

Working Group in Digital and New Media Annual Report 2015

Summary

The 2013-2014 academic year was exceptionally productive for the Working Group in Digital and New Media. Members of the Working Group delivered numerous papers, wrote grant proposals, won grants, submitted articles, forged new collaborations, and published and performed digital datasets, games, and new pieces of music. The Working Group sponsored a half dozen lectures of the past two academic years and gathered both formally and informally to share ideas, socialized, and collaborate. We also mourned the passing of the Chair of the Working Group in Digital and New Media, Joel Jonientz (Art and Design). His imprint and collaborative spirit shaped much of what the Working Group accomplished over the last three years.

Members of the Working Group have been involved in a range of collaborative ventures across campus. Van Eck and Dessel have partnered with colleagues in science education, biology, and physics. Pasch and Caraher have contributed to the ongoing renaissance at North Dakota Quarterly. Many Working Group members extended their collaborative work beyond the UND campus to include international organization, peer institutions, local partners, and global artists.

Capitalizing Working Group's global connections, they hosted an virtual speakers series that brought major contributors to digital history, digital anthropology, and digital humanities to campus via Skype. University of Richmond President and Presidential Humanities Medal recipient Ed Ayers attracted over 80 students and faculty to hear his talk.

Kyle Conway, English/Communications Program

During the spring 2014 semester, Kyle Conway taught a graduate course about communication in the Bakken. The students came from a range of fields—not just communication, but also education and public health. Together, they reviewed submissions to a book edited by Bill Caraher and Conway called *The Bakken Goes Boom*. In 2015, they will publish this book through the Digital Press at the University of North Dakota and make it available in paper and electronic formats. It will provide scholars, policy-makers, long-time North Dakota residents, and newcomers to the state with a deeper, clearer understanding of the impact of the oil boom on life in North Dakota.

Tim Pasch, English/Communications Program

Timothy Pasch has been named Chief Information Officer of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States. In this role Pasch has leveraged Working Group resources and expertise in optimizing the digital infrastructure and strategy for this national scholarly organization, which publishes the peer-reviewed Taylor and Francis journal ARCS. www.acsus.org

Pasch continued his research into the cyberinfrastructure of the circumpolar Arctic this past year. He led a week-long digital base-camp in Arviat, Nunavut in May 2014 attended by Arctic policymakers, faculty members, and Inuit residents where he led discussion on federal Arctic data policy, app development, creative cultural convergence and sustainable development for digital economies in the North.

With the Consulate General of Canada and the Will Steger Foundation Pasch organized a major Arctic Symposium at UND in November of 2013. During the event Pasch, with the assistance of Working Group resources, CILT and ITSS established a live streaming connection with Nunavut and broadcast the event internationally.

Pasch is working with the governments of Greenland and Norway in participating in Virtual Arctic Ambassador programs, enabling students and faculty to engage in telepresence-enabled conversations with government officials related to the future and policy of Arctic Affairs.

With former Working Group colleague Joel Jonientz, Pasch composed, produced and scored the original music for Jonientz's original time-based media animation entitled "The Bat" currently being rendered for release with ElectroMagnetic Press.

Pasch is co-developing grant-based digital deliverables for submission to Public Health Canada. The iPad application deliverable is a culturally focused game for Inuit youth, currently in collaborative development in conjunction with Inuit developers in the Arctic and Vancouver using the Confluence agile development environment by Atlassian.

Crystal Alberts, English and Wilbur Stolt, Director of Libraries

Over the course of 2013-2014, the Chester Fritz Library and Dr. Crystal Alberts continued to build the UND Writers Conference Digital Collection (WCDC). The WCDC project team was able to preserve and digitize an additional 80 hours of footage dating from the late 1970s through the 2000s. The complete UND Writers Conference Digital Collection finding aid is now available thanks to assistance from a graduate research assistant. The project, which began in 2008, has now preserved approximately 300 hours of audio/video footage from 1970-present. The WCDC team also worked to increase the amount of footage freely available online for scholarly, educational, and historical purposes from 65 hours to approximately 117 hours. In particular, the team has made some or most video from the last thirteen years of the conference (2001-2014) freely available online, as well as added a number of other recordings available dating the mid-1970s through the 2000s. Dr. Alberts received another National Endowment for the Arts grant, which will enable the preservation of additional footage from the 1980s. She is currently working with students to increase the number of transcriptions available in the collection.

Paul Worley, Languages

Paul used to lab to hold occasional sessions of his class which explored concepts of performance in both Latin American and North American culture: "How to Do Things With (or without?!) Words: Performance in Latin America." The course resulted in several collaborative performances in the Memorial Union, in Merrifield Hall, and on the internet.

Paul also continued work on the animated shorts produced during a collaborative field season with Joel Jonientz among the Maya of the Yucatan Peninsula. The second video, "Ooch yéetel papayao" appeared this spring and featured animations produced by children who attended an animation workshop lead by Jonientz in the summer of 2012.

Richard Van Eck, Teaching and Learning

Richard Van Eck, Mark Guy (science education) and Tim Young (physics) have been working on three digital games to promote STEM education in pre-service teachers and middle schools. Van Eck is the design consultant and the evaluator for testing these games. The first game, Project NEO, targets the STEM education problem in middle school through the use of a game to promote STEM knowledge and positive attitude toward STEM. However, unlike other interventions, this approach is unique in two important ways: it addresses students in elementary school (because research shows they lack foundational conceptual science knowledge by the time they reach middle school), and it addresses those students by FIRST addressing preservice teachers (because they, too, lack fundamental conceptual science knowledge and thus cannot teach elementary students effectively). This team submitted a paper to the International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies (ICALT) based on the evaluation report prepared by Van Eck which included contributions from Mark Guy, Tim Young, and two IDT GRAs (Austin Winger and Deb Jenkins). The paper was accepted and won the award for best conference paper for the potential impact of the game and the innovative approach it adopts.

The second game is a mathematics game called Contemporary Studies of the Zombie Apocalypse and targets middle school students. The focus is not on computational mathematics, but on mathematical thinking in everyday life. The goal is to address the new Common Core mathematics standards, which focus on mathematical thinking. The team has applied for Phase II funding to develop the rest of the game and test it in middle schools in Grand Forks.

The third game is called FarPlane, and focuses on teaching leadership to high school students. In the game, you play an imposter posing as the queen of the planet Digon. The team has tested the game with high schools in the Bahamas, North Carolina, and Belgium and found it to be effective, and applied for Phase II funding this year to complete the game.

Ann Reed, Anthropology

In the Fall 2013 semester, Reed borrowed digital voice recorders, cameras, and tripods from the Digital Working Group to carry out ethnographic research with undergraduates in Western North Dakota. This project was geared towards collecting local-level data

about the impacts of the oil boom and about local history in light of the town's upcoming centennial celebration. In addition, Reed and her students used the Digital Working Group Lab to carry out a skype interview with a resident of Watford City to learn about her personal experiences with respect to the oil boom's impacts.

Michael Wittgraf, Music

Improvisations 2013, an improvisational musical work for electronics and saxophone by Michael Wittgraf, in collaboration with Malcolm Lynn Baker, saxophonist and Director of Jazz Studies and Commercial Music at the University of Denver, was performed by the pair at the 2013 Kyma International Sound Symposium in Brussels, Belgium, on September 12, 2013.

Also at the same symposium, Dr. Wittgraf's proposal to build a MIDI controlled microphone as part of the "InterFaceOff" workshop was accepted, the final results of which were presented on September 15, 2013 in Brussels.

In preparation for the symposium, Wittgraf and Baker performed Improvisations 2013, Microphun, and Turn of Phrase on the campus of UND, and at Studio Z in St. Paul, Minnesota, the home of the world-renowned new music quartet "Zeitgeist". These performances took place on September 3 and 4, 2014.

Thread, for live electronics, violin, cello, and piano, by Michael Wittgraf, was performed by the composer and the Red River Trio on the North Dakota Museum of Art's "Concerts in the Gallery" series on October 27, 2013, and subsequently performed the following night on the "Fine Arts Series" at Mayville State University. The Red River Trio is a UND Student ensemble. As far as we know, this marks the first time a UND student ensemble was featured on a "Concerts in the Gallery" event.

Thread was also performed by the same ensemble, In May of 2013 at Tongji University in Shanghai, China, the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, the Kanuma City Event Center, Japan, and at the Tokyo College of Music.

Microphun, for single performer on microphone, loudspeaker, and Nintendo Wii, by Michael Wittgraf, was performed by the composer at the Electronic Music Midwest Mini-Conference on the campus of Montana State University in Bozeman, February 2014.

Michael Wittgraf and Joel Jonientz were accepted to co-present at the 2014 NDSU Playing on Common Ground theatre Conference (May 1-3, 2014). The subject matter was to be an exploration and discussion of the early stages in their development of a multimedia, multi-modal "opera", where logistics, location, and available personnel would determine instrumentation, modes of presentation, and plot of the material. The intend was to create a multi-year project that would change as available technology and personnel changed. Tragically, Jonientz died on April 21 prior to the conference, and the project has been put on hold indefinitely.

Kim Cowden, Indian Studies/Communication Program

Cowden's project is a video documentary with an anticipated running time of 45 minutes. The film seeks to understand American Indian student retention in higher education issues. Using a series of in-depth interviews with American Indian students, mentors and educational experts, this project investigates the crisis of lower retention rates of American Indian students compared to any other ethnic minority. The project is generously funded by the North Dakota Arts and Humanities Council.

Brett Ommen, English/Communication Program

Brett Ommen and Joel Jonientz collaborated on the first (and sadly only) season of Professor Footnote podcasts. These scholarly podcast melded narrative, discussion, and academic analysis of topics with wide appeal. Brett and Joel incorporated footnotes throughout the podcast to provide academic citations or further discussion. The podcasts have over 1200 downloads to date.

Christopher Basgier, English

An essay Basgier wrote, titled "Atypical Rhetorical Actions: Defying Genre Expectations on Amazon.com" was accepted as a chapter in the collection *Emerging Genres*, edited by Carolyn R. Miller and Ashley R. Kelly. The essay analyzes satirical Amazon.com reviews in order to explain their unexpected rhetorical potential for political critique and community building.

Bill Caraher, History

Over the past year, Bill Caraher has continued his exploration of digital tools in field archaeology. He has presented work on archaeological database management and 3D imagining as well as more critical explorations of the institutional, economic, and professional issues related to access to digital tools. This has produced a sustained discussion of "Slow Archaeology" in conference conference papers and an essay submitted to *North Dakota Quarterly* on that topic in the fall of 2014.

Caraher has also published a large, peer-reviewed digital dataset based on a decade of work with the Pyla-Koutsopetria Archaeological Project on Cyprus. This data was published in collaboration with the Alexandria Archive and is now publicly available on their Open Context digital publishing platform. Continuing the work of making archaeological data more widely available to researchers, Caraher has worked with Prof. Jon Frey (Michigan State University) and the MATRIX Center for Digital Humanities and Social Sciences at Michigan State University to serve a pilot project for an application developed through a \$350,000 NEH Digital Implementation Grant. This project will make the excavation notebooks and other archaeological data from the Princeton Polis Expedition (with which Caraher has been affiliated for 5 years) available to affiliated researcher via the internet.

Caraher has also collaborated with Brett Ommen, Kyle Conway, and Joel Jonientz to develop *The Digital Press* at the University of North Dakota. The Digital Press's inaugural volume, *Punk Archaeology*, appeared this fall, and a digital version of the book

was downloaded over 1000 times in the first week it was available. The book is now available in paperback form at Amazon.com.

This interest in digital publishing has led Caraher (and Pasch) to collaborate with North Dakota Quarterly. This collaboration extends from co-editing a collection of poems, fiction, and essays on the "Slow Movement" for the Winter 2015 issue and consulting on best practices for moving the journal in more digital directions.

Caraher continues to blog at the Archaeology of the Mediterranean World which has enjoyed close to 150,000 page views in the last year and served as a platform for discussions ranging from the North Dakota Man Camp Project, to 3D imagining in archaeology, craft practices in archaeology, and new technologies for archaeological fieldwork.