

USING THE WEB TO CHANGE EDITORIAL RESEARCH PRACTICE

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Pacific Neighborhood Consortium

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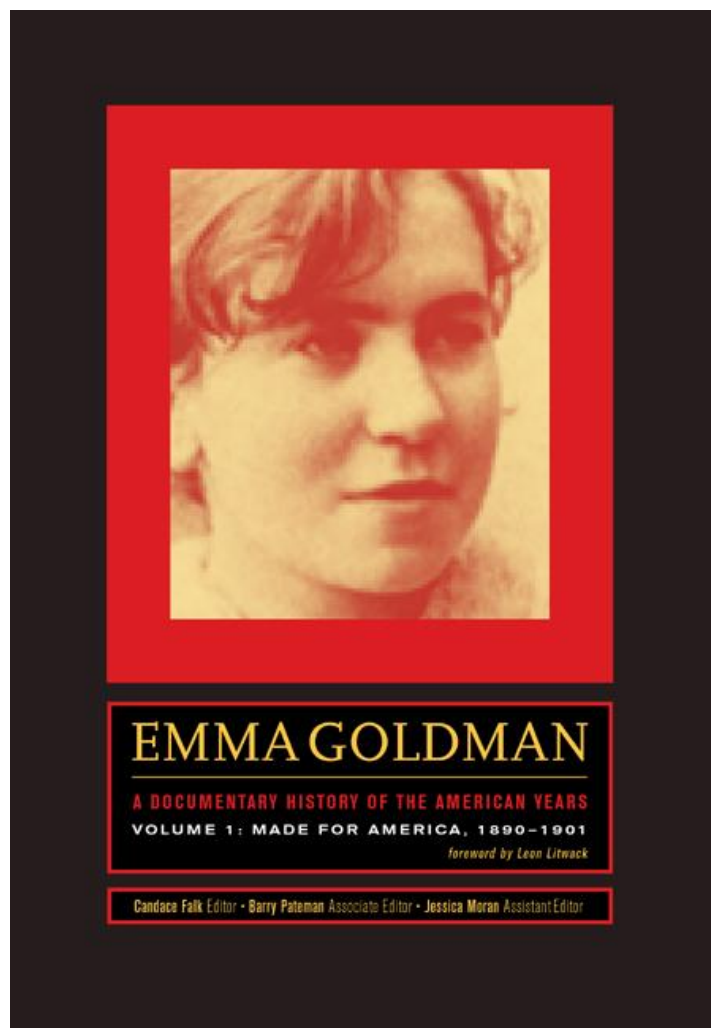
Documentary editing

- Editors prepare collections of documents: letters, articles, diaries, essays, etc.
- Printed volumes provide context for better understanding subjects' experiences and general milieu through footnotes, images, chronologies, articles

Documentary editing: workflow

- 1) Gather documents
- 2) Contextualize select items
- 3) Publish final product
- 4) Repeat as funding allows

Case study: Emma Goldman Papers



Case study: Emma Goldman Papers

To WALTER CHANNING

New York, 18 October 1902

DEAR SIR

I am in receipt of your note of the 18th inst. and in reply would like to say this, I do not know whether Czolgoz¹ was an Anarchist, nor have I the right to say that he was not. I have not known him sufficiently to be acquainted with his political Views. In fact no one has, including Mr Isaak and Mr Shilling² and if they have expressed opinions either for or against his being an Anarchist they have done an injustice to the young man, who died such a brave death, as you and you, dear Sir will be guilty of the same offence if you attempt to prove that Czolgoz was not or was an Anarchist. No one can with certainty say, that the man was an Anarchist, since he was but little known, and since he has never proff made a public statement to that affect. Still less can one prove that he was not one; there is nothing in his act by which one can deny him the right of being an Anarchist. It is true, the Philosophy of Anarchy does not teach Invasion, but it does teach self defence, and Czolgoz's act was an act of self-defence and nothing else. You may question this, since Czolgoz was not personally attack by McKinley, quite true, but Czolgoz belonged to the Oppressed, to the Exploited and Disinherited Millions, who lead a life of darkness and despaire owing to those, of whom McKinley was one, therefore he was personally attacked by the ex President, or rather he was one of the Victims of the McKinley regime and those McKinley catered to. The act of Czolgoz may have been impractical or inopportune, I will not argue this point now, but I insist it had nothing unanarchistic about it, since, as I said before Anarchism claims the right of Defence against Invasion and Aggression of every shape and form and no one, who has his eyes open will and can deny that those in Power are the Invadors, and McKinley certainly was one of them. I send you with this, 2 Articles³

1. Leon Czolgosz, who assassinated President McKinley at the world's fair in Buffalo in September 1901, was judged sane before his trial by three psychiatrists for the prosecution and two psychiatrists for the defense. Later, Tufts University Medical School psychiatrist Walter Channing assessed Czolgosz as mentally unstable, based strictly on the assassin's personal history, in a October 1902 article published in the *American Journal of Insanity*.
2. Cleveland anarchist Emil Schilling had been Czolgosz's first contact in the anarchist movement in May 1901, lending him reading materials and answering his questions. According to Schilling they were estranged even before Czolgosz's arrival in Chicago. Abe Isaak, editor of *Free Society*, introduced Czolgosz to EG in Chicago; Isaak found Czolgosz's behavior suspicious.

Case study: Emma Goldman Papers



Case study: Emma Goldman Papers



Case study: Emma Goldman Papers



Case study: Emma Goldman Papers

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Ferdinand P Earle Notes.wpd	16.6 kB	WordPerfect document	2004-04-01 13:02:42
joehill notes.wpd	2.4 kB	WordPerfect document	2004-04-22 12:11:28
Seagull Notes.wpd	5.7 kB	WordPerfect document	2004-04-05 13:48:12
The Blast.doc	22.0 kB	Microsoft Word Document	2003-03-05 15:14:12
What I believe versus Anarchism.wpd	4.3 kB	WordPerfect document	2003-02-05 14:14:20
What I believe versus other sources.wpd	3.3 kB	WordPerfect document	2003-02-12 13:52:40
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▶ christie	4 items	Folder	2010-09-27 13:50:26
▶ Christina	3 items	Folder	2010-09-27 13:50:26

"Agnes" selected (containing 30 items)

Documentary editing: Problems

- Published volumes & necessary work are expensive
- Lack of space for all footnotes
- Much of research done is either glossed over in footnotes or not included at all
 - Fact checking
 - Falsification or dead ends
 - Tangential biographical details
- Preservation & legacy

How do projects take notes?

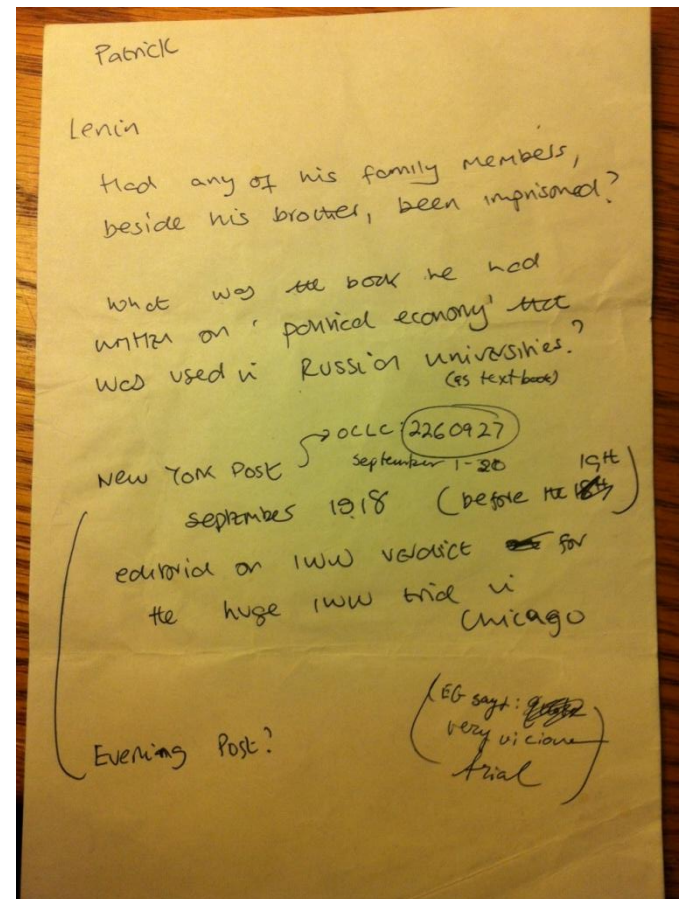
Patrick—

Lenin:

Had any of his family members beside his brother, been imprisoned?

What was the book he had written on 'political economy' that was used in Russian Universities?

New York (Evening?) Post,
September 1918 editorial on IWW
verdict for the huge IWW trial in
Chicago.



How do projects take notes?

- Sources consulted, notes taken based on findings
- Notes stored in a Word documents? Yellow notebook? Email?
- Negative conclusion reached to question, but no one will ever know

Lenin, Vladimir Ilich [V.I. Ulyanov] (1870–1924) Russian revolutionary leader and founder of the Bolshevik party, a faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party formed in 1903. Lenin grew up east of Moscow in the city of Simbirsk in a relatively wealthy family. When he was a teenager, his brother was executed for his role in plotting to kill Tsar Alexander III. While studying to become a lawyer, Lenin began his involvement in radical and Marxist circles in the late 1880s and 1890s. By the last years of the nineteenth century, he was a prolific writer and published many newspapers and articles encouraging revolution in Russia. To avoid being punished for his activities by the Tsarist police, Lenin spent much of the decades preceding the 1917 Russian revolution in exile in London, Paris, Geneva, Zurich, and other European cities, working with other émigrés to encourage revolution in Russia. After the overthrow of the Tsar in February 1917, Lenin planned his trip back to Russia, arriving in Petrograd in April. His return was controversial because his train from Switzerland was allowed to pass through Germany, one of Russia's enemies in World War I. This fact led many to believe that Lenin was

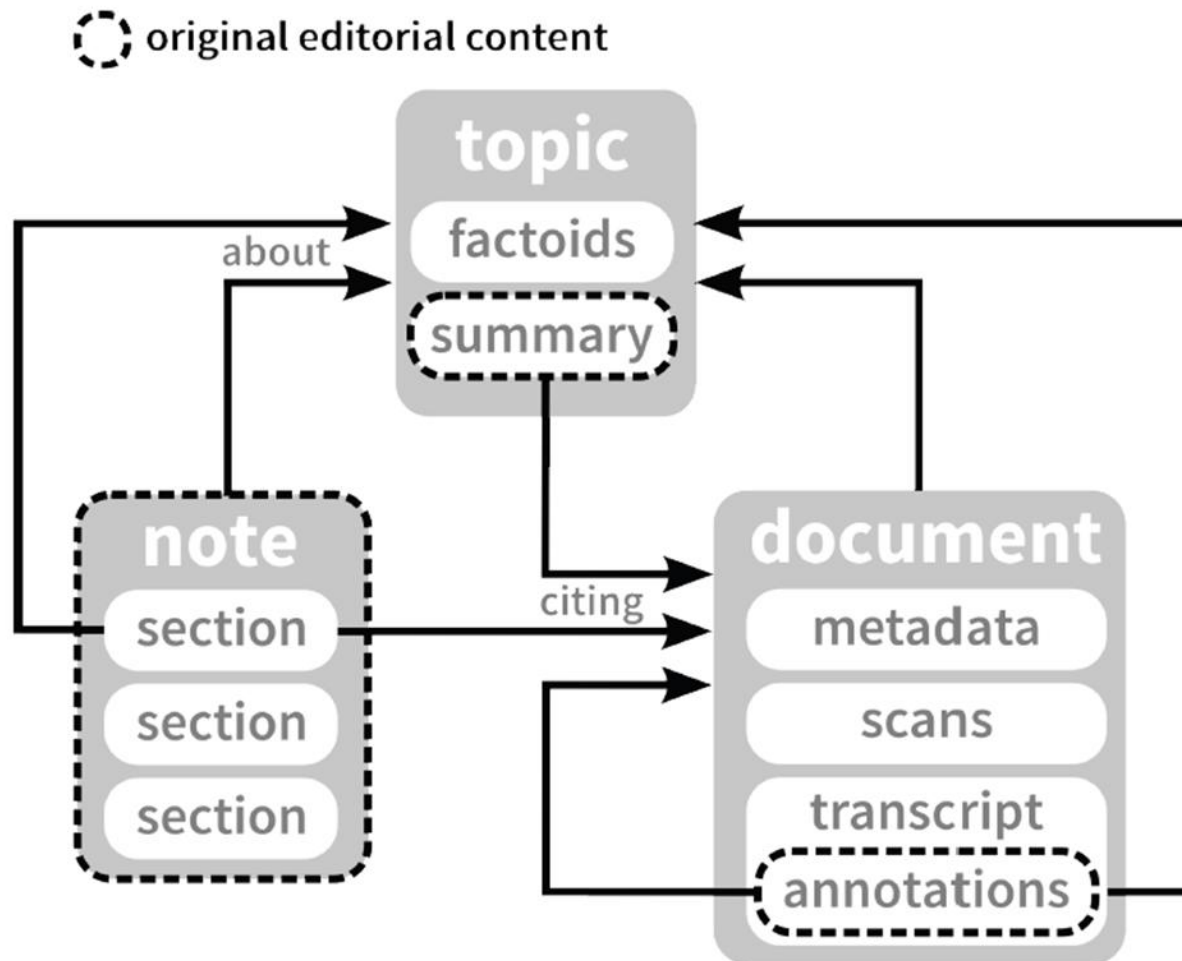
Editors' Notes

- <http://editorsnotes.org/>
- <http://ecai.org/mellon2010/>
- Finding a safe place for the “debris” of research
- Improving return on investment for documentary editing projects
- Central focus on changing work practices of editors and researchers rather than digitizing what already exists

Editors' Notes: Design principles

- 1) Minimal amount of “friction” for researchers
- 2) Flexibility for different work habits
- 3) Consistency in data models
- 4) Existing technology wherever possible
- 5) Adherence to web standards

Data model



Documents

- Zotero for document metadata (<http://zotero.org/>)
 - Ability to describe a wide range of documents
 - Read/write API
 - Citeproc-js for generation of citations and bibliographic references
- High quality, zoomable scans with <http://zoom.it/>
- Transcripts in HTML with interface to annotate passages of text

Add document

B **I** Generate citation Autoupdate?

Emma Goldman to Alexander Berkman, December 12, 1915, reel 4, Emma Goldman Papers.

Item type **Letter**

Title

Author

Recipient

Abstract

Type

Date

Language

Short Title

Cancel Save

Notes

- Most difficult part of the project
- Notes are messy, purposefully
- How to model something so chaotic & idiosyncratic?
- Goals: Easy to use; flexible but consistent

Notes

- Description
- Status
 - Open, closed, hibernating
- Assigned users
- Sections
 - Citation with optional notes
 - Plain text
 - Future: Maps? Timelines? Chronologies?

Editors' Notes
Browse
About

Search

Sanger and the Third ICPP

Unlike the coverage in secondary sources, planning on the Third ICPP started far earlier than Dec. See Watumull and the Third ICPP and British and Third ICPP for more. Focus in these notes is o

Add section: Document citation

Sanger, Margaret, letter to Katharine Dexter McCormick, Jan. 8, 1951 [MSM S33:712]

Sanger, Margaret letter to Pearl S. Buck, Jan. 9, 1951 [MSM S33:717]

B
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H3
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☷
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Notes that if they had been able to keep the East-West going, it would have made a great cont and blundering, not only in Washington but wherever but leaders are, and of course most fright civic affairs given to military leaders. We seem to learn nothing from history and one would thir make our military leaders hesitant to build up a powerful military organization. Germany did so on their knees."

"There is a possibility of our having a population Conference in the Orient somewhere in 1952. from India recently tells me many of the 65 clinics that I organized in 1936 are still going. It will the health groups to that information as well as supplies will not have to be limited to people w ahead and I am so happy to feel well again."

Sanger, Margaret letter to Eleanor C. Jenkins, Jan. 9, 1951 [MSM S33:719]

Brush, Dorothy letter to Margaret Sanger, Jan. 21, 1951 [MSM S33:768]

Demonstration with Lenin example

What changed for researchers?

Free text



Structured blocks

Implicit people,
places, events



Explicit linkable
entities

Filing cabinets



Open access

Benefits of our approach

- Connections linking topics are freed from the minds of editors & researchers and indexed for anyone to see
- Standardized records of work can easily be revisited from within a project or from outside
- New way of seeing the outer edges of humanities research
- Evidence of intense, often messy, scholarship behind concise, clean footnotes

Technology

- Django Python web framework
- PostgreSQL database
- South for database migrations
- Haystack for full-text searching
- Zotero for document description
- Google Refine for duplicate detection
- Bootstrap & jQuery for frontend development

Thank You

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Coleman Fung Foundation

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Project information: <http://ecai.org/mellon2010/>

Project site: <http://editorsnotes.org/>