

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 1F

FROM PAPYRUS TO THE INTERNET: TEXTS IN TIME

Session Moderator: James Clauss, Classics

238 MGH

1:15 PM to 2:45 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Newbook Digital Texts in the Humanities: The Emma B. Andrews Diaries

Megan Nicole (Megan) Rowland, Sophomore, Near Eastern Studies (Languages & Civilization)

Ariella Mihi (Ariella) Fish, Senior, International Studies

Tessa Eileen Carter, Senior, French, International Studies

Rachel Yim Schlotfeldt, Sophomore, French

Mentor: Sarah Ketchley, Near Eastern Languages & Civilization

Mentor: Walter Andrews, Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Emma B. Andrews' diaries give insight into the lives of archeologists working in Egypt's Valley of the Kings at the turn of the last century. Due to her association with the archeologist Theodore Davis, Andrews had a unique opportunity to see the excavations in the Valley of the Kings firsthand during her travels between 1889 and 1913. Though these diaries provide valuable cultural, social and archeological perspectives on this period of Egyptian history, they have gone largely unnoticed by the academic community, and this project intends to make these works available as invaluable for academia. In order to bridge a gap in the publishing world, the NEH-funded Newbook Digital Texts project provides a unique environment for the multi-media publication of texts, transcriptions, translations, and annotation of works that are not compatible with traditional publishing or available large-project digital platforms. Newbook Digital Texts' collaborative nature enables individual projects to inexpensively adapt to the project, providing opportunities for individuals to publish academic works with less expense and hassle. It also enables people to access important texts and resources more easily. As undergraduate researchers, we have the opportunity to work with these primary texts, learning useful digital humanities skills. At the beginning of the process, we learned how to create a structured transcription, allowing us to auto-tag the text.

During this process, we have been able to complete a structural analysis of the text. We all worked with XML formatting, creating name lists, and doing content tagging within the text. Additionally, we completed independent research for inclusion in the project's Wikipedia. Upon reading through the diaries and editing them, our project recognized important links to other excavators and research done in the Valley of the Kings, and we believe the diaries will fill gaps within academia in this field.

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The Newbook Project: Digital Texts in the Humanities of the Joseph Mathia Svoboda Diaries

Kelsey Arlene Hallahan, Junior, Near Eastern Studies (Languages & Civilization)

Rachel E. (Rachel) Brown, Senior, Near Eastern Studies (Languages & Civilization)

Tessa Eileen Carter, Senior, French, International Studies

Dana Talant, Senior, French, International Studies

Ariella Mihi (Ariella) Fish, Senior, International Studies

Sophia Elisa (Sophie) Welti, Senior, International Studies: Europe

Mentor: Walter Andrews, Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

The JMS Diaries is a collection of 16 original diaries and 30 transcriptions of original diaries written by Joseph Mathia Svoboda, an employee with the Lynch Brothers' Tigris and Euphrates Steam Navigation Company. He wrote his daily accounts of life on the Euphrates rivers between 1862 and 1908. The diaries give us insight into the everyday life of people in Iraq during the later half of the 19th Century. These diaries offer valuable cultural, social and anthropological perspectives about Iraq during this period and are invaluable to academia as primary source documents. The NEH-funded Newbook Digital Texts in the Humanities project works to transform such valuable primary source documents into dig-

ital texts in order to make them more accessible to scholars. In order to further this academic resource development, the project has been licensed with the Library of Congress as an independent publishing house. In this way, the Newbook project offers a collaborative environment in which individual projects can be inexpensively adapted, providing opportunities for individuals to publish academic works with less expense and inconvenience. It also enables scholars and the general public to access important texts and resources more easily. As undergraduate researchers, we work with these primary texts learning both research and digital archiving skills. We work through a five phase process consisting of transcribing, editing, analyzing, encoding and formatting each text. Each phase offers us a different challenge and requires a different skill set. Over the quarter our work varies from the physical transcriptions of the diaries to creating Perl scripted programs and using XML to markup and digitize the texts. Since beginning the project in September 2012, we have completed two diaries consisting of 400 pages each, and continue to work toward advancing this evolving, ongoing repository of primary source documents.