Texas Digital Newspapers

Newspaper Preservation and DH Projects

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Overview

• Texas Digital Newspaper Program (TDNP)
• DH Projects Utilizing TDNP
• National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) & Chronicling America
• NEH Data Challenge Award-Winning Projects
What is TDNP?

“We know our town won’t be here much longer, but we want the world to know who we were.” ~ TDNP Partner

• Digitally preserves and builds free access to Texas newspapers, from any location or date.

• Core mission is to preserve community identity in Texas and represent that to the wider world.

• With over 5 million open newspaper pages, this dataset is one of the largest single-state newspaper collections in the U.S. that is openly accessible to the public.
Research Projects Utilizing TDNP

• Mapping Texts (mappingtexts.org): Collaboration between UNT and Stanford University, led by Drs. Andrew Torget (UNT) and Jon Christensen (Stanford), this project utilized raw OCR text from TDNP newspapers to develop a historical trends timeline and to draw out patterns of activities across Texas. (mappingtexts.org)

• Runaway Slave Project: The work of Kyle Ainsworth, an archivist at Stephen F. Austin University, this project harvests runaway slave ads from Civil War era newspapers to represent “descriptions of the runaway’s intellectual and physical characteristics, material possessions, and likely travel plans” (digital.sfasu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/RSP)

• In-Class Activity: Resumes, Job Postings, and Newspaper Ads through Time: Utilizing Texas newspapers to understand how U.S. employment standards and laws have changed, Krahmer’s TECM 2700: Technical Writing course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Texas Revolution begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Texas becomes 28th state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Compromise of 1850 signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Slavery is declared abolished</td>
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<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Railroad Commission established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Texas &amp; Pacific Railway reaches Sierra Blanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Teddy Roosevelt recruits Rough Riders for Spanish-American War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>The poll tax becomes a requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>L. B. Johnson becomes president</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In 1833, immigrants arrive in South Texas.
- In 1844, a fire breaks out in Austin, the state's capital.
- In 1850, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is signed, ending the war.
- In 1860, Slavery is declared abolished.
- In 1870, the Railroad Commission is established.
- In 1880, the Texas & Pacific Railway reaches Sierra Blanca.
- In 1900, the poll tax becomes a requirement.
- In 1910, L. B. Johnson becomes president.
Interactive Map Collection

A collection of maps displaying geographical and other information as taken from the TRSP materials.

Location of Newspaper

Representing the location at which a newspaper was published

Location of Submitter

Representing the location at which a submission was made

Location of Capture

Representing the location at which a capture was made

Location of Slave Owner

Representing the location at which a slave owner resided or operated

Runaway Slave Project (2015)
In-Class Activity (2016-2017)

[Before starting, students receive resume examples from the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s.]

• Using Chronicling America (http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov), perform a search for “triangle shirtwaist factory.” Consider the age group and native languages of the people who died in the fire. How do you think employment law has changed?

• Using The Portal to Texas History newspapers (https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/tdnp), locate job postings in the newspapers from the same decades as the resume examples.

• Read through the U.S. Department of Labor Employment Law Guide (https://www.dol.gov/compliance/guide/).

• Prepare a statement about how your resume will differ from those you’ve seen, and compare one current job posting in your field to the job postings you located from past decades. Consider how current law affects resumes, and think about what potential future laws might exist. [Class discussion follows activity.]
NDNP & Chronicling America

• Sponsored by the NEH, NDNP has digitized over 11 million pages of newspapers from across the U.S.

• As with TDNP, newspapers are freely available with access to raw text.

• The 2016 Chronicling America Data Challenge, sponsored by the NEH, awarded prizes to six recipients.
Data Challenge Award Recipients

FIRST PRIZE

Project Name: America’s Public Bible: Biblical Quotations in U.S. Newspapers
  • Project Director: Lincoln Mullen, Assistant Professor, Department of History and Art History, George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)

SECOND PRIZE (2)

Project Name: American Lynching: Uncovering a Cultural Narrative
  • Project Director: Andrew Bales, PhD Student in Creative Writing, University of Cincinnati (Cincinnati, OH)
  • Project Name: Historical Agricultural News
    • Project Director: Amy Giroux, Computer Research Specialist, Center for Humanities and Digital Research, University of Central Florida (Orlando, FL)
“America’s Public Bible shows how thousands of biblical verses were used over nearly a century in some 56 billion words of text, revealing trends that are inaccessible to a single scholar’s reading of these documents, yet enabling a close reading of the ways in which verses were put to use.”~Mullen (2016).

The general trends, however, tell us much less than the patterns for individual verses. Consider this handful of verses, each of which has a pattern that differs from the general trend.\(^5\)
“This project aims to shed light on the gruesome culture of lynching. It also seeks to find nuance in its history and legacy. How did Americans explain the public killing of well over 4,500 neighbors? Who were the victims and who were the killers? With the support of the Library of Congress and the Chronicling America historic newspaper database, we can begin to know those stories”~Bales (2016).
“Digital APUSH: Revealing History with Chronicling America” uses word frequency analysis—a kind of distant reading made possible by the API—to discover patterns in news coverage. This figure represents the frequency in Chronicling America of the phase “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” from the time of the book’s publication to the start of the Civil War, or 1851 to 1861”~Palin (2016).
Upcoming Materials Available on the Portal

• **NEH-funded NDNP**, non-English titles, including *La Prensa* (San Antonio), *Revista del Valle* (Hidalgo County), *Falfurrias Facts* (Falfurrias), and the *German freie presse für Texas*, will go up to Chronicling America in the upcoming year, and these same titles will go into the TDNP collection shortly after.

• **Texas Borderland Newspapers**: Newspapers from Texas border counties and neighboring border counties, published in Spanish and English, spanning 1900-1923, through the support of a 2016-2017 TexTreasures award, funded through the Institute of Museum & Library Services.

• **St. Mary’s University**: *St. Mary’s Rattler*, student newspaper of St. Mary’s University; the Spanish Archives of Laredo collection, spanning 1749 to 1872, containing 3452 handwritten documents.
References


Questions?

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