



HIST5702

Winter 2011

Tuesdays 2.35 – 5.25

Location: PA111

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@electricarchaeo

AN INTRODUCTION TO HACKING AS A WAY OF KNOWING

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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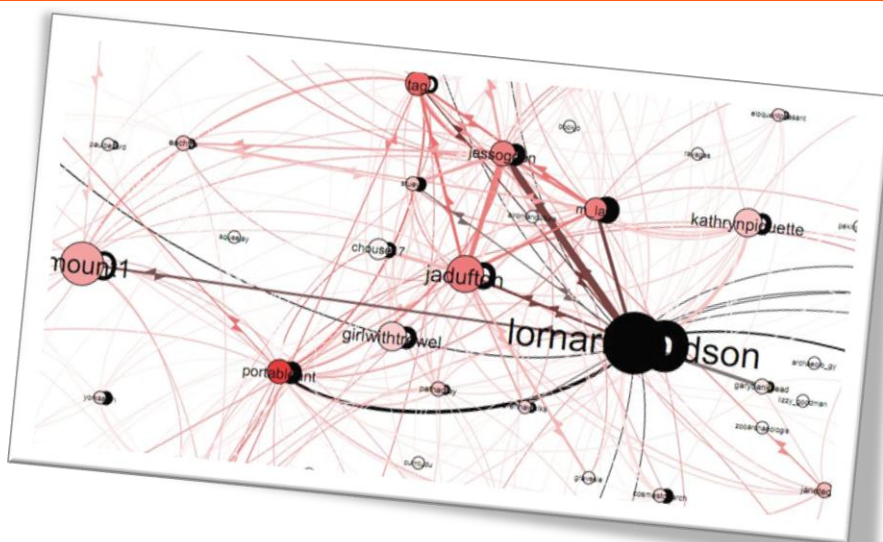
A bit more about the course

Get Familiar With Digital Research Tools

The field is constantly expanding and evolving. Any list of tools that I would post would soon become outdated. Instead, why not visit the 'Digital Research Tools Wiki' instead? The link is on the course website, which may be found at <http://dheworks.carleton.ca/history5702/>. You will be given a username to post on this website.

Open Access

I believe that digital history is also a kind of public history, especially the process of creation, and so a lot of what we will be doing will be publicly accessible. Some of it will not. As part of your



coursework, students will be blogging on this site. Students need to think about the degree to which they want their work to be open, and I would encourage students to choose appropriate [creative commons](#) licensing for their posts. **There is no penalty for choosing not to make your post public.**

FOLLOW ME

I tweet from @electricarchaeo. I blog at electricarchaeologist.wordpress.com. I'm also at <http://carleton-ca.academia.edu/SMGraham>. shawn_graham@carleton.ca

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Assignments

Weekly Blog Posts

The semester runs for 12 weeks. Each student is expected to produce and post 10 short-form publications (thus you have some latitude about when you post). The posts could, for instance, reflect on the class discussion, provide reviews of platforms and technologies, explore the readings more deeply, critically analyze the issues surrounding mobile computing as it pertains to history. You are contributing to the discussion and addressing the wider academic community. Please always indicate a Creative Commons license for your post. If you wish your post(s) to remain private, please discuss this with Shawn as soon as possible.

This website is publicly accessible; there will be comments made on your posts. Be prepared to engage with the wider community. While I do not require you to obtain and use Twitter

accounts, you might wish to do this in order to share your written work with the wider academic community. A good list of people in the field to follow is on the course website.

Individual Mini-Project

Students will pursue a personal project which can explore the many different ways digital history can be created; the main limiter is that the project deal substantively with the theoretical issues surrounding digital history. This project will be presented orally towards the end of the term; more details to be discussed in class.

A Smartphone App

This project is patterned along the lines of a design studio, working as if we've been contracted by [NiCHE](#) to explore how historians can tell the environmental history of the city via augmented reality and other digital history tools.



Writing History in the Digital Age Open Peer Review e-book
writinghistory.trincoll.edu

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