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Title: *Building 9066 Archive into Wikipedia: A Case Study of Digital Scholarship, History and Activism at Fresno State*

Abstract: Can special collections, archival materials and library exhibits support community activism? The paper focuses on Fresno State and how the university library's special collections and exhibits served as important research materials to be cited into an online site such as Wikipedia. The case study presents how the library promotes the intersections of digital scholarship, activism and research in a Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon in March 2017. The Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon's theme was the Executive Order of 9066, which was a controversial order signed by President Roosevelt to approve the designated military zones that Japanese Americans would be relocated during the height of World War II. To remember the 75th anniversary of this order, scholars, librarians and community members attended the Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon and added new sources into Wikipedia from the library's collections and exhibits. The paper provides the contexts and outcomes of this community activity.

Keywords: digital humanities, Wikipedia, special collections, digital collections, reference

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Introduction

On February 19, 1942, U.S President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed and issued the Executive Order 9066 to create designated military zones that would lead to interment camps for Japanese Americans. From February 1942 to March 1946, the United States incarcerated and relocated over 120,000 Japanese-American civilians into internment camps during the height of World War II. This kind of atrocity and mistreatment of Japanese Americans created a historical trauma. Fresno County, a county in Central California was one of the cities that had many designated zones.

To remember this part of history (in the 75st anniversary), Fresno State's Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) launched a public exhibit called, "9066: Japanese Voices from the Inside" from February 9 to April 30, 2017. The exhibit commemorates the complex part of U.S. history. It showcased artifacts that were used or made in the campus in the display. The project also focused on preserving papers of Central Valley families who endured the internment period. Preserving these objects ensures that this is part of Fresno's history would not be forgotten.

To build on this effort, SCRC partnered with the first year student success librarian to launch the first Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon on this topic in March 2017. The Wikipedia workshop was opened to all community members. Participants created and edited Wikipedia entries by citing and using the content from the exhibitions and from archival materials. Participants were able to engage with historical sources, library reference materials and share their new knowledge of digital scholarship and activism. The purpose of this program was to bring community users interested in disseminating the library's efforts to commemorate 9066 and its aftermath. The exhibition included furniture to archival documents from internment camps that raised attention but also expanded the local history and genealogy of the victims of 9066.

This paper presents how library's special collections and exhibits can be actively integrated into online spaces such as Wikipedia to engage with the communities and to develop new ways to create digital scholarship projects and programs. The paper will explore opportunities and challenges in hosting a Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon event covering historical themes to engage with the community in digital scholarship and digital activism, and emphasizes how libraries, particularly the library's special collections and research services can add new value and knowledge into the digital space to preserve and share historical materials and traumas of this particular period.

9066 Wikipedia-Edit-a-Thon at Fresno State

California State University, Fresno (also known as Fresno State) is part of the California State University system (CSU) made up of 23 campuses across the state of California in the United States. Fresno is located in the heart of California, in the Central Valley. It is a diverse county in California with many ethnic communities living in this city. Fresno State has over 21,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate students. It is also a diverse campus with students from Hispanic, Hmong, Cambodian, Chinese heritages and more. The Henry Madden Library at Fresno State strives to promote diversity and inclusivity on campus and beyond.

To remember the 75th anniversary of 9066, SCRC organized several major events and exhibits in the spring of 2017. These public programs and exhibits covered the incarceration of Japanese Americans with a focus on the San Joaquin Valley community. One of the main questions asked throughout the planning process was, "what would be an effective way to engage with users in-person and online?" To consider this question, the resource would have to be open, accessible and popular. Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia that has crowdsourcing features can be flawed and biased in its entries. However, it is also a popular "reference" site that can provide great source of information if the entries are written and cited properly. "Libraries and librarians have taken a critical interest in Wikipedia as a reference tool ever since the project's inception more than a decade ago, the use of Wikipedia as a platform for connecting patrons with archival and special collections is still in its infancy – but the potential power of that partnership is evident."[1]

Special collections and archival materials often do not get exposed to the general public. A Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon would be an effective way to promote the library's exhibits, programs, spaces, and also its collections. By engaging with general participants, this kind of interaction can promote new collaborations and also recognizing the searing history of 9066. The event welcomed historians, scholars, students, researchers and the general public to engage with exhibit and the content.

The opportunities to promote special collections and library exhibits through this kind of community program are promising. Patrons can become more aware of the library's collections but also what the sources reveal about this part of history. Not every

[1] See Sliger Krause, Rose, James Rosenzweig, and Paul Victor Jr. "Out of the Vault: Developing a Wikipedia Edit-a-thon to Enhance Public Programming for University Archives and Special Collections." *Journal of Western Archives* 8.1 (2017): 3. P. 2

document is digitized and not every collection is readily accessible as well. In this context, digital humanities is "an application of information technologies in analyzing humanities" and is often "data-driven, answering humanities research problems with multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches within the digital IT/realm."[2] Special collections are important resources for digital humanities projects because they offer historical perspectives that can be reimagined through the digital lens of Wikipedia. These sources can be cited and integrated into a larger online encyclopedia for others to see regardless of geographic boundaries. Readers can understand that archival materials and special collections can actively boost the credibility of digital information.

Though these primary sources often contain narrow views or perspectives, they still offer new ways to think about research differently, particularly those interested in historical studies. When these sources become digitized, they can be textually analyzed, encoded as data and possibly mined for new studies in digital scholarship. Within the Wikipedia space, librarians can rectify these entries and demonstrate to patrons how helpful that these sources can be for diversifying content or to provide new information that were not available before.

In 9066 Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon, the special collections team pulled materials relating to 9066 experiences from letters to dairies to memos. Participants were encouraged to peruse these sources for inspiration and discovery. In addition, they were encouraged to visit the library's exhibit to cite some of the content in the library spaces as well. The Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon is a not a new event. Many universities, libraries, museums and academic institutions have collaborated and conducted these workshops throughout the world. They find ways to engage with their communities to support their collections, dig deeper in the entries and to challenge faulty or unreliable sources. From art to reference materials to special collections, Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thons are effective ways to engage with communities in information, sources, and exhibits. The events "meets the objective of meeting people where they, in places they already look for information."[3]

Getting Started: When you start a Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon program, it is recommended that you have a landing page or a central site with information about the program and what participants are expected to do when they attend. In the classroom, there should be a series of laptops available for patrons to use. Patrons can register for a user account on Wikipedia on their own or you can provide them in advance as well. If you expect many participants, it is recommended to have them create their own accounts when they arrive so they can use that account to edit other entries as well. Handling special collections and archival materials require a firm disclaimer. These materials can be fragile, rare, and brittle. The special collections librarian or archivist should also be present to make sure the materials are handled properly by patrons. If there are items that patrons should not be touching, you may want to make a "copy" of the item so patrons can use it and cite it in the Wikipedia page.

The landing page or the central site can also offer helpful entries that need to be edited, added or revised. In 9066, we cover these topics that need to sources to be added:

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[2] Kamada, Hitoshi. "Digital humanities Roles for libraries?" *College & Research Libraries News* 71.9 (2010): 484.

[3] See Sliger Krause, Rose, James Rosenzweig, and Paul Victor Jr. p. 22.

* [[Mitsuye Endo]] (more info needed)
* [[Violet de Cristoforo]] (more Post War info needed)
* [[Gordon Hirabayshi]] (more bio info needed)
* [[Minoru Yasui]] (more World War II info needed)
* [[Redress Movement]] (fact checking on dates needed)
* [[Tuna Canyon Detention Station]] (more general info needed)
* [[Kibei]] (more general info needed)
* [[Dorothea Lange]] (more general info needed for Japanese American Internment)

These pages can concern people, movements, camps or locations where more information is general needed. This kind of set up can help patrons readily identify which topics they can work on and what start searching for sources in special collections or archival materials to cite and support their entries. Most importantly, many of these activists did not have extensive Wikipedia entries or sources to support their backgrounds.

To expand on digital activism, the intersection of special collections and Wikipedia can drive this community engagement process in promoting and re-discovering the “missing voices” of the activists and their roles in challenging 9066. This kind of digital scholarship project can certainly offer inspiration to readers from other parts of the world when they encounter newly written entries of community activists of 9066, particularly in Japanese-American communities.

Challenges: The challenges of organizing a Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon are generally the unpredictable nature of the event. There may be a high or low number of participants and these events are typically opened to the general public. The patrons may have different technology skills and they may not be familiar with Wikipedia. These challenges are learning opportunities to teach patrons how to find resources, engage with their skills and interests. You may want to conduct a general assessment on why they are here.

If you do not have a high turn out of participants, you may consider partnering with a local community or campus group. For instance, this Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon was passed to the History Department to encourage students and faculty to attend and engage with these materials. This kind of collaboration provides opportunities for the libraries to extend its services and resources in a curriculum-integrated program. Most importantly, think about the theme of your Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon event: does it align with a library exhibit or a campus program? These kinds of public programs can highlight and support new voices and issues concerning your university and also the digital space.

Conclusion: Intersection of Community Activism and Digital Scholarship

The intersection between community activism and digital scholarship is apparent in this kind of project: to promote the lost or marginalized voices of Japanese American activists in American history by actively rewriting and adding content into their Wikipedia

biographies can be an effective way to engage with communities who may not be familiar with their work.

The harrowing history of 9066 should not be forgotten. Digital scholarship can be a creative way to perceive and analyze content differently such as social justice. One way to develop a digital scholarship project is through an event like the 9066 Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon. Implementing a Wikipedia-Edit-A-Thon is an engaging way to bridge the library's exhibits, special collections and commitment to diversity and inclusivity with Wikipedia, and campus/community partners. By focusing on important themes such as 9066 for this event, the librarians also demonstrate a unique level of "community activism" to promote their collections to diversity Wikipedia and to encourage digital research that covers important issues in American history.

The 9066 event at Fresno State is the first of many workshops that will cover themes of social justice, inclusivity and diversity to reshape Wikipedia entries and to encourage others to do the same at their institutions.

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