Project Endings Meeting Notes

28 May 2018

Present: Stewart Arneil, Claire Carlin, Emily Comeau, John Durno, Lisa Goddard, Elizabeth Grove-White, Matt Huculak, Martin Holmes, Janelle Jenstad, Greg Newton.

INTERNET SHAKESPEARE EDITIONS: the challenges of legacy projects

Janelle reported on the current situation: the site could go dark in December because Cocoon will be incompatible with the version of Java UVic Systems wants to install. The technical issue is complicated by questions about governance.

Editors continue to submit content. A new guidelines structure is in process, and three editions have been re-encoded according to these new standards. Authority for overseeing the inclusion of new material is, however, unclear, as the transfer of responsibility for a project begun over two decades ago is incomplete.

On the technical side, Martin and Stewart compared the advantages of starting from scratch to the huge job of trying to revitalize existing structures. But technical questions cannot be addressed fully until governance is clear. In the meantime, the primary suggestion floated during the discussion (by Lisa) was to seal off the back end of the site so that any new content submitted would not appear on the public site until the governance/legal issues are cleared up. If the situation is not resolved by the end of the calendar year, the ISE could be twilighted.

Janelle noted alternatively the possibility that two smaller websites could be built fairly quickly, and that the ISE’s sibling site Digital Renaissance Editions (directed by Brett Greatley-Hirsch) and the Queen’s Men Editions (led by Helon Ostovich, Peter Cockett, and Andrew Griffin) do not have the same governance transition challenges.

All agreed that the intersection of technical issues with governance (including ownership, management, and relationships) is a key question for Project Endings, as demonstrated in our ongoing interviews with the P.I.s of digital projects. On that subject:

INTERVIEWS UPDATE

Danny Martin has been hired as our new RA for 8 hours per week to assist Emily in transcribing and encoding the interviews.

Report from Emily:

Interviews conducted so far: 8

Transcribed: 5, 2 IP

Encoded with basic XML: 4, 2 more this week

Scheduled: 17, 12 of these in June

No reply: 8 (of 33 total contacted)

Survey responses: 65 full, 60 incomplete (no change since April)

WEBSITE

The European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force from 25 May 2018. Given that the WordPress site has always been blocked in Europe, this is one more reminder that the existing WordPress site needs to be replaced. After discussion about using WordPress or Git.io, Martin proposed using the Keats model for a straight HTML site that we could all edit. Pat can work on the layout structure, while the Martin, Stewart or Greg will need to transfer the content.

Elizabeth suggested we begin to compile conference papers and other outputs of our research for eventual publication of a compilation, which could appear on the site, in the UVic repository (linked from the site), and perhaps elsewhere as well, with the proper permissions. Martin noted that providing links to each piece would be the easiest way to publish on the site.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES, PAPERS GIVEN AND PUBS

Martin has had three papers accepted for the TEI conference, two of which are Endings-related. He’ll also be presenting two papers in Tokyo in September, one at DH, and one at the Japanese Association for Digital Humanities.

OUR (PROMISED) CONFERENCE:

We’ll need to obtain a Connections grant, without which it probably won’t be possible to hold a conference, unless it’s strictly a local one.

One strategy for enhancing impact is to convince a larger organization to include digital preservation as a theme (a stream or sub-theme or topic). For example, the weekend before DHSI in 2020 we could hold a symposium, “Project Endings at DHSI,” possibly in association with CARL (the Canadian Association of Research Libraries), of which Jonathan Bengtson is president. Other possible partnerships will be explored if this one doesn’t pan out.