Carlos Montezuma’s Wassaja Newsletter

Access, Engagement, and Collaboration

Engaging the Digital Humanities: Collaborating throughout the Research Lifecycle - ACRL Webcast

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Outcomes:

1. Working with diverse communities and collaborative strategies
2. Overcoming technical limitations of library CMS
3. Increase Exposure through online digital exhibitions and integrating digital humanities research and instruction
Carlos Montezuma (1866-1923) was a member of the Yavapai Nation from Arizona who was taken from his home as a child. He grew up in Chicago and became a medical doctor. Montezuma was also an intellectual and activist and self-published the *Wassaja* newsletter during the years 1916-1922.

*Wassaja* was a vital source of news about Indian affairs in an era that had few outlets for such information and contains valuable reports directly from people living within the Indian reservation system.
In 2014 Dr David Martinez from ASU’s American Indian Studies Department, Dr. Jodi Flores, a CLIR data curation postdoc with Digital Antiquity and ASU Libraries, and I applied for and received a Seed Grant from ASU’s Institute for Humanities research. Our seed grant is entitled “Carlos Montezuma’s Wassaja Newsletter: Digitization, Access and Context”. Seed grants are designed to support the beginning of a project so that researchers can develop a workflow and have a proof of concept when applying for larger amounts of funding. The intended outcomes of our seed grant were to (read slide)
An outcome of our seed grant was to create a web page, so we were very fortunate when we were contacted by ASU Digital Humanities group Nexus Lab to be the client for a development group to create an interactive web application. The resulting website was a user friendly site which allowed for the addition of background information on Montezuma, news related to the project, including events, and better highlight our collaborators. In the future, we hope to also include blog posts from contributors and supplemental materials that can be included for research and teaching.
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Partnership

Community members helped identify photographs

Graduate student conducted practicum in the Fort McDowell archives

Participated in a joint panel discussion

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Early in the project we met with librarian Jacqueline McCalvin and museum director Karen Ray from Carlos Montezuma’s home community the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. We discussed the grant project, our respective Carlos Montezuma Collections, and possible additional ways to collaborate. The results (read slide) Panel discussion - Jacqueline McCalvin and museum director Karen Ray former FMYN president Rafael Bear
Brief Overview

a. Vanilla site - multipurpose

b. Brief Stats - despite being an inherent IR we put “EVERYTHING” in the repo. (click)

c. An IR not with DH in Mind (click)

d. Easy to use management interface

e. Not a place for visualization, engagement, or community interaction
The ASU Digital Repository: Discovery and Access

The GOOD

- More Discoverable Google it and One Search It vs. finding aid
- OAI-PMH for harvesting records
- Creative Commons enabled - encourage reuse
- Easy and persistent access to files
The ASU Digital Repository: Limitations

The BAD NOT SO GOOD

The Repository is not enough. There is a limit to what the repository can and SHOULD do. It is a place to provide persistent access through minted handles.

1. Not dynamic, and interactive, not an exhibit
2. The repository does not tell a story
3. No guest book or invitation to contribute
4. Interface limited to manual upload
5. Barriers to contacting project organizers
The UGLY

OAI-PMH data dump

a. Limitations of DAMS (B2)

i. No metadata remediation

ii. Metadata: Type was limited to Image/Text not helpful for users

iii. Difficult to pull collection aggregation without understanding OAI-PMH

iv. This requires library knowledge, do we expect end users to know this?
Which takes us to the Carlos Montezuma Website. A website dedicated to the project with a DH perspective.
Developing Wassaja As a Digital Humanities Project

The ultimate objective of this semester-long effort was to develop a web-site which would both promote Carlos Montezuma’s Wassaja newsletter, and interact with the Wassaja Newsletter collection already housed within the ASU Digital Repository.

Because we had a firm completion date, we needed to treat this as a project.
“Developing Wassaja” Project Participants

- Project led by Assistant Director of the Institute for Humanities Research
- Volunteer project featuring a mixture of undergraduate and graduate students as well as university staff and academic professionals (i.e. librarian)
- One undergraduate student (Laura Keller) was in her last semester and would soon be hired by the Arizona State Library as a Digital Archivist
- A doctoral student finishing her dissertation was hired by the IHR
Project Management & Outcomes

Objectives:
Clients (ASU Libraries) established for us

Timeline(s):
Per client expectation: Began in January and finished web-site for April 23rd panel discussion.

Division of labor:
Content Development and Design Group
Systems, Interface and Usability Group
The ASU grant team hopes to greatly expand our pilot project. To that end we have partnered with three additional institutions with Carlos Montezuma holdings, The Newberry, The Wisconsin Historical Society, and the University of Arizona, to digitize and present together online all of our collective holdings of Wassaja Newsletter and our Carlos Montezuma Collections. This would make over 16,000 pages of material available online. We continue to apply for funding to support this work.

Image citation: Carlos Montezuma, 1896 Photographic reproduction: From collections of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Thank you!

Sources