

Independent Voices August 2015 Newsletter

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New Platform

Earlier this month we notified many of you about the platform change for Independent Voices. Independent Voices was moved to a Veridian-based platform. Veridian may be a familiar name to many of you. Based in New Zealand, Veridian began by hosting historical newspapers for libraries such as the National Library of New Zealand and the University of California system. Over time they have expanded to other types of textual content. Veridian is used by Princeton, Cornell, Columbia and a number of other libraries large and small.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Independent Voices website. At the top left, the logo reads "Independent Voices" with the tagline "An Open Access Collection of an Alternative Press". On the top right, there are links for "Register" and "Log in". A navigation bar below the logo contains links for "Home", "Search", "Titles", "Dates", "Libraries", "Series", and "Help". Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email are also present. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column, titled "FEATURED IN THIS COLLECTION", displays a cover of the "LAVENDER WOMAN" newspaper from November 1971. The middle column, titled "ABOUT THIS COLLECTION", provides a detailed description of the collection's scope and history, mentioning the 60s, 70s, and 80s, and listing various groups represented. The right column, titled "SEARCH THE COLLECTION", includes a search input field and a "Browse the collection" section with options to "Browse by title" and "Browse by date". At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with "Produced by REVEAL DIGITAL", a Creative Commons BY license icon, links for "Legal Notice" and "Privacy Policies", and "Powered by Veridian".

We were impressed early on with Veridian's understanding of library needs and the adaptability of the platform. In the end, they achieved for us that rare outcome of lowering costs and improving usability. There are a number of improvements you may notice. Here are some of the biggies:

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- Browsing titles is 100% improved. You can now see the list of publications in the collection on the Title tab. Once you find the publication title you are looking for, click on it to see all the available issues in a list view or calendar view.
- Browse by Series is now a top-level option. This is an easy way to view a list of titles that are related to specific social movements.
- There is also extensive faceted searching, enabling users to limit their searches to a specific publication, series, publication place, date, source library and many others. It is powerful!
- Depending on the original print quality, which can be sketchy, and page layout, which can be "creative," some of the OCR text is not accurate. The Veridian platform enables registered users to correct the OCR text, using the page image as a reference. Give it a try sometime. It is surprisingly addictive!

The new platform provides significant improvement in searchability. Always a work in progress, there are a few aspects of the platform that are not yet where we want them to be. We are already working with Veridian on improvements to the image viewing experience. If you have other suggestions for improvements or changes you would like to see, please let us know. In the meantime, we hope you

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New Content – The Berkeley Barb

For the past several months on the old platform we had been unable to load new content to Independent Voices, even while we continued to produce content. A 100,000-page backlog of new material accumulated and is ready to be loaded into the collection. The Berkeley Barb was the first new title to be added. It was loaded in time for the Berkeley Barb's 50th reunion celebration in Mid August 2015 (read more about the "Barb" and the reunion [here](#)).



Founded in 1965, The Berkeley Barb was known for its confrontational style of journalism covering a wide range of issues and movements from the draft to the Black Panthers to the Weather Underground. Over its 15-year run The Barb became one of the most important alternative press publications in the country, serving as a model for the many other campus underground papers that subsequently sprang up in the 1960s.

Project editor, Ken Wachsberger, attended the Berkeley Barb reunion and showed the gathered crowd Independent Voices and the Barb's digitized pages. Gar Smith, Berkeley Barb veteran staffer, was there and overjoyed by what has been accomplished saying, "For reasons unknown, the Barb was never included in the Underground/Alternative Press Index, so all that history had been lost to us. Now it has reappeared in all its smudgy splendor. I am in awe of the work you have been doing. Independent Voices and Reveal Digital have accomplished something that I have been yearning for since the Barb's demise 34 years ago. Finally, a searchable trove of the Barb's (near-) complete 15-year history."

None of this work could have been accomplished without your library's funding support. Thank you!

You can browse through the Berkeley Barb issues in Independent Voices by clicking this [link](#). While we have located a majority of the Barb issues, there are a few gaps we are still trying to fill. If your library holds the Berkeley Barb, let us know. You may have just what we need to complete the run.

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Update on MARC Records

One of the benefits Reveal Digital promises to funding libraries is that we will provide MARC records for each title in Independent Voices. We have begun collaborating with Becky Culbertson at University of California, San Diego to create robust MARC records. Becky is also hoping to facilitate the assignment of ISSNs.

The project has turned out to be a bit more complicated than anticipated, so Becky has enlisted the help of two student workers, Kristina Tran and Jairett Epperson. Becky reports that they are having a great time working with the Independent Voices content. Thank you, Becky, Kristina and Jairett for contributing your time and expertise to help the rest of the Independent Voices community!



Once Becky and team have completed their tasks, I will be working with several librarians who have volunteered to test our records and the process for making the records available to everyone. Assuming all goes well, we will be rolling out the first set of MARC records in September.

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New Projects Need Your Support

As a supporter of Independent Voices, you recognize the value of and support the creation of new digital collections in an open-access environment. Will you consider making a yearly commitment to our model by making a funding commitment to a new project each year? This year there are four new potential projects. I encourage you to check out all of the projects, but I draw your attention to the Highlander Folk School Digital Archive project in particular.



We recently uploaded a [video](#) through which you can learn about Highlander's background and its significant contribution to labor and civil rights movements. We know the archive is valuable to scholars and researchers in education, history, black studies, labor studies and sociology programs, because Highlander is visited in person by thousands of scholars every year. Digitizing the content will open it up to even more people and will no doubt benefit the scholars at your institution as well.

Unlike Independent Voices, when you make a commitment to the Highlander Folk School Digital Archive project, you will not be invoiced until we reach the project's funding goal. We will invoice in such a way as to enable your library to pay from year-end funds or from next year's budget, providing your library with budget flexibility. The funding levels for the project are extremely reasonable. Will you take a moment over the next couple of days and log-in to [revealdigital.com](#) to make a funding commitment to one of the great new projects on the site?

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Join our Project Review Panel



Numerous new project ideas have emerged as Jeff and I have been talking to and visiting libraries over the past 12 months. We would like to develop a process by which we can obtain input from other libraries about the viability of multiple project ideas to ensure we focus our resources on projects that will meet the information needs of the broader library community. We need your help!

I will be putting together a panel of librarians who are willing to spend a few minutes every couple of months reviewing project ideas, rating them on several characteristics and providing any commentary that seems appropriate. Panelists will enjoy previewing possible new projects and, more importantly, they will have a direct hand in shaping the information landscape of the future. Sounds fun and rewarding, right?

I will be reaching out to many of you in the coming weeks. If you know right now that this is a process in which you would like to be involved, please contact me directly. I think you will be excited about what's on tap!

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Update on MARC Records: Jairett Epperson, Kristina Tran and Becky Culbertson

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