Renaissance and Reformation
Renaissance et Réforme

Bauer, Ralph, gen. ed. Early Americas Digital Archive

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of these photos might either provide contexts as to why users might want to access them and their significance for Cavendish research, or offer links to other projects connected to the site that have made use of them. The concept, however, of gaining collection permissions for sharing research photographs in this method is an innovation that should be acknowledged. Scholars, whose research travel funds are increasingly dwindling, are often making research treks to look at materials that someone else's archive photographs could spare them. While it should never be presumed that photographs could stand in for undertaking an examination of a textual object on one's own, Moore's research photo cache offers scholars who lack institutional funding, or other pricey resources such as database subscriptions, essential access to primary-source material. This section of the project is rich for future development, and suggests a new form of collaborative archival crowd-sharing, should more libraries be so generous and supportive of new avenues of research as Chawton House Library.

Digital Cavendish: A Scholarly Collaborative promotes blog posts, bibliographies, biographies, digital humanities scholarship, and traditional essay-form articles—offering a peer-reviewed space for diverse modes of research. In this way, it is at the forefront of what digital humanities as a field can and should do for the future of scholarly research: create space for valuing newer, more expedient scholarship, by a diversity of experienced voices, that does not depend on slow-moving journal or monograph publication.

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Early Americas Digital Archive.
College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 2002. Accessed 8 December 2019. eada.lib.umd.edu.

The Early Americas Digital Archive (EADA) is a hemispheric digital archive of primary texts from 1492 to 1820. Originally launched as a paywalled project of the Society of Early Americanists in 2002, the now fully open EADA is an example of an early digital project that utilized digital technology to push a field, and its scholars, forward. When the Society of Early Americanists met

for the Early Ibero/Anglo American Summit, scholars decided to construct an electronic anthology, "The Summit Anthology," for use in teaching and research. The EADA was one of many early projects supported by the Maryland Institute of Technology in the Humanities (MITH) at the University of Maryland. The project is under the general editorship of Ralph Bauer, a noted scholar of the early Americas, and in its new iteration the EADA has moved to an open access project that invites guest editors to contribute. The EADA represents a coalition of scholars who advocated for a hemispheric understanding of the early Americas at a time when the field was beginning to expand, harnessing digital technologies to construct a set of reliable texts for both research and teaching.

The EADA is divided into two sections: the database, labelled "Archive," and the "Gateway to Early American Authors on the Web," labelled "Gateway." The sections are divided according to textual authority, with the EADA authoritative database searchable by author, title, and subject. These texts give full colophon information and regularize names in the header according to the Library of Congress authority files. The EADA notes that the texts in this group are of high quality; all are carefully edited, and some include high resolution page images. As such, the texts found in the EADA database are authoritative and appropriate for research purposes as well as classroom purposes. The second section, the "Gateway to Early American Authors on the Web," adds links to additional external texts that are not vetted by the EADA. The two sections, one comprised of texts edited by EADA contributors and the other a collection of hyperlinks, are a common construction found in early digital archives, many of which included their own literary and historical texts and a linked collection of external texts and support materials, such as Wikipedia entries. Hyperlinks always run the danger of disappearance, but the EADA has linked to the Wayback machine when pages are redundant, a useful means of archiving our fast-disappearing digital legacy. The two sections, "Archive" and "Gateway," are accessible through tabs on the top of the website. The archive section is broken into author and title categories and features an advanced search, which gives the user the ability to search by additional terms including time period, geographic location, genre, text mode, and format. The section takes the form of a scrolling page that lists EADA alphabetized authors followed by, without an apparent break or categorization, a list of titles. The scrolling page is rather confusing; it is unclear that the second half of the page

offers the same materials, recategorized. It would be more useful if the EADA either allowed the user to select alphabetization by author or title, or clearly marked the two sections. In the Gateway, the list of hyperlinked external texts is organized by author. While the introduction makes clear the differences in the quality of texts found in the Archive versus the Gateway, it is easy for the user to lose this distinction when working within the EADA. It would be helpful to have a clarification of editorial standards on individual texts.

The documentation included in the archive is somewhat scanty, with a brief introduction that describes the inception of the project and the two components of the archive. It would be useful to understand the transition of the archive from early scholarly collective through the support of MITH to its current iteration. The project is, in some ways, a case study for the preservation and extension of an early digital humanities editorial project. While the EADA has been successful in migration to a useable and updated site, many of the early digital humanities projects are languishing. A detailed discussion of how the project succeeded when others failed, as well as pitfalls along the way, would be of great interest to digital humanists and digital textual historians. It should be noted that the archive does not use editorial metadata structures such as Dublin core or TEI/XML, but does include colophon information.

The EADA serves the dual purpose of research and teaching, and is "committed to exploring the intersections between traditional humanities research and digital technologies" (homepage). As part of this mission, the EADA invites guest editors to submit texts for inclusion, and some of the guest editors are students, undergraduate and graduate. The inclusion of editions developed during a class, such as "The Audiencia of Sta. Fee to the king, on the taking of Sto. Thome by the English in 1618," produced by undergraduates and graduates from the University of Virginia, is a commendable model that not only expands the EADA but encourages the expansion of a community of editors. It also ensures that those interested in small scale digital projects have a central location in which to reposit the materials.

The archive houses a fairly small number of texts—146, representing around 90 individual authors—with the reach of the EADA expanded by the collection of links to external sites found in the Gateway. Texts range from short, such as Samuel Occom's "Sermon on Matthew 22:24," to long, such as Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*. When the EADA was launched in 2002, the representation of hemispheric texts and non-English language texts of the

Americas in anthologies was minimal, and the EADA's editorial work expanding the canon stepped into an important gap. As the archive grew organically, it did not necessarily grow in a strategic manner, not a surprise given the origin of the archive. Guest edited texts have expanded the EADA, though in a somewhat haphazard manner, leaving the EADA unbalanced in representation. There is good coverage of Spanish language texts, but few French texts—which is not surprising given the development of the archive out of the Early Ibero/Anglo American Studies scholarly collective. Another limitation of the EADA is the archival boundaries of 1492 to 1820, which might signal a problematic start date of a hemispheric project that seeks to resist colonial segregation.

The design of the website would benefit from updating for usability and readability. The lack of page images is unfortunate though understandable given the site's origination. Moreover, the EADA clearly intends the texts to be read on the website, but the blue background with lighter blue text makes that difficult. It would be useful to have a standard black text on white background or the ability to adjust for readability. Further, the ability to download plain text would serve users, especially as the open texts might prove valuable to current efforts in Open Educational Resources (OER) textbook development. The texts found on the EADA database (archive) are trustworthy and most are freely available with the inclusion of the header; such work would allow a teacher to construct an OER textbook that is broader in representation than many early American anthologies currently in print.

The EADA is an important website that provides authoritative texts for use by researchers and teachers. It also is one of few examples of early digital projects that have successfully navigated to a stabilized and updated website. So many of our early digital editorial projects have languished, breaking or disappearing. The EADA, by contrast, houses texts that remain relevant to our current scholarship and provides open primary sources that will increasingly be of use to classroom instructors interested in providing high quality open textbooks. The EADA remains a crucial hemispheric project that allows scholars and teachers access to texts that have often been excluded from the canon of the literature of the Americas.

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