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Report 4: April 1, 2005-September 30, 2005

Publishers' Bindings Online, 1815-1930: The Art of Books

PI: Dr. Louis A. Pitschmann, Co-PI: Karen Croneis, The University of Alabama

Project Manager: Jessica Lacher-Feldman, The University of Alabama

University of Wisconsin-Madison Co-Coordinator: Peter Gorman and Barbara Walden

Overview of April 1, 2005- September 30, 2005

The project team continued to build on several aspects of the PBO project, including database development and population, web development, subject-specialized research, as well as a broad array of outreach, marketing, promotion, and publicity. Among the many accomplishments of the *Publishers' Bindings Online* project and its participants during the period of April 1- September 30, 2005, was the population of the PBO database with over 2000 records on August 15, 2005. This major accomplishment was announced on several listservs and in several other venues. The population of the database and publicity of said accomplishment brought new and enthusiastic visitors to the site, including individuals from Princeton, North Carolina State University, and the University of Iowa, who offered their web projects as a resource to be listed on our resources pages. This **primary outcome** for the project has been met in its initial stage by providing to the public **2064 complete database records** (images and rich metadata) in a fully searchable database. The database is accessible online at bindings.lib.ua.edu/sitesearch. Several other accomplishments are documented in this report, divided into headings that reflect the grant narrative and deliverables of the project.

Website:

The URL bindings.lib.ua.edu PBO project was established in the very beginning of the project. As of September 30, 2005, the website comprises 160 static web pages with fully integrated access to the PBO database. We also established a **text only** (ADA compliant) version of the PBO website for vision-impaired users. The site continues to grow and receive increasing attention and publicity. Between April 1 and September 30, 2005, the PBO website received an average of 192,689 hits per month. We have seen a steady increase in the number of visitors monthly.

The project has been referenced, reviewed, or mentioned several dozen known websites and blogs from across the US and around the world, including sites in Finland, Spain, Germany, Japan, and South Africa.

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/publicity.html>]. Using Google, the top two search results for the very standard descriptive term "publishers' bindings" are from the PBO project, namely the PBO homepage and the PBO galleries page.

Participants and Staffing:

Both current and past Publishers' Bindings Online staff and students are documented on the PBO website at <http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/credits.html> Each additional student and staff member who works on the project will be included on the credits page of the website. The duration of their employment and the nature and level of their responsibilities/position is provided and can be referenced by future employers and others.

In July 2005, temporary bindings staff member Kristy Dixon left the project for a position in Seattle, Washington. In September 2005, Amy Rudersdorf left the project and the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a position at NC State University. The acting co-coordinator with Barbara Walden is Peter Gorman, Head of the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center.

User Studies/Usability Testing:

To ensure value to end users, we have begun some usability testing in order to seek out feedback. During the period of April 1, 2005-September 30, 2005, the PBO group worked with a group of twenty-seven K-12 teachers from the Tuscaloosa City Schools and County Schools as part of a "Teaching American History" program. The collaboration and training resulted in both excellent feedback, and enthusiastic commentary.

Outcomes:

From the User studies and presentations, the feedback received has been analyzed and the comments and suggestions are being incorporated into the project in several areas including interface redesign, value-added components area, adjustments in language and tone, and the development of canned searches and other tools to provide end users a more satisfying experience. We have created several lesson plans and incorporated terminology from the K-12 curriculum into the project in order to facilitate use by the K-12 community. A teacher from the "Teaching American History Program" noted that the lesson plans and gallery for "Uncle Tom's Cabin" would work well to facilitate discussion and she plans on incorporating them in her classroom.

Travel

In April 2005, Jessica Lacher-Feldman and Douglas Anderson, UA Libraries Head of Systems visited the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Douglas Anderson, Head of Systems, to meet and discuss the progress of the PBO project and deliverables. Conference related travel is included in presentations.

Benchmarks:

Selection

This portion of the project is **100% complete**. There are 4501 titles total to be used in the project (2501 titles from UA and 2000 titles from UW-Madison)

Metadata Creation

UA: 100% complete (2501 of 2501 titles); UW-Madison: 91% complete (1892 of 2000 titles). **Aggregate: 97.6% complete** (4393 out of 4501 metadata records completed).

Digitization/Reformatting

UA: 100% complete; UW-Madison: 91.7% complete. **Aggregate: 96% complete** (4335 out of 4501 metadata records completed).

Uploading/FTP

The University of Alabama Libraries FTPs the master images to UW-Madison for inclusion in the database. This is done in batches of 2 GB on a regular basis. As of September 30, 2005, FTPing of images from UA to Wisconsin is **100% complete**.

Final Quality Control

The final quality control for the project resides with the project manager, Jessica Lacher-Feldman, who is reviewing records and images, and the interface for both UA and UW-Madison. This is a process where each record is reviewed for quality, continuity, and accuracy, and changes are made directly to the metadata. Issues which require global changes are completed by Jessica Williams and others at UW-Madison. As of September 30, 2005, the final quality control process is **46% complete**.

Project Database

As reported in Report 3, the first iteration of the public database was made available on March 1, 2005. On August 8, 2005, additional records were made available to the public, which now totals **2,064 complete records**. The database is accessible through the bindings.lib.ua.edu URL at bindings.lib.ua.edu/sitesearch.

Value-Added Components

Several new tools and resources have been added to the project website between April 1, 2005 and September 30, 2005, with still more in development. These materials reside under **Research Tools:**

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/research.html>] and under **Teaching Tools** on the project website

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/teaching.html>]. Some resources are presented under both headings in different ways. In the interest of clarity each resource will be listed once for this report.

Bibliography of Print and Online Resources

This working document provides bibliographic information on print resources and links to online resources relating to the study and appreciation of publishers' bindings.

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/bib.html>]

Other Online Resources

This working document provides links to online exhibitions, collection descriptions and other visual tools

relating to publishers' bindings. A master list of online resources is provided in the Master Bibliography. [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/other.html>]

Binding Designers: Biographies and Examples

The PBO project has developed a resource that lists and describes every designer, engraver, or artist included in the project, both identified and unidentified. This master list of designers also includes links to the database to provide all available examples from each designer.

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/designers2.html>] As part of our work with binding designers, we have also provided short biographies of some of the most prolific and best known binding designers, along with some examples of their monograms, signatures, or initials. [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/designers.html>]

Controlled Vocabulary for Subject Headings

This comprehensive list of terms used to describe both the book bindings themselves and the imagery on the covers is provided here. The list allows users to scan through the terms we have identified and included in our controlled vocabulary. Each subject heading term currently available in the database is clickable and allows access to the search results for that term. Upon completion of the project, every subject heading will be clickable and access the PBO database. [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/vocabulary.htm>]

UW-Madison's Scandinavian-American Publisher Holdings, 1840-1920

This resource is a comprehensive bibliography of UW-Madison's holdings of works produced by Scandinavian-American Publishers during the PBO period. The bibliography was compiled by Ann K. D. Myers with initial research by David S. Gehring, and managed by Barbara Walden in 2004-2005. Many of the titles included in the bibliography are part of the PBO project database.

[http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/scan_bib_uwm.doc]

Tutorials

A tutorial on keyword Searching and emailing a PBO record was developed using Macromedia Captivate. The tutorial requires Macromedia Flash player.

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/tutorials/tutorialmain.html>]

Galleries and Lesson Plans

[Start at: <http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery.html>]: The galleries we have created are a means of gaining additional information and insight into specific aspects of the Publishers' Bindings Online project. The galleries include short essays, teaching resources, bibliographic resources, and links to search results within the PBO database. Galleries created address specific eras, geographic locations, single authors, titles, publishers, designers, as well as specific physical mediums. There are currently thirteen galleries available. They are intended for use by teachers, students in the K-12 community, and lifelong learners of all ages and levels. They have been written to entertain and to inform, and to serve as starting points for further research and reading in each given area, as well as provide end users some historical context when using the PBO database.

Publishers' Bindings by Decade [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/decades.html>]

This page serves as a gateway to eleven entertaining and informative essays about each decade covered in the PBO project. Major movements in the design and the overall look and style of publishers' bindings can be better understood by reviewing the bindings themselves as a group by decade. We have created a gallery search for eleven periods covered in the scope of the PBO project which is clickable through each of the eleven galleries. In addition, each decade gallery provides end users with interesting information about the styles of that period, as well as some insight into the major literary, cultural, and historical events that occurred during the decade.

Abraham Lincoln, Civil War President [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/lincoln.html>]

An essay on Lincoln, which includes hyperlinks to reviewed related resources, a bibliography, and a list of related online resources, as well as images of Lincoln related books from the PBO project and a link to books about Lincoln which takes the end user directly into the PBO database.

From Domestic Goddesses to Suffragists:

The Story of Women Told on Bookbindings, 1820-1920 [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/women.html>]

An essay that explores the role of women as reflected in bookbindings in the period of the PBO project. It features three lesson plans for three age groups K-12, as well as information on how to search the PBO site for images that reflect women's history in bindings. Also included are related online sources and a list of print resources.

Gallery of Book-Cloth Grain Patterns [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/grain.html>]

This gallery provides the user with detailed images and descriptions of fifteen cloth patterns featured on books in the PBO period and provides access to PBO database results through each cloth pattern featured.

Heroes of the "Lost Cause" [http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/lost_cause.html]

This gallery features insight into the term "Lost Cause" and offers information about this major historical and cultural phenomenon of the 19th century. Also included are links to print and online resources.

Lafcadio Hearn: 19th-Century World Citizen [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/hearn.html>] and [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/hearn/hearnbioessay.html>]

This gallery features an essay on the works of Hearn, as well as a biographical essay and a link to search results in the PBO database. The UA Libraries hold a substantial collection of Hearn first and early editions.

Louisa May Alcott: Little Woman, Big Pen [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/alcott.html>]

This gallery features an essay on Alcott, as well as a bibliography of her works published both during her lifetime and posthumously. The gallery links to full-text online editions of some of her writing, and also features four lesson plans created for K-12. There is a link to the Alcott titles included in the PBO database, which to date is 75 titles.

"The Most Written About War in History": The Civil War in Fact and Fiction

[<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/civilwar.html>]

An informative essay on the Civil War, along with hyperlinks to related resources both within the text and in a bibliography, as well as a lesson plans, guidelines for book reports, and a Civil War book list for young adults.

Progress & Invention: Representations of the Industrial Revolution in America as Reflected in Bookbindings [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/industrial.html>]

This gallery features a compelling essay that shows the shift from agrarian life to urban life in the 19th century as reflected in bookbindings. It includes a general lesson plan, links to online sources, and a bibliography, as well as guide to searching the PBO site using terms relating to the Industrial Revolution.

Publishers' Bindings from the Max Kade Institute [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/kade.html>]

This essay on the Max Kade Institute serves as an entryway to review all the titles (currently 213 titles available) from the PBO project included from the Kade Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Publishers' Bindings from the Wade Hall Collection [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/wade.html>]

This biographical essay and bibliographic essay on the holdings from the Wade Hall Collection of Southern History and Culture also serves as an entryway to review all of the titles (currently 704 titles available) in the PBO project included from the Wade Hall Collection.

Silver & Gold: The Art of Metal Stamping [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/silvergold.html>]

This essay on the techniques of gold and silver/white metal stamping explains the process itself, and serves as an entryway to view examples of gold and silver stamping included in the PBO project.

Uncle Tom's Cabin: A 19th-Century Bestseller [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/uncletom.html>]

This gallery features information on Uncle Tom's Cabin, as well as an entryway to view the examples of Uncle Tom's Cabin currently available (122 examples available to date) in the PBO database. The gallery also includes three age-appropriate K-12 sample lesson plans and a handout, as well as links to other online resources and the full-text online edition of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Publicity, Promotion and Outreach

Presentations and Proposals:

Presented:

-A tent show presentation at The University of Iowa's Center for the Book conference, *The Changing Book: Transitions in Design, Production, and Preservation*, July 2005.

-*Publishers' Bindings Online: Reflecting American History and Culture via the WWW* presented at the American Association for History and Computing, Roosevelt University, Schaumburg, Ill. April, 2005.

-Poster session on collaboration at UW-Madison which touched upon the **PBO** project. at *SHOWCASE 2005, Ideas to Results: Improving Work, Learning, and Climate*, April, 2005.

-Poster session, *Descriptive Metadata for 19th Century Decorative Book Bindings: A Collaborative Digital Project* at Alabama Academic Library Association, April 2005.

-half day workshop on PBO and its uses in for K-12 at Teaching American History Program, UA.

Accepted:

-Jessica Lacher-Feldman (UA) with Dr. Micki McElya (UA, American Studies) and Dr. Josh Rothman (UA, History) at the American Historical Association (AAHC affiliate), Philadelphia, January, 2006: *A Nation Bound: American Publishers' Book Bindings, Imagery, and Their Relevance to and Reflection of History and Identity in America's First Century*.

Jessica Lacher-Feldman (UA), and two graduate students with present on PBO at Society of Alabama Archivists, November 2005.

- Rare Book and Manuscript (RBMS) Pre-Conference for June 2006 in Austin, Texas.

Submitted:

Project manager Jessica Lacher-Feldman has submitted an informal note of interest to IMLS regarding presenting or demonstrating the PBO project at Webwise 2006.

Publicity, Marketing and Outreach:

The *Publicity & Outreach* page [<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/publicity.html>] fully documents and illustrates all manner of initiatives, press, presentations, exhibitions, and other notable appearances of the Publishers' Bindings Online Project.

A comprehensive exhibition of publishers' bindings from UW-Madison's selections from the PBO project will be displayed in Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It will be curated by Barbra Walden (UW) and is planned for Spring 2006. There will be three or four large cases plus a computerized kiosk and a poster. The exhibit will be in the entrance lobby of Memorial Library, the central research library for humanities and social sciences. The gate count for Memorial Library during the 3-month period the exhibition will be on display is between 100,000-150,000 people.

An attractive and informational **bookmark** was created to publicize the PBO project and is being distributed at conferences and locally. An informational **poster** was created to use for events and exhibits. Both institutions have mounted copies of the poster for outreach and presentation endeavors. A single sheet (11x17) sixteen month **calendar** was created to promote the PBO project. 15,000 copies were printed at UA for wide local, regional and national distribution. Both the calendar and bookmark are mentioned on the publicity page, and requests have come via email to receive these items.

Print and Online Press:

A short article on the project was featured in Vol. 27, Issue 1 of *The Alabama Archivist*, the newsletter of the Society of Alabama Archivists. An illustrated feature article was published in the spring 2005 issue of *Library Horizons*. *Library Horizons* serves as the primary publication of the University of Alabama Libraries and has a circulation of 5000 and is also featured online at http://www.lib.ua.edu/pubs/horizons_spring_05.pdf

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Friends publication featured the PBO project in their fall 2005 issue of FriendsNews. The circulation for this publication is approximately 20,000 and will also be available online.