



AN INTRODUCTION TO HACKING AS A WAY OF KNOWING

HIST5702

Winter 2011

Tuesdays 2.35 – 5.25

Location: PA111

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INSIDE:

Welcome to Digital History

by Shawn Graham

In this seminar, we will be looking at what Digital History is, the ways it changes the questions we can ask about history, the way digital methods change what it is even *feasible* to ask, and how we communicate this research to a wider public. Technology is not neutral, and we will be exploring the ramifications of that realisation.

Given that many digital tools are also new media tools, the practice of digital history is also often a kind of public history. This course will explore various concepts and tools currently being used in Digital History. Topics to be discussed may include data mining & text analysis, mobile computing & geographic information systems, and serious games.

In terms of major project work to put these ideas into practice, we will be building an augmented reality application connected with the history of the City of Ottawa. We won't however be building this from scratch. Rather, we will be exploring the various platforms that exist to see if we can mash up various services to create a viable product. What are the implications for telling history in this way?

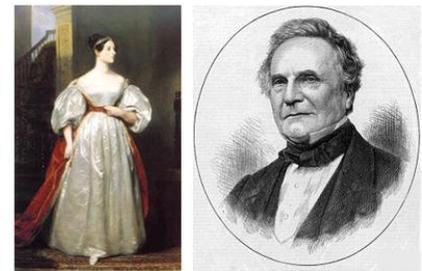
One of our outcomes will be a how-to digital handbook for historical societies and others, so that augmented reality becomes a possibility for a wider range of creators, storytellers, and historians.



Assignments

You will be creating 10 blog posts, one individual mini-project, and one group project.

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Seminars & Readings

Everyone is expected to take a leadership role in at least one seminar, facilitating the discussion, and summarizing the major readings for that week.

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Assignments ... continued.

What are the potentials, problems, theoretical perspectives that would inform best practice in this field?

(In this project, I am influenced and inspired by the recent work of the Cultural Heritage Informatics Field School at MSU, and would like to acknowledge that debt).

We will be exploring various platforms for their suitability for public history, on a particular topic related to the environmental history of Ottawa. The precise form of this app will depend upon our critical review of various platforms available for authoring content; I do not intend to build an app from scratch during this course, as one of our desired outcomes is to create a how-to guide for the various audiences who might wish to leverage augmented reality applications to tell their own stories.

We may, depending on the interests of the group, split into smaller groups to complete multiple contrasting & complementary implementations across more than one platform.

As a final step, we'll create a group-authored "Guide to Using AR Platforms for Cultural Heritage" This final deliverable in the course will be built from our blog posts, discussions, and experiences into a single white paper which we will submit to NiCHE and post publicly on this website. We will be maintaining a [Zotero](#) library that will become publicly accessible at the end of the course. We will use [Anthologize](#) to manage and build the report as an e-publication.



HeritageCrowd.org

EVALUATION

Leadership in the seminar /
reflective blogging 30%

Individual Mini Project 30%

Group Project 40%

Readings

The full list of readings is on the 'schedule' page of the course website. There is no set text for this course. Rather, representative readings have been culled from the literature, and links to the original articles have been provided on the course website.

That said, if you've ever wondered how *history* can be a thing that can be *computed*, (indeed, how anything gets computed) then get a copy of James Gleick, *The Information. A History, A Theory, A Flood*. Pantheon (2011) <http://www.amazon.ca/Information-History-Theory-Flood/dp/0375423729>. You might also obtain a copy of Douglas Ruhkoff, *Program or be Programmed – Ten Commands for a Digital Age*. Soft Skull (2011) <http://www.amazon.com/Program-Be-Programmed-Commands-Digital/dp/159376426X/douglrushk-20>

You will also want to become familiar with the Digital Research Tools Wiki, maintained by Lisa Spiro at <http://www.amazon.ca/Information-History-Theory-Flood/dp/0375423729>

Finally, please do read Stephen Ramsay's remembrance of Father Busa at <http://lenz.unl.edu/2011/08/11/father-roberto-busa.html>. Then go find any piece of Father Busa's work.

If you are on Twitter, follow the list of digital humanities maintained by Dan Cohen, api.twitter.com/dancohen/digitalhumanities and keep an eye on <http://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/>.

Learning Objectives

- To understand the implications of digital tools for the practice and philosophy of history
- To develop critical apparatus for evaluating and situating digital history work
- To develop facility with one or more digital practices relevant to the student's own thesis work