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# The ADE Annual Meeting Sessions

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, OCTOBER 5–7, 2000

## Editing California Writers

Chair: Beverly Wilson Palmer

The first session of the ADE's 2000 annual meeting, the first ever in California, appropriately began with a panel examining the writings of three California-based writers: Frank Norris, Robinson Jeffers, and Ambrose Bierce.

Jesse Crisler, professor at Brigham Young University and editor of *Frank Norris: Contemporary Letters*, presented a paper ("Scarce as Hen's Teeth: The Letters of Frank Norris") concerning problems many editors have confronted: the search for lost letters, and the frustration when only routine or very brief ones surface. Crisler recounted the history of earlier publications of Norris's letters leading up to the most recent edition which, although lacking some of the significant letters, guarantees the novelist's "prominence in epistolary literary history."

James Karman, professor of English at Chico State University, also described in his paper ("Rock and Hawk: The Letters of Robinson and Una Jeffers") the search for letters and laid out the plan for his forthcoming volume, *The Collected Letters of Robinson Jeffers with Selected Letters by Una Jeffers*, where he aims to be an "impersonal" editor. Karman emphasized the contrast in tone and subject matter between the colder, more abstract letters of the poet Robinson Jeffers and the passionate, concrete ones written by Jeffers's wife, Una.

Lastly, in his paper "The Tale of Tales," Donald Blume, assistant professor of English at Central Connecticut State University, dealt with the textual history of Ambrose Bierce's 1892 collection of short stories, *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians*. Blume argued that the 1909 volume 2 of the *Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce* is no improvement on the 1892 edition. Bierce added some stories and dropped others, apparently to satisfy his publisher's strict demand for a 400-page volume.

Discussion for this session on California writers centered on discoveries of new manuscript material as panelists recounted, often humorously, the joys and disappointments resulting from their searches.

—Beverly Wilson Palmer

## The ADE Breakfast

Alfred Bendixen

The recent revision of the canon that has led to a renewal of interest in such major writers as Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mary Wilkins Freeman, and Edith Wharton has not yet led to the basic textual work and archival research essential for the establishment of reliable texts and accurate information. This presentation outlined some of the problems and opportunities facing the researcher working on American women writers and argued for the importance of this research.

Although Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short masterpiece, "The Yellow Wallpaper," is among the most anthologized of American short stories, scholarship has not yet paid appropriate attention to the manuscript version of that text, which is superior in several respects to all the published versions. In addition to several very substantial changes, perhaps most notably a different ending, the manuscript provides radically different paragraphing. These physical divisions in the text are crucial to interpretation, because they provide the primary representation of the emotional, psychological, and spiritual gaps in her marriage and ultimately in her psyche.

An exploration of archival material on Mary Wilkins Freeman may also challenge the standard view that her work declined after her marriage. There are reasons to believe that her later work represents an artist attempting to extend the range of her literary subjects, themes, and techniques and engaging in a series of bold artistic experiments with diverse genres. Archival material, particularly the Shaw scrapbook, provides revealing glimpses into the special nature of that marriage and the complex role her husband played in her final years. Furthermore, an unpublished letter Freeman wrote explaining her refusal to write an essay on the "American Woman" is representative of the fuller, richer, more complex view of her triumphs and tragedies that emerges from the archives.

While Edith Wharton's literary reputation has soared in the past twenty years, her works have not benefited from any significant textual scholarship even though most of the manuscript material is easily available. This material contains revisions Wharton made to several texts,

which have never been incorporated, including at least one short story that has been almost completely rewritten. A huge number of important unpublished letters shed light on Wharton's values and ideas as well as on several of the major works. For instance, the synopsis written while she was at work on *The House of Mirth* contains important revelations about her initial conception of this novel. Gilman, Freeman, and Wharton provide important examples of the wide range of important textual and archival work that is essential to anyone concerned with developing a fuller understanding of the achievements of American women writers.

### Documentary Editing in the Digital Age

Chair: Larry I. Bland

This session's subtitle was "How to Use a Comprehensive Electronic Edition for Fun, Profit, and Survival." Of course, the "fun" part was obvious only to documentary editors—outsiders merely shake their heads in wonderment. "Profit" was used in an ironic if not sarcastic sense. "Survival" was clearly the key. Whereas the "paperless office" foreseen a couple of decades ago has failed to materialize, the "paperless edition" may be the wave of the future.

Ronald Bosco (SUNY at Albany) and Joel Myerson (University of South Carolina) have been cooperating on an edition of the extensive correspondence among the Emerson brothers (William, Ralph Waldo, Charles Chauncy, and Edward Bliss). Bosco described the brothers' background, noting particularly William's influence on Ralph Waldo, which is a significant part of the justification for the edition. There are 1,251 letters by the brothers known to scholars, Myerson noted, of which only 6 (excluding those by Ralph Waldo) have been published heretofore. A selected letterpress volume will complement the searchable electronic (CD-ROM) edition.

As project manager of the effort to develop the George Perkins Marsh Online Research Center at the University of Vermont, Elizabeth Dow (then at Vermont but now at Louisiana State University) organized a panel of documentary editors, librarians, and technical experts to examine the problems of creating intellectual access to electronically published historical documents. She summarized the final report, entitled the "Burlington Agenda," which established eight key issues for further inquiry: who uses the documents; website design (i.e., how to assure that users are successful); markup guidelines; encoding guidelines; benefits and problems of linking to external resources; capability and limits of search engines; how to

assure that users get information efficiently and in context; and what publication practices are appropriate. The full Agenda report is available at <http://etext.uvm.edu/ba>.

Using PowerPoint software and a laptop computer to illustrate his points, David Chesnutt (University of South Carolina) gave an overview of MEP-2 (Model Editions Partnership, twentieth-century database). The new MEP-2 experimental database includes several hundred pages (documents and illustrations) from five letterpress editions. The first MEP effort (eighteenth- and nineteenth-century projects) has recorded 1.25 million hits, including 4,922 user sessions of 19 minutes or more—far more than anyone had expected, and many by high school students. Chesnutt showed some examples of SGML markup used by MEP-2 and explained why letterpress editions had to be rethought for digital presentation and use (e.g., better help screens, document-centered presentation techniques, nonproprietary software to facilitate "migration" of materials into future hardware and software).

—Larry I. Bland



"Documentary Editing in the Digital Age." Photo by Sharon Ritenour Stevens.

### Documentary Scholarship in the Bay Area

Chair: Candace Falk

This panel captured the diversity and the spirit of the Bay Area and showcased some of the more unusual issues faced by documentary editors.

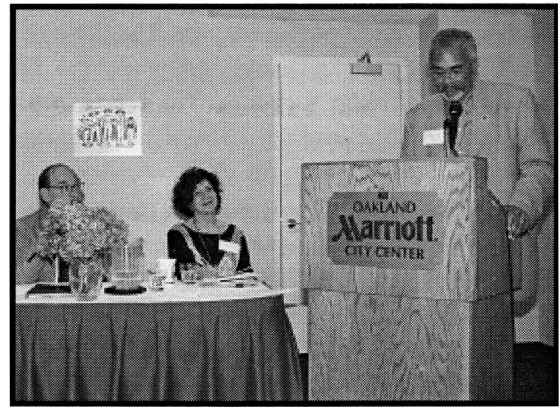
In "Editing Dead Reptiles: The Tebtunis Papyri at the University of California Berkeley," Tony Bliss, Curator of Rare Books and Literary Manuscripts at the University of California's Bancroft Library, discussed the challenges of

his current work with the Advanced Papyrological Information System project—an international initiative for facilitating access to the collections at the University of Michigan, Columbia University, and the University of California, Berkeley. The Tebtunis papyri at the Bancroft library were the focus of his presentation—material from inside a mummified crocodile found accidentally when one of them dropped! Not only does his job entail carrying a mummy across the campus, but, in a *tour de force* of bringing the future together with the far-off past, he has posted the ancient written fragments online, accessible to all those interested in trying their hand at documentary editing. Bliss shared vignettes from his work that raise fascinating prospects about the future of collaboration, and of access to very rare and unusual material.

In “Huckleberry Finn Again,” Bob Hirst, longtime editor of the Mark Twain Project and curator of the Mark Twain Papers in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, spoke with some irony, reminiscent of Twain himself, about the dilemma of a literary editor upon finding, long after the completion of the project’s “definitive publication” of Huck Finn, the missing half of the manuscript, lost for more than a hundred years. Reflecting on this mixed blessing, he addressed the complexity of ownership and permission (to understand how this happened) and the ways in which an editor of literary documents must always be aware of the author’s many revisions and edits sometimes bypassed even by the original publisher. Hirst also emphasized the role of the documentary editor in placing such discoveries in context to improve the authority of the text, in contrast to many publishers anxious to capitalize and sensationalize the new material without considering its scholarly implications. The story of the locked and hidden trunk, and the intrigue around the publisher’s family finally allowing Hirst to follow through on his many requests over the years, stand as a tribute to persistence and a reminder that the documentation of the past often is full of surprise.

Clay Carson, Professor of History at Stanford University, was invited by Coretta Scott King to edit and publish the Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. In “Who Owns Martin Luther King, Jr.,” Carson respectfully addressed the intricacies of working with the King Estate, especially on the issues of intellectual property—the false dichotomy of thinking that King is “owned” by everyone who identifies with his legacy and the technicalities of legal ownership. The talk included fascinating details about King as a private citizen copyrighting many of his works, including the “I Have a Dream” speech, and explored the significance of this act to his family and its

implications for scholars and for the public. Reporting that the King Papers project is given full access to these historical documents, Carson initiated a broader conversation about intellectual property rights and documentary editors. The recent “Mickey Mouse” case was cited as working against the long-term interests of scholars, especially as use of the Internet grows as a place to broaden the parameters of historical research. Carson concluded with a message of appreciation for the opportunity to work with the inspirational papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.—as an activist, scholar, and editor—as an ongoing freedom struggle, well worth even the legal challenges.



*“Documentary Scholarship in the Bay Area.”  
Photo by Sharon Ritenour Stevens.*

## Recent Developments in the Fashioning of Electronic Databases

Chair: Thomas A. Mason

In a discussion entitled “Hypertextile Scholarship: An Electronic Edition of the Bayeux Tapestry,” Martin K. Foy demonstrated his Bayeux Tapestry Digital Edition, which a user can access at the website <http://www.english.fsu.edu/bayeux>. He asked, How do you edit the Bayeux tapestry (the medieval embroidery that chronicled the Norman Conquest of England by William the Conqueror in 1066)? His edition includes an online image of the tapestry in full color, a glossary of personal and place names, and a map. He discussed difficulties he encountered in gaining the cooperation of the tapestry’s owner, the Bayeux Museum.

Only a month before this session, Robert Rosenberg had introduced the online edition of the Thomas A. Edison papers, the culmination of five years’ planning and twenty years’ work. In a talk entitled “Structuring a Document Database for Online Presentation,” he demonstrated

his edition's electronic finding aid and discussed the complications of tracking enclosures. The edition is at <http://edison.rutgers.edu>.

In a presentation entitled "Electric Reciprocations: Building a Walt Whitman Archive," Kenneth M. Price demonstrated his Walt Whitman Hypertext Archive, which includes images, documents, and text related to Whitman. It can be found at <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/whitman/>.

—Thomas A. Mason

## **The Book, the Byte, and the Bread: A Forum**

Chair: Charlene Bickford

Charlene Bickford, Co-editor and Project Director at the First Federal Congress Project, The George Washington University, began by contending that the only sure thing in our lives today is change. The future of our profession, our editions, and reliable and accessible texts on the Internet depend upon our ability to adapt to change yet again. We must continue to move into the electronic world while insisting that our standards be maintained and promote the broad use of editions while creating products with the future in mind.

Anne Newhall, Executive Director of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, outlined the financial situation at the NHPRC for FY 2001. Funding for this fiscal year far exceeds this year's appropriation, which is again stable at \$6 million. She, the Archivist of the United States, and Commission members need solid information for the case they make to the Office of Management and Budget and the Congress for increasing the appropriation to \$10 million during the period of the current appropriation and obtaining a higher authorized funding level in the next reauthorization bill. They need to know projects' requirements and ways the NHPRC could be more helpful. She believes the Commission could support additions further through assistance with technical issues, increased distribution, staff training, and projects to encourage use. She proposed gathering information through an ADE-hired consultant funded by the NHPRC and provided a list of questions she would like to see posed in such a study.

Richard Leffler, Associate Editor at the Ratification of the Constitution Project at the University of Wisconsin, responded that the NHPRC staff had raised valid questions, questions that are being asked of them. When we have discussed these questions and in some cases implemented policies to address them, we will be able to assure the NHPRC and others that documentary editions are enormously useful to scholars, that projects are effi-

cient, that volumes are being marketed and distributed well, and that fundraising from private sources is facilitated and increased. Some of these questions have been answered by recent surveys and studies by Ann Gordon and Martha King. The NHPRC can also help editors make decisions regarding electronic publishing and improved distribution. Similarly, the NHPRC can use its good offices to help editors raise private funds.

Mary Gallagher, Coeditor of the Papers of Robert Morris, explored the question of documentary editing in a democratic world. Although projects are completing more and more volumes to scholarly critical acclaim, democratic forces in the electronic, political, and educational world threaten the future of documentary editing. Users of our editions appreciate their reliability and enduring value, but many forces, such as the marketplace, technology, and demands for instant results, will affect the future of documentary editing even more than they are affecting the present. The cutbacks in funding for the NEH, coupled with that agency's desire to change the way it supports long-term projects, makes for a perilous situation. The NHPRC too is moving away from starting multivolume editions. Those brave enough to launch such projects will find resources diminishing and time consumed with fruitless fundraising.

Gallagher went on to ask how our profession would survive without the leadership of those who are involved with long-term editions, a core of career editors. Long-term projects are important repositories of our collective wisdom and play a significant role in transmitting it. She outlined several areas where we must be involved to make what we do visibly relevant, including increasing classroom use of editions through curriculum development, websites, exhibits and books of well-edited documents. Although this would take time away from our editions, it might provide additional revenue streams. We must find ways to appeal to broader audiences.

Gallagher concluded with a statement that expresses the challenge facing the documentary editing profession:

In one way or another, politicians have affirmed their support for preserving our American heritage. We must continue our efforts to convince them, our funders, and the public at large that documentary editing and long-term editorial projects are an important part of this agenda. We must show them that our product is essential to keeping our heritage fresh and vital, and that the skills we preach and practice are those that informed educators are striving to instill. As diffi-

cult as it may be to establish a niche in the educational establishment and in the world of commercial publishing, we must make the effort because any measure of success will strengthen our case before our funders. Financing a well-chosen canon of documentary editions is a luxury third world nations cannot afford, but it is not in that category for the United States of America. We must remind our elected officials that an ongoing commitment to long-term editorial projects, to expanding our literary and historical canon editions, is well within our national capabilities and ought to be one of our cultural priorities.

A spirited question and answer period followed.

### **Editing the Spanish Southwest**

Chair: Diana Hadley

The final session of the 2000 ADE conference addressed issues in the transcription and translation of Spanish texts.

The first presentation was given by Richard Flint, Research Assistant Professor of History at New Mexico Highlands University. His talk, "Historical Context and the Muster Roll of the Coronado Expedition, 1540–1542," blames historical misrepresentation of the event on the failure of past historians to search beyond the "Muster Roll" for evidence. From this single document, the expedition becomes the heroic adventure of a few hundred men rather than the larger undertaking of 1500 to 2000 people. The culprits are translations that fail to present the document as a partial list. The solution, according to Flint, is to produce dual language editions with more accurate translations.

Jerry Craddock, Professor of Spanish and Romance Philology at UC Berkeley and program director of the Center for Romance Studies, presented "Editing the Documents of the Oñate Entrada into New Mexico, 1598–1601." In his presentation, Craddock cited the need for critical editions of Spanish texts to replace current translations that have derived from erroneous transcriptions and have often been adjusted to comply with current theory. Craddock's purpose is to provide readers with all the evidence. To achieve this goal, he suggests publication in facsimile, followed by the English transcription, and complemented by an annotated translation.

"The Importance of Style: Translating Spanish Colonial Documents," concluded the session and was offered by Tracy Duvall, Assistant Curator of Ethnohistory at the

Arizona State Museum. Duvall describes a need to preserve the author's voice in translated texts. Just as the discipline has been increasingly faithful to a single standard in transcription, it should also move toward a uniform style in translation. Unless an editor notes alterations in a text, translations should never be clearer than originals.

—Sara Martin

### **Editor Sought for *Documentary Editing***

The ADE solicits proposals for a new editor and a new institutional home for its quarterly journal, *Documentary Editing*. Beth Luey will continue as editor until she has seen the December 2001 issue through to publication. Her successor will begin work in the fall of 2001 to produce the March 2002 issue. The Association seeks a two-year renewable commitment to the journal from a new editor and institutional host. Proposals should identify the editor, include a projected budget for the first year, and indicate the level of institutional support available to the publication. Interested parties should apply to:

Beverly Wilson Palmer  
Lucretia Coffin Mott Correspondence  
History Department, Pomona College  
551 N. College Avenue  
Claremont, CA 91711  
fax 909-621-8574, or  
<bpalmer@pomona.edu>

For more information about the responsibilities connected with the publication of *Documentary Editing*, applicants should contact Palmer at either of the above addresses or 909-607-3443.

### **Call for Nominations**

The ADE Nominating Committee seeks nominations for the President-elect and Councillor-at-Large positions on the 2001 ballot. Submit nominations by February 1, 2001, to the chair: Sharon Ritenour Stevens, George C. Marshall Foundation, P.O. Box 1600, Lexington, VA 24450; [stevenssr@vmi.edu](mailto:stevenssr@vmi.edu). The other members of the committee are Dennis Conrad, Helen Deese, Richard Leffler, and Elizabeth Nuxoll.