

Annual Performance Report HD-50843-09

The Cambridge Word Shakespeare Encyclopedia: An International Digital Resource for Study, Teaching, and Research

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Summary

Of the five phases outlined in our application, three were scheduled for the period October 2009 to September 2010:

- Refining the concept of the encyclopedia as an on-line resource
- Building a prototype (later adjusted to wireframes)
- Reviewing the prototype

Two other phases were scheduled for October 2010 to March 2011:

- Building and demonstrating the prototype (wireframes)
- Documentation, assessment, and final dissemination

The co-directors are happy to report that the tasks in the first three phases have been fulfilled and that work on the fourth phase, building and demonstrating the wireframes, is well underway.

The major events in this process have been seven, all of them made possible by the NEH Digital Humanities Start-up Grant, by the University of Southern California's absorption of all overhead costs for the administration of the grant, by Bryn Mawr College's provision of additional travel and clerical-support funds to Katherine Rowe, and by Cambridge University Press's absorption of the technical development costs so far. The broad-based collaborative nature of CWSE remains one of its strengths. Each of the following seven events will be reported on separately in the sections below:

- A trial run of ideas for CWSE in a paper by co-director Katherine Rowe in a session on "Editing beyond the Author Function" organized by co-director Bruce Smith at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in Philadelphia in December 2009
- A three-day advisory forum at the University of Southern California in January 2010 that drew on the expertise of seventeen participants from the UK, Germany, and the USA to produce the design plan that now governs the project, which has been renamed Cambridge World Shakespeare Online
- A workshop entitled "Shakespeare 2.0" convened by the co-directors of CWSO at the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America in Chicago in April 2010, a workshop that attracted as participants and auditors some of the top scholars in digital Shakespeare scholarship and helped to refine the model for CWSO developed at the January forum
- Katherine Rowe's invited participation in the Scholarly Communications Institute at the University of Virginia in July 2010, where the hybrid business model of "home edition"/"professional edition" were explored with other teams of scholars and university presses

- A series of meetings initiated by the co-directors in London in August 2010 to explore possible partnerships between CWSO and major archives, including the British Library, the British Museum, the London Metropolitan Archive, the Department of Contemporary and Modern Performance at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the performance archive at Shakespeare's Globe, and the performance archive of the Royal Shakespeare Company on deposit at The Shakespeare Centre in Stratford-upon-Avon
- Demonstration of wireframes of the prototype of CWSO at an unusually well-attended session at the biennial International Shakespeare Conference in Stratford-upon-Avon in August 2010
- Demonstration of wireframes of CWSO at the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Society of Japan in Fukuoka, Japan, in October 2010 (technically outside the chronological frame of this report, but part of the development process).

“Editing beyond the Author Function,” MLA, December 2009

This session brought together participants from a number of current digital projects in the humanities and provided a fertile environment for trying out ideas for CWSE in a paper by co-director Katherine Rowe. One idea in particular, the prospect of using CWSE as the node of “federated archives” across a number of sites and research institutions, began to take firm shape in this session.

Advisory Forum, USC, January 2010

The NEH grant, along with support from the Center for Transformative Scholarship at USC, the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences at USC, and Cambridge University Press, facilitated a gathering of 17 experts and potential users of CWSO. In addition to the co-directors these participants included

- A. R. Braunmuller, University of California Los Angeles, Associate General Editor of *The New Cambridge Shakespeare*
- Michael Chaplin, Electronic Publishing Development Manager, Cambridge University Press
- Beatrice Rehl, Editorial Director for Academic and Professional Publishing Division, Cambridge University Press, Americas Branch, New York
- Sarah Stanton, Publishing Director for Humanities, Cambridge University Press, UK
- Zoe Borofsky, Center for Digital Humanities, University of California Los Angeles, Development Coordinator for the electronic *Encyclopedia of Egyptology*
- Philip Ethington, University of Southern California, co-director of USC Center for Transformative Scholarship, North American Editor and Multimedia Editor of the journal *Urban History*, co-recipient of MacArthur/HASTAC Digital Media and Learning Competition
- Andreas Kratky, University of Southern California, Visiting Assistant Professor, Interactive Media Division, USC School for Cinematic Arts
- Tara McPherson, University of Southern California, co-director of USC Center for Transformative Scholarship, editor of two anthologies on new technologies (one for MacArthur Digital Media and Learning)
- Jan Reiff, University of California Los Angeles, co-editor of the online *Encyclopedia of Chicago*
- Willeke Wendrich, University of California Los Angeles, editor in chief of the *online Encyclopedia of Egyptology*

- Sophie Lesinska, Director of Public Services, USC Libraries
- Laurie Fisher, PhD candidate in English, University of Southern California, with interests in production history
- Niels Herold, Associate Professor of English, Oakland University, Michigan, assistant editor of *New Variorum Coriolanus*, author of articles on historicism, pedagogy, and Shakespeare performances in prisons
- Sean Roberts, Assistant Professor of Art History, University of Southern California, specialist in the reception of artistic and negotiation of artistic technologies between early modern Christian and Islamic societies
- Matthew J. Smith, PhD candidate in English, University of Southern California, with interests in the history of religion and the history of science

The result of three days of reports from developers of similar projects, suggestions from potential users of CWSO, brainstorming sessions, break-out groups, and input from the commissioning editors and the chief digital development manager at Cambridge University Press was a design in which the *Cambridge World Shakespeare Encyclopedia* will be only one element, a design that has inspired us to rename the project Cambridge World Shakespeare Online. As the design now stands, CWSO will bring together four resources:

- edited texts of Shakespeare's plays and poems, complete with commentaries, notes, and introductions, from the New Cambridge Shakespeare
- the 200+ articles in the *Cambridge World Shakespeare Encyclopedia*
- electronic editions of Cambridge University Press's other books on Shakespeare, plus selected other books from CUP's list in early modern studies
- databases from "partner archives," institutions that choose to share their resources through CWSO

The over-all goal will be the creation of an integrated search site in a carefully delimited subject area (Shakespeare and resources that support reading, research, and performance preparation) that will provide users with manageable lists of hits in comparison with general search engines like Google—in effect, one-stop shopping for Shakespeare studies. This search site will provide users with tools not available elsewhere. Ideally these tools will include all of the following:

- personalized workspaces for registered users
- user-defined interfaces that provide alternate ways into the sites, depending on the user's needs and preferences
- collaborative filtering ("Searchers who chose this term also looked for . . .")
- alternative displays of search results, according to a user's preference, as sectors (hierarchized lists) or tag-clouds (frequency and interconnections indicated by font-size, proximity, and/or color)
- persistence (the site will keep track of what has been added since the user last visited)
- RSS feeds (software that helps users keep track of streams of data)
- capacity to manipulate Shakespeare's texts (e.g., creating "sides" that show only one character's speeches, cutting the text for performance purposes and depositing the cuts in a storage space from which they can be retrieved, searching the text for particular words and grouping together speeches that contain those words)
- blog-space and social-networking possibilities (including capacity for toggling onto other users' annotations and manipulations of Shakespeare's texts)

One practical result of the January forum was Cambridge University Press's taking on the task of developing wireframes that could be used in presenting CWSO to potential collaborators and potential users. Intensive work on these wireframes, by an international team, went on during spring 2010, so that a demonstration model was available for presentations in the UK and in Japan during summer and fall 2010.

"Shakespeare 2.0," Shakespeare Association of America, April 2010

Attracting as participants and auditors some of the top scholars in digital Shakespeare scholarship, this workshop focused on key challenges scholars face in translating our core practices into digital environments: scholarly vetting, the definition of expertise, collaborative authorship, defining communities of users.

Scholarly Communication Institute, University of Virginia, July 2010

Several teams of scholars and university presses presented hybrid business models at SCI 2010, where the paradigm of free "home edition" and revenue-generating "professional edition" was broadly discussed as both a viable principle and a significant challenge. We are pursuing this model for the CWSO, focusing on establishing a phased development process of ongoing grant-seeking and defined commitments from CUP.

Meetings in the UK to explore "federated archives" within CWSO

The co-directors initiated a series of meetings with curators and development officers at a number of high-profile research archives in the UK, including the British Library, the British Museum, the London Metropolitan Archive, the Department of Contemporary and Modern Performance at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the performance archive at Shakespeare's Globe, and the performance archive of the Royal Shakespeare Company. The result of these meetings has been commitments in principle by the British Library (including the performance archive of the National Theatre) and the Department of Contemporary and Modern Performance at the V&A to make digital files of their holdings (book pages, manuscripts, prints, photographs, sound files, and video files) directly available through searches within CWSO. Both of these institutions have agreed to join with CWSO in further grant applications toward technical development that will make these interlinks possible. The British Library is already well advanced in making its resources available electronically; the V&A Department of Contemporary and Modern Performance, despite its massive holdings, has hardly begun, so that participation in CWSO would be a significant boost to its efforts. The Director of Research at Shakespeare's Globe in London has expressed keen interest in joining this enterprise. Exploratory talks with other possible partners—the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, the Shakespeare Folios Archive at Meisei University in Tokyo, and the American Shakespeare Company at Mary Baldwin University in Virginia—are underway. When these negotiations have concluded, the co-directors of CWSO plan to apply for further funding from the NEH and possibly the Mellon Foundation.

All the archives with whom we met identified a defined content-gateway such as the CWSO as a new and potentially very exciting way to increase traffic in their holdings. Secondary and college students were the most frequently-cited potential audience, with theater professionals and scholars as the next most-frequently cited audiences.

Demonstration of prototype at the International Shakespeare Conference, August 2010

General enthusiasm for CWSO, as well as specific suggestions for users' interfaces and content, were generated by a demonstration of the wireframes for CWSO before an audience of 50 people at the International Shakespeare Conference in Stratford-upon-Avon in August. Among the participants were a director and an actor from the Royal Shakespeare Company, who offered concrete, practical ideas about how a theater-practitioners' interface could be designed that would make CWSO usable by professional and academic companies in the preparation and archiving of productions. The USC librarian who participated in the January Advisory Forum had noted the absence of online resources for departments of drama and theater. The inclusion of a user-defined workspace in CWSO for theater practitioners—a workspace that will allow manipulation of Shakespeare's scripts for actors' use and that will give actors, directors, and designers easy one-click access to acting scripts across 400 years and to records of earlier productions—will fill this gap in scholarly resources. At the conference preliminary discussion about collaboration on this aspect of CWSO was begun with representatives of the American Shakespeare Company, headquartered at Mary Baldwin University in Staunton, Virginia, and affiliated with an MA program in Shakespeare studies. It is possible that ASC will sign on as joint applicants with CWSO in future grant applications.

Demonstration of CWSO wireframes at the Shakespeare Society of Japan, October 2010

Although outside the chronological frame of this report, the workshop on "Shakespeare and Next-Generation Open Web Technology" that the co-directors of CWSO ran at the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Society of Japan belongs with the sequence of events outlined in this report. Future presentations of CWSO at national professional meetings will be concerned with fine-tuning and technical execution of the plans that have been developed between December 2009 and October 2010. Among the participants in the SSJ workshop were the co-directors of A | S | I | A, an ambitious pan-Asian performance archive that is being launched from the University of Singapore in November 2010. As with the presentation of CWSO at the International Shakespeare Conference in August, an unusually large number of auditors were attracted to this workshop at SSJ. Among the major topics discussed among participants and auditors were problems of editing connected with additions to the database, once projects like CWSO and A | S | I | A are in use. Possible answers to these questions will be a major consideration in the final phase of the NEH Digital Humanities Start-up Grant for CWSO.