



Submitted on: 14/08/2014

---

## Historic Mexican and Mexican American Press Collection: Expanding Access to a Different Point of View

**Mary Feeney**

Research & Instruction, University of Arizona Libraries, Tucson, AZ  
mfeeney@email.arizona.edu

**Chris Kollen**

Office of Digital Innovation & Stewardship, University of Arizona Libraries, Tucson, AZ  
kollen@email.arizona.edu

**Verónica Reyes-Escudero**

Special Collections, University of Arizona Libraries, Tucson, AZ  
reyesv@email.arizona.edu



Copyright © 2014 by Mary Feeney, Chris Kollen, and Verónica Reyes-Escudero. This work is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>.

---

### Abstract:

*The University of Arizona Libraries' Historic Mexican and Mexican American Press online collection provides access to Mexican and Mexican American magazines and newspapers published in Tucson, El Paso, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sonora, Mexico, from the late 1800s to the 2000s. These newspapers are useful not only for researchers and students, but the Mexican American community has also found these newspapers to be very important and critical to showing their views of historical events. The newspapers demonstrate the voice that Mexican American newspapers have provided during critical time periods in U.S. history as Mexican Americans fought for justice, equality, and human rights and what daily life was like for Mexican Americans. This paper will discuss the origin of the project, describe how the project team approached the development of the collection, and the benefits of collaborating with campus and other institutional partners. We include the results of interviews with University of Arizona faculty both before and after the completion of the project, the impact on classes and researchers of making these newspapers openly available, comparisons to similar collections, and examples of the types of information available through the collection. We also discuss what it has meant to the local Mexican American community to have these magazines and newspapers openly available.*

**Keywords:** Newspapers; Digitization; Mexican American; Arizona; Special Collections

---

## **Introduction/Background**

The Historic Mexican and Mexican American Press collection (MMAP), developed by the University of Arizona (UA) Libraries, expands access to newspapers and magazines that provide the Mexican American community's perspective and coverage of critical events and time periods in U.S. history, as Mexican Americans fought for justice, equality, and human rights, as well as perspectives from reporters and intellectuals on everything from art to the great wars. Gonzales (1977, 50) comments that "historians in the United States have often, consciously or unconsciously, neglected the contributions of ethnic minorities in this country. The historical study of North American journalism is no exception." This digital collection provides open access to Mexican and Mexican American newspapers and magazines and aims to expand access for scholars and the community to these neglected sources. The collection includes 150 years of Mexican and Mexican American press published in Tucson, Arizona; El Paso, Texas; Los Angeles, California; San Francisco, California; and Sonora, Mexico, from 1855 to 2004.

In the spring of 2009, three UA librarians were contacted by a Mexican American Studies faculty member who was teaching a new course, History of Red-Brown Journalism, and needed assistance from the library on class assignments. The class was studying Mayan-Mixtec and Mexica codices, Spanish- and English-language newspapers that covered the 1850s to the 1970s, and female journalists from the same time period. Their class assignments included writing research papers and developing an exhibit in the Main Library focusing on what they were studying in the class using materials from the Main Library, Special Collections, and the instructor's personal collection. The information resources discovered at the UA Libraries helped the students understand how Mexican Americans viewed various historical events and what daily life was like for the community. As Nicolás Kanellos (2000, 5) writes, "most of the newspapers ... have protected the language, culture, and rights of an ethnic minority within a larger culture that was in the best of times unconcerned with the Hispanic ethnic enclaves and in the worst of times openly hostile." By expanding access to these materials that are unique or not widely available, libraries are opening the door to discoveries by a new community of users, both scholars and community members, which may not have been possible without online access.

The collaboration with the instructor led the librarians to explore the development of a collection that focused on Mexican American newspapers and magazines. A project team of librarians was formed representing four areas of expertise - journalism resources, digital project management, borderlands curation, and systems. The instructor was very excited about our interest in the Mexican American press and agreed to serve as the project consultant. The project was also in line with the UA Libraries Special Collections' Borderlands Cultural Communities program, which is committed to acquiring, preserving and providing access to materials relevant to the Mexican and Mexican American community, among other cultural communities.

We had a general idea of what we wanted to include in the collection, but we needed a more defined scope for the project. We conducted a literature review of what had been written on the Mexican American press. It was also important to address the needs of our intended audience for the collection - faculty, both as researchers and instructors. We interviewed several faculty members in key UA departments: Mexican American studies, history, and journalism. Some of the interview questions included: what newspaper or magazine titles

were important; are there specific time periods that were important; where were important or influential newspapers or magazines being published; who were some of the important journalists or publishers; how would these materials be used for your research or teaching. As we progressed in the project and had discussions on the team we also realized that the broader community would have a vested interest in the collection, and it would be important to consider their contributions and promote the collection to a wide audience. The literature review and the faculty interviews helped the project team define the scope of the project. We had a better idea of what our focus should be, and we started to develop a list of newspaper and magazine titles to include. They also helped us develop criteria for ranking titles to include in the collection (Feeney, Kollen, & Reyes-Escudero 2011, 161-162). The twenty titles included in the collection cover 150 years of newspapers, from *La Estrella de Occidente*, first published in 1855 in Sonora, Mexico, to *El Independiente* still being published by the UA School of Journalism.

Inter-institutional collaboration was a key component in the development of the collection. The UA Libraries collaborated with three other institutions to digitize two newspapers in the collection. By collaborating with the University of North Texas (UNT) and the University of Texas, El Paso (UTEP), the UA Libraries was able to add content from the *El Paso Morning Times*. By collaborating with the Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records (ASLAPR) the UA Libraries was able to include an additional title, *El Fronterizo, 1882-1908*.

*El Paso Morning Times* was published from 1913 to 1918 in El Paso, Texas, as a daily newspaper in both Spanish and English. The project team originally planned to digitize only the Spanish-language sections of the newspaper, however since the UA Libraries did not have the equipment or staffing to digitize any of the newspapers on microfilm, they were outsourced to a vendor. It would have been difficult and complicated for the vendor to digitize only the Spanish-language sections of the newspaper. They would need to digitize both the Spanish- and English-language sections and then write a computer script to strip out the English-language sections. It would have cost substantially more than we had originally estimated, and we did not want to discard any content. We thought it would be a great enhancement to the collection to be able to provide both sections of the paper, providing an easy way to compare how the two sections covered the same topic. Digitizing both sections of this newspaper increased the cost by more than 500%. What options did we have? We could either request additional funding from the UA Libraries or come up with another solution. We contacted UNT, the lead institution of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) in Texas, and UTEP to explore collaborating on digitization of the *El Paso Morning Times*. Both institutions were interested and we reduced the cost by 66% for each of us. In addition, we developed a good relationship with both institutions, and we have talked about collaborating on digitizing additional Mexican American newspapers.

ASLAPR is the lead institution for NDNP in Arizona. The project team had talked to representatives from ASLAPR about which Arizona newspapers each of our institutions was planning on digitizing. In 2011, NDNP started to allow institutions to digitize newspapers in other languages, including Spanish. Due to that change, ASLAPR decided to digitize the Tucson newspaper, *El Fronterizo, 1882-1908*. We had already digitized the later years of the same newspaper, but did not have the earlier years in the UA Libraries' collection. We proposed to ASLAPR to split the costs of microfilming and digitizing the newspaper and each institution would provide access to the newspaper in our respective digital collections. This was another great collaboration: ASLAPR was able to reduce their cost to microfilm and digitize this newspaper, and the UA Libraries was able to add an important Mexican

American newspaper published in Tucson to our digital collection. As with UNT and UTEP, we established a good working relationship with ASLAPR and have talked with them about collaborating in the future on digitization of additional Mexican American newspapers published in Arizona.

### **About the Collection**

The MMAP collection includes twenty newspapers and magazines published in Arizona, California, Texas, and Mexico, covering 1855-2004. These newspapers provide access to a different point of view than the mainstream, English-language press, during important historical events in Mexican American history, from the Mexican Revolution, to the Bracero Program, to the Chicano Movement. During the height of the Chicano Movement in 1970, Herminio Ríos and Lupe Castillo, two well-known historians and activists in the Chicano Movement in Tucson and co-founders of *El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought*, published a listing of Mexican American newspapers from 1848-1942 with the goal of demonstrating, “that not only was the Mexican American historically present, but that *he also left written records of his presence*” (1970, 17). The aim of the newspaper bibliography was to “represent a significant key to the history of Mexican-Americans in all its major aspects-political, economic, social, and artistic” (Ríos & Castillo 1970, 17). There have been updates to this bibliography (Ríos & Castillo, 1972), other more ample bibliographies by Miguélez (1981) and others, as well as attempts at recording the importance of Mexican and Mexican American newspapers in the Southwest (Sheridan, 1986), all with the intention of proving the presence of the community’s contribution to society and to the historical record. For the community of scholars and the broader community, having digital access to these publications more than four decades after the publication of this bibliography has been a great boon. To highlight the different perspectives that these publications contribute, some of the titles in the collection are described below.

### **Late 19th Century through Mid-20th Century**

#### ***La Estrella de Occidente, Boletín Oficial, and La Constitución***

The earliest newspaper in the MMAP digital collection is *La Estrella de Occidente* (later titles were *Boletín Oficial* and *La Constitución*), which was the state-run newspaper in Sonora, Mexico, from 1855-1876. The UA Libraries digitized this set of newspapers from the “Fernando Pesqueira newspaper collection,” which we have on microfilm.

*La Estrella de Occidente* was established by Ignacio Pesqueira, the governor of Sonora. Francisco Ramirez was asked by Pesqueira to serve as its editor, which he did from spring of 1860 to spring of 1862 (Gray 2006/2007, 29). Ramirez had been living in Los Angeles, where he had been the publisher of *El Clamor Público* between 1855 and 1859 (Gray 2006/2007). *Boletín Oficial* continued *La Estrella de Occidente* and was published in Ures, the capital of Sonora, Mexico, from 1876-1879. *La Constitución*, “the government’s mouthpiece” (Salas 1997, 212-213) was published weekly in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, from 1880-1910, continuing *Boletín Oficial*, with Alejandro Ainslie serving as editor (Martinez 1996).

The coverage of important issues like Mexican immigration in the Tucson newspaper, *The Arizona Daily Star*, is contrasted with that in the Sonoran state-run newspaper, *La Estrella de Occidente*:

The *Arizona Daily Star* urged that Mexican immigrants be forced to undergo a five-year probationary period before being allowed citizenship. Sonoran government officials expressed outrage over what they perceived as an act of desertion by their fellow countrymen. This increasing out-migration became a source of embarrassment to state officials. To retaliate against the so-called *sonorenses americanizados* (Americanized Sonorans), in 1874 the state's official newspaper, *La Estrella de Occidente*, published a list of those individuals who had changed their nationality. (Salas 1997, 104-105)

### ***El Fronterizo***

The next earliest newspaper in the collection, *El Fronterizo*, was published in Tucson, Arizona, where the University of Arizona is located. This newspaper was published 1878-1914, “an amazingly long life for a frontier newspaper, especially one written in Spanish” (Gonzales 2009, 97). Our digital collection includes issues from 1882-1884, 1887-1897, and 1904-1908. In our experience, missing issues can be a common problem; complete runs of newspapers are not always available, especially for papers that may not have been systematically collected, microfilmed, and preserved by libraries and archives. *El Fronterizo* was a weekly Spanish-language newspaper founded by Carlos Velasco, who was an immigrant from Sonora, Mexico (Kanellos 2000, 89). The newspaper was “progressive” and was “catering to the needs of the area’s mining communities as well as to the Tucson business community” (Kanellos 2000, 89). Velasco, who had been a lawyer, politician, and journalist in Sonora, “moved north to escape political turmoil at home” in 1877 (Gonzales 2009, 96-97). When he moved to Arizona, Velasco was briefly involved in retail, but his “real passion was journalism” (Gonzales 1984, 271). The editorial position and viewpoint of Velasco’s newspaper defended the interest of Mexicans in Arizona and in Sonora, and later served as an advocate of maintaining peace to achieve progress (Gonzales 1984). Velasco identified as a Republican, and was “alienated by the anti-Mexican bent of Tucson’s Democratic newspaper, *The Arizona Star*, and he readily admitted his dislike of its editor” (Gonzales 1984, 276). Velasco was also the founder of Alianza Hispano Americana, a Mexican American civil rights organization, and his newspaper reflected that perspective (Kanellos 2000, 89-90). *El Fronterizo* was “the most successful of all Arizona’s Spanish-language newspapers” before it ceased publication in 1914 (Lyon 1994, 170).

### ***La Crónica, Hispano América***

*La Crónica* was established in 1914 in San Francisco by J. C. Castro from Spain. The title was later changed to *Hispano América*, and part of that title is covered by the *Hispanic American Newspapers* database from Readex. Julio Arce, a newspaper publisher, journalist, and political refugee from Guadalajara, Mexico, was the editor of the newspaper for several years and later became owner of the newspaper (Kanellos 2000). Arce’s “Crónicas Diabólicas” columns published in *La Crónica* and *Hispano América* and written under the pen name “Jorge Ulica” were syndicated and published in newspapers throughout California, the Southwest, the Midwest, and Mexico (Gruesz 2012).

### ***El Mosquito***

Another Tucson newspaper was *El Mosquito*, which started in 1919 as a weekly Sunday publication and later ran twice-weekly, owned and edited by Felipe Hale. The newspaper, described as “sharp-tongued” and “acerbic” (Sheridan 1986, 172, 175), covered issues of concern to the Mexican American community, including commentary about Paramount Pictures’ negative portrayal of Mexicans in their films (Sheridan 1986; Martinez 2001).

Sheridan also described *El Mosquito* as “lively”, and commented that the newspaper “gleefully defended its right to use slang terms like ‘*baboso*’ (‘idiot’ or ‘fool’)” (1986, 205).

### ***El Tucsonense***

One of the key titles in the collection is *El Tucsonense*, one of the longest-running Spanish-language Mexican American newspapers in Tucson. It was founded by Francisco Moreno in 1915 and published until 1959. The Readex *Hispanic American Newspapers* database includes the 1915-1923 issues, and the MMAP collection includes the 1924-1959 issues. Five years after its founding, Moreno built a print shop, purchased printing equipment, and moved the operation to the print shop, which still stands to this day as Old Pueblo Printers in Tucson. The newspaper covered topics ranging from the Mexican Revolution, Mexican labor in Arizona, the Great Depression, the education system, politics, treatment of farm and railroad workers, sports, arts, and both World Wars. It also had a long-standing literary column to which many known intellectuals of the time contributed. Resistance poetry published in *El Tucsonense* was collected in the work of Manuel Murrieta Saldívar in *Mi Letra no es en Inglés: La Resistencia Cultural Sonorense en la Poesía de “El Tucsonense,” 1915-1957*. In the initial planning stages, the project team made a decision to digitize only the issues not digitized elsewhere, given resource considerations. In retrospect, the authors realize that the community not affiliated with the UA only have access on the UA campus to these early years due to commercial vendor restrictions.

### **1960s-1970s**

The late 1960s were “significant for Chicano journalism,” with “the greatest growth in the number of publications” (Andrade 1979, 20). The MMAP collection includes six newspapers from this time period, two from Tucson, two from the Bay Area in northern California, and two from Los Angeles, California. Three of these newspapers are described below.

### ***La Raza***

*La Raza* was published as a newspaper 1967-1970 and as a magazine 1970-1977 “in the barrio of East Los Angeles to help make Mexican Americans aware of the social and political struggle of the Chicano movement” (Andrade 1979, 4). The paper was created because “the establishment press was not printing barrio news” (Andrade 1979, 21). The MMAP collection includes the 1967-1970 issues of the newspaper. Andrade (1979, 1) describes *La Raza* as “a radical, militant, activist Chicano publishing organ which often participated in...the events it reported.” It addressed social, political, and educational issues, and included articles in Spanish and English. The Spanish-language press, including *La Raza*, provided its communities with “information seldom available in the established English-language press” (Andrade 1979, 15).

### ***¡Coraje!***

The Mexican American Liberation Committee (MALC) at the UA published *¡Coraje!* in 1969. The first issue included the headline “Walkout!” about a rally held by high school students concerning issues affecting Chicano students, as well as poetry, drawings, a corrido, and local conference announcements. MALC grew out of the UA Mexican American Student Association, which had formed in 1967 (Rosales 1996). One of its co-founders was Salomón “Sal” Baldenegro, who “became Tucson’s most well-known *movimiento* leader” (Rosales 1996, 211). Baldenegro worked with other local activists, including Raúl Grijalva, who was later elected and currently serves as a United States Congressman, and other UA students (Rosales 1996). Lupe Castillo, a Tucson historian and activist, was also involved in

contributions to *¡Coraje!* She is an example of one of the women during “el movimiento” that was highly involved in trying to change the narrative of the Mexican American community through newspapers of the Chicano Movement. During a talk she gave at the launch event for the digital collection, she stated that, “*El Coraje* was a medium that would provide community evidence for social movements” (University of Arizona Libraries, 2013). She attributed newspapers as being “radical and nationalistic; centered in a historical cultural identity of a people in a landscape that was the reality of those living in the borderlands” (University of Arizona Libraries, 2013). In other words, papers of “el movimiento” such as *¡Coraje!* were “barrio centered” with working class ethos, portraying the values, customs, music, and literature of the people, contrary to what was generally being portrayed in academia.

### ***¡Basta Ya!***

*¡Basta Ya!* was a bilingual community newspaper published in San Francisco, California from 1969 to about 1973. The publisher was Los Siete de La Raza, an organization started by “politically active youth in the Mission District” (Summers Sandoval 2013, 150) to support “Los Siete,” seven Latino young men who had been arrested in a disputed incident with police officers, during which one officer was beaten and another shot to death (Summers Sandoval 2013). The publication started out as “a four-page mimeographed newsletter detailing the plight of the accused in both English and Spanish” (Summers Sandoval 2013, 178). During its early publication, the publishers used the press of the Black Panthers for support, and it sought to “create a sense of solidarity with other radical movements around the country” (Summers Sandoval 2013, 178).

## **1980s to present**

### ***Americas 2001***

One of two magazines in the collection, *Americas 2001* was published from 1987 to 1988 by Los Angeles journalist Roberto Rodriguez, the faculty member with whom the authors had collaborated on his course and the development of the MMAP collection. It was a Spanish-English bilingual publication, with the columns running side-by-side in the two languages. The premiere issue describes that “when the idea for the magazine was born, it was decided that the primary focus of the magazine would be to provide a forum for the debate of ideas and issues that affect our community” (“Editorial” 1987, 4). The magazine covered social and political issues from immigration law to the grape boycott in support of farm workers, and included debates between political figures on these topics. The magazine also featured fictional works, artwork, and reviews. One of the issues of the magazine was a special youth issue that featured articles, artwork, and photographs by young Mexican American journalists.

### ***South Tucson’s El Independiente, El Independiente***

*South Tucson’s El Independiente* (later title *El Independiente*) began publication in 1976 at the UA Department of Journalism, now the School of Journalism. It was, and continues to be, a student-produced bilingual newspaper focused on South Tucson, which is an independent city from the larger surrounding city of Tucson and has a largely Hispanic population. The first issue of the newspaper, published May 7, 1976, states that it was a “new voice for South Tucson,” and that the paper “is an attempt to fill this gap and to establish a community newspaper to report local issues comprehensively” (“New voice for South Tucson” 1976). A local reporter who attended the launch event for the digital collection noted the importance of the UA School of Journalism’s publication because of its recognition of the need to publish about South Tucson, which was not being covered by other press. He commented that the

publication was an example of what is now called hyper-local news coverage, and it also provided university students an opportunity to be trained in journalism (University of Arizona Libraries, 2013).

### **Comparison to Similar Collections**

Most U.S. newspapers digitized to date have been English-language newspapers in the public domain, published before 1923. Until 2011, the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) grant requirements allowed for digitization of English-language newspapers only. Newspapers in other languages including Spanish may now be included for grant funding (Library of Congress 2011). As of June 2014, a search in *Chronicling America* (Library of Congress) limited to Spanish-language resulted in 28 newspapers, from Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Texas. Some of the titles listed are preceding or succeeding titles, leaving about 22 newspapers. However, the majority of these newspapers were not Mexican American publications, and were primarily written in English with occasional sections or columns in Spanish. The three newspapers listed from Arizona include *El Fronterizo* (described earlier), and two newspapers that were primarily in English with sections or columns in Spanish: *The Argus* and *St. John's Herald and Apache News*.

Other Hispanic newspapers, including Mexican American press, that have been digitized include those in the *Hispanic American Newspapers, 1808-1980*, database available for purchase or subscription from Readex, a division of NewsBank. The database, which includes hundreds of newspapers, is described as “the single largest compilation of Spanish-language newspapers printed in the U.S. during the 19th and 20th centuries” (Readex). Newspapers in the collection are based on the “Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project,” led by Nicolás Kanellos. It includes some issues of *Las Dos Repúblicas*, the first Spanish-language newspaper in Arizona. However, unlike the UA Libraries’ Historic Mexican and Mexican American Press collection which is freely-available online, the Readex database is only accessible to library users whose institutions have provided access.

An important radical Mexican newspaper, *Regeneración* (<http://archivomagon.net/periodicos/>), has been digitized by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia / Dirección de Estudios Históricos. The newspaper was founded and published by Ricardo Flores Magón, whom Kanellos (2000, 19) describes as “the most important Mexican revolutionary journalist and ideologue” in 1900. The newspaper was suppressed, Flores Magón was jailed, and he came to the United States in exile, where he resumed publication of *Regeneración* in San Antonio, Texas, then St. Louis, Missouri, and later Los Angeles, California (Kanellos 2000). Flores Magón’s newspapers are freely-available online and open to all researchers.

These other collections, along with some individual newspaper titles that have been digitized by libraries, are the few other examples of Mexican and Mexican American newspapers that have been digitized.

### **Promotion of the MMAP Collection**

Promoting and launching the digital collection is a crucial aspect of developing these types of products. It is often forgotten or overlooked, but careful planning and timing is important and must not be hurried or tagged on at the end. One of the benefits of working with colleagues across the library is that different strengths and experience will be brought to the table.



Colleagues in Special Collections contribute expertise in event planning and execution and donor relations. This expertise helped the project team think through the best approach to planning and executing a launch event for the digital collection. Rather than quickly plan and hold an event as the project was wrapping up, the team realized that it would be beneficial to slow down and put in place a well thought out plan, which included an important line-up of speakers and panelists, VIP lists for invitations, a welcoming plan for dignitaries, partnerships with other entities such as the university press, refreshments, and set up such as technical equipment and recording of the event. These are just some of the considerations taken in the planning.

The collection officially debuted to the public on April 24, 2013. Plans were made and coordinated with the project team and the UA Libraries' Marketing and Public Relations office. Announcements for the event were made in a number of different venues, including campus news, local news, and national news. In addition, print invitations were sent to Congressman Raul Grijalva, members of the press, city officials, the Mexican Consulate and other dignitaries, the Hispanic alumni association members, descendants of Tucson pioneer families, and local authors, as well as university dignitaries. Although Congressman Grijalva graciously declined by calling one of the authors, it was important that he be aware of the collection as an important member of the community, and as he too was a contributor to one of the papers, *¡Coraje!*, during his university days. Many of the dignitaries who were invited, members of the press and local authors attended the event. It served as confirmation of the importance of the collection. As mentioned above, taking the time to choose speakers is an important part of a launch such as this one. We were fortunate that several of them agreed to participate in the program.

The press release about the event provides information such as a description of the digital collection, a list of speakers and special guests, and a quote from the professor who consulted on the project (University of Arizona Libraries, March 18, 2013). In addition, we wanted to give something away at the event that would include the collection's website address and be a memento for people to keep. We decided to give out note cards with images from four of the publications: *Americas 2001*, *Corazon de Aztlan*, *¡Coraje!*, and *El Independiente*. Each notecard included information about the collection and the newspaper from which the image had been taken. We felt it was important to publicly acknowledge the contributions of the project's collaborators, those who gave us permission to use their newspapers or magazines in the collection and other stakeholders. The program began with remarks by the Dean of the UA Libraries, the Consul of Mexico, and the grandsons of the owner, publisher and editor of *El Tucsonense*. The Consul gave gracious remarks about the value of the collection. He pointed out the importance of reporters creating the reputation of individuals and communities and the importance of providing access beyond those in the academy to the papers written by and about the Mexican and Mexican American communities. There were over one-hundred people in the audience including members of the campus community, members of the broader community, several dignitaries, members of the press and other scholars. The presentation was recorded and is available online for listening (University of Arizona Libraries, April 24, 2013). Three panelists gave presentations in which they discussed the importance and impact of the collection: a Mexican American Studies faculty member (the project consultant), a School of Journalism faculty member, and the co-editor of *¡Coraje!*, one of the newspapers in the collection. The common thread among the panelists' talks was that having open access to these newspapers was invaluable for teaching and research, particularly in the areas of border reporting and borderlands studies. With the availability and searchability of the newspapers, one can study and compare the perspectives from papers published in Mexico and the United States, as well as those published by the mainstream media. One of the panelists pointed out

the difference in perspective between the long-standing Spanish-language newspapers and those published during *el movimiento*. While the former could be seen as an elite publication, the latter was meant to be a medium for communicating the everyday by everyday people, with a “hyper-local” perspective. What the authors recognized is that all of these publications help to round out the perspective of the communities, with all of the varying perspectives and nuances of the Latino community.

We also received comments about the collection based on marketing efforts. A professor in Spain emailed the project team to say that the promotion must be working because he had heard about MMAP from various places in the United States. A faculty member from California mentioned that she had heard about the collection from a professor at the University of California, San Diego, and from an Arizona State University librarian’s promotion of it on their Chicano/a Research Collection Facebook page. The UA Libraries also promoted the digital collection and had news coverage on the Libraries’ Facebook page. In its initial stages, prior to the launch and using a mock-up of the site, the project team decided to start promoting it through the Tucson public library system offering two talks in different venues, as well as making presentations at annual conferences of the Arizona State Library Association and New Mexico Library Association. Spreading the word early and often through outreach events or social media is important (Anip & Mattos 2013).

### **Impact: Usage and User Feedback**

The MMAP collection website (<http://www.library.arizona.edu/contentdm/mmap/>) provides information about the collection with links to the digitized newspapers and magazines in ContentDM. The usage data provided by ContentDM includes the number of times newspaper and magazine issues are accessed and the number of items in each collection. From July 2012 to May 2014, the newspapers and magazines in the collection were accessed 2,299,350 times, approximately 99,972 per month or 104,516 per title. Promotion played a key role in informing the community of the digital collection and contributed to the increase in usage. Starting with the launch event in April 2013, we can see the impact of promoting the collection: in May 2013, the collection saw a 91% increase from the previous month. The number of items for each newspaper or magazine range from one issue (*El Hijo de Fronterizo*) to 3,679 issues (*El Tucsonense*). There is a correlation between the usage for these two newspapers and the number of items, as would be expected. From July 2012 to May 2014, *El Hijo de Fronterizo* was accessed 1,148 times and *El Tucsonense* was accessed 355,507 times.

It has now been over a year since the digital collection was released to the public. We interviewed three faculty members, from Mexican American studies, history, and journalism, who have used the collection in their classes. The Mexican American studies and history faculty members have both used the collection in their undergraduate courses, in conjunction with other materials in Special Collections. The Mexican American studies faculty member commented that one of the impacts of the collection is that one can easily see the involvement of women serving as journalists, editors, and publishers of some of these newspapers, when it was very unusual during this time period for women to be involved in mainstream English-language newspapers. An example is Rosa Moreno, who served as the publisher of *El Tucsonense* from 1933-1959.

The history faculty member has also used the collection for his own research, to find out what was written in various Mexican American newspapers about specific events, such as the annexation of Mexico by the United States, the intervention of the United States in Mexican

affairs during the Mexican Revolution, and editorials that depicted the defensiveness of Mexican Americans during the time of Pancho Villa. The Mexican American studies faculty member thought that having the newspapers and magazines in the collection openly available has been an acknowledgement to the Mexican American community of the community's historical contributions. He commented that some Mexican Americans feel marginalized, and the collection provides them with a narrative of how this area has been shaped by the Mexican American community. Related to this sentiment, the faculty member from California also responded that the collection made Mexican American history openly available and accessible, and that the importance of open access cannot be overstated, especially when it comes to communities of color.

We talked to a journalism faculty member about the collection, and specifically *El Independiente*, the student newspaper published by the UA School of Journalism. She had established the student paper in 1976 and served as its faculty advisor for many years. The professor stressed the importance of having the archives of the newspaper digitized and available to faculty, students, and the community. In classes, students can understand themes across time, through the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and to the present day because the newspaper is still being published. They can read about what is important to the community, to see how it has both evolved and stayed the same. Some of the important local issues that were covered in the paper were about city autonomy, intergovernmental relations, water issues, immigration, bilingual education, asylum policies, and desegregation. Researchers can now more easily compare and contrast coverage of these issues from another point of view. The faculty member also commented that having these digital archives available advances the ability to do research about Southern Arizona.

The authors also sent out a questionnaire to several individuals whom they knew had used the collection or had been in the original round of stakeholder interviews. One professor noted the impact of the collection on student research at all levels. Her own research has also been facilitated by being able to search the newspapers online, allowing her to access more content in a shorter amount of time and increasing the number of newspapers she can include in her research. In addition, she commented that her research can more readily be multi-ethnic, multi-national, and multi-lingual. Other scholars have also benefitted from the digital access to these newspapers. An unlikely surprise occurred when one of the authors met a professor living in California at the time. She mentioned her research using late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century papers to look at how the Spanish-language press treated a topic she has previously written about in the context of English-language press. In further discussions, the author realized that the professor had been using the UA Libraries' MMAP collection. The professor mentioned that she was ecstatic at having found the collection, as it provided her with a search capability not available elsewhere.

The authors also received a congratulations and thank you from a professor in Spain; he is considered an expert in Chicano studies and whose research concentration is in the identification of pre-civil rights movement literary texts of the United States Hispanic culture. His response on the impact of this collection has been two-fold. It has facilitated his research, and he considers the collection to be a boon for historians, cultural and literary researchers. To summarize, he believes that access to these papers creates a wealth of primary sources with which some aspects of the history of the Mexican American community may need correction, given that cultural and literary historians would have depended on their own lens or mainstream texts and would not have used newspapers with the viewpoint of the community for their research. He points out that newspapers were the medium that was used to

communicate within the community and included not only news but letters, manifests, and other communications, which provides a picture into political, cultural and intellectual life of the community.

The importance of this open access digital archive of newspapers has been felt in the community of scholars, as well as the broader community both locally and beyond. Scholars and community members from California to Virginia to Spain have commended the collection and have communicated about their usage of it. It has also provided opportunities for students in multiple ways. On a personal level, many native Tucsonans have commented that they've been able to find ancestors in the columns of these newspapers, particularly in *El Tucsonense*. In general, they've found obituaries, which include details of family members' lives, photos, celebration announcements and other familial information. Given that members of the community have at times felt disregarded by mainstream news sources, the impact at times is intangible but worthy of noting.

### **Future Plans**

While these twenty publications that we have digitized cover over a century of Mexican and Mexican American press in the West and Southwest United States, there are still many more newspapers that fit the scope of what we could include in the collection. For example, according to Lutrell's (1950) *Newspapers and Periodicals of Arizona, 1859-1911*, there were several other Spanish-language newspapers in Arizona that are not represented in the MMAP or other digital collections.

We have started to discuss with ASLAPR how our two institutions could collaborate on digitizing additional Mexican American newspapers published in Arizona, and we are interested in opening discussions with UNT and UTEP on further collaboration. In addition, we have been contacted by publishers of historic Mexican American newspapers who are interested in adding their newspapers to the digital collection.

Beyond adding content to the collection, we have also considered what additional functionality that researchers of the collection would need. We know there is evidence that even basic searching changes how historical research is conducted. One of the UA faculty members has used basic searching currently available in the collection to find early usage of particular words, such as "Chicano". One of the issues that we have identified is that the optical character recognition (OCR) quality varies greatly. In general, we found that newspapers and magazines published more than 40 years ago, which account for more than half of the collection and were digitized from microfilm, are less accurate. Arlitsch and Herbert (2004, 60) point out similar issues, noting that "most of these visual defects appear in the early years of the newspapers, leading us to conclude they were the first to be microfilmed and that service bureaus of the late 1940s had not yet perfected their techniques." The condition of the microfilm, as well as whether digitizing from a master microfilm or not, can also affect the quality of OCR. If we were to enhance the OCR accuracy, we would greatly enhance basic searching of these newspapers. Nicholson (2012, 241) described "newspaper culturomics" and a methodology to analyze newspaper text by using keyword searching of specific words in a commercial database. MMAP does not have the same limitations mentioned by Nicholson (2012, 242-243) and could provide text analysis software that would expand the possibilities of new discoveries.

It will be important as we move into the next phase of the project to capitalize on the collaborative partnerships we have built with UA faculty members and the community. We would like to establish an advisory board with representatives from the UA faculty and community members who would provide input on future directions for the collection, such as new titles to add and what new functionality would enhance how researchers use the collection.

As a result of our various presentations, the launch event, and talking with potential donors about the project, Special Collections acquired the complete print run of *El Tucsonense*, and other individuals with ties to the community have expressed interest in donating their materials including a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter. The project itself has given the project team and the Borderlands Curator an opportunity to cultivate and acknowledge potential donors from the community.

Our hope is to continue to discover additional newspapers and add to the digital collection to continue to expand access to a different point of view. As Gruesz (2012, 457) comments, “even a single issue of one of the hundreds of forgotten newspapers from the Spanish-speaking borderlands speaks volumes about the life of its public.”

## References

Andrade, Francisco Manuel. “The History of ‘La Raza’ Newspaper and Magazine, and its Role in the Chicano Community from 1967 to 1977.” Master’s Thesis, California State University Fullerton, 1979.

Anip, Erenst and Jodie Mattos. “Bringing the Past to the People: Outreach Efforts and Value-added Content for Chronicling America in Hawaii and Vermont.” Paper presented at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress, Singapore, August 20, 2013. Accessed June 24, 2014. <http://library.ifla.org/257/1/153-anip-en.pdf>.

Arlitsch, Kenning and John Herbert. “Microfilm, Paper, and OCR: Issues in Newspaper Digitization. The Utah Digital Newspapers Program.” *Microform & Imaging Review* 33, no. 2 (2004): 59-67.

“Editorial.” *Americas 2001* Premiere Issue (1987): 4.

Feeney, Mary, Chris Kollen, and Veronica Reyes-Escudero. “A Century of Mexican and Mexican American Press: Preserving the Past Online.” *Microform & Digitization Review* 40, no. 4 (2011): 158-167.

Gonzales, Juan. “Forgotten Pages: Spanish-Language Newspapers in the Southwest.” *Journalism History* 4, no. 2 (1977): 50-51.

Gonzales, Manuel G. “Carlos I. Velasco.” *The Journal of Arizona History* 25, no. 3 (1984): 265-284.

Gonzales, Manuel G. *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States, Second Edition*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009.

Gray, Paul Bryan. "Francisco P. Ramirez: A Short Biography." *California History* 84, no. 2 (2006/2007): 20-38.

Gruesz, Kirsten Silva. "Mexican/American: The Making of Borderlands Print Culture." In *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Volume 6: U.S. Popular Print Culture, 1860-1920*, edited by Christine Bold, 457-476. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kanellos, Nicolás. "A Brief History of Hispanic Periodicals in the United States." In *Hispanic Periodicals in the United States, Origins to 1960: A Brief History and Comprehensive Bibliography*, edited by Nicolás Kanellos and Helvetia Martell, 3-142. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 2000. Accessed June 20, 2014.

[http://docs.newsbank.com/bibs/KanellosNicolos/Hispanic\\_history.pdf](http://docs.newsbank.com/bibs/KanellosNicolos/Hispanic_history.pdf).

Library of Congress. "Chronicling America." Accessed June 4, 2014.

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/?state=&ethnicity=&language=spa>.

Library of Congress. "National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), Technical Guidelines for Applicants." August 19, 2011.

[http://www.loc.gov/ndnp/guidelines/archive/NDNP\\_201113TechNotes.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/ndnp/guidelines/archive/NDNP_201113TechNotes.pdf)

Luttrell, Estelle. *Newspapers and Periodicals of Arizona, 1859-1911*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona, 1950.

Lyon, William Henry. *Those Old Yellow Dog Days: Frontier Journalism in Arizona, 1859-1912*. Tucson, AZ: Arizona Historical Society, 1994.

Martínez, Oscar J. *Mexican-Origin People in the United States: A Topical History*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2001.

Martinez, Oscar J. *U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1996.

Miguélez, Armando. "Antología Histórica del Cuento Literario Chicano (1877-1950)." PhD diss., Arizona State University, 1981. Accessed June 20, 2014.

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/nd/ark:/59851/bmc5b0d7>.

"New voice for South Tucson." *South Tucson's El Independiente*, May 7, 1976: 4.

Nicholson, Bob. "Counting Culture; or, How to Read Victorian Newspapers from a Distance." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 17, no. 2 (2012): 238-246.

Readex. *Hispanic American Newspapers, 1808-1980*. Accessed June 16, 2014.

<http://www.readex.com/content/hispanic-american-newspapers-1808-1980>.

Ríos, Herminio and Lupe Castillo. "Toward a True Chicano Bibliography: Mexican-American Newspapers: 1848-1942." *El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought* 3, no. 4 (1970): 17-24.

Ríos, Herminio. "Toward a True Chicano Bibliography – Part II." *El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought* 5, no. 4 (1972): 38-47.

Rosales, F. Arturo. *Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 1996.

Salas, Miguel Tinker. *In the Shadow of the Eagles: Sonora and the Transformation of the Border during the Porfiriato*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997.

<http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft0f59n6xw/>.

Murrieta Saldívar, Manuel. *Mi Letra No es en Inglés: La Resistencia Cultural Sonorense en la Poesía de "El Tucsonense," 1915-1957*. Hermosillo, Sonora: Instituto Sonorense de Cultura y Gobierno del Estado de Sonora, 1991.

Sheridan, Thomas E. *Los Tucsonenses: The Mexican Community in Tucson, 1854-1941*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1986.

Summers Sandoval, Tomás F., Jr. *Latinos at the Golden Gate: Creating Community and Identity in San Francisco*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

University of Arizona Libraries. "Historic Mexican & Mexican American Press Collection." YouTube audio recording, 1:45:07. April 24, 2013.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCVUwPXq7PE&list=PLKJ4ynpS\\_58igTBZ481LLGGiUgYLpXeje](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCVUwPXq7PE&list=PLKJ4ynpS_58igTBZ481LLGGiUgYLpXeje)

University of Arizona Libraries. "Press release." March 18, 2013.

[http://www.library.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/users/gms/UAL\\_MexicanPressCollection\\_Release.pdf](http://www.library.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/users/gms/UAL_MexicanPressCollection_Release.pdf).