of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.**

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[69] I owe this insight to Ann Ardis.
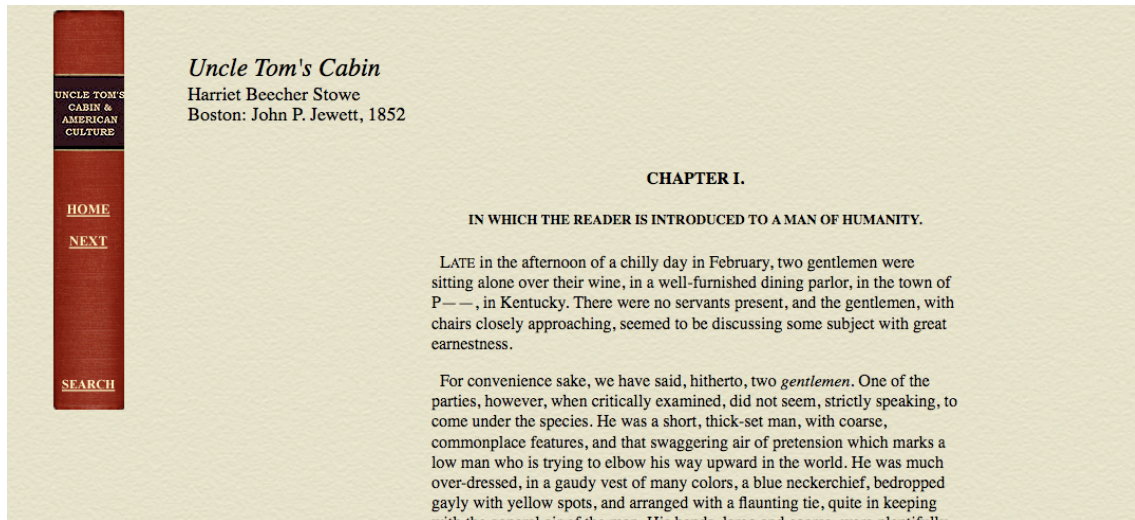
**Figure 1.5. Screen shot of 1852 Jewett edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.**

These discrete, stand-alone digital representations of Stowe's texts contrast

with Susan Belasco Smith's description of reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in serial

(newspaper) format, where the experience of reading "column by column in issue

after issue is a very different experience from reading the novel in book form, in

part because one is constantly reminded of the presence of the many voices and

speakers."[70] This polyphonic aspect of serialization, Smith argues, occurs at both a

mechanical level, with the sheer number of texts jockeying for attention, and at an

intertextual level, with Stowe's installments appearing alongside citizens' letters to

[70] Smith, Susan Belasco. "Serialization and the Nature of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," in
*Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America*, eds. Kenneth M. Price and
Susan Belasco Smith. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 69-89. Similarly, Barbara
Hochman reads the serial form of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the context of the
abolitionist and literary material that appeared alongside it, in order to
"understand how Stowe's narrative often challenged well-worn interpretive
norms." See Hochman's "Uncle Tom's Cabin in *The National Era*: An Essay in
Generic Norms and the Contexts of Reading." *Book History* 7 (2004): 145.

the *National Era* criticizing the Fugitive Slave Law, and accounts of Louis Kossuth, a Hungarian revolutionary seeking asylum in the United States, all of which lend a greater historical resonance to the cultural contexts and interpretations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[71]  In *UTC&AC*, however, these polyphonic contexts are stripped away, leaving only the text of the installments (or chapters, in the case of the Jewett edition) surrounded by blank margins, and one navigational marker at the bottom of the page, allowing a reader to move sequentially forward, but not backward or non-linearly, through Stowe's texts.  *UTC&AC*, then, simulates the univocality and linearity of a book—only the narrator's voice is present in the transcriptions of both texts—as it endeavors to direct a reader sequentially and unilaterally through these chapters, while simultaneously suppressing other affordances that a printed artifact would provide.

Although the collection avoids providing extensive contextual information for its artifacts, Stephen Railton and his team fully acknowledge this limitation.  In the collection's section about *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, Railton and his team provide a rationale not only for Douglass' *Paper,* but also for the entire site's design:

> While one of our aims was to preserve something like an article's original look, we developed this design mainly to make texts readable while taking as much advantage as possible of the capabilities of the electronic technology…We hope that what is gained by using electronic technology to give modern users access to the past speaks for itself

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[71] Smith, 78-79.

throughout this site, but we know it's crucial to realize what is changed or even lost when the past is studied through the window of a computer monitor…at least by looking through this complete issue [of *Frederick Douglass' Paper*], you'll have a clearer sense of what the individual pieces in this archive can't give you. Most of the papers in which they were published are available in microfilm -- the "advanced technology" of an earlier generation, and a good place to look next if you want to read any of the articles in their larger textual and historical context.[72]

This rationale highlights several issues relating to the collection's interface and its New Critical tendencies.  First, Railton and his team's decision to design the site with readability in mind not only indicates the ensuing trade-offs in balancing the requirements of different media, but also stems from the team's awareness about the potential needs of a wide audience of "modern users."  By giving preference to readability, the affordances of browsing, and keyword searching rather than situating artifacts immediately within a more detailed historical or editorial context, Railton and his team presume an audience of readers who may not necessarily need or want extensive editorial or critical information about Stowe's texts,[73] instead preferring the artifact itself.  What better way to ensure readability

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[72] From "*Frederick Douglass' Paper* and Our Digital Files," http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/interpret/fdpaper/fdpagesf.html

[73] The question of "how much is enough" recurs continually in the creation of digital thematic collections.  Susan Belasco, for example, describes a similar challenge in determining how much context to provide for Walt Whitman's poems as they appeared in periodicals in order to provide adequate context for the poems, but without creating an archive of the periodicals themselves.  See Belasco's "*Whitman's Poems in Periodicals*: Prospects for Periodicals Scholarship in the Digital Age," *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell; Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press and

and transparency than by presenting artifacts and transcripts as simply as possible—and therefore, with as little immediate contextual information as possible?[74]

Second, their construal of the mediating force of the interface ("what is changed or even lost") as something that detracts from a reader's historical understanding works in direct contrast to the phenomenon of remediation, which relies partly on hypermediacy to achieve its effect. This construal also overlooks the importance of other remediating forms—especially the codex—that actively shape the navigation and content of *UTC&AC*. By characterizing the interface as not just a window but also as a synecdoche for 'electronic technology' and the contextual losses associated with it, Railton and his team minimize their agency in shaping the interface design and the artifacts within the collection, and unintentionally negate the collection's potential for engaging readers who seek paratextual material and editorial contexts for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Their

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University of Michigan Library, 2011; 44-62. Available online at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001.

[74] From the collection's inception, Railton and his team intended to provide only transcriptions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, rather than transcriptions accompanied by page images (email correspondence with Railton, 15 June 2014). Even if they chose to include images, Railton's team would have faced significant financial considerations as well as logistical ones, given the challenge of determining how much context to include alongside *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the high cost of digitizing page images, rendering the images searchable via Optical Character Recognition, preserving and permanently hosting digitized texts, and paying staff to do all of this.

willingness to "preserve something like an article's original look" contrasts with the actual design of the *National Era* text and the Jewett edition of *UTC*. This design assigns near-identical skeumorphic elements and a codex-like authority to both texts, papering over (no pun intended) the material affordances provided by their printed counterparts. Further, they render the interface as a transparent means of delivering historical information to its readers ("we hope that what is gained...speaks for itself"), thereby emphasizing and promoting the New Critical and clear-text tendencies of the collection. This lends some irony to their comment about contextual loss ("what the individual pieces in this archive can't give you"), because they provide the most editorially up-to-date transcriptions of Stowe's texts, yet provide minimal information about their editorial interventions in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. From an editorial and textual perspective, it becomes difficult for readers to know precisely what the central texts of *UTC&AC* currently *do* give them.

### *UTC&AC*'s implications for research: design as knowledge discovery

While this difficulty may not impact most users of the digital collection, it has significant implications for literary research and scholarship. Since its inception, the collection's use of New Critical and clear text interpretive strategies has not only had a cumulative effect of emphasizing its multimedia artifacts at the expense of its central texts, but in doing so has also unintentionally reinforced

scholars' perceptions of the 'reliability' of printed editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

More importantly, *UTC&AC* (like many digital literary collections) has fostered a

perceptual divide between "stable" printed editions and their "ephemeral" digital

counterparts—despite the considerable editorial overlap between print and digital

editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.  In his essay "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's*

*Cabin,"* Wesley Raabe details the complex editorial history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as

a printed as well as a digital text, and describes the impact that an unmitigated

faith in printed editions has on scholarship:

> faith in the accurate transmission of print is as misleading as the distrust of
> texts in electronic form. The turn in literary scholarship away from
> bibliography and textual scholarship has almost inevitable consequences.
> The stubborn faith that texts are transmitted from one print form to
> another with mostly inconsequential alteration may confer unmerited
> authority on a printed text, and the conviction that digital objects are
> mutable and ephemeral leads to undeserved prejudice against scholarship
> in digital form. In fact, the assumption that a distinction between print and
> digital forms provides a useful guideline for scholarly authority, at least in
> the matter of textual accuracy, is nearly meaningless, as print and digital
> textuality may be thoroughly intermingled.[75]

Raabe's assertion may seem ironic when applied to *UTC&AC*, because of the

collection's arguable turn away from textual scholarship—or at least, because of its

emphasis on historical artifacts at the expense of detailing its own involvement in

the editorial history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.  This elision of editorial emendations to

Stowe's texts might, on the surface, bolster the argument for the superiority of a

printed edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* over either of the digital versions in the

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[75] See Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin,"* 66-67.

collection, because a printed version would likely contain editorial information about Stowe's text. Yet the *UTC&AC* represents this very intermingling of print and digital textuality, as evidenced not only by Raabe's editorial corrections included in the transcription of the 1852 Jewett edition on Railton's site, but also by Railton's own 2007 Bedford St. Martin's edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which draws directly from the text of the 1852 Jewett edition in *UTC&AC*. The irony of Raabe's assertion is that readers would only know about this intermingling if they encountered Raabe's essay. Otherwise, the complex editorial history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* remains obscure for readers who encounter Stowe's texts via the digital collection.

Yet Raabe's point about scholarship's turn away from bibliography and textual history argues for another important aspect of digital collections: the necessity to make explicit their editorial choices and to acknowledge their own participation in literary scholarship. While even this explicitness wouldn't guarantee to overturn the undeserved prejudice against digital texts, it would—at the very least—remind any scholars using those texts that a great deal of editorial work went into their creation for and representation within an online environment.

However, scholars' preference for printed, "stable" works explains only part of the reason for this prejudice against digital texts. The other reason, I believe, stems from the two-fold issue of design and audience: many digital collections don't look or present themselves as scholarly. Illustrations, typeface, and an

interface design organized for a more generalized/non-specialist audience can

arguably work against digital collections' acceptance as scholarly sources worth

citing.[76]  Related to this, digital collections such as *UTC&AC* that are aimed at

multiple audiences can present their own design challenges, one of which

corresponds with printed editions:  how much to include for a broad audience.

Using New Critical/clear-text editorial practices to prepare and design a text—

print *or* digital—for a high-school student makes perfect sense, in order to avoid

overwhelming her with excessive editorial and historical context, especially if she

is reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for the first time.[77]  Yet the risk one runs in using

these New Critical/clear-text editorial strategies, especially when designing digital

texts, is to elide the editorial and historical contextualization that many specialists

and scholars may require.  Of course, even with this contextualization, there is no

guarantee scholars would begin citing *UTC&AC*'s versions of Stowe's texts, but the

challenge of what and how much context to include for digital collections—as

we've begun to see with *UTC&AC*—foregrounds the importance of design,

especially interface design, when creating digital collections for multiple

audiences.

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[76] A variant of this idea remains deeply entrenched among many academic
librarians, who reluctantly advise students to start with freely available (and often
extremely user-friendly) online sources for their research such as Wikipedia, but
ultimately emphasize more "scholarly" sources—i.e., printed works, databases and
other subscription-based content with complicated interfaces—often without
regard for the nature of a student's research topic.
[77] I owe this insight to Ann Ardis.

To return to an earlier point: if a digital collection's interface determines

what we read and how we read it, and if the interface itself has been designed for a

broad readership, then how have multiple audiences actually used and responded

to *UTC&AC*? The short answer is, in remarkably similar ways. According to Lisa

Spiro and Jane Segal's 2007 survey of American literature scholars' use of digital

collections, "*UTC&AC's* primary value seems to come from providing a single point

of access to the rich contexts surrounding the novel."[78] Their results, gleaned from

an online survey, citation counts of *UTC&AC* in books and journal articles,[79] and a

series of personal interviews with scholars, revealed that scholars value *UTC&AC*

for the immediate access it provides to "surrounding materials that get at

responses to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," which corresponds with the ways non-specialist

readers use the collection.[80]  Since its inception, the collection's impact on

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[78] See Lisa Spiro and Jane Segal's "Scholars' Usage of Digital Archives in American Literature." *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*. Eds. Amy Earhart and Andrew Jewell. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan Library, 2011, 115. Also available at
http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001.
[79] Citation counts include the number of times *UTC&AC* was mentioned in bibliographic essays about Stowe and were indexed in *American Literary Scholarship* from 2000-2004, as well as citation counts of *UTC&AC* in the *Modern Language Association* database from 2004-2008. Spiro and Segal understandably excluded reviews, but they also excluded dissertations mentioning *UTC&AC*. As difficult as it would be to analyze, their elision of dissertations citing *UTC&AC* seems problematic, given their goal of evaluating the impact of digital collections on American literary scholarship.
[80] Spiro and Segal, 115. Spiro and Segal's survey, while relatively rare within the field of literary studies, somewhat addresses Lorna Hughes' concern that "revisiting a digital resource to understand its impact, assess its user base, and

scholarship has arguably stemmed from the overall design, which emphasizes the

historical and cultural artifacts that contextualize *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, rather than

emphasizing Stowe's texts.  Indeed, as Spiro and Segal point out, Claire Parfait

references *UTC&AC* so often she includes it as a web source in her publishing

history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but only as a contextual resource for *UTC*, and not as

one of the recent American editions in the appendix.[81]

Yet Spiro and Segal's survey elides other equally important methods of

gauging the site's impact on scholarship:  namely, through email inquiries to

Stephen Railton from scholars and other readers using *UTC&AC*; through the

collection's usage statistics; and through the collection's prominence on the open

web.  Taking these points in reverse order, *UTC&AC* attracts a high degree of

visibility as a publicly available collection.  A web search using the phrase 'Uncle

Tom's Cabin and American Culture' shows Railton's site featured prominently in

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enhance its embedding in teaching and research…are luxuries that institutions can rarely afford. This lack of systematic research on the impact of digital collections on scholarly practice contrasts strongly with not only the investment in digitisation, but in funding of research into e-infrastructures, e-science, and the development, management, funding and sustainability of digital repositories."  See Hughes' "Live and Kicking: The Impact and Sustainability of Digital Collections in the Humanities," from Proceedings of the Digital Humanities Congress in 2012, sponsored by the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield. Available at http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/openbook/chapter/dhc-hughes.
[81] See Parfait's *Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin*, p. vii ("List of Abbreviations"). Parfait's most frequent references throughout her book are to American reviews of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, though her appendix of dated editions credits *UTC&AC* as the source for illustrations from two 1897 editions of *UTC*.  See *Publishing History,* 220.

teaching guides for middle and high school students, and on many subject guides

for public and academic libraries.[82]  Tellingly, the most common description of

*UTC&AC* in these guides refers to the collection's primary resources—illustrations,

video, text, and audio—emphasizing the importance and prominence, both in

scholarly communities and among general readers, of the collection's subtitle:  *A*

*Multimedia Archive.*

Usage statistics also provide a revealing snapshot of the collection's use.  A

preliminary analysis of page visits[83] from September 2013 through August 2014

shows that *UTC&AC* received the greatest number of visits in November and

February, with a steep drop-off in the summer months, suggesting that usage of

the collection is tied to the school year/semester.  Spikes in November (59,212

visits) and April (63,334 visits) likely indicate intense research before a paper or

assignment was due, a conjecture supported by the fact that U.S. educational

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[82] A web search using only the phrase 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' which is the most
common search string used to find the collection, puts *UTC&AC* in the top ten list of
Google results, the first of which—a Wikipedia entry on the novel—cites the digital
collection dozens of times.
[83] Usage statistics provided via internal *UTC&AC* web pages, courtesy of Stephen
Railton, 7 June 2013.  In this case, "usage statistics" refers to page visits rather than
hits, given the potentially misleading nature of hits, and of web analytics in
general.  A "hit" refers to a file sent to a browser by a web server.  Since one web
page may be comprised of a number of files (e.g., graphics, illustrations), a reader
who clicks on a page may download a number of files—i.e., generate a number of
hits—just by clicking on that individual page.  Of course, bots—software
applications that run automated tasks on the internet—can generate page visits as
easily as human beings, so overall numbers for page visits and hits must be
analyzed with a small pile of salt.

sites—those with a domain of .edu—consistently accounted for over 40% of the

collection's usage by country during the 2013-2014 year, with higher spikes

during the months of November and April.  (The exceptions were May, June and

July of 2014, in which U.S. educational sites accounted for an average of 34% of the

collection's use by country.)  Most revealingly, the parts of the collection that

received the greatest number of visits[84] during the 2013-2014 year include several

sites within the 'Anti-Slavery Texts' section of UTC&AC, the critical essays

("Interpretive Exhibits"), and chapters from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, especially the table

of contents and chapter 1.  See Table 1.1 below for more detail.

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[84] Because *UTC&AC*'s only available monthly usage data is comprised not of page visits, but of the top fifty **hits** (or downloaded files) for each month, I estimated within Table 1 the number of page visits based on the number of hits generated by each page.  For example, two hits recording the same page's top frame and left frame counts as one page visit.  As mentioned above, web analytics can be incredibly misleading, and so my calculations for Table 1.1, although imprecise, serve as an attempt to document the overall proportion of the fifty most frequently visited pages within *UTC&AC* during the 2013-2014 time span.

| Page visits to *UTC&AC* | Number of page visits |
|---|---|
| **Anti-Slavery Texts** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/abolitn/abhp.html | **110** (of these visits, 34 were to Frederick Douglass's *Narrative*; Weld's *American Slavery As It Is* received 16 visits; David Walker's *Appeal* garnered 12 visits) |
| **Interpretive Exhibits** (critical essays about *UTC*) - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/interpret/interframe.html | **39** |
| ***UTC&AC*'s entry page** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/ | **36** |
| ***Uncle Tom's Cabin* – Jewett edition** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/uncletom/uthp.html | **34** (of these visits, 14 led to the table of contents, and 15 pointed to chapter 1) |
| **Minstrel Songs** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/minstrel/misohp.html | **18** |
| **Longfellow's *Evangeline*** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/sentimnt/evanhp.html | **16** |
| **Illustrations for *UTC*** - http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/uncletom/illustra/ilhp.html | **15** |

**Table 1.1.  Page visits to *UTC&AC*.**

The first observation someone may make regarding these page visits, and one that surprised me, is the number of visits for the Jewett edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, suggesting that some readers are actually reading (or starting to read) the opening parts of the novel online, despite the absence of any immediate contextual information for the novel.   Second, the extent to which the critical essays ("Interpretive Exhibits") were consulted within the past year suggests that readers

require, or have been directed by teachers to consult critical contexts for novel, along with the collection's illustrations and minstrel songs.

Finally, the overall proportion of visits to *UTC&AC* within this time span points to the anti-slavery texts of the collection, indicating that the collection's primary value for readers lies in its contextualization of the novel, specifically within the historical framework of abolition.  Moreover, the fact that Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* elicited approximately the same number of visits as Stowe's novel—and that Weld's *American Slavery As It Is* and David Walker's *Appeal* garnered 16 and 12 visits, respectively—suggests at least two additional interpretations.  First, Stowe's work has been—at least for the 2013-2014 period—studied alongside other anti-slavery texts; second, the digital collection serves as a primary entry point for many of the texts themselves, whether or not they are studied alongside *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[85]  Once again, *UTC* becomes the nominal occasion both for the multimedia artifacts related to the novel and other texts within the digital collection.

While these page visits suggest a number of explanations for readers' motives, reading this data in the context of email inquiries and responses to the site gives a clearer picture of which readers—both specialist and non-specialist—

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[85] Internet searches, like web analytics, must be interpreted with extreme caution. Nevertheless, results from a web search using the phrase 'Frederick Douglass's Narrative' puts *UTC&AC*'s version of his work within the top four results.  Searches for the other artifacts in Table 1.1 (e.g., minstrel songs, Walker's *Appeal*) reveal similarly top-ranked results for those pages.

use *UTC&AC*, and of how each group of readers uses it. The 58 total responses from

two sets of emails[86] come from a wide variety of users, evident in Table 1.2 below.

Additionally, the range of readers' responses is equally diverse, as seen in Table 1.3

below.[87]

| Category of email respondents | Number of respondents |
|---|---|
| Students (high school, undergraduate, graduate) | 21 |
| Faculty members (includes tenured, tenure-track, and adjunct faculty) | 12 |
| Others (librarians, general readers, Sunday school teachers)[88] | 12 |
| K-12 school teachers | 8 |
| Independent researchers | 4 |

**Table 1.2  Category and number of email respondents for *UTC&AC*.**

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[86] Stephen Railton provided me with two sets of email exchanges, dated 2001-2002 and 2012-2013; each set spans the academic year.  According to Professor Railton, these sets of emails leave out only two kinds of requests:  the first are requests from individuals asking him to determine the worth of an old book, and the second are requests from students asking him to recommend a paper topic (email communication, 7 August 2013).

[87] In Table 1.3 the overall frequency of responses is greater than the number of respondents because of the overlapping content of responses themselves.   For example, many respondents emailed Professor Railton to express gratitude for the collection *and* to ask a research question within the same email.  In these instances, I coded these emails for both categories.

[88] "Others" include librarians, two Sunday school teachers, one film producer, and several individuals curious to know more about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

| Type of response/inquiry | Frequency of response/inquiry |
|---|---|
| Research question | 29 |
| Permission to use materials from UTC&AC | 22 |
| Gratitude | 18 |
| Other[89] | 5 |

**Table 1.3.  Type of response/inquiry for *UTC&AC*.**

Even within this relatively small selection of emails, we see both a variety of

respondents and the remarkable consistency in the kinds of questions posed by

these groups.  The range of respondents clearly fulfills Railton and his team's goal

of creating a collection for a wide audience of readers.[90]  At the same time, the

substance of this group of emails remain relatively consistent, indicating that

*UTC&AC* succeeds in its role as a research collection, especially for a broad

audience.  Questions from college and university instructors, as well as several

graduate students, centered on requests for permission to use materials from the

collection for their teaching and research, as well as on specialized research

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[89] Responses in this category ran the gamut.  One reader offered to contribute
materials for *UTC&AC*, while another reader wanted to know who finances the
digital collection.  A third reader—a producer from the 2001 television show "The
Weakest Link"—wanted to know whether Stowe's novel introduced the character
of Simon Legree for the first time in American literature.
[90] Email communication with Railton, 13 June 2014.  Railton writes that "from the
start the 'intended audience' was as broad as it could be, and the intent, very
succinctly put, was to explore the ways in which modern technology could give us
access to our cultural past.  (I'm still waiting for Apple to build a time
machine.  Until then, I think electronic technology is the best tool for giving 21st
century users a way into the 19th century….)."

questions (e.g., inquiring about stage adaptations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*).  Indeed,

four faculty members assured Dr. Railton they would cite *UTC&AC* in their

forthcoming publications, pointing to a form of scholarly use of *UTC&AC* not

readily apparent in Spiro and Segal's survey.  (One faculty member described the

collection as "enormously, even fundamentally helpful to my project (and I cite the

website frequently in [my 2013 book])…Thank you for the incredible resource you

have created.")

Emails from students, particularly elementary and high school students,

included research questions ranging from inquiries about secondary sources for

the novel to the history of minstrelsy, with a small proportion of students—

primarily graduate students—requesting permission to link to or use artifacts

from the collection in their own work.  Email inquiries from librarians, Sunday

school teachers, church leaders, and others fell into the categories of 'research

question' and/or 'permission for use,' substantiating Unsworth's assertion that

because there may be an audience for scholarship outside the academy, scholars

have a responsibility for engaging with a broader audience.[91]

Significantly, the most consistent kind of response from all groups of

readers is gratitude.  One college student, writing in 2001, thanks Railton for the

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[91] See Unsworth's "The Crisis of Audience and the Open Access Solution."  Dan
Cohen and Gregory Crane have also written on this subject; see Cohen's December
2010 talk "The Ivory Tower and the Open Web," and Gregory Crane's "Historical
Perspectives on the Book and Information Technology," 130-131.

"wonderful compilation of materials" in *UTC&AC* which helped her with her 19th

century literature course, and writes (rather presciently) "websites like these

make me hopeful that the Internet may one day be as useful to students as the

library." A high school student proclaims the collection as a "lifesaver," because he

can engage in "extensive research at any hour, in my own home without having to

deal with library hours and possible availability of sources. Also, since I am not a

fan of microfiche, your site is even better. I really appreciate the work you have

done."[92] A church leader writing in 2013 thanks Railton for providing illustrations

and information for an upcoming talk on biblical and pro-slavery arguments,

declaring the collection "a wonderful treasure trove of antebellum fiction and

nonfiction writing, a very useful resource for historical research. Fascinating and

illuminating!" Finally, in 2002 a faculty member proclaims her gratitude for such

an "amazing resource. The sound files alone are worth their weight in gold. I

wished I had checked [the collection] out sooner, since it's applicable for the whole

course I'm teaching on sentimental culture. Thank you for putting it together – it's

a masterpiece in terms of both content and design."

These responses from readers thanking Dr. Railton reveal that despite the

aesthetic limitations or rigidity of *UTC&AC* as a digital thematic research collection,

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[92] The student's remark also recalls Railton's directive for readers to consult the microfilm version of artifacts for greater contextualization, suggesting that for many of *UTC&AC*'s readers, the convenience of the digital collection's "advanced technology" outweighs the inconvenience of older ones.

many scholars and general readers (students, teachers, librarians) find it anything

*but* limiting.  On the contrary, these users seem to find the collection's interface

design highly accessible, and express gratitude for the cultural and historical

artifacts on the site, however dispersed and distanced from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* they

may be.

Another significant aspect related to *UTC&AC*'s interface design that

emerges from readers' responses centers on the number of requests for

permission to use the site's materials.  The fact that this request cuts across *all*

groups of readers suggests the importance of including a clearly stated usage

policy within digital thematic research collections—which *UTC&AC* does—and the

importance a collection's interface design and usage policy play in determining *any*

reader's process of knowledge discovery and dissemination.  As we can see,

numerous requests for permission to use the historical artifacts inspired by *Uncle*

*Tom's Cabin*, in tandem with its design, lead precisely to the sort of knowledge

discovery that Liu argues for.  While *UTC&AC*'s Browse Mode may present itself as

a tired and outdated-looking interface, it also functions fairly successfully as a

"principle of knowledge discovery and generation" for numerous groups of

readers.  Just as we see the twin logics of remediation at play in *UTC&AC*—the

immediacy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* focusing one's attention solely on the transcript of

the Jewett edition, combined with the hypermediacy of the collection's minstrel

songs, illustrations, and Douglass's *Narrative*—so, too, we see the mingled roles of

interface design, New Critical/clear-text representational strategies, and the collection's terms of use working in coordinated fashion to foster readers' discovery and dissemination of knowledge associated with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Moreover, the number of visits to the anti-slavery texts hosted within *UTC&AC* during 2013-2014, when read in tandem with readers' email responses to the collection over this same time period, points to the ideological role *UTC* occupies both in current pedagogy and in the canon of nineteenth-century American literature and history. Indeed, the greatest proportion of research questions sent to Professor Railton during the 2013-2014 time span came from students and teachers (both K-12 and college/university instructors) inquiring about the novel, its related artifacts, and Douglass's *Narrative* all within the contexts of slavery, the Civil War, the Underground Railroad, and other historical events that center on race. Given the subject matter of Stowe's novel, this hardly seems surprising. Yet viewed in combination with the extent to which teachers, faculty members and librarians incorporate *UTC&AC* into coursework, curricula and research guides, *and* in combination with readers' frequent requests for permission to cite and disseminate the collection's materials, *UTC&AC* unquestionably solidifies *Uncle Tom's Cabin*'s place in the American literary canon.

In the sixteen years since its debut, *UTC&AC* has strengthened the place of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within the canon and curriculum of American literature, through its prevalence on the web, its scholarly use by specialist and non-specialist readers,

and its promotion of historical texts and multimedia artifacts associated with

nineteenth-century American history and literature.  Ultimately, the collection

serves as an important model for subsequent digital thematic collections.  Despite

the relative absence of editorial documentation about Stowe's texts and its overall

lack of integration of those texts with the historical artifacts in the collection,

*UTC&AC*'s inclusion of multimedia artifacts, anti-slavery texts, and historical

contexts for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* underscores the importance of providing thoughtful

contextual frameworks for literary texts in a digital environment, especially when

designing a collection for multiple audiences.  *UTC&AC* also underscores the crucial

role design plays in knowledge discovery and dissemination for a wide audience of

readers and scholars.

In this sense, *UTC&AC* aligns with the field of public humanities, a form of

scholarship that Kathleen Woodward describes as "reduc[ing] the distance

between university and life, and offer[ing] civic education for all involved."[93]

Through its New Critical and clear text literary strategies, its contextual artifacts,

and its design, *UTC&AC* helps reduce the distance between specialist and non-

specialist research, and truly offers a civic literary and historical education for

multiple audiences.

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[93] See Woodward's "The future of the humanities – in the present and in public,"
123.

**Chapter 2**

**DOCUMENTATION FOR THE PUBLIC: *THE WALT WHITMAN ARCHIVE***

Ed Folsom once wrote that Walt Whitman did not merely write *Leaves of Grass,* but instead made it "over and over again, each time producing a different material object that spoke to its readers in different ways."[94]  Through the seemingly countless number of additions and revisions he made to *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman at once pushed the limits of the codex and challenged the idea that such a dynamic work could be unified under a single title.[95] In 1995, scholars Kenneth Price and Ed Folsom took up this challenge when they and their staff published the online collection *The Walt Whitman Archive* (*WWA*). Now nearly twenty years old, this site prominently features Whitman's published works, including several editions of *Leaves of Grass* that form the basis of the collection, and that were among the first of Whitman's materials to be digitized and made available on the site.

Just as *Leaves of Grass* underwent numerous changes during and beyond Whitman's lifetime, so too has the *WWA* undergone notable and visible changes to its interface and underlying structure since its first appearance in the digital world.

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[94] From Folsom's "Whitman Making Books/Books Making Whitman," available at http://www.whitmanarchive.org/criticism/current/anc.00150.html
[95] I owe these insights and this phrasing to Marcy Dinius.

In its most recent incarnation, the *WWA*'s interface resembles the table of contents

for a book, with the first 'chapter' leading the reader/user to Whitman's published

works, and with the site's author and editors featured prominently at the top of the

home page. Likewise, the mark-up language that comprises part of its structure—

specifically, its use of XML and TEI, or Text Encoding Initiative,[96] to both mark up

or represent the texts within its collection—makes this language publicly visible

and, for some of Whitman's texts, downloadable. Indeed, much of the material

within the *WWA* is licensed via Creative Commons, rather than the standard

copyright used for many digital collections and print scholarly editions, giving

readers the ability and, in many cases, the permission to download, distribute and

adapt material from the site. Additionally, the *WWA* includes scanned images of

individual pages from his literary works accompanied by transcriptions. Thus, the

poet who collaborated intensively with printers and who sought to include all of

America and all kinds of Americans within *Leaves of Grass* is, within the *Archive*, an

eponymous figure whose texts can be easily read, downloaded, copied, and

disseminated—a fact he would undoubtedly appreciate.

These three updated elements—interface design, use of TEI, and the

inclusion of page images with transcriptions—all point to varying levels of

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[96] XML, or eXtensible Markup Language, is a generalized syntax used to describe any digital document in formal terms; it can be applied to anything (poems, recipes, etc.), and provides the rules for markup. TEI is a subset of XML, and determines the form of a text in a digital medium (e.g., where line breaks appear in a poem).

theoretical tension analogous to what we saw in Chapter One with *UTC&AC*.  For

example, the *WWA* provides detailed documentation on its editorial policies and

guidelines, list of contributors, conditions of use, and its history as a project, as

well as detailed documentation *within* the XML files of *Leaves of Grass* naming both

the contributors and their editorial changes to the markup of *Leaves of Grass*.

However, *The Walt Whitman Archive* is organized around a single author whose

picture appears prominently at the top of each page within the collection,

promoting a Romantic, even god-like conception of the author as Creator.  The

home page also lists Kenneth Price and Ed Folsom as the co-editors, while the

entire list of contributors to the *WWA* lies several pages within the site.  And in

order to read the XML files showing the collaborative and iterative editorial

practices involved in marking up Whitman's poems for a digital environment, the

files must first be downloaded.  The disparity between these collaborative

practices and the design of the *WWA*'s home page reveals the hidden labor of

collaborative forms of editor- and authorship, and adherence to the idea of the

scholarly imprimatur of the editorial expert.

More importantly, the *WWA* prompts three interrelated concerns

pertaining to its interface design and underlying structure.  First, the *WWA*

engages with theoretical conceptions of the author, particularly the humanist

Author in editorial theory, and the post-structuralist author-function.[97]  Second,

the collection's documentation about itself as a collaborative endeavor contrasts

with its home page design and organization. Finally, this tension between the

*WWA*'s collaborative culture and its home page design prompts a related question

about the generic complexity of the collection itself—about what, precisely the

*WWA* is.  Given Whitman's iconographic presence on the home page, as well as

Price and Folsom's names, the *WWA* arguably comprises a digital scholarly edition

of Whitman's works. [98]  Alternatively, given the collection's inclusion of his

journals and manuscripts, one could regard the *WWA* as a digital archive.  And

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[97] My use of the phrase "post-structuralist author-function" derives from Michel
Foucault's essay "What is an Author?" and from Roland Barthes' essay "From Work
to Text?"  Writing against the idea of the author as a lone genius who creates a
work using the power of their imagination, and whose intentions hold sway in
subsequent interpretation of their work (i.e., authorial intent), both Foucault and
Barthes argue that an author's identity (historical context, political views, etc.)
should have no bearing on interpretations of their work.  Instead, the author
occupies merely one role within the ongoing interpretations of a text.  Foucault
defines the author function as part of a written work's structure, but not
necessarily part of that work's interpretive process.  Barthes characterizes the
author as a guest in his own text, since for Barthes the primary literary
relationship is between a text and its reader, rather than the Author and his work.
(Paternalistic pronouns are original in Barthes.)  See Foucault's "What is an
Author?" in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed
Harari, Josué. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979; 141-160.  See also
Barthes' "From Work to Text," in *Image, Music, Text*, ed. Heath, Stephen.  New York:
Hill and Wang, 1977; 155-164.
[98] My use of "digital scholarly edition" refers to a project that emphasizes textual
variants using bibliographical methods.  While acknowledging the increasing
overlap among the genres of digital editions, archives, and collections, I want to
maintain a distinction by continually emphasizing the generic hybridity and
purposeful collection of artifacts encompassed by the term "digital thematic
collections."

given its inclusion of multimedia artifacts, a chronology of Whitman's life, and other features that correspond with library-created subject collections, the *WWA* could also be viewed as a digital thematic research collection.[99]

Using the *Walt Whitman Archive* as a case study, I would like to address these concerns by examining the ways this particular digital collection intermediates concepts of "author" and "editor," as well as certain conventions of a scholarly edition through its collaborative editorial practices and guidelines, its layout and design, and its detailed documentation about its conditions of use for the general public.  In analyzing these examples of intermediation, I argue that the *WWA* at once renders more visible the iterative process involved in editorial work, and makes the publicly accessible documentation of that process part of the collection's infrastructure.  As a result, the *WWA* establishes a standard of "best practices" for current and future digital thematic collections to follow, in terms of its relative openness and extensive documentation about its treatment of Whitman's works.  By making this documentation visible and part of its infrastructure, the *WWA* accomplishes two goals.  First, the collection aligns with D.F. McKenzie's assertion that our consideration of both the material form of an artifact and its authorial, literary, and social contexts impact the ways that artifact

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[99] The cluster of essays in the October 2007 issue of PMLA debate exactly precisely this issue, beginning with Ed Folsom's "Database as Genre:  The Epic Transformation of the Archives."  *PMLA* 122.5 (October 2007): 1571-1579.

is then "re-read, re-edited, re-designed, re-printed, and re-published."[100]  Indeed, the *WWA* provides a great deal of authorial, literary and historical context for Whitman's works.  Second, by using McKenzie's ideas as the basis for interpreting the collection, I will show how the *WWA* intermediates the categories of author, editor and reader—visible within some of the *WWA*'s XML files and in responses from readers—and helps us reimagine the relationships among these three groups, through elements of its infrastructure that foster an overlap among these groups.

First, a brief clarification:  my use of the term intermediation draws on N. Katherine Hayles' concept, which she uses in the context of media theory, and which—in addition to McKenzie's ideas—will provide a useful way of analyzing the tensions inherent in the *WWA*'s structure and design.  In *My Mother Was a Computer* and her subsequent article "Intermediation:  Pursuit of a Vision," Hayles draws on Nicholas Gessler's definition of intermediation,[101] which he coined within the context of artificial intelligence.  Hayles describes this phenomenon as follows:

> [Intermediation is] a first-level emergent pattern...captured in another medium and re-represented with the primitives of the new medium, which leads to an emergent result captured in turn by yet another medium, and so

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[100] D.F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 23.
[101] See also Gessler's "Evolving Artificial Cultural Things-That-Think and Work by Dynamical Hierarchical Synthesis," *Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Proceedings*, March 31, 2003.  Available at https://web.duke.edu/isis/gessler/cv-pubs/03naacsos.pdf

forth. The result is what researchers in artificial life call a dynamic hierarchy, a multitiered system in which feedback and feedforward loops tie the system together through continuing interactions circulating through the hierarchy. Because these interactions go up as well as down, down as well as up, such a system might more appropriately be called a *dynamic heterarchy*.[102] Distinguished by their degree of complexity, different levels continuously in-form and mutually determine each other.[103]

Hayles applies this concept to literary and media theory, arguing for an understanding of the interactions between systems of representation (language and computer code) and modes of representation (analog and digital).[104] She proposes this concept as an alternative to Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin's term "remediation," which is helpful for understanding how media relate to each other, but problematically posits the starting point for cycles of remediation at one point in time and with one medium (for example, the computer remediates, or "swallows" preceding forms of media such as film, radio, photography, the codex, the scroll, etc.). Intermediation, I think, is more useful because it allows us to focus

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[102] Archaeologist Carole Crumley defines a heterarchy as "the relation of elements to one another when they are unranked or when they possess the potential for being ranked in a number of different ways." Crumley notes that neurophysiologist Warren McCulloch first used the term to describe the cognitive organization of the human brain as orderly but not hierarchical. Crumley has used the concept to analyze the hierarchical-heterarchical power relations of complex societies—relations both implicit and explicit in the artifacts from different archaeological sites. See Crumley's "Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies," *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*, 6.1 (1995): 3. See also McCulloch's "A Heterarchy of Values Determined by the Topology of Neural Nets." *Bulletin of Mathematical Biophysics* 7 (1945): 89-93.
[103] See Hayles' "Intermediation: the Pursuit of a Vision," *New Literary History* 38 (2007): 100.
[104] See Hayles' *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 33.

on the dynamic interplay among concepts of "the author" and "the editor," as well as genres such as scholarly editions and digital collections, which, in turn, allows us to examine how these concepts and genres connect with and map onto each other.

As we saw in chapter 1, Bolter and Grusin's concept of remediation serves as a useful concept for analyzing *UTC&AC*, a collection that promotes New Critical and "clear text" strategies in its interface design, adapts affordances from printed works, and promotes a linear reading experience of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that corresponds overall with the linear phenomenon of remediation. *UTC&AC* also employs editorial approaches to the artifacts in its collection and supports an infrastructure that remains largely invisible to readers; the collection emphasizes the "immediacy" aspect of remediation by seeking to erase all traces of mediation, as readers encounter and engage with the artifacts in this collection. Yet for digital collections such as the *WWA* that make part of their underlying structures visible for readers, and that articulate their editorial/authorial decisions, intermediation works better as an analytical approach. This phenomenon accounts for the dynamic complexity of a collection that relies on multiple agents organized within their own loose hierarchy—editors, authors, and readers—and that uses a hierarchically-structured markup language (TEI) along with other elements (software programs, images, change logs, other markup specifications) to continuously determine how Whitman's texts are represented. With its well-

documented feedback and feed-forward loops among editors, authors and, to some

extent, readers, the *Walt Whitman Archive* could be considered one giant, dynamic

hierarchy/heterarchy characterized by multiple, continuous instances of

intermediation.  Analyzing these instances of intermediation will help us

understand how, within the context of electronic editing, the *WWA* compels us to

reimagine relationships not only among the primary texts, context, and

interpretive commentary[105] within the *WWA*, but also the relationships among

authors, editors, and readers themselves.


**Intermediation within the WWA's XML files**

The first instance of intermediation centers on the *Whitman Archive*'s social

editorial practices documented within the XML files of *Leaves of Grass*, as we can

see from the transcribed XML file below.

```
<change>
<date>2006-02-01</date>
<respStmt>
<name>Brett Barney</name>
</respStmt>
<item>Corrected heads; added horizontal separators; validated</item>
</change>

<change>
```

---

[105] See Price's "*Civil War Washington*, *The Walt Whitman Archive*, and Some
Present Editorial Challenges and Future Possibilities."  Ed. McGann, Jerome.  *Online Humanities Scholarship:  The Shape of Things to Come*.  Houston:  Rice UP, 2010, 287-309.  Also available via Connexions, posted May 8, 2010.  Available at http://cnx.org/contents/3d5747d3-e943-4a39-acf9-beb086047378@1.3

<date>2004-01-29</date>
<respStmt>
<name>Brett Barney</name>
</respStmt>
<item>Incorporated final proofreading edits; validated</item>
</change>

<change>
<date>2003-12-11</date>
<respStmt>
<name>Zach Bajaber </name>
</respStmt>
<item>Incorporated proofreading edits done by Mike Carmody</item>
</change>

<change>
<date>2003-04-08</date>
<respStmt>
<name>Zach Bajaber </name>
</respStmt>
<item>Added image entities; updated pb,lg1,lg2 tags; added seg, orig tags </item>
</change>

<change>
<date>April 1995</date>
<respStmt>
<resp>corrector</resp>
<name>Kelly Tetterton</name>
</respStmt>
<item>updated header and tags; added head notes to identify poem titles</item>
</change>

Within this XML file, different editors have documented their names, the date of

their editorial emendation, and a brief description of the changes they've made.

This record of editorial emendations visibly demonstrates the potential overlap in

the roles of author and editor. Whitman, of course, wrote the poetry within this

file, but in order to render it legible for a digital medium, the editors arguably

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perform the authorial task of bringing it into being and documenting their efforts. In Barthesian terms, "[i]t is not that the Author may not 'come back' in the Text,…but then he does so as a 'guest'."[106] In this instance, Whitman becomes a guest within the XML file of the text, sharing editorial/authorial space with Kelly Tetterton, Zach Bajaber, and Brett Barney. In Foucauldian terms, Whitman's work becomes re-authored not only by these editors, but also by the databases and other programs that bring his work into digital existence.

This authorial/editorial collaboration not only contrasts with the way many printed scholarly editions are often produced—i.e., largely via the work of a solo editor—but this collaboration also helps instantiate McKenzie's vision of a complete history of texts underwritten, in part, by the practice of social editing. Recalling McKenzie's assertion that the historical meanings of a text bear on the ways in which it is re-read, re-edited, re-designed, and re-published, the *WWA* has already begun to capture some of these recent historical practices—certainly re-editing and re-design—and documented them on their site and within the files that form the basis of its collection.

Within this same file, we can also see the provenance, or editorial genealogy, of this particular text.  (Again, spaces have been inserted for easier reading.)

---

[106] Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," 161.

```
<title>Complete Poetry and Collected Prose</title>
<author>Walt Whitman</author>
<respStmt>
<resp>Editor</resp>
<name>Kaplan, Justin</name>
</respStmt>
</titleStmt>

<publicationStmt>
<publisher>Literary Classics of the United States</publisher>
<pubPlace>New York</pubPlace>
<date>1982</date>
</publicationStmt>

<seriesStmt>
<p>Library of America</p>
</seriesStmt>
<notesStmt>
<note type="project">Checked against University of Virginia library copy: PS3200
1982 copy 2</note>
</notesStmt>
</biblFull>
</sourceDesc>
</fileDesc>

<encodingDesc>
<projectDesc>
<p>Prepared for the University of Virginia Library Electronic Text Center</p>
</projectDesc>
<editorialDecl>
```

The transcribed text above began as a 1982 print publication from the Library

Classics of America, and was then translated into an electronic text created at the

University of Virginia in 1995. While this kind of record within an XML file may

seem unremarkable, it is worth considering as parallel to the archival principle

known as provenance.  As a fundamental principle of archival science, provenance

refers to an "individual, family, or organization that created or received the items

in a collection. The principle of provenance or the *respect des fonds* dictates that

records of different origins (provenance) be kept separate to preserve their

context."[107]  Applying this principle to the transcribed example above, any records

describing how the University of Virginia Library acquired the Library Classics of

America copy of *Leaves of Grass* would be kept separate from the second copy and

the digital copy made at the Electronic Text Center, to preserve the separate

contexts of each of their origins.  Within this text we can see an adapted archival

principle at work, as it provides a brief history of the texts that serve as the basis

for this particular XML file.  It also shows the degree to which the *WWA* not only

intermediates but also radically adapts the principle of provenance by embedding

within this file the record of its multiple, disparate origins, rather than creating

separate records for each. Not surprisingly, this practice reflects the collection's

stated editorial policy of documenting how "Whitman's texts made their way into

the world, and the multiple agents that brought them into being,"—including the

Library Classics of America and the multiple editors of the XML file.[108]  Again, this

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[107] This definition of "provenance" is from the Society of American Archivists,
http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/p/provenance.
[108] The WWA's editorial policy is available at
http://whitmanarchive.org/about/editorial.html.

adapted, abbreviated form of provenance renders legible the ways in which this text was re-produced and re-edited, gesturing once more to McKenzie's sociology of texts. It also points to what Heather MacNeil sees as the corresponding shift from "an idealized to a socialized model" in both textual criticism and archival arrangement. In her forthcoming chapter, MacNeil traces the parallel conceptual developments between textual editing and archival arrangement. She describes each practice as moving away from attempts to recover an original, ideal text (textual criticism), and to preserve an original order of a creator's fonds (provenance), and moving *toward* an awareness of texts and provenance as culturally constructed and mediated by the agents—multiple or singular—that bring editions and archival records into being.[109] In documenting the multiple editorial intermediations and the poem's disparate origins, this XML file represents a significant move toward the kind of critical awareness MacNeil observes, in its expression of constructedness of this particular text.

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[109] See MacNeil's forthcoming chapter, "Deciphering and Interpreting an Archival Fonds and its Parts: a Comparative Analysis of Textual Criticism and the Theory of Archival Arrangement." *Research in the Archival Multiverse.* Eds. Gilliland, Anne; Andrew Lau and Sue McKemmish. Victoria, Australia. Monash University Press, forthcoming 2015. I thank Professor MacNeil for allowing me to see a preview of her forthcoming chapter, which was based on a conference presentation she gave in April 2013 at Yale University.

**Transparency and design in the *WWA***

Just as the XML file above in Figure 2.1 provides a record of past editorial involvement with and an adapted provenance of Whitman's poem, the *WWA*'s Changelog[110] allows us to see the ongoing intermediation of Whitman's works by multiple agents who continually revise and re-publish them for a broader audience. Indeed, perhaps what's most striking—in part because it is so unusual— is the *WWA*'s public visibility and accessibility of these collaborative editorial practices.[111]  The fact that the *WWA* makes a portion of its files publicly accessible to anyone with an internet browser and a text editor represents both a profound gesture of trust toward its larger audience, and a desire to engage with that larger audience by promoting the re-use and re-purposing of part of its collection. While this openness is in keeping with the ethos of Whitman's poems, many of which

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[110] In the context of computer science, a changelog is a record of all changes made to program source files, in order to help troubleshoot the incidence of any bugs (programming errors) that might arise later, and to document conceptual inconsistencies in programming, as well as the person or people who introduced them. Definition is from section 6.8, "Change Logs," GNU Coding Standards. Available at http://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/html_node/Change-Logs.html
[111] Four other digital collections that make portions of their XML files freely available to the public include the *William Blake Archive* (launched in 1996); *The Rossetti Archive* (launched in 2000); *The Modernist Journals Project* (launched in 1995); and *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk:  Race and Ethnic Images in Children's Literature, 1880-1939* (launched in 2012).  More recently, *Documenting the American South* makes its data files available.  See http://docsouth.unc.edu/docsouthdata/

have been described as the poetry of democracy,[112] it also reflects deliberate

decisions made during the *WWA*'s inception about providing both Whitman's work

and the processes by which those works were edited for a digital medium freely

accessible to and transparent for users.[113]

This commitment to transparency carries over into other parts of the

collection.  The Changelog (Figure 2.1) publicly documents editorial changes and

encoding corrections to Whitman's texts.  Here the *WWA* intermediates the feature

of a printed scholarly edition's list of variants, in which an editor lists the editorial

changes effected within that text.  Unlike a printed edition, though, the Changelog

allows for continuous updates, illustrating Price's assertion that at its core, the

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[112] In *Whitman the Political Poet* Betsy Erkkila analyzes Whitman's work in the context of nineteenth-century political struggles, and in *Leaves of Grass* she argues Whitman's expressions of democratic ideals coincide with expressions of same-sex love.  She also traces the changes he makes in subsequent editions of *Leaves*, altering over time his "posture as the poet of democracy."  See Erkkila's *Whitman the Political Poet*.  New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, 156.
[113] Users, that is, who have access to a computer with a viable internet connection, and—if necessary—software or hardware that accommodates any visual, aural, or motor disabilities they may have when using digital collections.  These stipulations may seem trivial or a matter of course, but remain important considerations when using the terms "access" and "accessibility," since these terms have a political significance that is often subsumed by (or completely elided in) larger discussions of whether digital collections charge their readers access to artifacts.  In short, I'm aware of the assumptions informing my discussion of accessibility, but am also mindful of other considerations that may profoundly impact a reader's access to a collection. Regarding Price and Folsom's efforts to keep the *WWA* free of charge to its readers, see Price's "Dollars and Sense in Collaborative Digital Scholarship: The Example of the Walt Whitman Hypertext Archive."  Available at http://www.whitmanarchive.org/about/articles/anc.00004.html

Whitman Archive is "a scholarly edition, in progress."[114]  Our ability to see this

progress differs dramatically from what we may see in printed editions, for here

we can see the visible and iterative act of textual reconstruction, as editors

document their emendations, allowing users to see a dynamic process normally

rendered static[115] in printed scholarly editions.  Additionally, the word cloud in

the right column of Figure 2.3 both underscores the dynamic nature of the

changes, and provides an immediate visual cue to readers about which aspects of

the collection have received the most emendations thus far, providing a visual

representation of this dynamic hierarchy/heterarchy in action.

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[114] From "Civil War Washington, the *Walt Whitman Archive*, and Some Present
Editorial Challenges and Future Possibilities."  *Online Humanities Scholarship: The
Shape of Things to Come*. Connexions. 14 May 2010.  Available at
http://cnx.org/contents/3d5747d3-e943-4a39-acf9-beb086047378@1.3
[115] Relatively static, that is—if a book is re-issued in a subsequent edition, it may
change.  The *WWA*'s dynamic editorial process is certainly rendered unavailable in
print.

**WWA-CHANGELOG**

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 2013

**Typo Corrected in Complete Prose Works**

Ken spotted a typo (a closing curly brace had been substituted for a closing parenthesis), which I've now corrected.

~ Brett

POSTED BY WHITMANARCHIVE AT 12:58 PM
NO COMMENTS: LINKS TO THIS POST
LABELS: COMPLETE PROSE, TYPOS

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013

**Typo Corrected in Periodical Printing of "After All, Not to Create Only"**

Kelly Franklin alerted us to a typo ("gorss" for "gross"), which I've now corrected.

~ Brett

LABELS

About the Archive (11) audio (1) bibliography (1) Blue Book (6) blue bulge site (1) British editions (1) brown site (1) Complete Prose (1) copyright (2) corrections (14) correspondence (10) downloads (3) downloads DTD (1) Duke (1) EAD (12) editorial policies (1) encoding guidelines (3) encyclopedia (2) funders (2) grants (1) images (12) indexing (2) Leaves (18) linking (1) manuscripts (7) MS tracking db (3) new_content (5) notebooks (1) old versions (1) periodical printings (8) photonotes (1) portraits (1) preferred citations (3) prose publications (2) reviews (4) Rhys (1) Rossetti (1) social media (1) splash page (5) support (4) TOC (1) tour (1) translations (3) typos (24) unicode

**Figure 2.1. Screen shot of the *WWA*'s Changelog.**

Likewise, the *WWA*'s encoding guidelines and editorial policies[116] intermediate the convention of a scholarly edition's "note on the text," by detailing its scope, editorial principles and the process used to encode Whitman's texts. Its primary editorial policy, for example, follows some of the practices of documentary editing, where editors devote rigorous attention to a text and

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[116] The WWA's encoding guidelines and editorial policies are available at, respectively, http://www.whitmanarchive.org/mediawiki/index.php/Whitman_Encoding_Guidelines and http://www.whitmanarchive.org/about/editorial.html.

provide an explanation of their practices.[117]  As their editorial policy states, the

*WWA* endeavors to establish documentary texts rather than reconstruct

authorially-intended texts, focusing on the "historical and social aspects of the

texts—how the texts made their way into the world and the multiple agents that

brought them into being. The *Whitman Archive* confines any speculation about

Whitman's intentions to editorial notes."  Similarly, the collection's encoding

guidelines adapt the TEI's guidelines to Whitman's various writings and to specific

instances that arise from his corpus,[118] and document these adaptations, just as a

scholarly edition's apparatus records an editor's emendations to a text, as well as

her rationale for those changes.  With its focus on establishing documentary texts

rather than reconstructions of Whitman's intentions, the *WWA* foregrounds the

importance of its editors and its readers as much as Whitman the Author.  As Price

states, "in editing Whitman, everything depends on how Whitman is defined.....we

hold that Whitman resides both in his words and in his reception, in what has been

made of his words."[119]  In their declaration of editorial interdependence, the

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[117] See Mary-Jo Kline and Susan Holbrook Perdue's introduction "What is Documentary Editing?  Where Did it Come From?" in *A Guide to Documentary Editing*, 3rd ed.  Charlottesville, VA:  University of Virginia Press.  Online edition available at http://gde.upress.virginia.edu/01A-gde.html

[118] Examples of specific instances include Whitman's prose, manuscripts that are neither poetry nor prose, and writing in another person's hand.  One fascinating section in the *WWA*'s Encoding Guidelines is "Enigmas," which includes the intriguingly titled sub-categories "What Not to Encode" and "Dealing with Uncertainty."

[119] Price, "Civil War Washington."

editors can be seen as "authoring" Whitman for a wider audience, using their social

editorial practices as a definitional framework for this re-authoring. In another

sense, Price's assertion aligns with the editorial policy's emphasis on the historical

and social aspects of Whitman's work and underscores not just the ongoing

collaborative efforts required to bring Whitman's words into being—as seen in the

Changelog and in the XML files—but also points to the importance of editors and

readers in those efforts.

If the downloadable XML files and Changelog reveal past and ongoing

instances of editorial involvement/intermediation of Whitman's writings, the

*WWA*'s conditions of reuse represent a kind of future trajectory of this

intermediation. Put another way, these conditions represent the collection's most

profound gesture of trust toward its readers and its commitment to engaging with

audiences beyond academia by promoting the use and reuse of materials on its

site.  At the bottom of every page on the site a Creative Commons license appears,

signaling to readers that many of the materials on this site are, within certain

parameters, freely available for them to read, download, and repurpose.[120]  If we

define "infrastructure" as one part of the site's structure that facilitates the

production and distribution of digital artifacts by and about Whitman, then the

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[120] According to the *WWA*'s Changelog dated April 26, 2011, the editors revised
the home page, Conditions of Use, permissions form, and the footer to reflect the
collection's change from copyright to a Creative Commons License.  Prior to April
2011, all material in the collection had been copyrighted to the *WWA*.

*WWA*'s conditions of reuse—and especially the Creative Commons license—comprise a crucial part of this collection's infrastructure. By specifying in advance its conditions for use, the *WWA* situates itself as a chronologically dynamic rather than frozen (or dusty) collection of artifacts. Just as the downloadable XML files of *Leaves of Grass* give us a recent historical glimpse of what has been made of Whitman's work thus far, the Creative Commons license and conditions for reuse represent a form of trust that its users *will* go on to use its artifacts, and are free to do so within the parameters outlined in the license. While it is important to avoid the "if you build it, they will come" mentality when creating and maintaining digital collections (i.e., assuming the creation of a digital collection will automatically attract a large group readers), it is also important to balance that awareness with the understanding that one does not know precisely who a collection's audience is or will be, and how they will use a given collection.[121] All the more reason for providing, as the *WWA* does, the broadest possible means for promoting a digital collection's reuse, by making its guidelines not only explicit for its readers, but also a visible part of its infrastructure.

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[121] John Unsworth makes this point in his essay "The Crisis of Audience," and I paraphrase it here because his argument underscores the often-overlooked importance the *WWA*, *UTC&AC*, and other publicly available digital collections have for general (i.e., non-specialist) readers.

One final example of intermediation centers on the design and layout of what most readers first see when they visit the collection:  the home page (Figure 2.2).
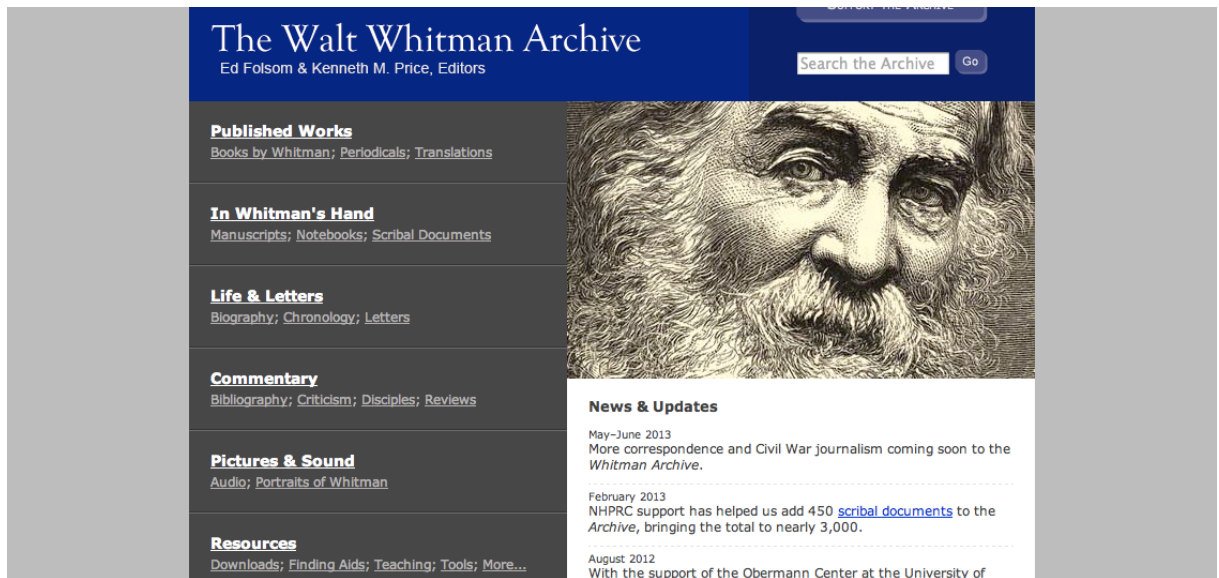


**Figure 2.2.  Screen shot of the *WWA*'s home page.**

As the most frequent mode of entry to the *WWA*, its home page remediates features of a scholarly edition, with its "table-of-contents" layout, organized under the rubric of Whitman's writings and the collection's two main editors.  In her article "Remediating Whitman," Meredith McGill argues that, contrary to Folsom's claims that the medium of the *WWA* allows readers to follow the complicated networks of Whitman's writing, the collection actually relies on "the centri[petal] force of the idea of the book in order to consolidate and make coherent a far

messier archive of printed works."[122]  She concedes that the editorial decision to

initially focus on *Leaves of Grass* was shaped by such considerations as minimal

start-up funding and maintaining the *WWA* as a freely accessible collection, but the

focus on *Leaves of Grass* was also prompted by "the need to make the project

legible and valuable to scholars, teachers, and students still operating in a codex-

dominated world.  In remediating Whitman, they have staked the value of the

digital database on fidelity to the conventions of the book, intensifying rather than

sundering the ties between the two media."[123]  Understandably, her larger point

regarding the collection's layout and organization stems, I think, from her desire to

see the *WWA*'s editors push the envelope a bit—to see, that is, the editors create

connections among Whitman's writings that would be unfeasible in print.  Yet her

comment about the need to make the collection legible and valuable for scholars,

teachers, and students strikes me as problematic because it collapses too many

groups of readers into one category, under the rubric of a "codex-dominated

world."  Undoubtedly, many scholars *do* operate in a world where the form (and

reality) of the book holds tremendous sway over the creation of scholarship—

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[122] McGill, "Remediating Whitman."  *PMLA* 122.5 (October 2007), 1593.  In fairness
to McGill, her critiques center on the 2007 version of the *WWA,* which prominently
featured Whitman's poems.  Since October 2007, the collection has added dozens
of prose manuscripts, reviews, translations, and other materials by and about
Whitman.  Additionally, McGill's use of the term "centrifugal force" should actually
be "centripetal force."  McGill acknowledges the error; the mistake in wording
springs from an editorial oversight prior to publication of her article.  Email
communication with Meredith McGill, September 29, 2014.
[123] McGill, 1594.

using and citing books carries more "authority" than digital collections—and what they themselves are encouraged to publish in order to maintain their own authority as scholars (frequently, digital collections don't "count" toward a scholar's publications).  However, students, teachers and scholars use the *WWA* for a variety of reasons and in tandem with other forms of media—as we'll see in this chapter's next section—suggesting that McGill's comment seems a bit narrow in its conception of readers and their use of media.

Finally, McGill's argument regarding the *WWA*'s centripetal use of *Leaves of Grass* represents a temporal marker of criticism about the collection, and illustrates the extent to which the *WWA*, in its more recent iterations, truly intermediates the ties between print and digital media.  That is, McGill's argument centered on a pre-November 2007 version of the collection.[124]  After its redesign in late November 2007, the *WWA* began including more writings by and about Whitman, and in March 2010, the editors began providing downloadable files of *Leaves of Grass* and of the reviews.[125]  By dramatically revising the collection's home page and expanding both its infrastructure and the accessibility of that infrastructure, the collection demonstrates the degree to which it does not so

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[124] The pre-November 2007 version of the *Walt Whitman Archive* may be found here:  http://whitmanarchive.org/archive2/index.html.
[125] According to snapshots hosted by the Internet Archive, the WWA's home page design did not change until late November/early December 2007.  Information regarding the 2010 release of XML files is available at the WWA's Changelog: http://wwa-changelog.blogspot.com/2010/03/downloads-of-raw-lg-and-reviews-files.html.

much intensify or sunder its ties with a particular medium, but instead intermediates the affordances (or characteristics) of it, along with other forms of media—books, manuscripts, periodicals, and images.

In expanding and making visible its infrastructure, the *WWA* also reveals the authorial/editorial tensions and intermediations that are now at play. For example, the collection's home page poses a few of points of tension when compared with its infrastructure:  the tension between the two editors on the home page and the multiple editors within the XML files; and the tension between the collection's title emblazoned across the top, along with the image of Whitman the Author here, contrasted with the extensive editorial, historical and critical contexts of his work documented elsewhere on the site.  Returning again to the post-structuralist author function, the *WWA* intermediates conceptions of Whitman the Author and Whitman the "guest" through its interface, which bears the poet's image emblazoned on the home page and on subsequent pages across the top, *and* through its infrastructure—the XML files, the Changelog, and the Encoding Guidelines—where Whitman becomes one of many editor-authors.

On the home page, however, the imprimatur of the scholarly edition still obtains, with the editors' names and Whitman's name and image featured prominently, a design that evokes a frontispiece and makes a visual argument for the authority of the book.  Whitman's iconographical presence announces itself fairly dramatically on the home page, and this design bears similarities with the

way Whitman often used images of himself when marketing his books.[126]  Indeed,

Folsom's description of how Whitman deployed his images throughout various

editions of *Leaves of Grass* is both an equally fitting description of the poet's image

on the *WWA*'s home page, and reveals the extent to which the home page's design

intermediates the introduction to a book:  "Usually [Whitman's] name did not

appear on the title page of his books; the visual image, the eyes in an ever-aging

face looking out into the world, stood for the poet more than the authority of a

deceptively permanent and never-changing name."[127]  Significantly, this image is

taken from a late nineteenth-century woodcut engraving that features Whitman's

head and shoulders, displaying what Folsom characterizes as the "expected

iconography of poets' portraits" that featured poets' heads in order to emphasize

poetry as an intellectual function.[128]

Undoubtedly, the proportion of space dedicated to his image on the *WWA*'s

home page and the choice of image showing Whitman's "elder status" as a poet

both connote substantial authority to Whitman—not to mention a compelling

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[126] Susan Williams details Whitman's use of his images to enhance his celebrity as an author.  See her "Authors and Literary Authorship," in *A History of the Book in America*, *Volume 3—The Industrial Book, 1840-1880*.  Eds. Scott E. Caspar, Jeffrey D. Groves, et. al.  Chapel Hill, NC:  University of North Carolina Press, 2007, 107-109.

[127] See Folsom's *Walt Whitman's Native Representations*.  Cambridge:  Cambridge UP, 1994, 158.  I owe these connections between the printed frontispieces and the *WWA*'s use of Whitman's image to Marcy Dinius.

[128] See Folsom's *Walt Whitman's Native Representations*, 146.  The cropped image of Whitman on the *WWA*'s home page is taken from a woodcut engraving by William J. Linton, created sometime around 1871.

visual mnemonic for readers and first-time visitors to the collection. Yet the

closely-cropped image on the home page emphasizes Whitman's eyes looking

directly at us, which seems to invite us in, or at least acknowledge us with a

straightforward (perhaps democratizing?) gaze that corresponds with the

straightforward language of his poems.  The use of the cropped image also

demonstrates how the *WWA*'s editors and designers adopt the author-function by

using a multiply-remediated image of Whitman to promote his and (by extension)

their own work, since their editorial labor, markup, and their design, including the

alteration of images,[129] have "authored" Whitman for the digital environment.

Even on the home page, then, we see subtle intermediations between Whitman the

author and Whitman the guest.

More importantly, the *WWA*'s use of imagery and text on this page and

throughout the entire collection demonstrates, as McGill briefly acknowledges,

how the *WWA* was designed both with scholars and with other readers in mind—a

point Claire Warwick makes when she observes the collection's design achieves

the difficult balance of addressing the needs of both non-expert and expert

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[129] Ted Genoway's historical research on the subtle variations in the frontispieces used for Whitman's 1855 *Leaves of Grass* provides a fascinating look at how the images modulated or enhanced Whitman's sexuality, depending on the particular frontispiece.  (His essay also made me realize that Whitman would have loved Photoshop.)  See Genoway's " "One goodshaped and wellhung man": Accentuated Sexuality and the Uncertain Authorship of the Frontispiece to the 1855 Edition of *Leaves of Grass*." *Leaves of Grass:  the Sesquicentennial Essays*.  Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007, 87-123.

users.[130]  In short, the *WWA*'s decision to intensify the ties between print and

digital media in its home page's layout and design, as well as the iconography of

authorship that it incorporates, ensures its accessibility for all readers, and reveals

its commitment to reaching a wide audience through the most visible part of its

infrastructure:  the interface.

**Archive, edition, database:  generic complexity in the *WWA***

As we have seen, the phenomenon of intermediation provides a useful

framework for analyzing the ways in which the *WWA* engages with theoretical

conceptions of the author, and the way it exhibits a perpetual tension between its

collaboratively maintained infrastructure and the editorial/authorial dominance of

its home page.  These tensions lead us, in turn, to consider precisely what the *Walt*

*Whitman Archive* is:  a digital scholarly edition?  A selective archive of Whitman's

works?  In terms of its genre, the *WWA* has prompted specific debate regarding its

identity.  McGill argues the collection is not a transformation but rather a

remediation (in Bolter and Grusin's terms) of archives, and observes the *WWA*

adheres closely, like many digital projects, to "normative ideas of the author and

work."[131]  Archivist Kate Theimer sees the broadened use of the term "archive"

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[130] Warwick, Response to Question 1, "360° -- Topic: The Walt Whitman Archive."
*Archive* 1 (Spring 2011).  http://www.archivejournal.net/issue/1/three-sixty/the-walt-whitman-archive-warwick-1/
[131] McGill, 1593.

among digital humanists, including Price and Folsom, as a potential loss for understanding the historical contexts that archives preserve.[132]  Tanya Clement, Wendy Hagenmaier and Jenny Knies acknowledge the generic overlap of the categories "edition" and "archive," and cite the *WWA* as one example of this kind of overlap.[133]  Finally, Price notes that digital thematic collections incorporate features of the archive, the scholarly edition, and the library but aren't adequately described by any single one of these terms.[134]  In a later essay he explores this terminological inadequacy more fully by tracing the connotative trajectory of each of his title's terms.  He concludes that scholars need to think carefully about the terms we use to define digital collections of literary and historical works, since these terms not only shape how humanities scholars currently conceive of their work, but also how digital scholarship will be positioned within the academy.[135]

More recently, Elena Pierazzo has provided a useful definition of digital documentary editions that corresponds with much of what the *WWA* does, and which aligns with McGill's view of the collection's relation to print and digital

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[132] See Theimer's "Archives in Context and as Context," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1.2 (Spring 2002). http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-2/archives-in-context-and-as-context-by-kate-theimer/

[133] See Clement, Hagenmaier, and Knies's "Toward a Notion of the Archive of the Future:  Impressions of Practice by Librarians, Archivists, and Digital Humanities Scholars." *The Library Quarterly* 83.2 (April 2013): 112-130.

[134] See Price's "Electronic Scholarly Editions," 435.

[135] See Price's "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection:  What's in a Name?"  *DHQ:  Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3.3 (Summer 2009).  Available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html

media.  Pierazzo defines a documentary digital edition as an editorial object that comprises the components of a digital publication—the source, the output, and the tools to produce and display it.  She then proposes that "perhaps we should just stop trying to map digital editions to printed ones and instead recognize that we are producing a different type of object,…a *documentary digital edition*….[which includes] the recording of as many features of the original document as are considered meaningful by the editors, displayed in all the ways the editors consider useful for the readers, including all the tools necessary to achieve such a purpose."[136]  In a later essay, she adds that a digital documentary edition includes an edition's textual content, as well as "the digital infrastructure (visible to the final user or not) necessary for the publication and exploitation of such content."[137]  Her definition corresponds precisely with many of the *WWA*'s features, such as its visible editorial practices, downloadable XML files, and scanned images of manuscripts accompanied by a transcription useful for readers. It also addresses the extremely practical matter of inclusivity ("as many features of the original document as considered meaningful") when recording features of a digital document.

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[136] See Pierazzo's "A Rationale of Digital Documentary Editions," *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 26, no. 4 (2011), 475.  Emphasis is the author's.
[137] See Pierazzo's "Digital Documentary Editions and the Others," *Scholarly Editing*, 5 (2014), paragraph 3.  Available online at
http://www.scholarlyediting.org/2014/essays/essay.pierazzo.html

Yet other aspects of this definition, as well as her proposal to cease mapping print and digital forms may be problematic.  First, her definition elides the potentially dynamic relationship among authors, editors and readers.  Instead, she describes the documentary digital edition as the outcome of a one-way movement from author to editor to reader, much like the trajectory of a printed edition— which is ironic, given her proposal to disregard print editions as a touchstone for digital ones.  Second, Pierazzo's suggestion to cease mapping connections between print and digital editions both connects with McGill's critique of the *WWA*, and hearkens back to Hayles' description of intermediation among literary forms.  As Hayles reminds us, the accumulated knowledge embedded in one medium carries forward into a new medium.  Gradually, the newer medium develops characteristics unique to itself, replicating effects that cannot be achieved in the earlier medium.  However, "the accumulated knowledge of previous [genres] has not been lost but continues to inform performances in the new medium."[138]

In the case of the *Walt Whitman Archive*, the printed editorial apparatus of a scholarly edition of Whitman's works and the *WWA*'s Changelog each serve as tangible examples of this kind of intermediation.  The documentary nature of a printed apparatus that records editorial changes to Whitman's work carries forward into and informs the *WWA*'s use of a Changelog to document ongoing emendations to Whitman's work.  Unlike a printed apparatus which relies on the

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[138] See Hayles' "Intermediation:  The Pursuit of a Vision," 106-107.

mechanisms of print-based publishing (creating proofs, finalizing typesetting, scheduling print runs), the Changelog may be quickly updated in real time by an array of editors, and continually informed by the knowledge embedded in a printed scholarly apparatus. This example isn't to suggest that digital thematic collections should continue to adhere unthinkingly to formal/generic features of printed collections, but rather to consider—as the *WWA* does—what elements of a printed artifact or edition carry forward into, intermediate, and are intermediated by a digital environment. Contrary to McGill and Pierazzo's views, perhaps a more productive approach to digital artifacts and collections could be characterized less as "either/or"—either we intensify *or* sunder ties with older forms of media—but rather "both/and."

One final aspect of Pierazzo's definition, her focus on the provisional visibility of an edition's digital infrastructure ("visible to the final user or not"), points to a larger and more central concern with past and current digital collections. Namely, if a collection's infrastructure remains invisible to readers, they will be unable to fully exploit, in Pierazzo's terms, the content of the edition. As we have seen so far, digital collections that make their infrastructure largely invisible (in the case of *UTC&AC*) or somewhat visible (as with the *WWA*) to readers greatly affect the ways in which their collection's artifacts are exploited and disseminated. Thus, Pierazzo's conception of a documentary digital edition's infrastructure as an optional feature for the reader risks overlooking the important

effects such visibility may have for readers.  It also discounts the potentially

dynamic relationship not just among primary texts, context, and interpretive

commentary—as well as the dynamic relationship between print and digital

forms—but also discounts the potential overlap among editors, authors, and

readers.  Put another way, her definition elides the dynamic hierarchy/heterarchy

of digital collections such as the *WWA*, as well as the phenomenon of

intermediation that renders these collections so dynamic in the first place.

Contrary to Pierazzo's call for regarding digital editions as a separate genre

from printed ones, John Savage reads digital collections, and the *WWA* in

particular, as a scholarly archive that "hover[s] in the professional limbo between

static archive and dynamic edition."[139]  Using technographic[140] and bibliographical

methodologies, Savage analyzes both the digital technologies the *WWA* uses, and

the print technologies (e.g, typefaces and fonts) that inform it.  As a result, he

provides a reading of several of the collection's features, such as the *WWA*'s choice

of typeface (Arial) in representing the opening line from *Leaves of Grass*.  He also

critiques three key aspects of the collection's design and structure:  first, the

inability to discover, via the collection's Changelog, precise changes made to XML

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[139] See Savage's "The Scholarly Archive as Electronic Text," from his dissertation
*Technography and the Sociology of Texts:  Reading Phenomena in the Digital
Humanities.*  Fordham University, 2011, 211-213.
[140] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "technography" as the "observation,
description, and study of technologies and their application." See "technography,
n." *OED Online.* Oxford University Press, September 2014. 18 October 2014.

files generated by the collection's text analysis tool *TokenX*. Second, he criticizes the lack of bibliographic information for each specific edition of *Leaves of Grass* transcribed on the site. Finally, he identifies the editorial corrections of Whitman's transcribed text that conflict with text appearing in the images of the printed text accompanying the transcriptions. For Savage, these examples create "an environment of uncertainty surrounding the *Whitman Archive* text…it is not in any sense a best text critical edition of the 1855 *Leaves of Grass*, but neither is it a truly diplomatic transcription of a particular book."[141] Savage accurately pinpoints what he sees as some of the collection's elisions and shortcomings—for example, the inability to use the Changelog to reconstruct previous versions of XML files that form the basis of Whitman's poetry. Yet by insisting the *WWA* embody the bibliographic stability and consistency of a printed edition, he both overstates the stability and textual accuracy of printed artifacts, and overlooks the phenomenon of intermediation that currently informs the print *and* digital artifacts comprising the *WWA*. Whereas Pierazzo calls for an approach to creating digital documentary editions that break with their printed counterparts, Savage regards existing digital collections—and the *WWA* in particular—as at best a bibliographically inferior

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[141] Savage, 208. "Diplomatic transcription" refers to the attempt of reproducing all the features of a manuscript or document (such as interlineations and strikethroughs) through "carefully chosen critical symbols or abbreviations to indicate details of inscription." Definition from "The Conventions of Textual Treatment," chapter 5, section 4, in *A Guide to Documentary Editing*. http://gde.upress.virginia.edu/05-gde.html

version of a printed edition, and at worst a failed hybrid (neither a critical edition

nor a diplomatic transcription).

Carole Palmer's definitional term "digital thematic research collections"

best embraces a more inclusive perspective in describing the hybridity of the

*WWA*.  Aligning her definition with John Unsworth's, Palmer defines the *WWA* and

other collections as "digital aggregations of primary sources and related materials

that support research on a theme," ones that bear a greater affinity with subject

collections developed in research libraries than with archives.[142]  Given the

overlap between efforts among librarians in creating digital libraries and scholars'

efforts to create thematic collections, Palmer concludes that "variations and

hybrids will continue to evolve along with the terminology."[143]  Since these

collections and the terms that define them continue to change over time, it

becomes important to evaluate these collections on their own individual and

dynamic terms—to regard them, in short, as evolving hybrids that intermediate

both the institutional entities (archives, libraries, special collections) that give rise

to them, the related epistemological traditions and disciplinary practices that

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[142] Libraries often select and bring together thematically-related materials—print
and digital—whereas archives generally strive to maintain the original order of a
set of materials (such as an author's papers or a college's records).  One of the
main characteristics of a library's subject collection, then, is the principle and
practice of selection.  See Palmer's "Thematic Research Collections." *A Companion
to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. Oxford:
Blackwell, 2004.  Quotations are from, respectively, pages 348 and 358.  Palmer's
chapter is available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/
[143] Palmer, 361.

characterize these entities, and the artifacts collected and produced by those

entities (primary sources, scholarly editions.

Lisa Gitelman underscores the importance of evaluating digital media

despite the pace with which they often change, and despite the changing

frameworks we use to analyze these forms of media.  In her description of

analyzing the Web, she articulates the necessity and inherent difficulty of inquiring

into the history of a medium that changes constantly, and that helped construct

itself.  As Gitelman states, it is "sort of like standing in the same river twice:

impossible, but it is important to try, at least so the (historicity of the) grounds of

inquiry become clear."[144]  Like the web, the *WWA* has changed dramatically in a

relatively short period of time, specifically its interface and the range of materials

added to the collection.  For digital thematic collections, these changes present a

challenge both in terms of precisely what to critique—the pre-2007 home page of

the *WWA*, or the current one?—and how to critique them, given the evolving

generic frameworks (edition, archive, collection) from which they spring.  Yet the

endeavor nevertheless remains important because of the various levels of

intermediation at play in the *WWA*, both historically and now, and also because of

the impact these forms of intermediation ultimately have on the relationship

between the *WWA*'s artifacts (primary texts, context, and interpretive

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[144] See Gitelman's *Always Already New:  Media, History, and the Data of Culture*.
Cambridge:  MIT Press, 2006, 21.

commentary), and the individuals who produce, edit, read, and disseminate those

artifacts.

In short, given the dynamic characteristics of the *WWA*, Price's description

of it as "a scholarly edition in progress" may be more precisely regarded as an

intermediated digital thematic research collection.[145]  As we shall see below,

examples of this intermediation encompass not only the *WWA*'s artifacts and

features adapted from other forms (e.g., scholarly editions), but also include the

individuals who read, respond to, and in some cases help alter the collection itself.


**Intermediation in real life:  readers and the *WWA***

While the concept of intermediation may be usefully extended to analyze

the generic complexity of the *WWA*, usage statistics and readers' responses to the

collection represent a kind intermediation in action.[146]  Although these forms of

usage remain invisible to anyone who visits the site, their cumulative effect reveals

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[145] While "digital thematic research collection" doesn't scan nearly as well as
"scholarly edition in progress," it remains important to include the term
"intermediation," in order to underscore aspects of other genres the *WWA* draws
upon, and to retain the term "collection" because the *WWA* is, fundamentally, a
collection of carefully selected and edited materials.
[146] These statistics are provided via web logs of *WWA* web pages, courtesy of
Kenneth Price and Brett Barney, 17 August 2014.  The only data excluded from
Table 2.1 is the bandwidth used. As mentioned in chapter one, website statistics
can be incredibly misleading and should therefore be analyzed with caution.
However, the *WWA*'s web analytics software screens out bots—especially for
statistics recording downloaded files—and so its usage statistics can be regarded
as reasonably accurate.

the extent to which the *WWA*'s design and infrastructure foster the national and international reach, dissemination and re-use of both Whitman's works and the collection's supplementary materials (e.g., its encoding guidelines). The effect of these responses also, in some cases, visibly shapes the collection, demonstrating how the *WWA* intermediates the categories of author, editor and reader, and helps us re-imagine the relationships among these three groups. Recently, Henry Jenkins has focused on the impact of social media platforms that foster a participatory culture, one in which people (especially students) increasingly form affiliations with each other, produce creative expressions, work together in teams, and shape the flow of media. Yet readers' responses to the *WWA*—indeed, the staffing structure and online organization of the *WWA* itself—represent the importance of studying digital collections of pre-internet texts as well as post-internet platforms as sites that foster this kind of participatory culture, especially in relation to literary scholarship.[147]

In terms of sheer reach, the *WWA* attracts thousands of unique visitors each month, as Table 2.1 below illustrates.

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[147] I owe this insight about participatory culture to Kate Freedman. See Jenkins, Puroshotma, et. al, "Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century." John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2005. Available at
http://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF

| Month | Unique visitors | Number of visits | Pages | Hits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| August 2013 | 34,859 | 53,101 | 172,092 | 781,922 |
| September 2013 | 44,883 | 68,476 | 248,186 | 1,110,197 |
| October 2013 | 50,880 | 76,100 | 285,817 | 1,297,145 |
| November 2013 | 53,401 | 81,881 | 348,528 | 1,460,771 |
| December 2013 | 49,768 | 76,448 | 231,911 | 1,079,422 |
| January 2014 | 56,792 | 84,377 | 241,255 | 1,170,572 |
| February 2014 | 57,516 | 85,035 | 302,115 | 1,336,274 |
| March 2014 | 61,459 | 93,125 | 288,969 | 1,305,268 |
| April 2014 | 58,311 | 89,815 | 242,493 | 1,184,319 |
| May 2014 | 56,571 | 88,026 | 278,788 | 1,124,699 |
| June 2014 | 42,131 | 65,645 | 217,474 | 804,164 |
| July 2014 | 39,455 | 64,144 | 180,725 | 701,669 |

**Table 2.1.  Number of unique visitors, visits, and page downloads for the *WWA*.**

As with the *UTC&AC*, we see spikes in *WWA*'s usage during the fall and spring,

suggesting that usage corresponds with the academic year in the United States.

While the greatest proportion of readers accessing the collection are from within

the United States, a smaller but consistent proportion of readers are from France,

China, Great Britain, Canada, the Ukraine, the Netherlands, and India.  This usage

reflects both Whitman's international reputation and the *WWA*'s translation of

Whitman's works for a wider audience.[148]

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[148] On a related note, the *WWA* includes translations of Whitman's work in German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish, further emphasizing the collection's international scope and reach.

With regard to the most visited pages, the *WWA*'s home page comprises—
not surprisingly—one of the most frequently-viewed pages for the calendar years
2013 and 2014.  Also not surprisingly, the collection's home page comprises the
primary entry point for readers for both years. (See Table 2.2 below.  Numbers
within parentheses in the column for 2014 indicate their rank.)

| Pages | Number of views - 2013 | Number of views - 2014 |
|---|---|---|
| *WWA*'s Mediawiki | 410,018 | 252,691 (3) |
| Downloads | 317,986 | 579,465 (1) |
| *WWA* home page | 311,937 | 254,112 (2) |
| *WWA* Encoding Guidelines | 99,140 | 92,359 (4) |
| Multimedia Gallery | 78,619 | 72,019 (6) |
| Search page of bibliography about Whitman | 60,442 | 30,695 (10) |
| Whitman's scribal documents (handwritten notes during his job in an attorney's office) | 59,647 | 2,814 (117) |
| *Leaves of Grass: The Poems of Walt Whitman*, selected, with an introduction by Ernest Rhys (1886) | 46,952 | 72,606 (5) |
| Whitman's published works (entrée page to published books, periodicals, and translations) | 37,388 | 41,267 (9) |
| "Song of Myself" from the 1891 edition of *Leaves of Grass* | 35,575 | 47,498 (7) |
| U.S. editions of *Leaves of Grass* (entrée page) | 35,302 (#13) | 45,880 (8) |

**Table 2.2.  Top ten page views of the *WWA*.**

In terms of page views, the other top three results are surprising.  The *WWA*'s
Media Wiki (the entrée page to documentation on the collection's editorial policies,

encoding guidelines, work history, and publicity), the Encoding Guidelines for

Whitman's writings (which provide extensive detail about how editors have

modified TEI to edit Whitman's works) and the Downloads page all indicate

readers' active interest in the creation, encoding, and ongoing work of the

*WWA*.[149]  Additionally, these views indicate a level of awareness among many

readers about the extent to which Whitman's works are mediated for a digital

environment, which challenges Savage's contention that users are lulled into

"accepting the illusion of unmediated access" to the *WWA*.  Granted, many readers

will not likely consider, as Savage describes it, the "additional layers of mediation

as [the *WWA*] moves (at a minimum) from hand-coded XML through XSLT to

HTML before finally being rendered on-screen by a web browser."[150]

Nevertheless, by providing public access to part of its infrastructure, the *WWA*

promotes a high level of awareness about the degree of *human*-generated

intermediation required to continuously create, edit, and document both

Whitman's works for a digital environment, and the frameworks that inform those

changes.

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[149] This interest suggests yet another avenue of research for digital thematic
collections—that is, researching the ways older collections like the *WWA* inform
current collections in terms of encoding practices, editorial policies, and other
elements related to a digital collection's infrastructure.
[150] Savage, 212.

Additionally, the Media Wiki's Work History page,[151] which lists *WWA* staff's names and details their recent contributions to the collection as well as the hours per week devoted to those contributions reveals the oft-hidden labor that underwrites digital literary collections.  This detailed work history also recalls MacNeil's description of textual criticism and archival arrangement as practices that move "toward an awareness of texts and provenance as culturally constructed and mediated by the agents—multiple or singular—that bring editions and archival records into being."[152]  While the *WWA* does not follow traditional principles of provenance but instead stands on the hybridized ground of editions, archives, and libraries, its work history page visibly documents the extent to which, in MacNeil's words, multiple human agents continually construct and mediate the collection.

As the other top-visited page in the collection, the Downloads page indicates the number of views of the XML files that comprise the *WWA*.  More precisely, the Downloads page refers to the XML schema, or rules, that govern the structure of each XML file in the collection.  According to Brett Barney, the *WWA*'s

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[151] The WWA's Work History page is available at
http://www.whitmanarchive.org/mediawiki/index.php/Work_History.
[152] See MacNeil's "Deciphering and Interpreting an Archival Fonds and its Parts:  a Comparative Analysis of Textual Criticism and the Theory of Archival Arrangement."  *Research in the Archival Multiverse.*  Eds. Gilliland, Anne; Andrew Lau and Sue McKemmish.  Victoria, Australia. Monash University Press, forthcoming 2015.

publishing framework is configured so that each time a reader views an XML-based artifact from the collection—a letter Whitman wrote, or one of his journalistic pieces—this schema file receives a "ping" or a notification.[153]  Put more simply, the Downloads page indicates the number of times readers—more specifically, their browsers—view the XML files in the *WWA*.  In one respect this kind of usage may seem unremarkable.  In another respect, however, this evidence of interaction between readers and XML files compels to us to consider (or at least acknowledge) non-human agents in the viewing/reading process. The Downloads usage suggests there may be additional categories to consider along with those of author, editor and reader:  in this instance, browsers, files, and markup languages.

Of the remaining pages, their extensive viewership reveals readers searching for and consulting Whitman's primary works and artifacts from the Multimedia Gallery. Readers' visits to editions of *Leaves of Grass* may remind us of McGill's observation about the centripetal force these editions have on the collection; however, this force is counterbalanced by readers' interests in multimedia artifacts related to Whitman.  The relatively short duration of visits to the *WWA*—a yearly average of 3.5 minutes in 2013, and 3.1 minutes for 2014—combined with the fact that approximately 50% of the page hits are directed to image files in the *WWA*, suggests many readers use the collection to look at images

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[153] Brett Barney provided this gloriously succinct explanation and example.  Email correspondence with Barney, November 13, 2014.

of Whitman, as well as briefly view or consult works by and about him.  In 2013,

for example, a total of 23,554 individuals visited the *WWA* between 30-60 minutes,

and 13,170 readers visited it for one hour or longer.  While these groups

collectively comprise only 4.3% of all visitors to the *WWA* for the year 2013, they

indicate that at least 39,000 individuals *do* use the collection for some kind of

extended reading and/or research (or they visited the collection and left their

browsers open for a long time). Nevertheless, we can see how the *WWA* fosters a

readership not only of artifacts by and about Whitman, but also the organizational

structures (e.g., Encoding Guidelines) that inform these works.

| Downloaded files | Number of downloads - 2013 | Number of downloads - 2014 |
|---|---|---|
| Voice recording of what is believed to be Whitman reading four lines from the poem "America" | 20,868 (includes 9,993 partial downloads) | 11,691(includes 10,246 partial downloads) (3) |
| *Leaves of Grass: the Sesquicentennial Essays*, edited by Susan Belasco, Ed Folsom, and Kenneth M. Price | 10,663 | 22,370 (2) |
| *Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself": A Mosaic of Interpretations* by Edwin Haviland Miller | 9,117 | 29,254 (1) |
| *Walt Whitman & the World*, edited by Gay Wilson Allen and Ed Folsom | 2,600 | 5,175 (5) |
| *Transatlantic Connections: Whitman U.S., Whitman U.K.*, by M. Wynn Thomas | 1,718 | 2,602 (10) |
| *Conserving Walt Whitman's Fame: Selections from Horace Traubel's Conservator, 1890-1919*, edited by Gary Schmidgall | 1,711 | 3,538 (6) |
| *Whitman East & West: New Contexts for Reading Walt Whitman*, edited by Ed Folsom | 1,584 | 2,028 (13) |
| *Walt Whitman & the Class Struggle*, by Andrew Lawson | 1,384 | 1,804 (15) |
| *The Continuing Presence of Walt Whitman: the Life After the Life*, edited by Robert K. Martin | 1,301 | 3,299 (7) |
| "Love, War and Revision in Whitman's Blue Book," by Kenneth M. Price | 1,285 | 1,788 (16) |
| *Walt Whitman: the Centennial Essays*, edited by Ed Folsom | 1,058 (13) | 6,162 (4) |
| *Intimate with Walt: Selections from Whitman's Conversations with Horace Traubel, 1888-1892*, edited by Gary Schmidgall | 903 (17) | 2,954 (8) |
| *Walt Whitman: Where the Future Becomes Present*, edited by David Haven Blake | 715 (21) | 2,726 (9) |

**Table 2.3.  Top ten downloaded files from the *WWA*.**

While the *WWA* promotes online-only reading, searching, and consultation of both

Whitman's works and of its own infrastructure, Table 2.3 above reveals readers'

overwhelming interest in downloading critical works about Whitman, as well as

hearing him. [154]  (Numbers within parentheses next to the downloaded results

indicate their rank.)  In fact, one of the most-frequently downloaded files for both

years is a sound recording of what is thought to be Whitman reading four lines

from the poem "America." This, along with readers' interest in viewing multimedia

artifacts about him (Table 2.2) indicates public as well as scholarly interest in

Whitman as a figure, and reinforces the *WWA*'s promotion of him as Author (as

opposed to the post-structuralist view of Whitman as 'guest').  And while all of the

remaining downloaded files pertain to book-length works *about* Whitman, further

emphasizing his status as an individual 'Author,' this usage also illustrates interest

in criticism about Whitman.  Proportionally, the number of downloaded pages is

significantly smaller than the number of page views, suggesting a more specialized

readership for these critical works.  Despite these smaller numbers, as well as the

fact that the *WWA* determines what critical works are offered on its site, these

downloads allow one to gauge readers' critical interests in Whitman via the *WWA*

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[154] Partial downloads refers to incompletely downloaded files, indicating anything
from a reader's inadequate internet connection or bandwidth to a user stopping
the audio file before its 36-second run plays through.

from year to year,[155] and even trace the longer-term impact of some scholarship.

For example, the second most frequently downloaded book from the *WWA* during

2013 and 2014 is *Leaves of Grass: the Sesquicentennial Essays*, which grew out of a

2005 conference celebrating the sesquicentennial of the first publication of *Leaves*

*of Grass*.  Of course, one reason why this particular book has been downloaded so

frequently likely stems from the names of its editors:  Kenneth Price and Ed

Folsom's names appear on both the home page of the *WWA* as well as the book.

This is not to suggest opportunism on their part, but rather their willingness and

their ability to negotiate copyright terms in order to disseminate a selection of

their work and other scholars' work via the collection.

Indeed, this latter point, negotiating copyright, is one of two factors in

determining the kind of scholarship available through the *WWA*.  The other factor

includes the resources required to track the sheer volume of Whitman scholarship

published each year for possible inclusion in the *WWA*.  With regard to the first

factor, Price recently stated the impossibility of providing a coherent body of

criticism given its widespread publication in numerous journals and book

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[155] The XML files of Whitman's works were downloaded 833 times during the 2013 calendar year, the same year the international Digital Humanities conference was held in Lincoln, Nebraska.  This usage allows us to potentially connect readers' interest based on recent historical events as well as individual critical interests about Whitman, and at the very least reveals a subset of readers who actively used (or at least downloaded) part of the *WWA*'s accessible infrastructure.

publishers, "only some of [whom] cooperate with requests to reprint material."[156]

In response, Price and Folsom have drawn on existing networks with individuals,

publishers and institutions—such as the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, the Iowa

Press Whitman book series (each of which Ed Folsom leads), Blackwell Press, and

the University of North Carolina Press—to gain electronic rights to monographs

and articles for inclusion in the *WWA*.[157]  With regard to the second factor,

resources, Price recently stated that the *WWA* cannot operate as a publishing

outlet for Whitman scholarship, given the constraints of time—other aspects of the

*WWA* often claim higher priority—and the volume of Whitman criticism. However,

he acknowledges that "the [criticism] section on the *WWA*…points to yet another

area in which the *WWA*, and other digital collections, could and perhaps even

should expand:  providing peer-reviewed scholarship."[158]  Given the thousands of

downloaded articles and books about Whitman within the past two years alone,

Price's conjecture regarding the future direction of digital thematic collections

would be well heeded, and is a point I shall return to in my conclusion.

By providing open access to selected critical works about Whitman, the

*WWA* fosters the dissemination of freely accessible scholarship, as well as literary

works by Whitman.  This commitment to public access once again connects with

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[156] Email communication with Kenneth Price, January 19, 2015.
[157] See the WWA's "Commentary" page at
http://www.whitmanarchive.org/criticism/current/index.html.
[158] Email communication with Kenneth Price, January 19, 2015.

Woodward's assertion about the importance of public humanities in providing a civic education for everyone,[159] and serves as one of the *WWA*'s foundational principles. As Price says, "[w]hatever the challenges are of meeting a dramatically expanded readership—and those challenges are considerable—we should also celebrate this opportunity to democratize learning. Anyone with a web browser has access, free of charge, to a great deal of material that was once hidden away in locked-up rare-book rooms. The social benefit of freely available electronic resources is enormous."[160]

As if in response to Price's assertion, individuals from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities have recently emailed him attesting to the importance of works by and about Whitman for their creative and scholarly work. Perhaps not surprisingly for such a well-known literary figure as Whitman, the collection elicits a variety of responses from a wide audience, as evident in Tables 2.4 and 2.5 below.[161] Although these 38 respondents comprise an admittedly small selection for analysis, they nevertheless provide a compelling snapshot of

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[159] See Woodward's "The future of the humanities—in the present & in public," 123.

[160] Price, "Electronic Scholarly Editions," 447.

[161] Email responses graciously provided by Kenneth Price, 17 August 2014. Readers' emails range from August 2013 - October 2014. In Table 2.5, the overall frequency of responses is greater than the total number of respondents because of the overlapping content of responses themselves. For example, many respondents emailed Price to express gratitude for the collection *and* to ask a research question within the same email. In these instances, I coded these emails for both categories.

precisely who uses the collection, why they use it, and the extent to which some of

their responses actively intermediate the *WWA*.

| Category of email respondents | Number of respondents (38 total) |
|---|---|
| Students (undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral) | 8 |
| Faculty members (includes tenured, tenure-track, and adjunct faculty) | 5 |
| Artists, photographers, writers | 9 |
| Others[162] | 16 |

**Table 2.4.  Category and number of email respondents to the *WWA*.**

| Type of response/inquiry | Frequency of response/inquiry |
|---|---|
| Gratitude | 12 |
| Research question | 10 |
| Offers to *WWA* of creative or scholarly works related to (or inspired by) Whitman | 10 (9 creative artists, 1 scholar) |
| Permission to use materials from *WWA* | 9 |
| Inquiry about working at *WWA* or working with Dr. Price | 4 |

**Table 2.5.  Type of response/inquiry for *WWA*.**

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[162] Whitman would likely be elated at the multitudes comprising this category, which includes librarians, archivists, journalists, publishers (one from Japan), as well as a pastor, a lawyer, a retired physician living in Turkey, and one self-identified anarchist living in the Czech Republic.

As we can see in Tables 2.4 and 2.5, many of the respondents include students and

scholars writing with research questions, sending requests for permission to use

material from the collection, and in four instances, asking to work at the *WWA* or

with Kenneth Price.[163]  Yet what seems striking are the number of creative artists,

including photographers, writers, and musicians who emailed Price.  Of this group,

nearly all requested permission to use materials from the *WWA*, and six of the nine

individuals also offered their *own* creative contributions, inspired by Whitman's

poetry, to be hosted on or linked to from the collection's website.  I think this was

by far the most fascinating kind of response, because this kind of engagement

underscores the extent to which the collection begins to push the boundaries

between reader and author/creator.  Just as the *WWA* disseminates Whitman's

work, these readers in turn use his words, vocal recordings, and images of him as a

creative springboard for their own works, which they then felt compelled to share

with others via Price.[164]  While the creative impact of the collection is not visible to

anyone using it, this form of engagement suggests a future practice that collections

could employ—namely, in rendering more visible, perhaps via social media

outlets, the ways non-specialist readers actively use digital literary collections, as

[163] One undergraduate student and one doctoral student wrote to Price asking
about the possibility of an internship at the *WWA*, and the remaining graduate
student and post-doctoral student—from Lithuania and Iran, respectively—wrote
to Price asking him to guide their own scholarly work, further emphasizing the
international reach of the *Walt Whitman Archive.*
[164] One jazz musician thanks Price for posting a notice on the *WWA*'s Facebook
page about a concert inspired by *Leaves of Grass.*

well as the ways in which scholars use them. In fairness to the *WWA*, it has both a

Twitter account and a Facebook page. And posts to the *WWA*'s Facebook page, in

contrast to the collection, give a much broader picture of how Whitman's work

continues to not only make its way into the world, but also how readers

disseminate and refashion his work for creative purposes.[165]

Although the creative impact of the *WWA* and its corresponding

intermediation of readers and author-creators remains largely invisible for anyone

using the collection, scholarly forms of intermediation are more immediately

discernible, and reveal a blurring of the boundaries between authors, editors and

readers. For example, one faculty member gave permission for Price to include his

forthcoming chapter about Whitman in the "Criticism" section of the *WWA*,

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[165]Analyzing the dynamic between the *WWA*'s collection and its social media outlets in Facebook and Twitter is yet another area for further research. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation because I'm running out of time before my defense, one approach could be to solicit more feedback from readers via the *WWA*'s Facebook page and Twitter account, to see how readers currently use Whitman's work. Of course, this endeavor could easily be a full-time job in itself, yet I believe it opens up a meaningful area of study. Gathering and publicizing expressions that draw on Whitman's work from more general readers, and connecting these expressions to the *WWA* in some way (perhaps by alluding to their contributions on the WWA's "Follow Us" page), would forge stronger connections between the public humanities and the digital humanities, reinforcing the civic as well as scholarly benefit of collections such as the *WWA*. The *WWA*'s Facebook page is available at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Walt-Whitman-Archive/111055715587122 And be sure to follow them on Twitter: @WhitmanArchive. For an overview of Whitman's prevalence in early and mid-twentieth century mass media, see Andrew Jewell and Kenneth Price's "Twentieth-century Mass Media Appearances." *A Companion to Walt Whitman*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, 341-358.

reinforcing the collection's focus on scholarly authorial work about Whitman,

along with its commitment to providing openly accessible scholarship.  Another

professor wrote to Price identifying two erroneous line breaks in the transcription

of a prose work by Whitman, which has now been corrected on the site and

recorded in the Changelog.  In this instance the scholar/reader adopts the role of

editor by providing the correction, and although the source of this correction lies

in the *WWA*'s Changelog, which is some pages away from the prose work, other

readers may clearly see evidence of the correction.  A third example includes a

digital project archivist who found an erroneous reference in Whitman's

"Brooklyniana, No. 8," and offered a correction.  The *WWA*'s co-editor Ed Folsom

invited her to draft a correction, which has now been incorporated into the notes

for this work, and the archivist has been credited in the Changelog.[166]  Finally, John

Savage's critique of the *WWA*'s elision of bibliographic information about specific

editions of *Leaves of Grass* used to create page images resulted not only in the

inclusion of that information on the *Leaves of Grass* home page, but has also been

documented in the Changelog.[167]  While these instances of intermediation

comprise only a handful of examples, they show how the *WWA* functions as a

multi-layered system in which feedback and feedforward loops among editors and

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[166] Evidence of archivist Sarah Gentile's correction is available at http://wwa-changelog.blogspot.com/2014/11/correction-to-note-about-academy-of.html
[167] Evidence of this correction is available at http://wwa-changelog.blogspot.com/2013/10/leaves-of-grass-index-page-updated.html  For Savage's critique of this former omission, see page 207 of his dissertation.

readers tie the system together through continuing interactions circulating

through the collection.  Put more simply, these instances reveal how the *WWA*'s

infrastructure—specifically its comment form for readers and the Changelog—

reshape the relationship among the collection's editors and its wide range of

readers.  This activity also goes some way toward fulfilling Edward Whitley's

assertion that if the *WWA*'s staff expanded its group of editors to include "the

hundreds (if not thousands) of scholars, students, and non-academic readers who

visit the Archive every day, it would not only make better use of the digital

medium, but it would also go some distance toward fulfilling Folsom's claim that

'All users are potential co-editors.'"[168]  Significantly, many collections have gone

even further in reshaping the reader/editor relationship through the use

crowdsourcing, an activity in which readers transcribe manuscripts and correct

errors in digital scans, effectively acting as editors.[169]   By incorporating a similar

feature into the *WWA,* the collection's editors would not only address Folsom's

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[168] See Whitley's Response to Question 3, "360° -- Topic: The Walt Whitman
Archive."  http://www.archivejournal.net/issue/1/three-sixty/the-walt-whitman-
archive-whitley-3/.
[169] According to Jeff Howe, crowdsourcing refers to the act of taking a job
traditionally performed by a designated individual and outsourcing it to an
"undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call."
Collections such as *Transcribe Bentham* and 18th Connect's TypeWright all enlist
dozens of reader-editors to transcribe manuscripts or correct scans of primary
materials.  The most well known crowd-sourced collection, of course, is Wikipedia.
See Howe's "Crowdsourcing:  a Definition."  Available at
http://www.crowdsourcing.com/  For a recent overview of crowd-sourced
projects, see *Crowdsourcing our Digital Heritage*, ed. Mia Ridge.  Surrey, England:
Ashgate Press, 2014.

claim, but also fulfill Whitman's idea of the democratic—of offering readers, in

Erkkila's words, not "a closed system, but an open road" upon which any reader

may shape Whitman's work.[170]

Further, the *WWA*'s impact on the process of literary scholarship is evident

both from scholars' research inquires to Price, and from other studies of

nineteenth-century American literary studies scholars.  As Spiro and Segal report

in their interviews with scholars, one early-career professor revealed he would

initially consult the *WWA* for his scholarly work but cite the NYU Press edition of

*Leaves of Grass* because the journal to which he submitted his article required the

print citation as part of its house style. Recently, the scholar decided to quote

directly from and cite sources within the *WWA* for his scholarly work, partly

because citing the digital collection is easier, and partly out of an "ethical

obligation to credit his real source."[171]  Additionally, Segal and Spiro report the

*WWA* facilitates scholarship and reduces the need for travel to archives because

the collection provides scholars access to primary sources that were previously

unavailable, or were limited in their access.[172]  More importantly, scholars assert

the *WWA* contributes to the increasing prominence of manuscript and textual

[170] *Whitman the Political Poet*, 115.
[171] See Spiro and Segal's essay, "Scholars Usage of Digital Archives in American Literature."  *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age.* Eds. Amy Earhart and Andrew Jewell.  Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan Library, 2011, 110.  Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001
[172] See Spiro and Segal, 111.

study of Whitman, promotes a greater understanding of the nineteenth-century

print culture within which the poet published his works, and documents the

relationship between Whitman's works and American culture.[173]

This documentation of Whitman's works and American culture is borne out

in recent books aimed at more general audiences as well. Justin Martin's 2014

book *Rebel Souls: Walt Whitman and America's First Bohemians* uses the *WWA*'s

collection of Horace Traubel's *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, the *WWA*'s 1855

edition of *Leaves of Grass*, and *The Vault at Pfaff's* collection of the *Saturday Press*.

By drawing on these sources, Martin's book serves as an important example of

how the *WWA* contributes to the dissemination of knowledge about nineteenth-

century literary culture, fosters scholarship written for the general public as well

as academic audiences, and—via its prominent use throughout Martin's book—

arguably compels even more readers to visit, study, comment upon, and help re-

shape Whitman's works.[174]

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[173] Spiro and Segal, 111. My recent cursory search of the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* yielded, within a matter of minutes, six articles published in the past four years that cite the *WWA* as a source. Although these kind of full-scale searches often resemble searching for a needle in a field full of haystacks, they suggest the importance of this endeavor if we hope to gauge a fuller sense of the impact digital literary collections have on literary and public scholarship.

[174] Martin's book realizes William Panapacker and Paul Crumbley's assertion that Whitman scholarship has become more historical and biographical, with an emphasis on reaching audiences beyond academe—a fact they attribute in part to the online resources such as the *WWA* and *The Vault at Pfaff's.* See Justin Martin's *Rebel Souls: Walt Whitman and America's First Bohemians.* Boston: Da Capo Press,

Nowhere, I think, does the *WWA*'s importance for all readers make itself more evident than in the number of people expressing gratitude to Price for the collection. One photographer who offered the *WWA* his photos—inspired by Whitman's "A Noiseless Patient Spider"—writes "Thank you for keeping Walt Whitman's legacy active and pertinent." Similarly, a professor at a South African university congratulates Price and his team for their "superb work" on a collection that proves "immensely helpful" for his teaching: "[The *WWA*] is comprehensive, exceedingly easy to navigate, and wonderfully accessible—an invaluable resource!" His comment points simultaneously to the value and the global reach of the *WWA* as a digital archive supporting scholarship and pedagogy, reinforcing yet again Whitman's idea of the democratic.

Finally, an overseas reader expresses his gratitude for the collection's criticism as well as its primary works, noting Whitman's "inside and out American-ness," and confessing that Price's article on Whitman was "so engaging I found myself reading on and on, and at the end I said to myself out loud, "Wow"…My impression was that you had generously given of your knowledge, skill, time and care in the writing, and I appreciated it. Thank you." This eloquent response directly challenges Savage's assumption about precisely who reads the *WWA* and why. In writing about the collection, Savage argues "We do not normally seek out a

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2014. See also Panapacker and Crumbley's "Whitman and Dickinson," *American Literary Scholarship*, 2008: 67-89.

new edition to see what an author wrote; existing editions already tell us that, more or less. We read a new edition to see how the editor reinterprets the textual tradition."[175]  On the contrary, scholars *and* general readers seek out the *WWA* for a variety of reasons.  Granted, his observation about why "we" read an edition certainly rings true for many scholars.  Yet Savage's narrow view of the *WWA*'s purpose elides both its significance as a hybrid archive/edition/digital library, and the importance the collection has for a broader, more democratic array of readers, artists, and scholars than what Savage envisions.

Whitman famously wrote "I am large/I contain multitudes."  What he could not have envisioned is the extent to which the multitudes now contain *him*. Through Facebook, through Twitter, and especially through *The Walt Whitman Archive*, we respond to and dramatically re-shape Whitman to our varied purposes. And by inspiring a wide audience of readers to comment on and contribute their creative and scholarly work, the *WWA* continuously intermediates the categories of reader and author.  Ultimately, of course, Whitman is more than a mere guest in his own archive.  Yet the *WWA*'s inclusion and presentation of other materials— downloadable files, images, sound recordings, Creative Commons licenses— position him within a larger, dynamic hierarchy, with editors at the top and readers close behind.

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[175] See Savage, 212.

Although their contributions, like the responses from *UTC&AC*'s readers, comprise a snapshot rather than a comprehensive picture of readers, and although their emails currently remain invisible to anyone using either collection, both the *WWA* and *UTC&AC* indicate readers' persistent desire to use, engage with, and disseminate materials from each collection.  Of course, the difference between these two collections is how readers interact with each site, as evidenced by their emails and web statistics.  *UTC&AC* prompts primarily research questions and requests for permission to use its artifacts, whereas *WWA*'s readers seem to want to contribute their own work as frequently as they use the collection's materials. (Indeed, we've seen how some readers view the *WWA* as a potential publishing platform for disseminating their own work inspired by Whitman.)  Just as Whitman continually revised his works and incorporated responses from other readers within them,[176] so today's readers are compelled to incorporate Whitman into their own works—scholarly and creative—and disseminate them.

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[176] Three examples among dozens of Whitman's poetic revisions include his altering the sexuality in the Calamus portion of *Leaves of Grass*, and his inclusion of Ralph Waldo Emerson's letter to him, congratulating the poet on the beginning of his career (a letter Whitman re-printed without Emerson's permission).  A third, more telling example is Whitman's addition of the word "poem" to every title of the 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, as an assertion his work be read as poetry, and in response to Emerson's exclusion of that word in his congratulatory letter.  For alternations to the Calamus poems, see Jay Grossman's " 'The evangel-poem of comrades and of love': Revising Whitman's Republicanism," *American Transcendental Quarterly* 4.3 (September 1990): 201-218.  For details about Whitman's publication of Emerson's letter and Whitman's response, see Jerome Loving's *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself*, Berkeley: University of California

Why is this?  Part of it, I think, is the aura of Whitman as Creator who

inspires or evokes creative responses from others.  His significance as a literary

figure goes hand in hand with the significance of his works in the American literary

canon—a dominance reflected and reinforced by the *WWA*.  Yet the other reason

why the *WWA* elicits a wider array of responses points directly to its publicly

accessible infrastructure:  its Changelog, Encoding Guidelines, Editorial Policies,

Creative Commons Licenses, and downloadable files available to anyone with an

internet browser.  These elements represent a crucial part of the *WWA*'s

infrastructure and represent an array of "best practices" that other digital literary

collections should follow, because on the most fundamental level, these practices

are the conduits through which digital collections negotiate their relationships

with larger, more heterogeneous audiences.  Fundamentally, these practices

determine not only what scholars ultimately create, but also determine whether

and how other students, students, and general readers—perhaps future

collaborators—go on to use them in the future.

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Press, 1999, 211-212.  See also Jay Grossman's *Reconstituting the American
Renaissance:  Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation*, Durham: Duke
University Press, 2003, 100-101.

**Chapter 3**

**ENCODING RACIALIZED LANGUAGE AND COUNTERING THE CANON IN *THE TAR BABY AND THE TOMAHAWK:  RACE AND ETHNIC IMAGES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, 1880-1939***

In the 1917 issue of *The Crisis*, Carrie W. Clifford wrote a column titled "Our Children" in which she outlines her vision of a children's magazine, one where its readers may send stories, drawings, and other creative expressions for publication. Like *The Crisis*'s founder W.E.B. Du Bois, Clifford saw a need for this kind of publication because "the life story of the colored American is truly so marvelous that it can be woven into stories more fascinating and entertaining than any fairy-tale it has ever entered into the mind of man to conceive…It is through story-telling, games, recitations and periodicals that we hope to awaken in the children race consciousness and race pride."[177] Three years later Clifford's dream became reality with the publication of *The Brownies Book*, one of the first twentieth-century African-American magazines for children.  Inspired in part by the Harlem Renaissance and seeking to redress the negative depictions of black characters in

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[177] See Clifford's "The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: Our Children."  *The Crisis*, 14.6 (October 1917): 306-307.  Available via *The Modernist Journals Project* at http://library.brown.edu/pdfs/1292427242179750.pdf   *The Crisis* is the official publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and was founded by W.E.B. Du Bois in 1910.

white-authored children's literature of the period, *The Brownies Book* contained

the very life stories that Clifford imagined:  poems, nursery rhymes, letters from

parents, and creative expressions from readers themselves.  As such, the

publication "enabled a space for disenfranchised voices to express identity and

activism," and represents one site of recovery that, in Katherine Capshaw Smith's

view, "helps unsettle canonical notions of children's literature."[178]

Just as *The Brownies Book* represents a site of recovery for children's

literature and worked against racist and negative depictions of black children, *The

Tar Baby and the Tomahawk:  Race and Ethnic Images in American Children's

Literature, 1880-1939* (*TBT*) seeks to recover and disseminate works such as *The

Brownies Book*, as well as more problematic representations of race in children's

literature, such as Joel Chandler Harris's *Uncle Remus* stories.  Set against the

canonical landscape of digitized American literature, the *TBT* contrasts sharply

with most digital thematic collections of nineteenth-century American literature,

which usually center around one author, and generally reinscribe the canonization

of nineteenth-century American writers.  This privileging of the author becomes

especially apparent when we notice how closely the table of contents for the

*Norton Anthology of American Literature* (8th edition, 2011) corresponds with

writers represented in the *Anthology* and writers whose texts are digitally

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[178] See Smith's "*The Brownies' Book* and the Roots of African American Children's
Literature," *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*, paragraph 21.  Available at
http://childlit.unl.edu/topics/edi.harlem.html

available.  Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Mark Twain, and Emily Dickinson[179] all have robust digital collections of their work freely available online, whereas many female and African-American writers who appear in the *Anthology* have no corresponding digital collection of their works online.[180]

Unfortunately, this is not a new phenomenon:  Amy Earhart details the number of digital projects by and about people of color that emerged in the late 1990's and have since become irrevocably lost, a phenomenon that underscores the need for scholars and institutions to focus on less canonical authors in order to round out what Earhart calls the digital canon.[181]  Looking back a couple of decades before the 1990's, Amanda Gailey observes that "digital American literature reproduces the divide that afflicted print editing in the 70s and 80s:  a handful of canonical authors are the beneficiaries of rigorous, well-funded, long-term labor, while many other authors—disproportionately minorities—are

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[179] Emily Dickinson serves as an outlier, with three different sites devoted to her work.  The *Dickinson Electronic Archives*, Amherst College's *Emily Dickinson at Amherst College*, and Harvard University Press's *Emily Dickinson Archive* all provide scanned images of Dickinson's work and critical contexts for it.

[180] For example, both Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* are freely available online via the University of North Carolina's *Documenting the American South* collection, but these are only transcriptions of their works (very few page images from each edition are available), and the works are difficult to locate by subject within the collection.

[181] See Earhart's "Can Information Be Unfettered?  Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon."  *Debates in the Digital Humanities.*  Ed. Matthew K. Gold.  Minneapolis:  University of Minnesota Press, 2012, 309-318.  Also available at http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/16

studied as a largely undifferentiated mass in large-scale digital productions."[182]

Yet within the past few years, the emergence of some smaller-scale projects,

including *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*, hold out the promise for a more well-

rounded canon of digital thematic literary collections.

Led by Amanda Gailey, Gerald Early, D.B Dowd and Katharine Capshaw

Smith, this digital collection officially launched in 2015 and currently includes

images and transcriptions of children's literature published in the United States

between 1880 and 1939.  What makes this digital collection of children's literature

especially non-canonical—or counter-canonical, as its editors describe it—is its

focus on race.  The *TBT* includes a range of once-popular children's literature,

some of which preserves white attitudes toward African Americans and Native

Americans, and some of which springs from African American and Native

American authors who created "a revisionist children's literature aimed at both

white and minority readers."[183]

Although the *TBT* straddles the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rather

than fitting neatly into the nineteenth century, it is precisely this collection's lack

of easy fit—both chronologically and canonically—that makes it an ideal collection

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[182] See Gailey's chapter "The Death of the Author Has Been Greatly Exaggerated,"
from her forthcoming book *Proofs of Genius:  Collected Editions from the American
Revolution to the Digital Age*.  Under contract with the University of Michigan
Press; anticipated publication Fall 2015.  Chapter sent via personal
correspondence, December 12, 2014.
[183] Taken from *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*'s home page,
http://childlit.unl.edu/

to analyze.  To frame it in positive terms, the *TBT* serves as an ideal case study among digital thematic collections for several reasons. First, the thesis-based organization of the *TBT* contrasts with most other digital thematic collections organized around a single author or work, and promotes a nuanced approach to interface design and markup.  Second, one of the collection's explicit goals is to include lesson plans for use of its materials, signaling the *TBT*'s overt embrace of multiple public audiences such as elementary and high school teachers, general readers, and scholars.  Finally, the *TBT*'s use of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) guidelines differs dramatically from other collections' use of these guidelines, by providing interpretive markup for the texts in its collection, specifically when contextualizing early twentieth-century white attitudes toward African Americans.

Some elaboration on this final point is in order:  like *The Walt Whitman Archive*, *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* uses TEI to mark up the texts in its collection and makes this markup language viewable for the general public. Because of the racially charged language within some of the stories in the *TBT*, the collection's editors employ fairly extensive use of TEI.  This markup, which Gailey terms "heavy editing,"[184] refers to multiple uses of TEI tags within some stories that provide readers with original and regularized spellings of words, and allows

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[184] See Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing:  the Example of Race and Children's Literature of the Gilded Age."  *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell; Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press and University of Michigan Library, 2011; 125-144.  Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001

them to toggle between different spellings.  By using TEI to interpret and

contextualize literary texts, the editors foster a reader's active engagement with

the collection.  At the same time, the editors' use of this markup language reveals

its shortcomings in representing literary texts in a digital environment, and points

to the need for alternative forms of markup to adequately represent counter-

canonical works.

Most importantly, the collection's use of TEI, along with the collection's

organization and design, points to the ways this collection foregrounds questions

about the American literary canon, authorship, and race.  More precisely, the *TBT*

prompts several considerations related to its design and structure.  Recalling

Johanna Drucker's assertion that interface design must be analyzed as a "rhetorical

and aesthetic representation of knowledge,"[185] the *TBT*'s interface and

organizational structure make an aesthetic and rhetorical argument for

thematically organized and well-contextualized literary texts.  In alignment with

Tara McPherson's call to historicize and politicize code studies,[186] the *TBT*

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[185] See Drucker's *Speclab*, 17.

[186] McPherson's term "code studies" draws on Mark Marino's definition of critical
code studies, which he describes as the practice of reading and analyzing code as a
text, as a system of signs with its own rhetoric, and as a means of communication
that "possesses a significance in excess of its utility." See Marino's "Critical Code
Studies," *electronic book review*, December 4, 2006.  Available at
http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/codology   See also
McPherson's "Why Are the Digital Humanities So White? or Thinking the Histories
of Race and Computation."  *Debates in the Digital Humanities*.  Ed. Matthew K. Gold.

incorporates racialized[187] dialect with the markup language used to describe the artifacts in its collection.  If, as McPherson argues, computers are encoders of culture, *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* encodes late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century linguistic codes into the collection's markup language— specifically by negotiating the complicated relation that Joel Chandler Harris' stories have with race and with the larger canon, given his use of a "black dialect" in retelling African and African-American folk tales for white audiences.  At the same time, given the constraints of TEI in representing conceptions of race, the *TBT* also exposes a striking divide between the culturally complex artifacts in its collection, and the markup language used to represent them.

Despite these constraints, *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* challenges, on one level, the nineteenth-century American literary canon and curriculum as currently represented in digital collections.  Yet in addressing these considerations, I intend to show how *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*'s content and form also possibly challenge the idea of the literary canon itself, by representing what Ann Ardis describes as a "less conventionally literary orientation to the study of literary history."  In her essay on the African-American

Minneapolis:  University of Minnesota Press, 2012, 153.  Also available at http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/29
[187] Throughout this chapter I use the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of "racialize," which is defined as "affected or influenced by racism.  Also: categorized or divided according to race."  *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2014.  Web.  5 January 2015.

magazine *The Crisis* and its relation to modernist studies, Ardis contends we should not neglect "to recognize how the new modernist studies can reinforce the fetishes of English studies as a discipline—fetishization of authorship, of aesthetic value, of books rather than periodicals as the objects of choice for analysis—rather than enabling a fuller historicization of all three."[188]  Her assertion applies with equal force to the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth century literary works of *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*, a collection of books, periodicals, and other artifacts that eschews an authorial focus in favor of juxtaposing these highly contextualized literary works and organizing them through the critical lens of race. Ultimately, the collection argues for precisely the kind of historicization Ardis describes, through its design and organization, through its variety of primary materials, and through the culturally responsive and responsible degree of contextualization it employs in representing many of its literary texts in a digital environment.

**Interface as argument**

Starting with the interface of *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*, we can see how its home page combines affordances from the paratextual features of a book

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188 See Ardis's "Making Middlebrow Culture, Making Middlebrow Literary Texts *Matter*:  The Crisis, Easter 1912," *Modernist Cultures* 6.1 (2011), 20.  I owe these insights to Ann Ardis.

as well as the horizontal navigation menu common to many web pages (Figure

3.1).



The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk:
Race and Ethnic Images in American
Children's Literature, 1880-1939

Home | Topics | Browse | Search | About

Welcome
About *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*

*The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* looks at the intersection of race and childhood between 1880 and 1939 as viewed through children's literature, its illustrations, and associated material objects. While often imaginative or even fantastical, successful children's literature typically reflects society's norms in order to win parental approval. This unique combination of fantasy and orthodoxy makes children's literature an ideal lens for exploring the American racial imagination.

Many of the texts included here were highly successful in their day, but have fallen out of favor due in large part to their now-outdated views of race. *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* creates a kind of counter-canon of children's literature, making available texts that enshrine white attitudes toward African Americans and Native Americans alongside the contemporary culture-bridging efforts of African American and Native American authors to create a revisionist children's literature aimed at both white and minority readers.

We hope that this accessible collection will encourage further scholarship on the themes of race, childhood, and American identity from disciplinary perspectives including art history, ethnic studies, history, and literature. However, our primary interest is in making these texts teachable, so that instructors, students, and interested lay readers can now easily access materials that were crucial to shaping nineteenth- and twentieth-century American ideas of racial difference.

Please note that this project is very much a work in progress. We are still preparing texts and other materials for the site, most notably a section addressing representations of Native Americans in children's literature of the time period. This site is a draft, and we are actively expanding and improving our holdings. We are excited to share these materials and want to make them available now, even though we have much work to do.

**Figure 3.1. Screen shot of the Home page of *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*.**

Featuring a title and introductory passage of text, and bordered on the top right by a silhouette of children playing, the home page somewhat resembles an illustrated introduction to a children's book. Both the image and title announce the collection's focus on artifacts from a particular time period and genre (children's literature), rather than an individual work or author. Further, the image on the Home page comes from the "Playtime" section of *The Brownies Book*, an early twentieth-century magazine devoted to African-American children, underscoring the collection's thematic focus on race and childhood. This focus is further reflected in the design, which offers readers the chance to search, browse, or explore the collection by topic, rather than by works organized under the rubric of an author. Working in tandem with the visual argument of the home page, the introductory text on this page declares its intent to "look at the intersection of race and childhood…as viewed through children's literature," and to create a "kind of counter-canon of children's literature" that will ideally be used by instructors, elementary and high school students, and general readers as well as scholars.

By framing the collection in this way, the *TBT*'s editors establish a highly distinctive rhetorical and visual argument for the collection. Unlike digital collections that provide sparse introductory descriptions, or that rely on the organizing principles of a book or the canonical status of a work or author, the *TBT*'s editors explicitly state the collection's intentions and even specify its intended audiences up front. The concise introductory paragraphs seem designed

to be easily skimmed, given their brevity and jargon-free language, which suggests

the editors' awareness of their wide audience of readers.  In addressing their

specialist audience, the editors frame the collection as an argument for expanding

the literary canon and curriculum by virtue of its subject matter—children's

literature exploring the American racial imagination—thus overtly situating the

*TBT* in historical and racial contexts that other digital collections often eschew.  Of

course, one could argue that in making publicly available such racially charged

artifacts, especially children's literature from the Jim Crow era, the *TBT* editors

almost by necessity have to include some form of introductory text.  Nevertheless,

their initial and careful contextualization points to the collection's willing

engagement with a form of cultural literary criticism, signaling a potential "best

practice" for current and future editors to adopt, particularly when working with

sensitive material.

One other aspect of the introductory text worth noting centers on the final

paragraph of the home page:  in providing a kind of status update on the collection,

the editors variously describe it as a work in progress, a site, and a draft to which

they are "actively expanding and improving our holdings."  They draw on several

genres and institutions in describing the collection, mingling terms for a

composition (work), the Web (site), a written but not-yet-finalized document

(draft), and a library or archival collection (holdings), revealing their reliance on

multiple forms to characterize the collection.  Even at the outset, then, the editors

indicate the *TBT* does not fit neatly into one classification, further underscoring its lack of easy fit—chronologically, canonically, and generically—in comparison with other digital thematic collections.

Perhaps the two most striking features that make the *TBT* unique in contrast to the *WWA* and other digital collections are its thematic organization and its contextualization of artifacts, as we can see in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 below.
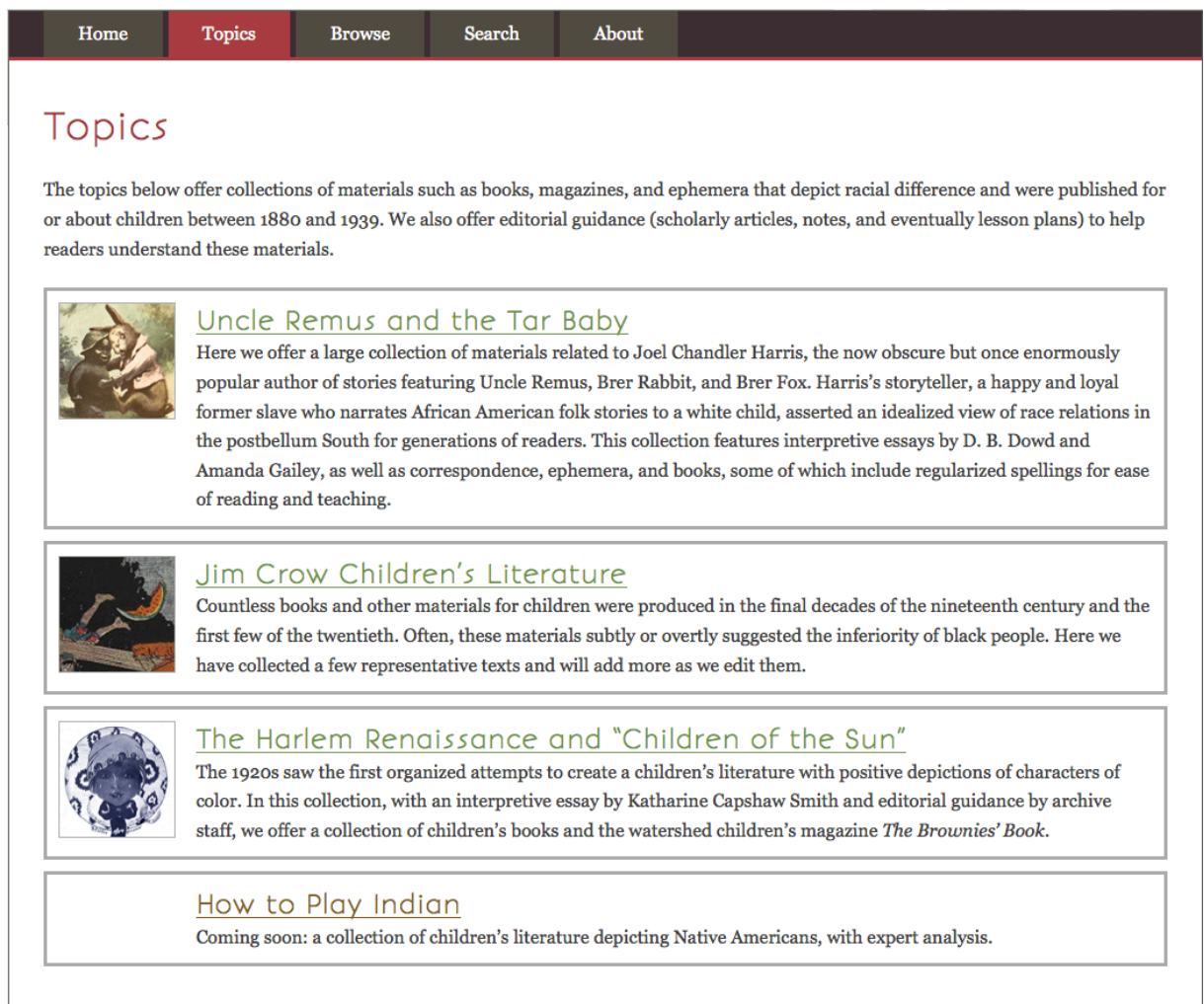


**Figure 3.2.** **Screen shot of the Topics page of *TBT.***

In terms of its organization, the *TBT* truly is a digital *thematic* collection in that it draws on several themes and genres to organize itself: materials centering on characters and stories by an author (Harris), materials from a particular era in American literary history (Jim Crow), children's books and magazines from a significant literary period (the Harlem Renaissance), and a forthcoming collection of children's literature depicting Native Americans ranging from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth century.  Unlike many digital collections that use a work or author as a primary mode of organization,[189] *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* represents multiple genres (magazines, books, ephemera) related to the topic children's literature, and uses the themes of race, history, and literary history to organize those materials.  Further, by juxtaposing Harris' racially problematic stories and Jim Crow era literature with children's literature from the Harlem Renaissance, the *TBT*'s "Topics" page argues for a historically complex understanding of both children's literature and the cultural milieu in which it was published and read.

The *TBT*'s use of themes to organize its interface corresponds with its use of hyperlinked essays to contextualize the artifacts in each of its sub-collections. Within the introductory text of Harris's stories and the Harlem Renaissance

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[189] Some notable exceptions include the *Colored Conventions Project*, *The 19th-Century Concord Digital Archive*, *Civil War Washington*, and *The Vault at Pfaff's*, accessible at (respectively) http://coloredconventions.org/, http://digitalconcord.org/, http://civilwardc.org/, and http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/pfaffs/

section, the editors include referential hyperlinks to other parts of *TBT*.  After this introductory text of each sub-collection, the editors arrange links in an order designed to promote readers' understanding of the material by providing background information, interpretive essays, lists of further readings, and finally the primary materials themselves.   (See Figure 3.3 below.)

## Background Information

Biography of Joel Chandler Harris
*Sabrina Ehmke Sergeant*

Further Reading on Joel Chandler Harris

Joel Chandler Harris and Folklore
*Sabrina Ehmke Sergeant*

Further Reading on American Folklore

## Interpretive Essays

Uncle Remus in Pictures
*D. B. Dowd*

Uncle Remus's Cultural Afterlife
*Amanda Gailey*

## Primary Materials

Books by Joel Chandler Harris
*A collection of Harris's books intended for children or families*

Joel Chandler Harris's Correspondence
*A selection of Harris's correspondence with authors, illustrators, and other notable figures*

Ephemera and Adaptations
*A selection of advertisements, menus, and other disposable texts featuring Harris and his characters*

**Figure 3.3.  Screen shot of *Uncle Remus and the Tar Baby*.**

While this order does not, of course, guarantee readers will peruse these sections in a linear fashion, nor do the embedded hyperlinks and notes ensure that readers will follow those paths, each section's design argues for a nuanced understanding of children's literature by placing its historical and cultural contexts in close visual proximity to the primary materials themselves.  Further, these forms of contextualization represent the editors' awareness of their responsibility to their readers, given the racially problematic aspect of Harris's stories and the Jim Crow literature.  As Gailey contends, "requiring readers to move through some degree of editorial mediation—perhaps as little as a disclaimer—before gaining unfettered access to these books is the only responsible way, both educationally and ethically, to present the materials."[190]

The form and design of this contextualization, along with the collection's relatively small size, also lend the *TBT* a kind of cohesion lacking in other collections*.*  Unlike the *UTC&AC*, which disperses its contextual artifacts in an atomized fashion across numerous pages, or the *WWA*, which separates Whitman's work from its historical and critical contexts, the *TBT* brings together background readings, interpretive essays, and primary materials in one place.  On the surface, this method of organization for its sub-collections may seem unremarkable.  Indeed, the design of these introductory pages to each sub-collection parallels the

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[190] See Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing:  the Example of Race and Children's Literature of the Gilded Age," 142.  Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/etlc.9362034.0001.001

design of a printed edition's table of contents bearing an introduction, primary

text, and historical contexts.  Yet by adopting this 'table-of-contents' structure and

combining it with hyperlinks, each sub-collection's design and organization strive

to counteract the tendency toward atomization prevalent in digital collections such

as *UTC&AC*.  This design also reinforces the collection's overall argument for a

historically nuanced understanding of race and children's literature, first by

juxtaposing materials from the *Uncle Remus* stories and children's literature of the

Harlem Renaissance as closely as possible to interpretive essays about each of

their respective primary materials, and second, by situating each sub-collection as

closely as possible to the other.

 As we can see in Figures 3.4 and 3.5 below, this contextualization extends to

the level of markup language—specifically, coding for original and regularized

spellings of words from a selection of Harris's stories that use eye dialect[191]—in

order to display both spelling options within the public interface.[192]

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[191] "Eye dialect" refers to the use of nonstandard spelling for speech as it appears
in print (e.g., "enuff" for "enough").  First used by George P. Krapp to describe how
colloquial usage appears in print, eye dialect may be used to represent colloquial
speakers as "uneducated, youthful, rustic, or otherwise unlike the readership."
Eye dialect can also indicate spellings of words that may be pronounced in a non-
standard way (e.g., "dat" for "that"). Definition and quotation taken from Tom
McArthur's "Eye Dialect." *Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language*.
Oxford University Press, 1998.  *Oxford Reference.* 2003. Web.  Date accessed 24 Jan.
2015.
[192] As of January 2015, the *TBT* provides alternate spellings for six out of fifteen of
Harris's stories:  *Uncle Remus: Songs and Sayings; Nights with Uncle Remus; Free Joe*
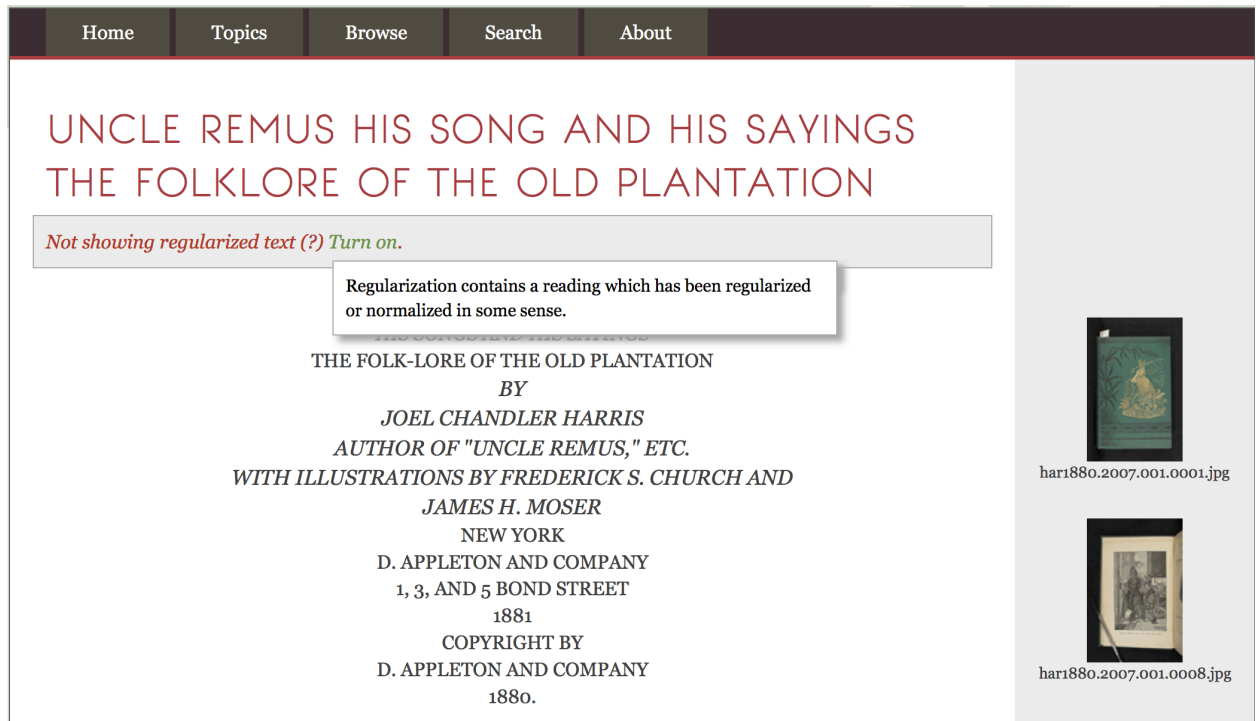
**Figure 3.4. Screen shot of *Uncle Remus: His Song and Sayings*.**

On the public interface side of Harris's story, readers can hover the cursor over the

question mark in "Not showing regularized text (?)" and see a clear definition of

the phrase, followed by the option to turn on the feature, which demonstrates the

editors' awareness of non-specialist readers unfamiliar with the term "regularized

text."  The editors also cue readers to use the hyperlink to toggle between the two

forms of spellings ("Turn on"), thereby promoting a reader's engagement with the

text.  And by highlighting this feature with a gray band, the editors provide a kind

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*and Other Georgian Sketches; Daddy Jake the Runaway and Short Stories Told After
Dark; On the Plantation;* and *Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit.*

of visual explanation for readers once they choose the regularized spelling option

(see Figure 3.5 below).



## UNCLE REMUS INITIATES THE LITTLE BOY.

One evening recently, the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" missed her little seven-year-old. Making search for him through the house and through the yard, she heard the sound of voices in the old man's cabin, and, looking through the window, saw the child sitting by Uncle Remus. His head rested against the old man's arm, and he was gazing with an expression of the most intense interest into the rough, weather-beaten face, that beamed so kindly upon him. This is what "Miss Sally" heard:

"Bimeby, one day, arter Brer Fox bin doin' all dat he could fer ter ketch Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit bin doin' all he could fer ter keep 'im fum it, Brer Fox say to hisse'f dat he'd put up a game on Brer Rabbit, en he ain't mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf twel Brer Rabbit come a lopin' up de big road, lookin' des ez plump, en ez fat, en ez sassy ez a Moggin hoss in a barley-patch.

*"By and by, one day, after Brer Fox been doing all that he could for to catch Brer Rabbit, and Brer Rabbit been doing all he could for to keep him from it, Brer Fox say to hisself that he'd put up a game on Brer Rabbit, and he ain't more than got the words out of his mouth til Brer Rabbit come a loping up the big road, looking just as plump, and as fat, and as sassy as a Morgan horse in a barley-patch.*

"'Hol' on dar, Brer Rabbit,'

*"'Hold on there Brer Rabbit,'*

sez Brer Fox, sezee.

*says Brer Fox, says he.*

"'I ain't got time, Brer Fox,'

*"'I ain't got time, Brer Fox,'*

sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, sorter mendin' his licks.

*says Brer Rabbit, says he, sort of mending his licks.*

har1880.2007.001.0024.jpg

har1880.2007.001.0025.jpg

har1880.2007.001.0026.jpg

har1880.2007.001.0027.jpg

har1880.2007.001.0028.jpg

**Figure 3.5.  Screen shot of regularized spelling and dialect spelling.**

Readers choosing this option see both the eye dialect of Harris's story and the

optional "translation" using modern spelling—seeing, in effect, both a modified
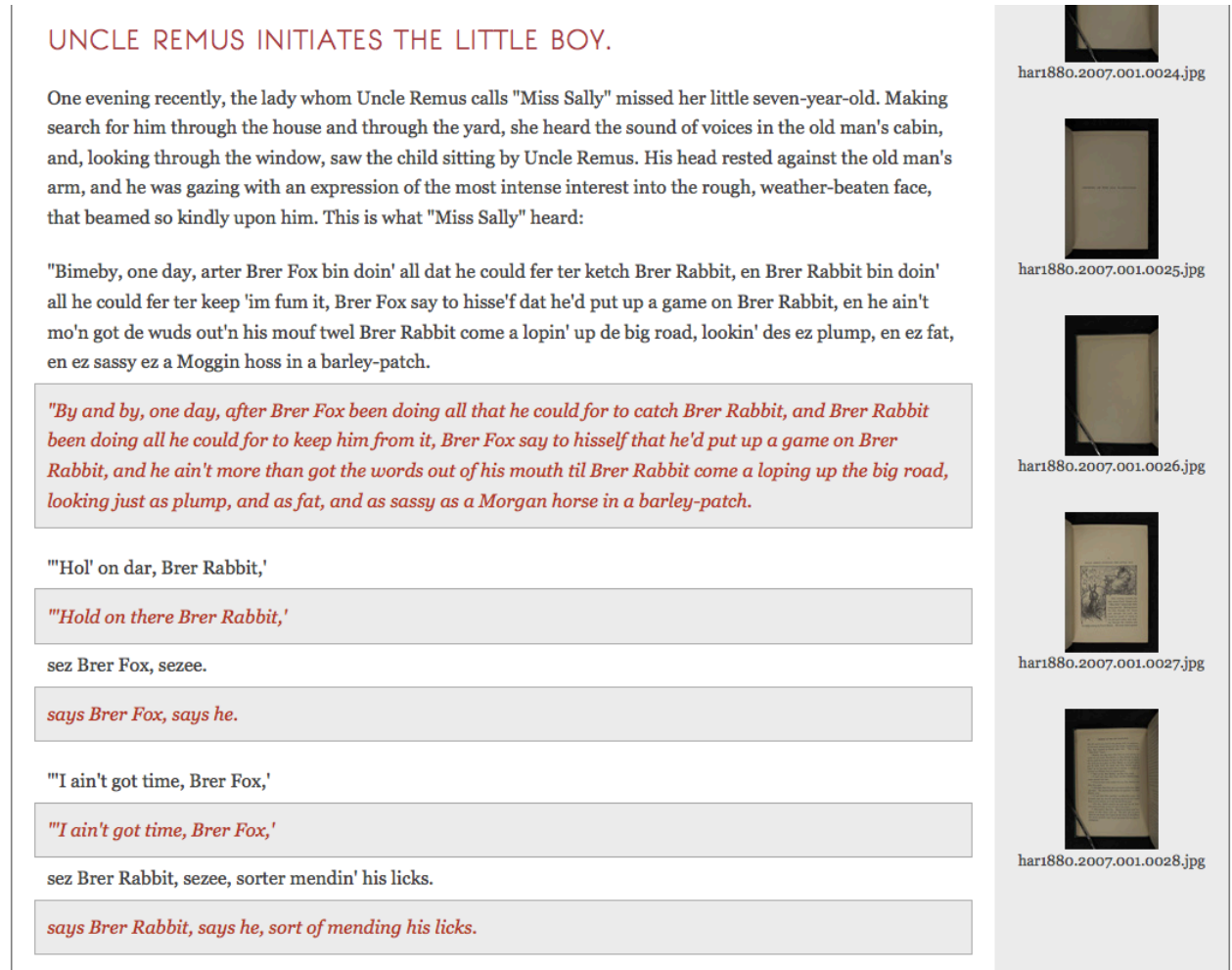
twenty-first century text as well as the text and images that earlier readers would

have encountered (albeit remediated via digitization and transcription).  Initially,

this feature may seem to correspond with Fitzpatrick's observation about the potential for hyperlinks to re-inscribe the author-reader hierarchy at an even higher level because they represent one person's or group's imposition of knowledge on others.[193]  Yet by casting this feature as a choice for readers to enact (or not), the *TBT*'s editors endeavor to move away from this hierarchy—or at least flatten it a bit—in providing alternate versions of Harris's stories.

Additionally, readers may "flip" back and forth through the scanned pages that appear in the right column alongside the transcribed text, expand the images to full screen, magnify individual images once they open them in a new window, and toggle between the scroll of the transcribed text and the codex-like presentation of scanned images.  Thus, the *TBT* uses affordances from different genres and markup languages (scroll, codex, TEI) to offer readers multiple, non-linear ways of interacting with its artifacts—in contrast to *UTC&AC*'s one-directional prompts for readers who engage with Stowe's novel, for example. Further, by displaying page scans immediately alongside the transcribed text of literary works, the *TBT* argues for the importance of reading text and images together, or at least visually contextualizing the transcriptions with their now-digitized sources.  The collection balances the affordances for non-linear movement among its artifacts with a high degree of textual and visual contextualization for readers.

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[193] See Fitzpatrick's *Planned Obsolescence*, 98.

**The affordances and constraints of TEI**

If the public interface of *TBT*'s texts allows for multiple forms of

engagement and argues for the importance of reading text and images in tandem,

the markup side of *TBT*'s texts reveals a similar concern for contextualization,

specifically through its use of XML and TEI.  As mentioned in the Introduction,

eXtensible Markup Language (XML) is a generalized language that can be applied

to anything—poems, novels, magazines—and is used to describe the formal

features and content of a particular document.  One important rule for XML is that

an opened tag must be properly closed, and a tag opened inside another tag must

be properly "nested"; otherwise the software program processing the XML file

cannot read it.  For example, a properly nested set of <person> and <persName>

tags for Uncle Remus, an elderly black character in Harris's stories, would be as

follows:

```
<person xml:id="uncle_remus">
  <persName>UncleRemus</persName>
   <sex>male</sex>
     <age>elderly</age>
       <trait><p>Former slave, now servant of Sally and John Huntington</trait>
</person>
```

TEI, or Text Encoding Initiative, refers to guidelines describing the structural or

formal features of a particular text, and directs humanities scholars on which set of

tags to use when marking up texts.  In the example above, TEI tags describe the

name <persName>, sex <male>, age <elderly>, and a trait of Uncle Remus.  As

Gailey characterizes it, XML provides the syntax for an artifact and TEI provides

the semantics.[194]  Within digital thematic collections, XML and TEI are analogous

to the editorial emendations that editors provide when working on a scholarly

edition of a text, since these languages—especially TEI—are used to determine

what a text is.  In essence, both XML and TEI mark up, or describe a text for the

digital environment, just as an editor 'marks up' a text with emendations and

footnotes for a printed scholarly edition.

As with other forms of markup, TEI determines not only the formal features

of a text, such as where line breaks occur in a story, but in the case of thematic

tagging, can provide suggested meanings of the words themselves, such as what

concepts appear in a particular text.  If the encoder does not assign a particular tag

(e.g., <title> or <trait>) to a line of text, the formal feature or concept affiliated with

that tag will not appear in a reader's search for that theme—i.e., it will not exist.

And while its greatest weakness is also its greatest strength—its ability to classify

knowledge to provide a level of searching and interpretation that may otherwise

be impossible—TEI exponentially increases an encoder's editorial responsibility to

the digital text she works with, because every tagging decision directly impacts the

form and content of that text, and because these decisions affect a reader's ability

to search for and find particular formal features or themes within that text.  While

the first editorial issue (shaping a text's form and content) is just as persistent in a

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[194] See Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing," 130.

print environment as it is in a digital one, the second issue (affecting one's ability to find features or themes) bears a different trajectory in a digital environment than a printed one, because coders must use one language to perform an entirely different one.  In doing so, they impact which features or interpretations may be rendered legible both through close reading and more "surface" forms of reading, such as highlighting passages via keyword searching.  Of course, searching a printed book using indexes or concordances works in much the same way that keyword searching might; the difference I want to emphasize centers on the means by which an editor makes a text "searchable."  In a printed artifact, other words assist readers, while in digital collections, markup language does.

Both kinds of reading, close and surface, inform the collection's use of TEI for Harris's stories to show their original and regularized spellings.  While the public interface of his stories provide hyperlinked cues for readers to toggle between versions, the XML files reveal the editors' use of TEI to mark up these different versions for multiple audiences.  For example, one section of the XML file for "The Folklore of the Old Plantation" featured in Figures 3.4 and 3.5 reads as follows:

```
<choice>
    <orig type="eye-dialect">"Bimeby, one day, arter Brer Fox bin doin' all dat
                he could fer ter ketch Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit bin doin' all he
                could fer ter keep 'im fum it, Brer Fox say to hisse'f dat he'd put up a
                game on Brer Rabbit, en he ain't mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf
                twel Brer Rabbit come a lopin' up de big road, lookin' des ez plump,
                en ez fat, en ez sassy ez a Moggin hoss in a barley-patch.
    </orig>
    <reg>"By and by, one day, after Brer Fox been doing all that he could for to
                catch Brer Rabbit, and Brer Rabbit been doing all he could for to
                keep him from it, Brer Fox say to hisself that he'd put up a game on
                Brer Rabbit, and he ain't more than got the words out of his mouth til
                Brer Rabbit come a loping up the big road, looking just as plump, and
                as fat, and as sassy as a Morgan horse in a barley-patch.
    </reg>
</choice>
```

One aspect immediately noticeable is the extent to which the editors "translate"

Harris's eye dialect into regularized English; specifically, they retain the syntax and

verb tense of Harris's characters, regularizing only the spellings of individual

words while leaving others—such as "Brer"—intact.  This decision seems to

emphasize the editors' efforts to retain as much of the story's original language

and syntax as possible, balancing Harris's use of a racialized dialect with a need for

translation of some of that dialect.[195]  This markup also allows for greater ease and

accuracy when conducting a keyword search for spelling variants (e.g., "sez" and

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[195] Not all words in Harris's stories have regularized spelling—e.g., "hisself"—a
decision that may reflect time and resource constraints as well as editorial
decisions, since the kind of mark-up required to regularize word spellings involves
a great deal of work.  Moreover, the issue of knowing how much to edit—a practice
closely linked the issue of how much to include in a collection—remains a
persistent challenge for anyone managing a digital collection.

"says"), providing an advantage for scholars wishing to analyze Harris's use of language.  This editorial markup, then, is one of several examples of how the *TBT* uses TEI to designate and render legible the linguistic features of Harris' stories for multiple audiences, demonstrating the editors' awareness of the racially charged language of the literary texts, and their sense of responsibility to readers encountering this language. More importantly, as Earhart points out, the *TBT*'s use of the tags <orig> and <reg> rather than <sic> ("error") and <corr> ("correct") aligns with cultural criticism about race and language, since this choice represents the editors' refusal to value one language over another.[196]  Rather than promoting the superiority of standardized English—as using the <sic> and <corr> tags would imply—the *TBT*'s editors instead choose an approach that accommodates the culturally complex and sensitive nature of the artifacts with which they work.

Although TEI allows for a rudimentary form of linguistic contextualization—through use of the tags <orig> and <reg>—its constraints as a method of describing texts often prove challenging.  First, as Gailey notes, TEI cannot adequately track the "cultural dissemination of texts, which is of keen importance for a study of racial content in children's literature."[197]  Knowing, for example, that Harris's *Uncle Remus* stories spawned musical adaptations and the Walt Disney film *Song of the South* lends a greater understanding of the ways racial

[196] See Earhart's "Can Information Be Unfettered?" 316.
[197] See Gailey's "Uncle Remus's Afterlife," *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*. http://childlit.unl.edu/topics/edi.afterlife.html

difference disseminated in the early and mid-twentieth century—an

understanding that TEI cannot currently convey and represent in a digital medium.

Further, Gailey notes that since many of the materials in *TBT* are a hybrid of

material object and text—such as postcards, diner menus, and household products

that use images from the *Uncle Remus* tales—treating them as objects or

collectibles fails to adequately capture their cultural significance and their textual

histories.[198]  As a result—and partly due to the constraints of digitization itself as

well as those of TEI—these hybrid materials become flattened out into a scroll of

images within each sub-collection, rather than configured in a way to show their

cultural and chronological relationships to each other.

      Finally, TEI cannot adequately describe concepts such as gender and race in

nuanced and culturally sensitive ways, an example of which we can see in the

green highlighted text in Figure 3.7 below.

---

[198] Ibid.

```
-<!--
  AG We need to resolve how to note race in the <person> tags. Should we use <trait> with @type?
  -->
-<particDesc>
  -<listPerson type="fictional">
    -<person xml:id="uncle_remus">
        <persName>Uncle Remus</persName>
        <sex>male</sex>
        <age>elderly</age>
      -<trait>
        -<p>
            Former slave, now servant of Sally and John Huntingdon
        </p>
      </trait>
    </person>
```

**Figure 3.6.  Screen shot of XML file of *Uncle Remus*.**[199]

Here Gailey's note, featured in the green highlighted text at the top of the figure,

shows her query about using TEI to note race, and wrestles with the question of

denoting race with TEI's tags:  "AG  We need to resolve how to note race in the

<persons> tag.  Should we use <trait> with @type?"  Her query refers to some TEI

elements that bear a brief explanation:  within the TEI's guidelines, the <person>

tag is an element designating a real or fictional individual; the <trait> tag is an

element describing a status or quality attributed to a person that does not change

over time; and @type refers to a category that further describes the element—e.g.,

<trait type="ethnicity">.  Currently the TEI Guidelines state that "'traits'…can be

either physical, such as sex or hair and eye colour, or cultural, such as ethnicity,

caste, or faith. The distinction is not entirely straightforward, however…the

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[199] The full XML file is available at http://childlit.unl.edu/har1880.2007.001.xml

division of mankind into different 'races', proposed by early (white European)

anthropologists on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin colour, hair

type and skull measurements, is now considered to be more a social or mental

construct."[200]

Although the Guidelines rightly allude to the problematic issue of using race

as a description because of its history as a construct, they simultaneously sidestep

the issue of representing this very construct.  Gailey's question thus exposes a

schism between the need for a more robust and nuanced markup language to

describe texts that contain culturally sensitive and complex issues, and the current

structure of the markup language used to edit those texts.[201]  This schism

corresponds with Tara McPherson's recent explanation of the difficulty in uniting

[200] See "Names, Date, People and Places," section 13.3.1 of the Text Encoding
Initiative Guidelines.  Available at http://www.tei-c.org/release/doc/tei-p5-
doc/en/html/ND.html.  (Note, too, the irony of the gendered language in this
section.)
[201] On a related note, until recently the TEI Guidelines drew on the International
Standards Organization's code 5218:2004 to assign sexuality of persons in a
document, using the attribute 1 for male, 2 for female, 9 for non-applicable, and 0
for unknown.  Melissa Terras, who discovered this designation, argued it was "an
outmoded and problematic representation of sexuality, and in particular formally
assigns women to be secondary to men," and submitted a request for it to be
changed.  In late 2013 the TEI Council members changed the designation to allow
locally defined values and alternative published standards to be used when
assigning attributes related to sexuality.  See Terras's request for the change at
http://sourceforge.net/p/tei/feature-requests/425/?page=1.  Her description of
the process on changing the guidelines in order to reflect a greater sense of
diversity and equity may be found at
http://melissaterras.blogspot.com/2013/05/on-changing-rules-of-digital-
humanities.html

discussions of race with digital collections and productions—a difficulty she

regards as the outcome of "the very designs of our technological systems…that

emerged in post–World War II computational culture. These origins of the digital

continue to haunt our scholarly engagements with computers, underwriting the

ease with which we partition off considerations of race in our work in the digital

humanities and digital media studies."[202]  In her analysis of the historical

relationship between the development of modular operating systems (such as

UNIX), and a corresponding development in the niched production of knowledge

within humanities departments, McPherson ultimately argues for the need to

develop common languages that connect the study of code with the study of race.

As she states, "our investigations must incorporate race from the outset,

understanding and theorizing its function as a ghost in the digital machine."[203]

McPherson's argument aligns closely with those of Lisa Nakamura, Alan Liu,

and other scholars who have observed how the field of digital humanities—and to

some extent, many digital thematic collections—have largely cordoned themselves

off from cultural studies, feminism, and race studies.[204]  And while McPherson's

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[202] See McPherson, 140.
[203] Ibid, 153.
[204] See Martha Nell Smith's "The Human Touch Software of the Highest Order:
Revisiting Editing as Interpretation," *Textual Cultures*  2.1 (Spring 2007):  1-15;
Lisa Nakamura's *Digitizing Race:  Visual Cultures of the Internet*.  Minneapolis:
University of Minnesota Press, 2008; and Alan Liu's "Where Is Cultural Criticism in
the Digital Humanities?"  Recently, Postcolonial Digital Humanities has sought to
work against this silo effect by exploring the theoretical and practical

concern rightly centers on the importance of theorizing race at the *beginning* of

any analysis—even an analysis of a technology that seemingly has nothing to do

with race—her argument applies equally well to the frameworks of markup

language currently used in digital collections.  While it is important to link studies

of code with culture, it remains equally vital to forge stronger sociocultural

connections between the *actual* code (or markup language) and the artifacts that

code seeks to represent in a digital collection.[205]  In this respect, the *TBT*'s

practices in using TEI are exemplary, especially given its constraints in providing a

more fully interpretive form of mark-up.

In editing materials for the *TBT*, Amanda Gailey identifies another challenge

that TEI and XML present for the collection's materials:  showing the relationships

among its artifacts.  Her critique of XML and TEI as standards for structuring

digital thematic collections has led her to conclude the following:

> What has developed is an encoding standard that works quite well for many
> projects, but in particular those projects that are primarily interested in
> single authors or single texts.  TEI…valu[es] naturalized assumptions about
> how literature is created, how it should be organized, and its quarantine
> from contentious politics…the Text Encoding Initiative has developed in a
> way that offers most support to projects that are interested in single works,
> single authors, or very formalist markup…XML itself, with its prohibition

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considerations of postcolonial digital humanities, and has explicitly addressed this
question.  See http://dhpoco.org/blog/2013/05/10/open-thread-the-digital-
humanities-as-a-historical-refuge-from-raceclassgendersexualitydisability/
[205] This idea corresponds with Liu's call for greater cross-disciplinary
collaboration among digital humanists, media artists, and media theorists to
"enlarge standards (such as "standards" themselves) with sociocultural meaning."
See Liu's "Where is Cultural Criticism," 501.

against conflicting hierarchies and nesting structure, lends itself to a view of literature that considers texts…as discrete, self-contained entities with their own internal coherence.  It fundamentally supports a view of literature that says here is a work; here are the texts that comprise it; here are the formal components of the texts; here are interesting sites of composition and revision.  At each stage the encoding typically looks inward… [206]

Rather than being able to fully represent the "contentious politics" of Harris's stories and their appropriations over time—notwithstanding the collection's use of tags to show original and regularized spelling—TEI is limited to describing primarily the formal features of texts and the editorial decisions that inform those descriptions.  Further, Gailey points out that rather than representing the cultural dissemination of materials—how, for example, characters from the *Uncle Remus* stories become appropriated for commercial purposes in postcards and diner menus—TEI instead describes them as discrete objects rather than as culturally and semantically related materials,[207] despite the collection's extensive historical contextualization for these materials on its site.  As a markup language, TEI remains well-suited to *The Walt Whitman Archive*, the *William Blake Archive*, and other digital collections with authors and works as their organizing principle, yet

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[206] See Gailey's "The Death of the Author Has Been Greatly Exaggerated."  *Proofs of Genius:  Collected Editions from the American Revolution to the Digital Age.*  Under contract with the University of Michigan Press; anticipated publication Fall 2015.  Chapter sent via personal correspondence, December 12, 2014.
[207] In "Uncle Remus's Cultural Afterlife," Gailey describes the inadequacy of TEI to represent materials that comprise a "hybrid of material object and text," and whose "cultural significance depends upon their textual roots and their post-textual forms."  See *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*, http://childlit.unl.edu/topics/edi.afterlife.html

reveals its deficiencies when used for a collection of materials organized and intimately connected by cultural and historical themes—race, childhood, and literacy—and fails to account for the cultural dissemination of characters and stories across several racial and ethnic groups and over several decades.

I agree with Gailey that TEI's constraints require increasingly sophisticated methods of describing, editing, and organizing artifacts, in order to accommodate non-canonical or counter-canonical works. While her critique stands, we should not overlook the significance of what the collection currently accomplishes and gestures toward:  first, its exposure of the editor-reader hierarchy inherent in XML, and second, a nuanced representation of literary artifacts that potentially challenges the concept of the canon (I'll return to this latter point below).  With regard to its editorial practices, the *TBT* makes the XML files for each artifact in the collection publicly viewable, and in doing so, signals some alternate ways of thinking about the editorial practices involved in representing literary artifacts in the digital canon.


**XML and visible editorial practices**

*The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* provides page images of literary works, transcriptions of those works, and links to the XML files forming the basis of those transcriptions similarly to the *Walt Whitman Archive.*  Yet unlike the *WWA*, the *TBT* makes the XML files for *all* of its texts publicly available to readers, and by

revealing the editorial notes within those files, the *TBT* enables readers to see the questions and comments its editors grapple with as they work against and within the hierarchy of XML/TEI.  While this kind of visibility neither guarantees that readers will click through to see the files, nor does it level out the power relations between editors and readers, the publicly viewable editorial comments within each file mitigate the editor/reader hierarchy by revealing the editorial process in representing the collection's artifacts.  Additionally, the visibility of *TBT*'s files contrasts with the way markup languages work in most digital collections, where they shape the structure and form of artifacts but remain unseen.  Indeed, Matthew Kirschenbaum once characterized TEI as a "shadow world government" which sets standards for knowledge representation that are invisible to an average reader, and thus exercises "rhetorical and ideological force."[208]  By contrast, the *TBT*'s use of XML and TEI remain persistently visible, operating in the sunlight (so to speak) by providing a highly visible record of the editorial and interpretive decisions in representing the artifacts in their collection.  While the editors still exert—along with XML and TEI—a control over the artifacts they choose to represent, they also make those decisions visible for anyone to see and critique.

In short, the *TBT*'s inclusion of publicly accessible XML files for each of its artifacts represents an editorial practice that recalls Elena Pierazzo's definition of digital documentary editions; digital editions, she asserts, contain "the digital

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[208]Quoted by Joanna Drucker in *SpecLab*, 14.

infrastructure (visible to the final user or not) necessary for the publication and

exploitation of such content."[209]   The inclusion of these files also works to

counteract what Michelle R. Warren regards as the implicit power relations

between editor and reader.  As Warren states,  "the proportionality of 'apparatus'

to 'text' can physically signal the power plays of editorial practice…The very

'blankness' of a page devoid of notes or other apparatus suggests a transparent

autonomy associated with disembodied authority.  Even the seemingly open-

ended structures of digital editions encode hierarchies in the architecture of both

software and hardware, insinuating power relations into both the production and

reception of electronic forms."[210]  Exposing these hierarchies counteracts, or at

least mitigates the power relations that determine the production of the *TBT*'s

artifacts, because its editors make explicit their interpretive and their ideological

decisions in producing racially problematic artifacts.

    And although each XML file generally looks inward (to recall Gailey's

description), some of the editorial comments in the XML files refer to characters in

other stories in the collection, suggesting two potential methods of using XML files

in the *TBT*.  First, editors may include comments within these files as a concise

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[209] See Pierazzo's "Digital Documentary Editions and the Others," *Scholarly Editing*, 5 (2014): paragraph 3.  Available online at
http://www.scholarlyediting.org/2014/essays/essay.pierazzo.html
[210] Warren, Michelle R.  "The politics of textual scholarship." *The Cambridge Companion to Textual Scholarship*.  New York:  Cambridge University Press, 2013, 125.

record of decisions about how artifacts have been edited; second, they may include

them to note relationships among different artifacts.[211] Of course, the latter

practice would still fail to represent, on the public interface side, the cultural

appropriation and dissemination of materials—that is, only the comments in the

XML file would reveal this relationship.  But recording this information could serve

as initial documentation of the relations among different artifacts, and be used

later if the *TBT*'s editors decide to shift to another form of markup, or another kind

of knowledge representation altogether.[212]

In the final chapter of her forthcoming book, Gailey outlines two forms of

organizing information—Resource Description Framework and Web Ontology

Language—as potential approaches for representing the relationships among

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[211] A third possible reason for retaining editorial comments in XML files is pedagogical:  many of the editorial comments in the *TBT*'s files function as an excellent primer for using TEI, because they show each editor's directive for how to describe different elements of an artifact (such as a title or image), followed immediately by the encoder's markup.

[212] "Knowledge representation" refers to a field of artificial intelligence that focuses on the encoding of information so that a computer system may use it. According to Patrick Hayes, the object of "knowledge representation" [i.e., what gets represented] now refers to "any organized body of general knowledge, including large-scale repositories of information intended largely for human use." One real-world example of knowledge representation includes the "did you mean…?" prompt in Google.  While this definition of knowledge representation focuses on making knowledge processable for computer systems, one should keep in mind the challenge—recalling McPherson and Gailey—to bridge this "processability" with the cultural and historical contexts of the materials being processed.  See Hayes' "Knowledge Representation," *Encyclopedia of Computer Science* (4th ed.), Anthony Ralston, Edwin D. Reilly, and David Hemmendinger (Eds.). Chichester, UK: Wiley and Sons, 2003; 947-951.

cultural materials, and advocates for adopting these and other approaches to combat the silo effect that current organizational methods (including XML and TEI) have on digital collections.[213]  Until then, however, the *TBT* continues to work effectively within as well as against the constraints of XML and TEI by including markup files for each artifact, which constitutes an editorial "best practice" for future collections to emulate.[214]

**Exploding the digital canon**

In addition to rendering visible the markup language for its materials, the *TBT* stands out from collections—especially those organized by an author or work—because of its challenge to the formation of what Earhart characterizes as the digital canon.  Recent critics of the digital canon hold a somewhat pessimistic view of its current development.  Amanda Gailey, one of the *TBT*'s main editors, sees author-centered collections like the *Walt Whitman Archive* as more likely to be digitized than Joel Chandler Harris's stories, and views this as a sign of American literature "moving into a stratified digital environment," where authors

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[213] See Gailey's "The Death of the Author Has Been Greatly Exaggerated," 221.
[214] Many digital collections have increasingly adopted this practice of allowing readers to view and occasionally download files of the markup language from their collections. Both *The Walt Whitman Archive* and *The Modernist Journals Project* provide XML downloads of selected texts in their respective collections.  More recently, *The Shelley-Godwin Archive* and the Harvard University-sponsored *Emily Dickinson Archive* enable readers to view and (in the case of Dickinson) download the TEI files.  *Documenting the American South* allows readers to download texts in plain text and XML/TEI formats.

whose works are historically or culturally problematic (such as Harris's) are "relegated to a less scholarly treatment than those whose sensibilities better correspond to our own."[215]  Similarly, Amy Earhart sees a digital canon that largely excludes works by women and people of color, and calls on current scholars to both "reinvigorate the spirit of previous scholars who believed textual recovery was crucial to their work," and to regard the digital realm a means of enacting changes in the canon.[216]  By contrast, critics such as Stephanie Browner see digital collections featuring non-canonical authors as expanding in number and scope, and concludes that "digital scholarship should, in the not-too-distant future, have a profound impact on the stories and histories we tell about the race and ethnicity in the Americas."[217]  Yet her final qualification seems significant; digital collections *should* have a profound impact on the varied stories we tell, but only if we (scholars, programmers, librarians, archivists, graduate students) heed Earhart's assertion to regard the digital realm as a means of expanding the American literary canon.  One approach these views seem to share is their implied definition of the

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[215] See Gailey's "The Case for Heavy Editing," *American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, 140.
[216] See Earhart's "Can Information Be Unfettered?  Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon," 316.  Similarly, Susan Belasco argues that scholarly work on women writers is at risk if faculty fail to defend and support the development of the basic tools for research that are needed for such work, and she includes digital scholarship as one of those basic tools.  See Belasco's "The Responsibility is Ours: The Failure of Infrastructure and the Limits of Scholarship," 333.
[217] See Browner's "Digital Humanities and the Study of Race and Ethnicity," *American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, 224.

term "canon," which aligns with Michelle Warren's concise description of it as the "very availability of certain texts, and not others, [which] conditions the formation of textual canons that in turn have decisive impacts on education, popular culture, and scholarship."[218]

While I agree with Warren, Gailey and Earhart that the availability of texts in whatever form comprises an important aspect of the literary canon, I contend the *TBT* operates less as a counter-canonical collection, or even as a way of thinking about the digital canon in more expansive terms, than as a collection that potentially counters the very notion of the canon itself.  Ironically, one avenue for approaching the *TBT* from this perspective lies with John Guillory's definition of "canonicity," which he defines as "a history of the production and the reception of texts, and of the social conditions of literacy (who reads and who writes), as well as what kinds of texts are written, and for what audiences."[219]  Significantly, Guillory's definition bears a striking affinity with D. F. McKenzie's sociology of the text, in which questions of authorial, literary, and social context impact "the ways in which texts are then re-read, re-edited, re-designed, re-printed, and re-published."[220]  Although McKenzie's formulation of the dynamic between the

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[218] See Warren, "The politics of textual scholarship," 125.

[219] See Guillory, John.  "Canon." *Critical Terms for Literary Study*.  Ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin.  Chicago:  University of Chicago Press, 1990, 238.

[220] See McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*.  Cambridge:  Cambridge University Press:  1999, 13.

social contexts and the material features of an artifact (text, image, audio clip)

focuses more on materiality than Guillory's definition, the correspondences

between their approaches—especially their emphases on the historical and social

conditions related to textual production and reception—signal the need to frame

the terms of the debate about under-studied literary works and recovery projects

such as the *TBT* in ways other than canonicity.  In the case of *The Tar Baby and the*

*Tomahawk*, it seems more productive to shift the focus to literacy and print

culture—and in particular, African-American literacy and print culture.  Adopting

this interpretive framework allows us to see both the ways in which *The Brownies*

*Book* contributed to early twentieth-century print culture by folding its young

readers' expressions into its publications, and to see (in turn) how the *TBT* itself

contributes to our twenty-first understanding of this period of African-American

literacy, through its digital representation of *The Brownies Book*, and its historical

contextualization of the periodical.

In its second issue, *The Brownies Book* began printing letters and notes from

its readers in a regular column titled "The Jury."  When the third issue appeared in

March 1920, the magazine began featuring letters from children asking how they

could contribute to *The Brownies Book*, as we see in this letter from Hannah Maude

Barnes:

> I AM eleven years old, and I want to be an author. Would you tell me how
> you went about it? Did you write a book first, or did you just send your
> writings to the magazines? How do you get into the magazines, to start
> with? I sent a very nice piece to an editor once, but he returned it. That

made me feel very sad, for I had spent a lot of time writing it out. I like your BROWNIES' BOOK and I wish you would put one of my pieces in it. Then, I feel, I could really see into my future.[221]

Barnes' letter is striking for a number of reasons:  first, *The Brownies Book* enables this young reader to begin to envision herself as an author.  By printing Barnes' response and disseminating it to an early twentieth-century audience, the editors allow her a glimpse of her future by granting her the kind of authorial status she seeks.  It also reveals the editors' intentional overlap in the roles of its authors and readers.  Indeed, by actively soliciting responses from readers, editors of *The Brownies Book* created a discursive space for African-American readers to express themselves creatively and—with increasing frequency—politically.[222]

Hannah Barnes' letter is only one among dozens of readers' responses printed in *The Brownies Book*.[223]  Collectively, these responses point to the profound cultural importance the magazine had for its readers in fostering

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[221] Letter from Hannah Maude Barnes, *The Brownies Book*, March 1920.  Available at http://childlit.unl.edu/brownies.192003.html

[222] In the October 1920 issue of *The Brownies Book*, Thomas Peterson writes "I think colored people are the most wonderful people in the world and when I'm a man, I'm going to write about them too, so that all people will know the terrible struggles we've had. I don't pay any attention any more to the discouraging things I see in the newspapers. Something just tells me that we are no worse than anybody else."

[223] The number of readers who responded to *The Brownies Book* with an offer to contribute their own pieces to the magazine recalls the emails Kenneth Price has received from writers and artists wishing to contribute to the *WWA*, suggesting another area to explore in the correspondence between print culture and digital collections:  the extent to which each medium may promote the productive overlap in the roles of authors, readers, and editors.

African-American literacy and instilling race consciousness and race pride, both in

active response to the degrading and racist depictions of African-American

children circulating in early twentieth-century print culture, and out of a desire, as

Capshaw asserts, to offer a space for readers and future writers "to shape [their]

expressions of identity and activism."[224]  (One future writer, Langston Hughes, saw

his first published poetry appeared in *The Brownies Book*, revealing the magazine's

influence on the American literary texts we now read.)

Just as *The Brownies Book* reveals the social conditions of early twentieth-

century African-American children's literacy and gave a voice to its readers by

publishing their writing, *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* disseminates the

magazine to a potentially larger group of twenty-first century readers, and uses

the affordances of the codex to duplicate, in its digitized images of the magazine,

the reading experience of *The Brownies Book*.  (Many readers enthusiastically

wrote in to say they read each issue "cover to cover.")  Further, by including

scholarly essays, introductory material, and an annotated bibliography about

African-American children's literature in the early twentieth century, and by

placing these materials alongside Harris' stories and Jim Crow children's literature,

the *TBT* frames *The Brownies Book* in a larger historical context, emphasizing the

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[224] See Katherine Capshaw Smith's essay "*The Brownies Book* and the Roots of
African American Children's Literature."  Available at
http://childlit.unl.edu/topics/edi.harlem.html

magazine's cultural significance for African-American writers, artists, and political figures of the period.

In this sense, the *TBT* represents a digital instantiation of what McKenzie sees as the disappearing border between bibliography's focus on the material features of a form, and the broader historical contexts that characterize literary criticism.  That is, the collection draws on the authorial, literary, and social contexts of the magazine as well as its affordances as a print publication to inform the re-editing, re-design, and re-publishing of *The Brownies Book.*  Further, the collection disseminates both the digitally-rendered magazine *and* many of its early twentieth-century literary and social contexts, including racially problematic literature, to a contemporary audience.  As a digital collection, then, *TBT* both works as a recovery project seeking to re-create and reproduce a range of depictions of African-American children, and—more importantly—to forge closer ties between our understanding of early twentieth-century print culture and African-American literary history.

As such, the collection represents less a digital "counter-canon" responding to other digital collections that reinscribe the American literary canon, though it does serve this purpose.  Rather, the *TBT*'s exploration of how children's literature, particularly African-American children's literature, shaped the American racial imagination bridges what Leon Jackson identifies as the disciplinary gap between

print culture studies and the African-American experience.[225]   Thus, the *TBT*'s less

conventionally literary orientation to the study of literary history arguably

counters the very idea of the canon, by directing our attention not to literary

achievement or authorial celebrity, but to the historical and cultural contexts

surrounding (and informing) the literary artifacts of early-twentieth century

African-American print culture.[226]

In a recent essay Gailey refers to the *TBT* as "a canary in a coal mine" rather

than a model for other scholarship, because of the difficulties involved in creating

and editing the collection.  She describes the collection as "medium-distance

scholarship," because the collection does not fit neatly into any one particular form

(digital scholarly edition, magazine, archive), because it includes multiple texts and

multiple authors, and because the *TBT* lies on the spectrum between the works of a

single author (such as *The Walt Whitman Archive*) and a large repository (such as

the *Making of America* collection).[227]   Given the challenges she and the collection's

other editors have encountered in terms of knowledge representation and funding,

[225] See Jackson's "The Talking Book and the Talking Book Historian:  African American Cultures of Print—The State of the Discipline."  *Book History* 13 (2010):  251-308.

[226] This final sentence paraphrases Ardis's assertion that "we need to recognize that the celebration of literary achievement or authorial celebrity is not always or necessarily a governing factor in a literary artifact's presentation in its pages."  See "Making Middlebrow Culture, Making Middlebrow Literary Texts *Matter*:  The Crisis, Easter 1912," *Modernist Cultures* 6.1 (2011), 36.

[227] See Gailey's "Editing in an Age of Automation," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.3 (Fall 2012): 341.

the *TBT* understandably serves as a warning for American digital scholarship if we fail to support current and future recovery projects.  At the same time, the *TBT*'s lack of an easy fit, chronologically and canonically, signal the need for a framework that can accommodate the *TBT*.  With its interface design, its inclusion of publicly accessible XML files, and its extensive historical contextualization of children's literature for multiple audiences, the *TBT* serves as a model of how digital collections can help us forge closer ties between print culture and literary history, and explode the American literary canon.

## Chapter 4

### MAPPING UNEXPECTED CONNECTIONS IN *THE VAULT AT PFAFF'S*

In the late 1850's, a group of writers, artists, journalists and actors began

convening in a basement beer cellar at 647 Broadway in New York.  With its

double-vaulted ceiling and cave-like atmosphere, Pfaff's Beer Cellar—owned by

Charles Pfaff—became one of the main locus points in New York for a community

of self-styled bohemians endeavoring to transfer the European-style bohemianism

of Paris to downtown Manhattan.[228]  Sometime around 1858 the poet Walt

Whitman, who lived in Brooklyn at the time, joined the group and began to

frequent the bar almost every night.  By the early 1860's he was inspired to

compose a poem titled "The Two Vaults," which juxtaposes the "myriad rushing"

crowds on Broadway with the group of individuals below ground at Pfaff's, where

"the drinkers and laughers meet to eat and drink and carouse."[229]

This juxtaposition of the bourgeois crowds milling about on Broadway with

the bohemian community gathering, unseen by many, below the streets of

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[228] Both the digital collection *The Vault at Pfaffs* and the recent book *Whitman Among the Bohemians* give a fuller history of this group of individuals.  See http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/.  See also Levin and Whitley's introduction to *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, Iowa City:  University of Iowa Press, 2014.

[229] See Whitman's "The Two Vaults," *New York Notebook*, Thomas Biggs Harned Collection, Library of Congress, 1861. Transcript available at *The Vault at Pfaff's,* http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/55710.  Accessed 15 March 2015.

Manhattan provided compelling imagery for Whitman's unfinished poem.  From a historical standpoint, this above-ground/below-ground image also represented Whitman's eventual eclipse of the coterie of individuals with whom he drank and talked almost nightly for years.  As Whitman's career progressed, some of his bohemian compatriots gradually receded into obscurity.  Within the field of literary history, scholarship on who these individuals were and what their impact has been on American literature and literary history—both in connection with Whitman and apart from him—was almost non-existent throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.  Their stories, like the bar in which they met, remained largely underground for decades.[230]

Within the past ten years, however, scholarship on their stories and writings has begun to surface with more frequency, and not only (or exclusively) in relation to Walt Whitman.  A major reason for this resurfacing can be attributed, at least in part, to *The Vault at Pfaff's*:  *An Archive of Art and Literature by the Bohemians of Antebellum New York*.  Officially launched in 2006 by Edward Whitley, Rob Weidman, and others at Lehigh University, the collection takes its name from Whitman's unfinished poem.  Yet as its full title suggests, the collection provides readers with a range of materials by and about the community who

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[230] Some exceptions include Albert Parry's *Garrets and Pretenders:  A History of Bohemianism in America*, New York: Covici-Friede, 1933; Emily Hahn's *Romantic Rebels:  an Informal History of Bohemianism in America*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1967; and Christina Stansell's *American Moderns:  Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century*, New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000.

contributed to the literary and artistic culture of nineteenth-century New York.

Just as Charles Pfaff's cellar served as the physical impetus for a bohemian coterie

of writers, artists, and intellectuals to gather together, *The Vault* functions as its

digital counterpart by bringing together materials by and about these individuals.

In doing so, *The Vault* fosters a more complete scholarly picture of who they were

and what they did.  Indeed, the collection's mission statement places this group's

contributions front and center, by providing extensive primary and secondary

materials about them.  As such, the collection seeks to more fully recover the

Pfaffians' incomplete histories, and to give a fuller scholarly picture of their

contributions to American literary history—in other words, to organize materials

"in ways that will help scholars to determine the impact that the Pfaffians had—

either as individuals or as a group—on the literary and artistic culture of the mid-

nineteenth-century United States."[231]

The collection's organization provides one key to understanding *The Vault's*

overall argument for this period in American literary history, as it provides

biographical sketches and annotated bibliographies of works by and about an

affiliated group of people across a range of time (1850-1860), as opposed to page

images and transcriptions of an individual author or work.  Additionally, the

collection provides full-text images of the nineteenth-century periodicals *The New*

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[231] "About the Archive," from *The Vault at Pfaff's*,
http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/38090

*York Saturday Press*, *Vanity Fair*, and *The New York Leader,* the first two of which

began at Pfaff's bar; it also links outside of its own collection to other sources

related to this literary community.[232]  Collectively, these features allow readers to

elicit connections among a range of individuals, works, and groups both "inside"

and "outside" this digital collection.[233]

These features also reinforce Meredith McGill's observations about the

digital collection.  In her discussion of *The Vault at Pfaff's*, McGill asserts it

"provides access not to the works of an author but to the social locations of culture,

drawing readers' attention to the jostling of coteries and to points of overlap

between and among discourses…*The Vault at Pfaff's* breaks new ground by

venturing beyond the mutually stabilizing categories of author and work, mapping

cultural and social connections that have yet to be adequately traced in print."[234]

Yet by linking to sources beyond its own collection, including stories from

European writers, and by embedding itself (as a collection) within a larger

network of nineteenth-century digital collections, *The Vault* reveals points of

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[232] According to Rob Weidman, co-editor of *The Vault at Pfaff's*, the full-text images
from *Vanity Fair* are provided by the digital repository *The Making of America*, and
granted permission to *The Vault at Pfaff's* to host local copies of these images.
Email communication with Rob Weidman, April 3, 2015.
[233] See "Editorial Policy," available at http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/38093.
*The Vault*'s editors explicitly state their goal of drawing connections between the
people, places, and texts from this period in literary history.  My argument centers
on the ways in which *The Vault* fulfills this goal through its design and structure,
and through its intermediation of multiple genres.
[234] See McGill's "Remediating Whitman," *PMLA* 122.5 (October 2007): 1595.

overlap between antebellum American literary history and European literary

history, and promotes both a transnational understanding of bohemia and of

literary history.[235]  In this sense, *The Vault* stands in stark contrast to other digital

thematic collections that adopt/adapt literary theories such as New Criticism (as is

the case with *Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture*) or that evoke Romantic

conceptions of the author (as is the case, somewhat, with the *Walt Whitman

Archive*).

Instead, with its juxtaposition of a range of literary artifacts, its use of

embedded links to contextualize those artifacts, its thematic organization, and its

focus on a largely understudied period of time rather than a singular author or

work, *The Vault* most closely parallels *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk*.

Additionally, by representing multiple, often conflicting interpretations about the

Pfaffians—another similarity this collection shares with the *TBT*—*The Vault*

departs significantly from early generation collections such as *UTC&AC* and the

*WWA*, which keeps scholarship about its subject separate from the work or author.

By contrast, *The Vault* brings together works by and about the Pfaffians, and places

a great deal of trust in its readers by shifting the responsibility for interpretation

onto us.[236]  In analyzing features such as these—its interface design, structure, and

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[235] I owe these insights to Marcy Dinius and Ann Ardis.
[236] I owe these insights about *The Vault*'s departure from other collections to
Marcy Dinius.  Additionally, I don't mean to suggest that early-generation digital
collections require little or no readerly interpretation at all, but to suggest that *The*

the ways it has generated new scholarship about the New York bohemians—I will

show how *The Vault at Pfaff's* characterizes literary history as a network, arguing

for a highly intermediated, rhizomatic approach to literary history, and serving as

an important model for current and future digital collections.

A brief clarification about my use of two terms: "intermediation," as you

may recall from chapter 2, refers to the interactions between forms of media.  In

contrast to Bolter and Grusin's term "remediation," which posits a starting point

for media at one point in time and with one medium that "swallows" other forms of

media (for example, the computer remediates or "swallows" the scroll, the codex,

photography, and film), intermediation focuses on the dynamic interplay among

these forms of media, without privileging any single medium or chronological

starting point.  As we saw in previous chapters, this kind of interplay may occur

among the roles (author, editor, reader) and genres (archive, edition) of a digital

thematic collection.  It applies equally well, as we will see, to *The Vault*'s

intermediation of several genres, including the database, the periodical, and the

archive.

The second term, "rhizomatic," is a variant of "rhizome," a botanical term

that refers to a subterranean stem that sends out roots and leafy shoots along its

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*Vault* departs significantly from other collections both in its conscious decision to
represent conflicting interpretations about the Pfaffians, and in encouraging
readers to engage with those interpretations.

length.[237] In parallel with the appealing similarity between the Pfaffian bohemians' underground bar and a rhizome's *modus operandi*, *The Vault at Pfaff's* uses the rhizomatic structure of the database in order to reveal the myriad, often complex connections among these writers and artists who exerted a (subterranean) influence over subsequent literary and artistic groups.  And its use of this rhizomatic structure is reflected in the most immediately visible part of *The Vault*: the interface design of its home page.  Both its older (pre-2015) design and especially its newer layout reflect *The Vault*'s endeavor to represent both individual bohemians and their shifting alliances over time.

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[237] See "rhizome, n." *OED Online.* Oxford University Press, March 2015. Web. 21 March 2015.

THE VAULT AT PFAFF'S  *An Archive of Art and Literature by New York City's Nineteenth-Century Bohemians*

About | Biographies | Works | Saturday Press

Welcome  *Introduction*  Staff  Support

In an unfinished poem written in the early 1860s, Walt Whitman memorialized "The vault at Pfaffs where the drinkers and laughers meet to eat and drink and carouse." Under the low-hanging ceiling of the underground pub sometimes referred to as "Pfaff's Cave," Whitman drew inspiration from the creative energy of what one nineteenth-century observer called "the trysting-place of the most careless, witty, and jovial spirits of New York,—journalists, artists, and poets." (The image to the right, for example, depicts a young William Dean Howells meeting Whitman for the first time at Pfaff's.) Visitors to *The Vault at Pfaff's* have the opportunity to experience the vitality of Whitman's favorite "trysting-place" by exploring the art and literature that helped to shape an emerging conception of New York City as the artistic, literary, and intellectual center of the United States.

*The Vault at Pfaff's* opened for public access in September of 2006. Presently, the site includes brief biographies of approximately 150 people who were connected to the bohemian scene at Pfaff's, as well as an annotated bibliography of over four thousand texts by and about the Pfaff's bohemians. (Many of these texts have already been annotated, but the annotation process is still ongoing.) The majority of the texts in this bibliography are from *The New York Saturday Press*, the short-lived but influential literary journal that many Pfaffians contributed to. All 157 issues of *The Saturday Press* have been digitally reproduced here. The other texts in this bibliography include nineteenth-century documents by and about the Pfaff's bohemians, as well as related twentieth-century scholarship. When an electronic version of one of these texts is available elsewhere on the World Wide Web, an external link has been provided to facilitate further research.

As work continues on *The Vault at Pfaff's*, biographies of individuals who have been identified as Pfaffians but who do not currently appear on the site will be added, as will further annotations of the works in the database. At a later date, the site will also include a set of introductions to the historical, social, and cultural contexts within which the Pfaffians worked, along with teaching modules designed to help secondary and post-secondary educators guide their students through the texts and issues presented here. A potential addition to the site could be the inclusion of visualization technologies to illustrate the web of connections between various of the Pfaff's bohemians. Such technologies would allow the data that has been and will be archived in *The Vault at Pfaff's* to be presented in a manner that will dynamically visualize the reciprocal influences between the patrons of Pfaff's.

*The Vault at Pfaff's* is created and maintained by Edward Whitley and Rob Weidman, with Megan Norcia, Abigail Aldrich, Elizabeth Wiggins, and others. See the staff page for a complete list of contributors.

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**Figure 4.1.  Screen shot of *The Vault at Pfaff's*, pre-2015 version.**

As we can see from this older interface, *The Vault*'s home page visually emphasized text while subsuming the individual bohemians. [238]  Additionally, the home page's illustration features William Dean Howells meeting Whitman, strongly hinting at Whitman's centrality to the group with whom he is pictured—the centripetal force (paraphrasing McGill) around whom other artists, writers, and actors revolved. Although the upper left corner provides links to biographies about and works by the Pfaffians, and allowed readers to search the collection's underlying database by

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[238] According to the Internet Archive's snapshots, *The Vault at Pfaff's* home page has gone through two design iterations since its 2006 launch.  The first design, pictured in Figure 4.1, features an illustration of Whitman talking with Howells in a larger group.  The second design appears in Figure 4.2 below.

specific historical groups (salons, associations, and coteries), these links were
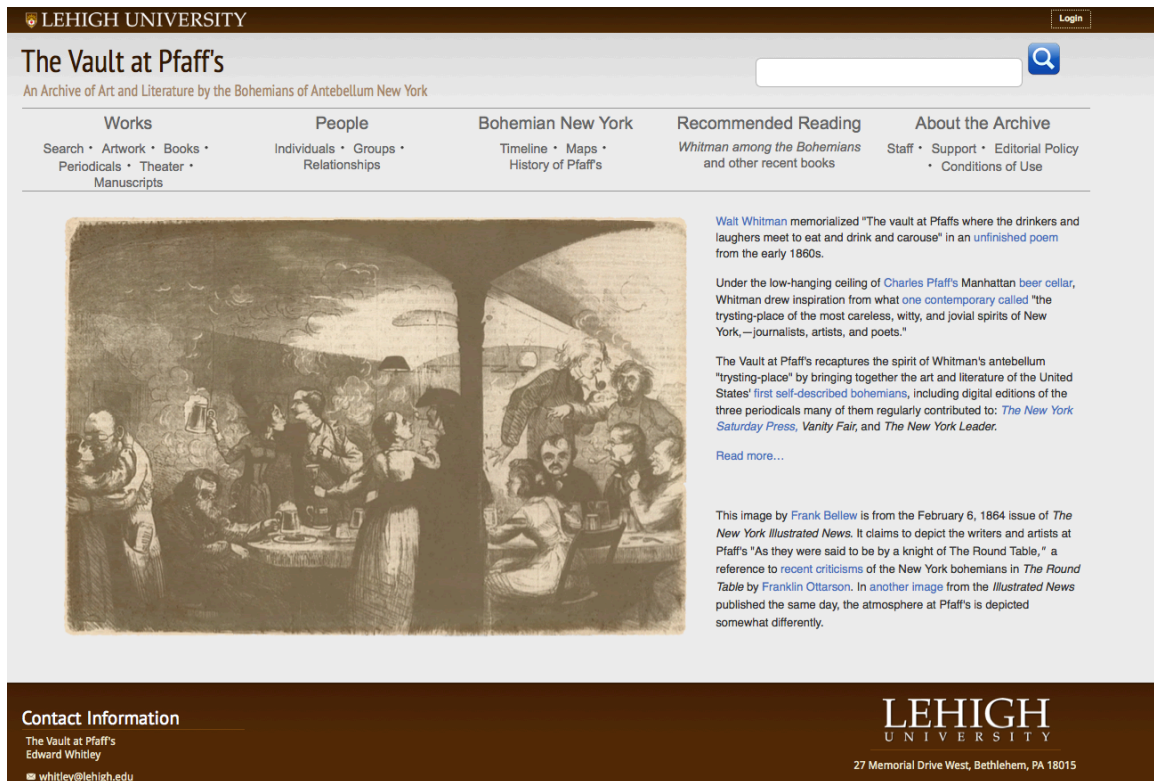
initially set several "clicks" away from the home page.



**Figure 4.2.  Screen shot of _The Vault at Pfaff's_, 2015 version.**

In contrast to the older interface, the new design (pictured in Figure 4.2) brings

these search features to the forefront and displays them across the top of the page.

While the earlier design compressed these features and set them several pages

into the site, the new design brings these multiple points of access to the top page,

emphasizing the group and its geographic place, as well as promoting other access

points to the collection ("Works," "People," "Bohemian New York").  Similarly, the illustration reflects the collection's emphasis on the group; instead of featuring Whitman, it depicts the writers and artists at Pfaff's—including the group's leader, Henry Clapp, Jr., seated at the table on the far left—visually underscoring the importance of the literary community.

According to *The Vault at Pfaff's*, this image was one of two illustrations that appeared in the February 6, 1864 issue of *The New York Illustrated News*, and referenced an anonymous reviewer's criticisms of the Pfaffians.  Both images, created by Frank Bellew, depict the New York bohemians in dramatically different ways.  The image on *The Vault*'s home page, which features three amorous couples and clouds of tobacco smoke, corresponds with the reviewer's criticism of the Bohemians as luring promising young literary men into "underground carousels and all-night dissipations," and putting them in danger of "drown[ing] their talent in lager-bier or "smok[ing] it out with tobacco."[239]  The second image, on *The Vault*'s "About the Archive" page, features a brightly-lit table of men soberly discussing their work, and bearing the caption "Bohemians as they are—described by one of their own number."[240]  These two images, then, serve as visual

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[239] See "Drama: Bohemianism." *The Round Table*. 06 Feb. 1864: 124.  Available at *The Vault at Pfaff's*, https://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/60704
[240] Bellew's image of the sober Pfaffians is available at http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/38090.  On a related note, one may wonder— as I did—why the editors chose for their home page the image of carousing Pfaffians rather than the sober group.  Perhaps because, in keeping with *The*

counterpoints to each other, providing compelling examples of *The Vault*'s

argument for a networked approach to literary history, and underscoring the

collection's conscious decision to represent multiple interpretations about the

Pfaffians.  They do so in part because the images depict a group rather than one

author or work, and in part because the collection's editors have embedded

hyperlinks connecting the images to each other, to biographical descriptions of

Bellew and the anonymous reviewer (likely Franklin J. Ottarson) in *The Vault*, and

to an external link to criticism about the Pfaffians available via Google Books.

More importantly, the use of hyperlinks connecting the images with each

other and their historical context points to the collection's endeavor to foster

critical engagement with its materials, even—especially—when those materials

contradict each other.  With its editorial policy of inclusion rather than

exclusion,[241] and with its caveat that readers peruse sources with a critical eye

because of the potentially conflicting materials about the Pfaffians, *The Vault*

reinforces this approach through its design—specifically, through the careful

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*Vault*'s policy of inclusion, the carousing image is more gender-inclusive, it
features lively debate as well as carousing, and it conveys a sense of life and
movement about the group.  (It's certainly more fun to look at.)
[241] See "Editorial Policy," available at http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/38093.
*The Vault*'s inclusive policy runs up against the formidable challenge editors face
when selecting and maintaining a collection of materials—that is, knowing
precisely how much to collect, and knowing when to stop.  (It also recalls Kenneth
Price's plaintive question about *The Walt Whitman Archive*:  "What separates
wisdom and madness in a project that sets out to represent everything?"  Not
much.)

placement of hyperlinks.  While an embedded link may not seem like a particularly

compelling design element, and while hyperlinks often tend to reinforce the

editor-reader hierarchy (because editors decide which materials they wish to

direct readers to), these embedded links become essential for researchers and

non-specialists alike, because they contextualize the historically complex materials

such as those found in *The Vault*.

One other important aspect of the home page's redesign lies in the footer,

where readers see its declaration as a peer-reviewed source.  Unlike, for example,

*The Walt Whitman Archive*'s inclusion of Kenneth Price's and Ed Folsom's names

alongside Whitman's at the top of the page, *The Vault*'s home page features the

group in its subtitle ("An Archive of Art and Literature by the Bohemians of

Antebellum New York"), its main navigational links, and its choice of illustration,

highlighting through its design the communal emphasis of the collection.[242]

However, *The Vault* departs from collections such as the *WWA* by declaring its

status as a form of digital scholarship with its inclusion in the Networked

Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Scholarship (NINES).[243]  Significantly, *The*

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[242] Like this footnote, editor Edward Whitley's name and contact information
appear on the footer of every page in *The Vault,* yet the inclusion seems designed
to facilitate contact with readers, rather than conveying an official scholarly stamp
of approval.
[243] Based at the University of Virginia, NINES is a scholarly organization that
serves as a peer-reviewing body for digital work focused on the nineteenth
century, both British and American.  It also functions as a research portal by
allowing readers to search across several of its collections at once, effectively

*Vault* also provides a search widget[244] at the bottom of each page that enables

readers to search across the digital collections within NINES (including *The Vault*),

thereby pushing the idea of the network even farther, by linking readers to a wider

array of materials connected with this and with other time periods.  In doing so,

*The Vault* embeds itself in a broader network of American, British, Caribbean and

French sources spanning the medieval period to the early twentieth century, and

encourages readers to search across this broader network of collections.  This

widget comprises one of several examples in which *The Vault* directs readers

outside its collection, and is an important point I'll return to later.  For the moment,

*The Vault*'s inclusion of this search function points to the extent to which the

collection's home page design, compared with other digital collections,

underscores its networked approach to literary history by forging connections

with other networks.

This approach appears most prominently in *The Vault's* inclusion of the

"Relationships" search feature, which allows readers to see the relationships

among individual bohemians (Figure 4.3).

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expanding a reader's access to materials and, at the same time, making the
materials within those individual collections more discoverable.
[244] A widget is a visual component of a graphical user interface (and the code
associated with it) that allows a reader to perform a particular function.  Common
examples of widgets embedded in websites include clocks, calendars, and weather
updates.  Definition of "widget" courtesy of *OED Online*. Oxford University Press,
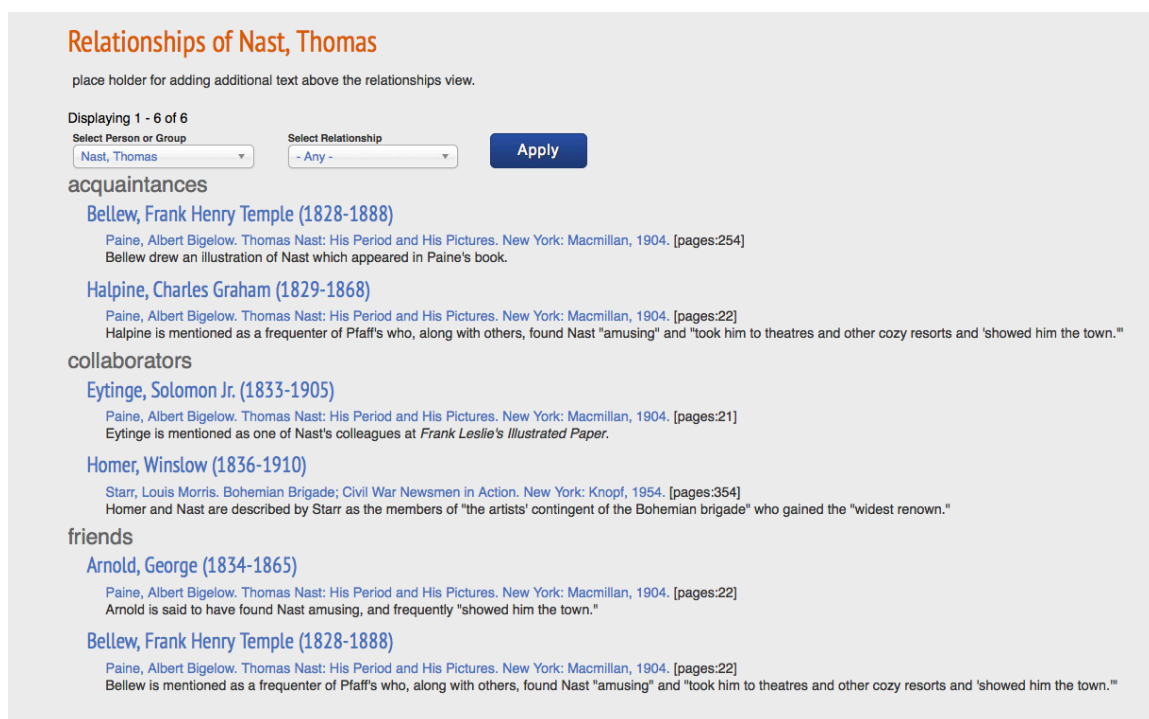March 2015. Web. 23 March 2015.

**Relationships of Nast, Thomas**

place holder for adding additional text above the relationships view.

Displaying 1 - 6 of 6

Select Person or Group     Select Relationship
Nast, Thomas ▼            - Any - ▼            **Apply**

acquaintances

Bellew, Frank Henry Temple (1828-1888)
Paine, Albert Bigelow. Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [pages:254]
Bellew drew an illustration of Nast which appeared in Paine's book.

Halpine, Charles Graham (1829-1868)
Paine, Albert Bigelow. Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [pages:22]
Halpine is mentioned as a frequenter of Pfaff's who, along with others, found Nast "amusing" and "took him to theatres and other cozy resorts and 'showed him the town.'"

collaborators

Eytinge, Solomon Jr. (1833-1905)
Paine, Albert Bigelow. Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [pages:21]
Eytinge is mentioned as one of Nast's colleagues at *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Paper*.

Homer, Winslow (1836-1910)
Starr, Louis Morris. Bohemian Brigade; Civil War Newsmen in Action. New York: Knopf, 1954. [pages:354]
Homer and Nast are described by Starr as the members of "the artists' contingent of the Bohemian brigade" who gained the "widest renown."

friends

Arnold, George (1834-1865)
Paine, Albert Bigelow. Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [pages:22]
Arnold is said to have found Nast amusing, and frequently "showed him the town."

Bellew, Frank Henry Temple (1828-1888)
Paine, Albert Bigelow. Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [pages:22]
Bellew is mentioned as a frequenter of Pfaff's who, along with others, found Nast "amusing" and "took him to theatres and other cozy resorts and 'showed him the town.'"

**Figure 4.3.  Screen shot of the Relationships feature in *The Vault*.**

This is by far one of the most compelling features of the collection, as it allows readers to search for and see at a glance one individual's or one group's relationships:  lovers, housemates, friends, family, acquaintances, antagonists, and collaborators.  ("Groups" refers to smaller, often geographically-defined gatherings—salons, coteries, or fraternities—of people who were Pfaffian bohemians, or were connected to them in some way.)  In the figure above, for example, we can see Thomas Nast's relationship with Frank Bellew categorized as both acquaintance and friend.  Similarly, writer Ada Clare's relationship with Walt

Whitman is variously categorized as friend, collaborator, lover, and antagonist,

effectively mapping different views of their evolving relationship with each other

over time:  their friendship while frequenting Pfaff's bar,[245] Clare's garnering

female support for Whitman's poetry, their rumored affair, and Whitman's

criticism of Clare's unconventional lifestyle.

In one sense, this feature enacts Carole Crumley's definition of a heterarchy,

a system defined by "the relation of elements to one another when they are

unranked or when they possess the potential for being ranked in a number of

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[245] Francis Wolle mentions Clare and Whitman's friendship in his book *Fitz-James O'Brien: A Literary Bohemian of the Eighteen-Fifties*. Eugene Lallor describes Clare's support for his poetry in "Whitman among the New York Literary Bohemians: 1859–1862." Both Daniel Epstein and David Reynolds mention Whitman's possible affair with Clare.  Albert Parry mentions Whitman's criticism of Clare's unconventional lifestyle in *Garrets and Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America*. More recently, Joanna Levin registers Whitman's recollection of his late friend's "gay, easy, sunny free, loose, but *not ungood* life" as bearing a discernible trace of a sexual double standard.  See Wolle's *Fitz-James O'Brien: A Literary Bohemian of the Eighteen-Fifties*. Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado, 1944; Lallor's "Whitman among the New York Literary Bohemians: 1859–1862." *Walt Whitman Review*. 25(1979): 131-145.  From *The Vault at Pfaff's*. http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/.  Ed. Edward Whitley and Rob Weidman, March 25, 2015.  See also Epstein's *Lincoln and Whitman: Parallel Lives in Civil War Washington*. New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2004; Reynolds' *Walt Whitman*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.  Both citations are taken from *The Vault at Pfaff's*.  http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/.  Ed. Edward Whitley and Rob Weidman, March 25, 2015.  See Albert Parry's *Garrets and Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America*. New York: Covici, Friede, 1933; and see Levin's ""Freedom for Women from Conventional Lies": The "Queen of Bohemia" and the Feminist Feuilleton."  *Whitman Among the Bohemians*.  Iowa City:  University of Iowa Press, 2014, 75-97.

different ways."[246]  By allowing readers to rank individuals and groups in a variety

of ways without privileging any one person or work, and by drawing attention to

"the jostling of coteries,"[247] this affordance serves as a tangible example of what

McGill describes as *The Vault*'s groundbreaking view of literary history, because

this feature invites readers to see that view.  More importantly, by encouraging

readers to select which individuals and coteries they wish to rank, the collection

construes literary history—or this period of it, at least—as a dynamic heterarchy,

one that requires a reader's engagement in order to generate connections among

individuals and groups.

Of course, the collection's editors provide the annotated primary and

secondary sources that form the basis of these relationships among individuals

and groups, and so in this sense the editor/reader hierarchy still obtains.  (Readers

cannot currently contribute materials to the collection, or provide annotations for

existing materials.)  Yet given the collection's policy of including materials that

often disagree about the nature of relationships among the Pfaffians, and given its

caveat/encouragement to read these materials with a critical eye, *The Vault*

arguably requires readers to engage more critically with its materials than it

would initially appear.  For as readers elicit connections among individuals, they

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[246] See Crumley's "Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies,"
*Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*, 6.1 (1995): 1–5.
[247] See "Remediating Whitman," 1595.

will inevitably find contradictions and points of overlap among discourse about the New York bohemians, and begin to regard the materials more carefully.

From a structural standpoint—specifically, the way the 'Relationships' feature works—it also represents what N. Katherine Hayles describes as the symbiotic relationship between the genres of narrative and database.[248]  Writing in response to Lev Manovich's characterization of narrative and database as "natural enemies,"[249] Hayles instead characterizes these two genres as symbionts, or organisms living in an intimate association and contributing to each other's support.[250]  As she asserts, a database can construct relational juxtapositions, yet it requires narrative to interpret the meaning of those relations; likewise, narrative

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[248] See N. Katherine Hayles' "Narrative and Database:  Natural Symbionts."  *PMLA* 122.5 (2007):  1603-1607.  *The Vault* uses a relational database as its structure. Relational databases organize information into one or more tables ("relations") of rows and columns.  In turn, each table represents an object type—for example, people—with each column representing an attribute of that object (date of birth, gender, profession) and each row representing a specific instance of that object (for example, Ada Clare). Junction tables can then connect two rows from one or more tables by sharing an attribute with one or more table. For example, a relationship table could contain columns representing attributes of the relationship (friend, lover, antagonist) and contain references to *other* table rows —person1 ID (Ada Clare's unique identifying number in the people table), person2 ID (Walt Whitman's unique number). Tables can then be connected with each other, allowing readers to search across this entire set of relations—search, in other words, the database.  Rob Weidman graciously contributed to this definition of "relational database."
[249] See Lev Manovich's *The Language of New Media*.  Cambridge, MA:  MIT Press, 2001, 228.
[250] A classic example of a symbiotic relationship is one between the Egyptian Plover bird and the crocodile, in which the bird removes food stuck in the crocodile's teeth.  The bird eats the food it removes, thereby rounding out its diet, and the crocodile can pursue future meals with sparkling clean teeth.

requires the computational power of a database to test its insights, and even to

create new narratives.[251]  Indeed, Hayles argues that as databases increase in size,

so too will the narrative possibilities:

> At the global level, databases are essential.  However, narrative enters
> even in the interpretation of relations revealed by database queries...in the
> face of overwhelming quantities of data that database-management systems
> now put at our fingertips, no one narrative is likely to dominate as *the*
> explanation, for the interpretive possibilities proliferate exponentially as
> databases increase."[252]

In the case of *The Vault*, a database powers the 'Relationships' feature by allowing

readers to arrange and sort people, relationships, and groups based on the

interpretive (narrative) connections its editors and other scholars have already

created.  And as material is added the database grows, allowing readers to elicit a

greater number of interpretive connections based on their interpretations of both

the new material and its relation to the existing material.  Although *The Vault* relies

on a smaller relational database than what Hayles envisions, the collection already

provides multiple explanations—multiple narratives—by and about the Pfaffians

rather than one dominant interpretation, which speaks precisely to Hayles' point.

Put another way, *The Vault* exemplifies the symbiotic relation between narrative

and database, and its 'Relationships' feature provides readers an essential

affordance for navigating this relationship.

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[251] See Hayles' "Narrative and Database:  Natural Symbionts," 1603.
[252] See "Narrative and Database:  Natural Symbionts," 1607.

**The digital informs the print**

Just as *The Vault* illustrates the symbiotic relation between narrative and database, it also reveals the extent to which it informs recent printed scholarship about the Pfaffian bohemians. This connection between, or perhaps interdependence of, the digital and the print springs in large part from the collection's complete digitized run of *The Saturday Press*, one of two literary magazines that began at Pfaff's bar. (The other was *Vanity Fair.*)

Mark Lause's *The Antebellum Crisis and America's First Bohemians*, for example, provides a history of nineteenth-century social radicals who joined the Pfaffian group. His delineation of the political affinities of New York bohemians— along with Henry Clapp's experiences abroad—rely extensively on works by the Pfaffians that appeared in *The Saturday Press*.[253] Similarly, Joanna Levin's book chapter "Whitman, Bohemia, and the *Saturday Press*" uses the literary magazine to analyze relationships among the Pfaffian bohemians and their bourgeois counterparts.[254] In his chapter "America, the Birthplace of Bohemia" Daniel Cottom argues that American bohemians—including the Pfaffians—sought to distinguish themselves as free-thinkers in contrast to the narrow-minded

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[253] See Lause's *The Antebellum Crisis & America's First Bohemians*, Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2009. Lause's chapter "Utopia on Broadway" cites numerous publications by Ada Clare, Fitz-James O'Brien, George Arnold, and A. L. Rawson.
[254] See Levin's *Bohemia in America*: *1858-1920*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010, 13-69.

purveyors of respectability, and in doing so he draws extensively on publications

by Getty Gay, Ada Clare, and anonymous submissions in the *Saturday Press.*[255]

Likewise, Stephanie Blalock uses the collection's biographical sketch of Fred Gray,

one of the main figures in her article, to elicit greater connections between Gray

and Whitman.[256]  Finally, almost every essay in the recent *Whitman Among the*

*Bohemians* uncovers little-known stories of either Whitman's experiences with the

Pfaffians or stories about the Pfaffians themselves, and these essays rely

extensively on sources in *The Vault.*[257]  The acknowledgements attest to this,

asserting the book would not exist without its digital counterpart.[258]  *Whitman*

*Among the Bohemians* also foregrounds, perhaps more than these other examples,

the interdependence of digital and print scholarship.  That is, the book relies on

*The Vault*—specifically, its run of the *Saturday Press*—to create interpretations

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[255] See Cottom's *International Bohemia:  Scenes of Nineteenth-Century Life*.
Philadelphia:  University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013, 146-185.
[256] See Blalock's ""My Dear Comrade Frederickus": Walt Whitman and Fred Gray."
*Walt Whitman Quarterly Review,* 27.1 (2009):  49-65.  Blalock's article is also
available at http://www.whitmanarchive.org/criticism/wwqr/pdf/anc.01030.pdf.
Patrick Scott also cites *The Vault*'s biographical entry on William North for his
article "'I Had Never Before ... Heard of Him At All': William Gilmore Simms, the
Elusive William North, and a Lost Simms Novel About American Authorship."
*Simms Review* 19.1-2 (2011): 5-17.
[257] Specific essays that extensively use *The Vault*'s run of the *Saturday Press*
include Ingrid Satelmajer's "Publishing Pfaff's:  Henry Clapp and Poetry in the
*Saturday Press*," Leif Eckstrom's "On Puffing: The *Saturday Press* and the
Circulation of Symbolic Capital," and Joanna Levin's ""Freedom for Women from
Conventional Lies": The "Queen of Bohemia" and the Feminist Feuilleton."  See
*Whitman Among the Bohemians*, eds. Joanna Levin and Edward Whitley.  Iowa City:
University of Iowa Press, 2014.
[258] See *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, vii.

(narratives) about the Pfaffian bohemians that, in turn, may be used to further

expand on the relationships of individuals listed in the collection.[259]

Books geared at non-specialist audiences rely on or reference the digital

collection as well. Justin Martin's *Rebel Souls: Walt Whitman and America's First*

*Bohemians* uses the collection's *The Saturday Press* to underscore Whitman's

connections with the New York bohemians, especially Charles Halpine, George

Arnold, and Thomas Nast. Martin draws on *The Vault's* biographical information

for these three individuals, and acknowledges the collection extensively in the

appendix.[260] In the 2012 Dover Press edition of Albert Parry's *Garrets and*

*Pretenders*, editor Paul Buhle asserts that readers interested in this period will

want to consult this "invaluable Internet resource" with its many supporting

documents, and Buhle imagines Parry taking great pleasure in "the ordinary

reader being able to study…all the issues of the key newspaper, the *Saturday*

*Press*."[261] And although it does not reference the collection directly, Sharon

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[259] Edward Whitley recently suggested another factor to consider with regard to this interdependence: timing. He points out that the full run of *Vanity Fair*, a publication "arguably as central to the Pfaff's experience as the *Saturday Press*," wasn't available to contributors in time for them to use it. He wonders, "is the scholarship in [*Whitman Among the Bohemians*] skewed because *The Vault* represented the *Saturday Press* as *the* bohemian magazine, when the truth was more complex?" His point underscores the larger issue of how digital scholarship's accessibility will continue to shape future printed scholarship. Email communication with Edward Whitley, Monday, April 6, 2015.
[260] See *Rebel Souls*, Boston: Da Capo Press, 2014, pages 277 and 280, respectively.
[261] See Parry's *Garrets and Pretenders: Bohemian Life in America from Poe to Kerouac.* Ed. Paul Buhle. Mineola, NY: Dover Press, 2012, xi.

Rudahl's "The Queen of Bohemia" renders the story of Ada Clare's life in comic

book format, featuring figures such as Adah Mencken, Walt Whitman, Charles Pfaff,

and Henry Clapp.[262]

These instances reveal the extent to which *The Vault*, as a form of digital

scholarship both informs and relies on recent printed scholarship, a relation that

gestures toward Wesley Raabe's assertion about the extent to which print and

digital textuality may be "thoroughly intermingled."[263]   Additionally, this

interdependence of digital and print scholarship exemplifies the symbiotic relation

between narrative and database—in this instance, scholarly and popular

interpretations of the Pfaffian bohemians that rely on and, in turn, may further

inform *The Vault*'s database-structured connections among individuals.  For

example, Joanna Levin uses Ada Clare's writings from the *Saturday Press* to show

how Clare's support of Whitman fit into her own bohemian agenda, thereby

emphasizing her literary contributions to the antebellum New York literary scene,

and revealing yet another perspective on her relationship with Whitman.  Levin,

then, provides an interpretation—that is, a narrative—about Clare's literary

contributions that is partly informed by *The Vault*.[264]

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[262] See Rudahl's "The Queen of Bohemia," in *Bohemians:  A Graphic History*, eds.
Paul Buhle and David Berger.  Brooklyn, NY:  Verso, 2014, 8-14.
[263] See Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," 67.
[264] See Levin's ""Freedom for Women from Conventional Lies": The "Queen of
Bohemia" and the Feminist Feuilleton," in *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, eds.

Collectively, these examples of print scholarship also demonstrate the various ways their authors situate their printed works in relation to the digital collection, and perhaps digital scholarship as a whole.  Of the aforementioned examples, Justin Martin's *Rebel Souls* acknowledges both *The Vault* and his use of the *Saturday Press* extensively in the appendix; likewise, Stephanie Blalock cites *The Vault* repeatedly in her article about Whitman and Fred Gray.  And in *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, the editors acknowledge the digital collection early on, asserting that since 2006, *The Vault* has "made widely accessible every issue of the bohemians' primary literary organ, the *Saturday Press*, along with detailed information about more than 150 figures associated in one way or another with the Pfaff's scene."[265]  Perhaps more importantly, the editors list the website links for seven of the twelve sources in the List of Abbreviations at the book's beginning. All seven sources are freely available online through *The Vault* and the *Walt Whitman Archive*.  By directing readers to these digital collections, the editors not only acknowledge their reliance on them, but also confer a much-needed legitimacy for digital scholarship as a whole, by revealing the extent to which these collections shape their collection of printed essays.  Thus, *The Vault* ensures the Pfaffians' increasing visibility in literary scholarship, and renders digital scholarship as a whole more visible in recent print scholarship.

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Joanna Levin and Edward Whitley. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2014, 75-97.
[265] See *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, xvi.

However, the collection still remains a shadowy presence in works by other scholars, occupying the place its bohemian coterie once did.  Despite the collection's clearly articulated conditions of use, which describe and give examples of how scholars should cite *The Vault*, many scholars continue to cite the magazine as a print publication—apparent in their endnotes and references—suggesting how the authority of print still holds sway in literary scholarship.

In *Bohemia in America, 1858-1920*, for example, Joanna Levin refers to *The Vault*'s version of the *Saturday Press* in her first chapter and directs readers to the collection,[266] but her subsequent citations refer to *The Saturday Press* as a print publication, without specifying the source.  Similarly, Mark Lause's *The Antebellum Crisis and America's First Bohemians* praises *The Vault at Pfaff's* in his introduction, acknowledging its range of materials including the complete, searchable run of the *Saturday Press* and describing the collection as "a model of what the Internet can provide in terms of accessible scholarship."[267]  Yet he cites the *Saturday Press* as a primary printed source, and his endnotes elide any acknowledgement of the collection. Finally, Daniel Cottom cites the *Saturday Press* repeatedly in *International Bohemia*, but as a printed source.  In fairness to these scholars, *The*

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[266] As Levin states, "the *S[aturday] P[ress]* is now available online through Lehigh University's Digital Library.  For this important new resource, see Edward Whitley, "The Vault at Pfaff's: An Archive of Art and Literature by New York City's Nineteenth-Century Bohemians."  See Levin's *Bohemia in America: 1858-1920*, Stanford:  Stanford University Press, 2010; 397.
[267] See Lause's *The Antebellum Crisis & America's First Bohemians*, x.

*Vault*'s display of the *Saturday Press* maintains the organization of the printed copy, by displaying individual pages from issues.  Citing the digitized magazine, therefore, entails citing it first as a printed source (Issue 1, Page 4).  Nevertheless, adding additional information about its digital origins, as outlined in *The Vault*'s "Conditions of Use" statement, remains essential to the status of digital scholarship.

This point about citation may seem trivial initially, but it speaks to what I suspect is a common practice among many humanities scholars:  consulting digital collections and sources but continuing to cite those sources as printed works.  In one sense, this practice recalls Wesley Raabe's assertion that literary scholarship's turn away from bibliography and textual scholarship has led to a misleading faith in the "accurate transmission of print" and an "undeserved prejudice against scholarship in digital form" because of its presumed mutability.  One of the consequences that Raabe describes, that printed texts acquire an unmerited authority,[268] drastically undercuts the generative impact that digital thematic collections have *already* begun to make in the field of literary and historical scholarship.

While this practice of citing digital sources as printed works was somewhat understandable ten years ago when citation standards for web sources were in

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[268] See Raabe's "Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," 66-67.

greater flux than now, and while issues such as link rot[269] certainly present their

own unique challenges, the consequences this particular citation practice has for

the field of literary scholarship—print *and* digital—remains just as crucial as the

ways in which humanities scholars define digital collections.  Recalling Price's

assertion, the way we define digital collections undoubtedly shapes humanities

scholars' conceptions of their work and how these collections are positioned in the

academy.[270]  Yet equally, perhaps more important is scholars' citations of digital

collections in their printed publications.  Literary scholars using digital collections,

especially freely available sources like *The Vault* (which isn't nearly as susceptible

to link rot as other online sources) have, I believe, an ethical obligation to cite

these collections, both to give credit to the actual source and to ensure that other

readers who wish to access the source may do so as well.  Only then will digital

literary scholarship—and digital thematic collections in particular—begin to

acquire the same authority that printed scholarship currently occupies.

What all these examples demonstrate, then, is the degree to which digital

scholarship and digital collections have begun to actively inform printed

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[269] "Link rot," also variously known as "link death," "link breaking," and "reference rot" and is defined as the process by which hyperlinks on web pages or on the internet point to unavailable resources.  Correspondingly, a link that no longer works is often referred to as broken link or dead link.  Definition courtesy of Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Link_rot
[270] See Price's "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection:  What's in a Name?" *DHQ:  Digital Humanities Quarterly*  3.3 (Summer 2009), paragraph 2.  Available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html

scholarship.  They also underscore the need to make this relationship even more

visible in printed scholarship, through the relatively simple act of citing digital

sources.  Just as *The Vault* fosters more robust and nuanced printed scholarship

regarding the nineteenth-century bohemian group's influence on subsequent

artists, so researchers using material from collections like *The Vault* must foster

these forms by acknowledging them more fully in their own works.  Doing so will, I

think, begin to confer much-needed authority to digital collections, by revealing

the extent to which print may—indeed, already *does*—productively rely upon the

digital.


**The periodical and the archive**

In addition to revealing the interdependent relation between digital

scholarship and print scholarship, *The Vault* also intermediates two genres as well:

the periodical and the archive.  As I noted earlier, the digital collection hosts an

entire run of the *Saturday Press*, which consists of digitized images taken from

Emory University Library's microfilm rolls—which, in turn, were made from

original copies at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.  The digital form allows

readers to browse the magazine page by page,[271] somewhat akin to the way they

might browse a printed copy (although there is no "page turn" function), and to

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[271] This browsing feature relies on CONTENTdm, a commercial software that many
libraries and archives use for hosting their digital collections, and that allows for
the digital management ("dm") of any content uploaded into its system.

use *The Vault*'s database to search within this magazine, or even across several magazines hosted by the collection.  In one sense these transformations from print to microfilm to digital could be regarded as pure remediation, with *The Vault*'s database "swallowing" the microfilm, which in turn "swallowed" the printed magazine.

However, the digital collection enacts multiple instances of intermediation, primarily through the affordances it provides for readerly engagement with the *Saturday Press* and other magazines.  The page-by-page browsing feature, for example, enables readers to view, define, resize and zoom in to individual pages of each publication, as well as search within individual issues. [272]  At the same time, the page scans retain the design and layout of the printed magazines, allowing readers to skim across the top of each column similar to the way they might read a print newspaper, and to see relationships in the juxtaposition of illustrations and text, as well as among different writers' works organized through the magazine's rubrics of the page and the issue.

Another instance of intermediation occurs between the *Saturday Press* and *The Vault*'s database.  More specifically, the collection's organizational

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[272] The one exception is the *Saturday Press*, which currently doesn't allow for searching because its page images haven't been scanned using Optical Character Recognition.  (Optical Character Recognition, or OCR, converts a digital image of a text into machine-encoded text, allowing it to be edited and searched.)

framework,[273] browsing software, digital scans of the magazines and the

underlying database all work in concert to allow readers to search across and

engage with the *Saturday Press* as a database—as a series of relationships

informed not by the organization of the printed page, but by a reader's search

terms.  Recalling again Crumley's definition of a dynamic heterarchy as a system

that allows elements to be ranked in a number of different ways, *The Vault*

construes its periodicals as dynamic heterarchies, inviting readers to engage with

them not only through pages and issues, but also by advertisement, criticism,

obituary, photograph, and other genres within these periodicals.  By offering

readers multiple modes of interaction with its periodicals, then, *The Vault* reveals

the extent to which the periodical and the database intermediate each other as

generic forms.

Yet another generic form entering this intermediatory mix is the archive, a

designation apparent in the collection's subtitle:  "An Archive of Art and Literature

by the Bohemians of Antebellum New York."  As its editorial policy states, the

collection's editors purposefully chose this term given its increasing prevalence in

digital scholarship, while also acknowledging the term's limitations in describing

the range of work throughout its own collection.[274]  And while debates surround

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[273] Drupal, the framework for *The Vault*, both organizes the collection's materials
into Works, People, Relationships, etc. *and* serves as the means by which readers
may search within or across these materials.
[274] See "Editorial Policy," available at http://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/node/38093

the application of this term for digital thematic collections,[275] the Society of

American Archivists' definition corresponds somewhat with *The Vault*'s provision

of the *Saturday Press* and *Vanity Fair*.  According to the SAA's glossary, the term

"archives" refers to "materials created or received by a person, family, or

organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved

because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain."[276]

Arguably, the *Saturday Press* and *Vanity Fair* could be regarded as the materials

created by a private (albeit loosely-affiliated) organization of New York

bohemians, preserved by *The Vault* because of the enduring value contained in

these publications.  At the risk of stretching the SAA definition, *The Vault*

effectively serves as an online archive for these publications, or at the very least

intermediates the preservation function of the archive by maintaining and hosting

these magazines.

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[275] See Theimer's "Archives in Context and as Context," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1.2 (Spring 2002). http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-2/archives-in-context-and-as-context-by-kate-theimer.  See also Tanya Clement, Wendy Hagenmaier, and Jenny Knies's "Toward a Notion of the Archive of the Future: Impressions of Practice by Librarians, Archivists, and Digital Humanities Scholars." *The Library Quarterly* 83.2 (April 2013):  112-130.  Finally, see Kenneth Price's "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection:  What's in a Name?" *DHQ:  Digital Humanities Quarterly*  3.3 (Summer 2009).  Available at http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html
[276] Definition of "archives" from *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*, ed. Richard Pearce-Moses.  Chicago:  Society of American Archivists, 30.  Online version accessed March 28, 2015.  Available at http://www2.archivists.org/glossary.

Further, *The Vault* includes a provenance note[277] about the *Saturday Press* in each search result using the 'Works' feature, and provides links to finding aids, manuscript collections, and scrapbooks—i.e., archival material—hosted at other institutions.  Of course, these examples could be seen as adaptations of archival principles and practices, rather than intermediations.  Yet if we return to Hayles' definition of intermediation, in which "the accumulated knowledge of previous [genres] has not been lost but continues to inform performances in the new medium,"[278] these examples show how *The Vault* employs elements of accumulated knowledge from other genres—the database, the periodical, and the archive—which then inform their performance in the relatively newer medium of the digital collection.

Approaching these examples as intermediations isn't to brush aside some archivists' concerns that applying the term "archive" to digital collections reveals a lack of understanding about what archives (and archivists) do,[279] but rather to

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[277] "Provenance" refers to the origins of an artifact or a collection of materials. This definition comes from the SAA's glossary, and is available at http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/p/provenance.

[278] See Hayles' "Intermediation:  The Pursuit of a Vision," *New Literary History* 38.1 (2007): 107.

[279] Kate Theimer eloquently expresses this concern in her article "Archives in Context and as Context."  By contrast, William J. Maher sees the application of "archives" to "singular, idiosyncratic, and synthetic gathering of documents" as a bastardization of the concept, and a direct challenge to professional archivists. Significantly, the SAA's glossary entry for "archives" includes a lengthy quotation from his 1997 presidential address to the SAA about this presumed bastardization, suggesting some archivists' ongoing defensiveness about the permutation of the

suggest that archives—the concept and what it refers to—have already changed in their centuries-old history, and will only continue to do so.  Therefore, regarding archival principles and practices as intermediations within digital collections such as *The Vault*—intermediations in concert with those of the periodical and the database—allow us to trace the transformative interactions of these different genres over time, and their effect on our understanding of literary history.   In the case of *The Vault*, literary history becomes characterized by a series of intermediated, intermediating forms: database, periodical, and archive.  As we shall see below, these intermediations work in tandem with another feature of *The Vault*—its inclusion of links to sources outside its collection—to reinforce the collection's larger argument for a rhizomatic approach to literary history.


**The Vault as rhizome**

        As mentioned earlier, *The Vault* uses embedded links to create connections among different materials in its collection, in order to contextualize these historically complex materials for readers.   Unlike many digital thematic collections that are largely self-contained, however, *The Vault* also provides links to repositories and sources outside itself, such as the *Making of America* collection,

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term and its implications for their profession.  See Maher's "Archives, Archivists, and Society." *The American Archivist* 61.2 (Fall 1998): 252-265.

*Wright American Fiction*, and Google Books, as we can see in the upper right corner

of Figure 4.4 below.



**Figure 4.4.  Screen shot of bibliography for "A Bygone Bohemia."**

Readers may access these links by first searching the collection's "Works" feature

for authors or people mentioned in *The Vault*'s materials, at which point they see a

list of literary and artistic works by Pfaffians, as well as scholarship that mentions

them—essentially, a hyperlinked annotated bibliography containing brief

abstracts, and (where possible) links to the full text of the works by and about the

individuals.

Additionally, they may see links to other collections as well.  While these links undoubtedly enhance the historical and archival functions of *The Vault*, their cumulative effect, to paraphrase McGill, strengthens the cultural, social, and historical connections between materials in *The Vault* and those in *other* digital collections.  This form of linking also creates a centripetal/centrifugal dynamic, because *The Vault* endeavors to gather and centralize in specific points the scattered artifacts about New York bohemians.

At the same time, the collection promotes a reader's attention outward, effectively extending its network beyond itself and resembling a rhizome.  In addition to recalling the botanical definition of a rhizome, these outward connections correspond with Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical conception of knowledge as a rhizome, which has no beginning or end.  In their delineation of a rhizomatic form of knowledge, Deleuze and Guattari contrast what they call an arborescent (tree-like) conception of knowledge—linear and hierarchical—with a rhizomatic conception of knowledge characterized by multiple points of connection among heterogeneous things (think grass instead of trees).[280]  As they assert, "the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance.  The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and…and…and…"[281]

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[280] See Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus.*  Trans. Brian Massumi.  London:  Continuum, 1987, 18.
[281] Ibid, 27-28.

Similarly, *The Vault*'s links to multiple points within its own collection as well as 'outbound' links to other collections enacts a rhizomatic effect, by using hyperlinks to connect disparate materials such as periodicals, finding aids, and digitized books, and to guide readers toward (and perhaps beyond) those materials, promoting seemingly endless conjunctions between materials in *The Vault* and those beyond it.  These "outside" links may also challenge our idea of what a coherent digital collection (or literary text, or artifact) should be.  As it points readers to periodicals, artwork, manuscripts and digitized books in other collections as well as its own, *The Vault* challenges our concept of a digital thematic collection as a singular collection.  This isn't to suggest the collection lacks coherence, but to argue that the rhizomatic effect of the "outbound" links compels us to consider how—or even whether—freely-accessible collections like *The Vault* may enhance their value to readers (scholars and non-specialists alike) by linking to freely-available sources elsewhere.[282]  Doing so will help counter—as *The Vault* currently counters—the "walled garden" effect that most digital collections promote.

One limitation related to the outbound links, however, stems from *The Vault*'s links to subscription-based collections for some of its full-text works.

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[282] My use of "whether" indicates the recognition that creating and maintaining links within *one* collection is challenging enough, let alone linking outward to other collections.  Linking beyond one collection also evokes the persistent challenge of knowing how many "outbound" links to include—in other words, knowing when to stop.

While the inclusion of subscription databases may presume an audience of scholars working at institutions with access to these databases, these links also point (almost literally) to the encroaching economic constraints placed on digital scholarship. Vendors are, with increasing frequency, digitizing and monetizing nineteenth-century literary and historical works, effectively prohibiting public access to them.

Perhaps to counteract this limitation, *The Vault* also includes links to freely-available full text works, a practice that may facilitate greater engagement with materials related to Pfaff's bohemians, and fulfill the collection's research agenda of providing more materials for researchers to assess the New York bohemians' literary and artistic contributions to the antebellum United States. More importantly, *The Vault*'s use of links connecting its collection with others networks—NINES, Google Books—represents a best practice for current and future digital collections, specifically for collections focused on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, since many materials from this time period (though not all) are in the public domain, or have relatively minimal copyright restrictions. Forging links to other freely-available collections will make these materials more discoverable to researchers, and promote scholarship about individuals and historical periods that have thus far received little attention. Indeed, given the generative impact of *The Vault* on recent printed works about the Pfaffians—as well as the interdependent relation between the collection and these works—the

inclusion of links to freely available sources potentially strengthens the

relationship between print and digital scholarship, because this practice ensures a

more democratic access to the literary and historical sources that inform that

scholarship.

By connecting with other collections and networks beyond itself, *The Vault*

also recalls the model of the rhizome, and corresponds with Deleuze and Guattari's

rhizomatic conception of knowledge. As they assert:

> America is a special case. Of course it is not immune from
> domination by trees or the search for roots. This is evident even in
> the literature, in the quest for a national identity and even for a
> European ancestry or genealogy…Nevertheless, everything
> important that has happened or is happening takes the route of the
> American rhizome: the beatniks, the underground, bands and gangs,
> successive lateral offshoots in immediate connection with an
> outside.[283]

Connecting these ideas to *The Vault*, we can see how this digital collection uses a

rhizomatic structure to represent a similarly rhizomatic group, while also

promoting scholarship that adopts this same approach to the New York

bohemians. From an interpretive standpoint, the collection features a group of

writers, artists and actors who formed a (literally underground) bohemian coterie

that prefigured—and in Whitman's case, heavily influenced—the Beat poets and

other literary and artistic groups. For example, Daniel Cottom sees the Beats of the

1950's as cultural and social heirs to nineteenth-century bohemians, including Ada

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[283] Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 21.

Clare and Walt Whitman. [284]  Similarly, Joanna Levin and Edward Whitley align the

Beats with Whitman in their description of Jack Kerouac and Alan Ginsburg's

responses to Whitman as a bohemian poet.  And Justin Martin asserts that

"everyone from Lady Gaga to George Carlin to Dave Eggers owes a debt to these

originals," identifying the New York bohemians as forerunners to the Beat poets,

Andy Warhol's Factory, and abstract expressionist painters from the 1950's who

frequented New York's Cedar Tavern.[285]

Yet in another way, *The Vault* exceeds Deleuze and Guattari's endeavor to

differentiate European and American literature—or at least challenges their case

for American exceptionalism—by situating its literary and historical works within

the structure of a network, thereby revealing the intricate historical connections

between European and American writers.[286]  For example, the collection includes

Polish historian Adam de Gurowski's regular *Saturday Press* column "Minor

Experiences in America," which details his experiences in adapting to American

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[284] See Cottom's *International Bohemia:  Scenes of Nineteenth-Century Life*, 277.
See also Levin and Whitley's *Whitman Among the Bohemians*, xxiii.
[285] See *Rebel Souls*, 2.
[286] As many scholars have noted, the New York bohemians—especially Henry
Clapp, Jr. and Ada Clare—were influenced by their first-hand experiences with
Parisian and London bohemianism, which they attempted to recreate at Pfaff's.
My point is that this transatlantic movement wasn't simply one-way, from Paris to
New York, but continued to reciprocate across the Atlantic throughout the mid-
nineteenth century.  See Cottom's *International Bohemia:  Scenes of Nineteenth-
Century Life*.  Philadelphia:  University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.  See also
"Bohemian New York."  *The Vault at Pfaff's.*
http://lehigh.edu/pfaffs.  Ed. Edward Whitley and Rob Weidman.  April 11, 2015.

life; a reprint of John Ruskin's "Sir Joshua and Holbein"; American Bayard Taylor's "By-Ways of Europe," a travelogue of his European excursions written for the *Atlantic Monthly*; and numerous translations of Honore de Balzac's stories published in the *Saturday Press*. While the inclusion of reprinted articles and stories was a common practice among nineteenth-century newspaper editors, *The Vault*'s organization of these works and authors as a network reveals the transatlantic connections between the New York Pfaffians (and other Americans loosely affiliated with the group) and European writers and artists. In a broader sense, *The Vault* characterizes European and American literary history not as conceptually distinct forms (as Deleuze and Guattari portray them), but as intimately connected.

Through its database structure and its design—particularly its decision to include links to other collections—*The Vault* uses the metaphor of the rhizome to argue for a network-like approach to transatlantic literature and literary history. In doing so, *The Vault* not only pushes us to think well beyond the normative categories of author and work, but also compels us to reconsider the canon as an organizational rubric for digital collections.

Indeed, *The Vault at Pfaff's* presentation of literary history (through its structure and design) arguably counters the very idea of the canon, by directing

our attention not to singular literary achievements or authorial celebrity,[287] but to

the network of individuals who lived in antebellum New York, to the wider

European network to whom they were connected, and to the social and historical

contexts in which they lived and worked.  No longer underground—or quite as

underground as they were when Whitman wrote about them—the Pfaffian

bohemians are now visibly above ground, and part of the 21st-century network.

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[287] This paraphrases Ardis's assertion that "we need to recognize that the celebration of literary achievement or authorial celebrity is not always or necessarily a governing factor in a literary artifact's presentation in its pages."  See "Making Middlebrow Culture, Making Middlebrow Literary Texts *Matter*:  The Crisis, Easter 1912," *Modernist Cultures* 6.1 (2011), 36.

**Chapter 5**

**CONCLUSION**

The argument each of my case study collections makes for digital thematic collections is, as we have seen, inextricably tied to the elements that comprise it, and therefore necessarily specific. Yet the collective story they begin to tell about literary studies and literary history reveals a potential shift in focus from author- or work-centric collections that reinscribe the American literary canon, to thematic collections that recover literary artifacts from forgotten periods in history and arguably compel us to move beyond the idea of the canon—and perhaps literary periodization itself. I qualify this shift as potential partly because more case studies would be required to confirm it, and partly because of the increasing economic constraints placed on digital collections, a point I'll return to below. And while all these collections share in common their focus on the nineteenth century, it's important to identify other similarities among these digital collections, in order to begin documenting continuities in the history of digital thematic collections, and to chart some possible directions for current and future digital collections.

Throughout this dissertation I've occasionally pointed to a best practice that each collection demonstrates, and these practices serve—despite my

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contrastive use of case studies—as one way of tracing continuities among these collections.  While these practices do not strive to be comprehensive, nor are they necessarily feasible for some collections, they highlight what I regard as aspirational features (as well as a set of continuities), particularly as current digital thematic collections continue to evolve.  Each practice is listed below, followed by a longer discussion.

**Best practices for digital thematic collections:**

1.  Design a collection's graphical interface with multiple audiences in mind.

2.  Create an editorial policy or statement, detailing (for example) how artifacts have been edited for a digital environment, or what markup languages or metadata formats have been used to represent those artifacts.[288]

3.  Articulate a statement detailing the collection's conditions for use, both for copyright purposes and for scholarly citation.

4.  If feasible, expand a collection's affordances for readers by providing (for example) different options for viewing and navigating through a collection, allowing readers to download and re-use files, and linking outward to other sources or collections.

5. Use culturally sensitive and semantically robust metadata for digital artifacts, to ensure a collection's discoverability and provide some level of contextualization.

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[288] "Metadata" can be succinctly described as data about data.  For example, the date and time a photograph was taken comprise part of that photo's metadata; other metadata might include the location of the photograph, who took the picture, and who or what is in the picture.  "Metadata format," also known as "metadata schema," refers to an overarching model or framework that can describe a group of objects (literary works, photographs, toys).  TEI, for example, is a metadata format used to describe a collection of literary artifacts.

6.  Articulate a digital preservation plan for the collection's artifacts and infrastructure, to ensure the collection's longevity.

7. Develop a sustainability plan for the collection, articulating (for example) how to maintain continuity when its editors move or change institutions.

As we have seen, the role of design has a discernible impact on the way readers engage with a digital collection, as well as what parts of a collection they engage with.  Of course, attentiveness to a collection's graphical design may entail the remediation, in the case of *UTC&AC*, or intermediation, as with *WWA*, the logic of the codex.  Yet attentive design also includes the way in which its artifacts are historically contextualized for specialist and non-specialist audiences, through the use of embedded links to provide interpretive essays and background information, as *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* and *The Vault at Pfaff's* each employ for different purposes.

Additionally, describing how a collection's artifacts have been edited and shaped for a digital environment is essential for researchers—indeed, for digital scholarship as a whole—because these descriptions frequently determine the ways and the extent to which scholars use that collection.  Related to this, knowing what markup languages or metadata schema have been used to represent those artifacts in a digital medium will continue to be essential for researchers, since they not only describe a particular artifact for a digital environment (as TEI does), but also comprise part of that digital artifact's materiality.  Just as medieval scholars often need to know, for example, the kind of paper comprising a

manuscript or the way it has been assembled, so scholars using digital artifacts

need to know (perhaps even *see*, via publicly accessible files) some of the layers of

human and technological mediation that comprise part of a digital artifact's

materiality, since this will impact their interpretation and analysis of that artifact.

Just as an editorial statement outlines editors' approaches to shaping the

artifacts in a collection, a conditions of use statement articulates how or even

whether readers use, cite, and disseminate those artifacts.  These last two

practices, citation and dissemination, underscore the importance for editors to

provide conditions for use, since they will determine the ways readers and

scholars go on to use those materials.  If a collection uses copyrighted material, this

guidance may be as minimal as providing directions for contacting copyright

holders.  For materials not under copyright, editors should specify more flexible

forms of use such as Creative Commons licensing—as both the *WWA* and *The Vault*

*at Pfaff's* do—since this kind of licensing offers the broadest possible means for

readers to use, cite, and disseminate aspects of that collection.[289]

While articulating this kind of statement will theoretically foster a

collection's greater use, editors should endeavor—if feasible—to expand a

collection's affordances for readers in other ways, possibly ones in which the roles

among editors and readers overlap.  This may range from interface-related

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[289] The *WWA*'s and *The Vault's* Creative Commons licenses, for example, allow me
to include screen shots from each collection in this dissertation without having to
request permission.

affordances like multiple options for viewing and navigation, to more

infrastructurally-based affordances, such as allowing readers to download and re-

use files.  Additionally, linking collections to other collections such as Google

Books—as *The Vault at Pfaff's* does—and to social media outlets might help forge

stronger connections between the public humanities and digital humanities, by

revealing public uses and expressions of a digital collection, thereby reinforcing

the civic as well as scholarly benefit of a collection.  Currently, however, many

digital collections tend to align more with what Roger Whitson and Jason

Whittaker characterize as a closed ecosystem.[290]  In describing the *William Blake*

*Archive*, they acknowledge its purpose as a "professionalization machine" where

Blake scholars go to learn their craft, but contend the collection "harks back to a

set of gatekeeping practices against a background of media scarcity that seek to

maintain the privileges of print in the digital age...the danger is that it becomes an

ecosystem that is too closed, too restricted for the twenty-first century."[291]

    In order to counteract this "closed ecosystem" effect, editors should

consider what affordances to provide that address readers' needs *and* remain

manageable from an editorial standpoint.  Crowdsourcing, for example, gives

readers the ability to act as editors by contributing to existing collections, yet also

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[290] See Whitson and Whittaker's *William Blake and the Digital Humanities:*
*Collaboration, Participation, and Social Media*, by Roger Whitson and Jason
Whittaker.  New York and London:  Routledge; 2013, 47-48.
[291] Ibid.

poses considerations about precisely who is allowed to participate, what level of contributions a reader may provide, and who will oversee and review those contributions. As with attentive interface design and clearly stated editorial practices, affordances for engagement arguably comprise an essential part of a collection's infrastructure, particularly if digital collections wish to expand their scope in this age of media abundance, a time when readers can (and often do) easily direct their attention elsewhere.

Given this age of media abundance, it may seem remarkable that readers find—let alone use—digital thematic collections, which points to another best practice: a collection's choice and use of metadata. The particular metadata format, or framework, that a collection employs often correlates directly with how easily readers may find it. Not only does a metadata format determine (to an extent) the ease with which its readers may find it, but it also describes or interprets those artifacts. As *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* demonstrates, metadata such as TEI may be used to accommodate and describe culturally complex artifacts, and subsequently represent an abbreviated form of cultural criticism.

The fact that most metadata formats lack the capacity to encompass sociocultural interpretations/critiques of the artifacts they describe points precisely to the need for greater attention to these formats. I say this both to acknowledge the urgency of Alan Liu's call for imbuing issues like metadata

standards with sociocultural meaning,[292] and to encourage creators of digital

collections to consult scholarship from librarians who have engaged in analogous

critiques of their own metadata.  In 1971, for example, Sanford Berman provided

an incisive analysis of the racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination in Library of

Congress Subject Headings and offered dozens of culturally sensitive alternatives;

many were incorporated into the classification scheme over time, but many still

haven't been adopted.[293]  More recently, Hope Olson's critical feminist approaches

to library classification systems reveals the ways libraries exert control over the

organization of scholarly information, thereby controlling how, when, and by

whom they are discoverable.[294]  Berman and Olson's scholarship not only offer

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[292] See Liu's "Where is Cultural Criticism in the Digital Humanities?"  *Debates in the Digital Humanities*.  Ed. Matthew K. Gold.  Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012, 495.  Also available at http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/20
[293] See Berman's *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People*.  Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1971.  Anyone who has clicked on subject links in library records or used the "subject" drawers of a card catalog has used Library of Congress subject headings.  Within information science, these terms are considered a form of bibliographic control (telling phrase) because they're applied to books, journals, and other information in order to help libraries organize and disseminate information, and to help readers find materials about, for example, Portuguese revolutionary literature.  As Berman noted, the problem centers on the subject headings' "obsolete and arrogant assumptions" about young people and women, and its racist bias toward African-Americans—assumptions that stem from prejudices reflecting the views of white Europeans and North Americans "heavily imbued with the transcendent, incomparable glory of Western Civilization" (ix-x).  See also Steven A. Knowlton's "Three Decades Since *Prejudices and Antipathies:*  A Study of Changes in the Library of Congress Subject Headings." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 40.2 (2005): 123-145.
[294] See Olson's *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries*.  Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.  For a more recent critique

incisive critiques about the way metadata organizes knowledge—and how, by extension, metadata maps onto to structures of power and control—but they also provide a foundation for future sociocultural critiques of metadata formats and their relation to knowledge discovery within the context of literary history.

Two final and related best practices include a digital preservation plan for the collection's artifacts and infrastructure, to ensure a collection's longevity, and a sustainability plan that centers on the people who maintain the collections, to ensure continuity when (for example) its editors move or change institutions. Additionally, it is essential to include documentation of a collection's history and decision-making processes—for example, changes in editorial policies or the rationale behind software and metadata choices—so that current and future contributors understand the history of the collection they work with, and use that documentation to inform future decisions.

These final three practices—digital preservation, sustainability, and documentation—would seem to center entirely on the practical. However, given the rate with which digital projects from the 1990s have disappeared, especially recovery projects of African-American and Latino writers, and given the catalyzing effect digital collections may have for printed scholarship, practices such as digital

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of subject classification and metadata, see Chris Bourg's "Never Neutral: Libraries, Technology, and Inclusion." Blog post, 28 January 2015. Available at https://chrisbourg.wordpress.com/2015/01/28/never-neutral-libraries-technology-and-inclusion/

preservation and sustainability help ensure ongoing access to current and future

collections (or at least provide a record of their existence).[295] These issues of

digital preservation, sustainability, and access take on a particular urgency in light

of the increasing commodification of literary history.

**Corporatization of literary history**

In January 2015 Readex unveiled "Black Authors, 1556-1922: Imprints from

the Library Company of Philadelphia," a collection of digitized imprints from The

Library Company of Philadelphia's Afro-Americana collection of books, broadsides,

and other material.[296] Similarly, EBSCO recently announced the digitization and

creation of fifty thematic collections from the American Antiquarian Society's

*Historical Periodicals Collection,* ranging from 1691-1887, many of which

encompass women's issues and the history of slavery. Less recently, Alexander

Street Press acquired *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-*

*2000*, a digital project encompassing primary materials and ephemera; it initially

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[295] Amy Earhart estimates that 50% of the projects listed in the *Voice of the Shuttle*'s under "Chicano/Latino Literature" are lost; half the projects listed under "The Minority Studies" are also lost. See Earhart's "Can Information Be Unfettered?" 313.

[296] The Library Company's African, Afro-Americana, and Caribbean history imprints are listed on NewsBank's website as "Other Products of Interest," underscoring the commodification of literature by and about relatively understudied individuals and groups in American literary history.

began as a freely-available collection hosted by SUNY-Binghamton, but became

unsustainable partly because of its reliance on grant funding.

These are large swaths of time, encompassing works well out of copyright.

Putting these works behind a pay wall, then—particularly collections of primary

materials representing women and people of color—will impact future humanities

scholarship by greatly constricting scholars' and general readers' access to these

materials.  Further, many of these newly-digitized works are periodicals,

suggesting that literary studies' general fetish for books may come at a very real

expense—intellectual as well as financial—for future literary and historical

scholars intent on researching these periodicals.[297]  Michelle Warren's call for

greater political scrutiny of the legal and economic issues posed by subscription-

based textual databases is absolutely correct, though I would add her call should

encompass ethical scrutiny, too.[298]

In addition to its impact on scholarship, this scale of commodification

exacerbates the economic disparities among higher educational institutions; that

is, only scholars who work at institutions with the funding to afford these

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[297] Many academic libraries and librarians are complicit in this phenomenon. Librarians at well-funded institutions continue to acquire these large-scale digitized corpora.  Further, collection policies at many academic and research libraries frequently privilege the acquisition of books (print and electronic) over more "ephemeral" materials such as printed periodicals—even historical ones— which in turn provides further incentive for libraries to purchase digitized collections of historical periodicals.
[298] See Warren's "The Politics of Textual Scholarship," 125.

collections will be granted access to them.  Of course, financial inequities among

institutions have always existed, but with the increasing pace of vendor-sponsored

digitization and shrinking library budgets, I believe administrators, provosts and

especially humanities scholars must weigh the cultural and ethical costs of

purchasing vendor-controlled digital collections.[299]

This relationship between corporatization and access expands on what Alan

Liu argues is sorely needed when creating digital projects:  namely, a more

culturally critical approach to the use of tools and concepts of digital technologies.

He is, I believe, absolutely right, but I would argue this approach is needed not just

with regard to the creation and use of digital tools, but also with regard to what

those tools create—digital thematic collections—and who has access to these

collections once they've been created.  Returning to his example of metadata, Liu

asserts that "digital humanists will need to show that thinking critically about

metadata, for instance, scales into thinking critically about power, finance, and

other governance protocols of the world." [300]  Instead of "metadata," we may easily

substitute "digital thematic collections," or "digital scholarship" and realize the

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[299] This is not to elide the fact that digital thematic collections often require a
considerable number of resources and incur ongoing costs, but rather to
foreground the need for individuals and institutions to weigh *all* costs—scholarly,
cultural, ethical, as well as financial—when creating and sustaining digital
collections.
[300] See Liu's "Where is Cultural Criticism in the Digital Humanities?"  *Debates in the
Digital Humanities*.  Ed. Matthew K. Gold.  Minneapolis: University of Minnesota
Press, 2012, 495.  Also available at http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/20

importance of thinking critically not only about what informs the creation of digital thematic collections, but also how (corporate) power and finance frequently scale into what these technologies *create*—digital collections and digital scholarship.

Indeed, the commodification of literary history extends, I think, to scholarship about digital collections. Just as we must avoid restricting literary materials for current and future readers, we also need to consider restrictions on scholarship generated by these collections.  Endeavors such as Open Humanities Press, Knowledge Unlatched, and the Library Publishing Coalition represent promising models of publishing platforms for literary scholarship.  Significantly, all these platforms are freely available to a wide audience, a factor we should keep in mind (i.e., audience) when thinking not only about creating and maintaining current and future digital thematic collections, but also about generating and disseminating scholarship *about* these collections.[301]

Set against the backdrop of this commodification, Amanda Gailey's characterization of *The Tar Baby and the Tomahawk* as "the canary in the coal mine" takes on an added poignancy.[302]  Yet her comment also underscores the

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[301] These musings were prompted by John Unsworth's "Pubrarians and Liblishers at 20:  Reflections on Library Publishing from 1995-2014." *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* 2.4 (2014): eP1201. http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1201

[302] See Gailey's "Editing in an Age of Automation," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.3 (Fall 2012): 341.

importance of the collection—indeed of all the digital collections in this dissertation—in contributing to the democratization of literary history. Through their interface design, their editorial documentation, and their online availability, these collections compel us to think more expansively about the role of nineteenth-century American literature in the twenty-first century, by engaging us—the wider public—as readers who may participate in that role.

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