

## **Editions and Archives: Digitizing Nineteenth-Century Journalism**

This paper argues that the dominant way of presenting historical serials in digital form – as archives of information – fails to represent their textual and bibliographic complexity and so cannot address the pressing need to conserve this fragile material. Taking the nineteenth-century newspaper and periodical archive as a case study, I examine the methodologies that underpin the various digital archives that have been produced and suggest that these resources, useful as they are, be complemented by a range of interconnected editions that can draw attention to the relationship between a digital resource and the printed objects upon which it is based.

The nineteenth-century serial archive is both vast and incomplete, representing an abundance of information, in book-like form, with few technologies available to access it. Digitization allows us to address many of the problems presented by the archive; however, it represents a transformation in which the properties of printed objects are altered to enable them to behave in new ways. Large-scale digital archives of historical serials render bibliographic and textual diversity so that articles behave in the same way within the context of the archive. This economy of sameness, vital for the operation of a large archive, does not represent the generic structures of the material but is a result of the way in which it has been processed.

It is essential that users are sufficiently literate to recognize the way content is marked by its transformation into digital form. There is a tension between the need to create easy-to-use resources and the responsibility designers have to the printed objects upon which resources are based. In my paper, I argue a mixed approach is required. For certain research questions, large archives are essential. In order to understand the place of nineteenth-century print in culture, however, a different type of edition is required.

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