

DIGITAL HISTORY

History 710 – Professional Development Seminar – Spring 2017

Goals

The term “digital history” has become ubiquitous, but what does it mean and what does it encompass? This seminar is designed to give graduate students what you might think of as “digital literacy”— a basic grounding in:

- the range of forms that digital history currently encompasses,
- the debates among historians about their implications, and
- (at least some of) the underlying technologies.

The seminar aims for broad rather than deep learning. The goal is not to make you a digital historian (though that might happen), but to expose you to methods and tools that might be useful for your own research and teaching and to give you the knowledge and confidence to speak intelligently on the subject, should you have occasion to do so (e.g., in a job interview).

Rhythm of the semester

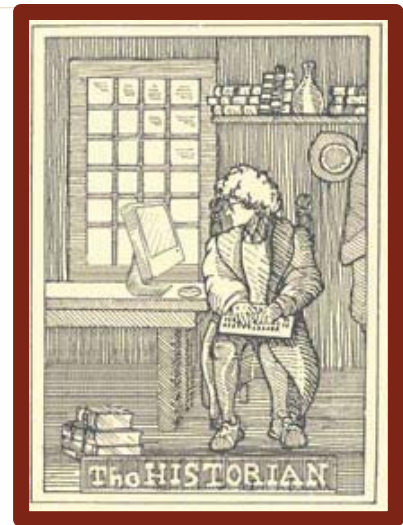
We will begin by exploring **controversies among historians** that digitization in historical scholarship has generated in recent years. Is it changing the nature of historical scholarship— the questions that we ask, the kinds of research that we do, the ways in which we disseminate the fruits of our research to academic and public audiences?

Against this backdrop, the rest of the semester is divided into two parts. The middle weeks of the semester resemble a **hands-on “boot camp”** that



introduces you primarily to tools for communicating the results of your research to academic audiences as well as to the broader public. During the last few weeks, you will develop **your own project**—either by putting to use the tools introduced during our boot camp or by exploring other tools of special relevance to your own work.

We will also maintain a WordPress **seminar blog**, to which you will be required to post weekly. This offers an opportunity to share your reflections on the assignments, to bring items of interest



<http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/index.php>

Meeting time/place

Mondays, 2:25-4:55 pm
Design Lab studio,
2252B Helen C. White

Professor Colleen Dunlavy

5109 Mosse Humanities
cdunlavy@wisc.edu
tel. 608.263.1854


Office hours

Wednesday, 3:00-5:30 p.m.



that you have encountered on the web to the attention of your classmates, and to hone your skills at writing for a broader (if limited) public.

Q: What will we not cover?

A: Topics or tools on which workshops are regularly offered on campus—e.g., citation managers (check out UW Library workshops), social media (Graduate School Professional Development workshops), basic word processing and spreadsheets (DoIT’s Software Training for Students), and the “big data” tools characteristic of the “public humanities” (occasional workshops). 

Q: Should I have some prior knowledge in order to do well in this seminar?

A: No. You may be familiar with some of the tools—that fine; you can mentor your peers. But no prior knowledge is assumed, so relax, enjoy, and learn! We’ll do a quick survey of pre-existing skills and knowledge in the first seminar meeting, and I will revise the “boot camp” portion of the syllabus accordingly, if needed.

Requirements and assessment

Plan to bring a **laptop** to every seminar meeting beginning February 13, when we will review the first assignment.¹ You need not purchase any books, but you may want to pay for access to **premium features** of online sites, e.g., for creating infographics or building a website.

The most important elements of this course are hands-on experience and engagement with the issues and tools. Your **grade**, therefore, will be heavily weighted towards participation.

GRADING SCALE

Participation	75%
“Boot camp” projects	15%
Independent project	10%

Doing well means faithful attendance (of course!), solid preparation for each week’s seminar discussion, good-faith efforts to complete the assignments, and an on-going commitment to producing the best possible work. Also, beginning February 6, please post weekly on our seminar blog at <https://hist710.wordpress.com/>. The blog is “private” – viewable only by members of the seminar.

Deadlines and **TIME MANAGEMENT ALERT**: The digital assignments are due by 6 p.m. on the Sunday before seminar. Blog posts are due by 10 am on Monday mornings. (In some weeks, you will be asked to “turn in” your assignment by attaching it to a blog post with your comments – that will count as your weekly blog post.) Each week, be sure to set aside some time to review the other seminar members’ completed assignments and blog posts before our seminar meeting.

Semester Schedule

The assigned readings are (or will be) available either through links in the schedule below, on our Canvas website (<http://canvas.wisc.edu>), or both.

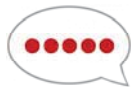
¹ If necessary, you can check out a laptop in the Design Lab.

JANUARY 23 – INTRODUCTIONS

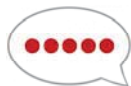
Part 1 – An Introduction to Debates about Digital History

JANUARY 30

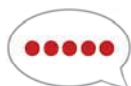
Discussion: Thinking about digital history



- Grafton, Anthony. “The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke.” *History and Theory* 33, no. 4 (1994): 53. If you prefer, of course, you can read his book instead—*The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). On [Canvas](#).

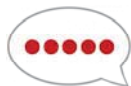


- Browse the outline version of Daniel J. Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) at: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/>. Given how quickly technology has evolved, this is rapidly becoming a classic – and useful for that reason.



- White, Richard. “What Is Spatial History?” Stanford University Spatial History Lab Working Paper, 1 February 2010. Available at:

<https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29>.



- Guldi, Jo, and David Armitage. *The History Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Available for download through the UW Libraries catalog or at: <http://historymanifesto.combridge.org>.
- Denbo, Seth, et al. “History as a Book Discipline (Forum).” *Perspectives on History* (April 2015): 19-27. On [Canvas](#).

Part 2 – Boot Camp on Digital Tools

With the issues in mind that were raised by last week’s readings, this segment begins with a discussion of digital collections as historical artifacts. In the remaining weeks, we will sample digital tools that seems especially useful for historians and you will have a series of assignments designed to give you some hands-on experience with them.

Our “reading” assignments in this part of the seminar are brief, how-to works, often on the web. Also, to prepare for each week’s topic, plan to spend some time trolling the internet for relevant sites. Be sure to share your reflections on the assignment and any links you find especially useful on our blog.

Beginning February 13, we will divide our 2.5-hour seminars between a collective review and discussion of the assignments due that week (usually the first ~1.5 hours) – be sure to review the seminar members’ assignments before seminar – and an introduction to the digital tool that you will explore in the following week’s assignment (usually the last ~1 hour). Instructors with DoIT’s Software Training for Students (STS) will provide the introductions to digital tools in the instructional space (2257) in the Design Lab. Note that the order in which the digital tools appear on the schedule below may change, depending on the availability of STS instructors.

REMINDER: The digital assignments are due (submitted mainly via our blog) by 6 p.m. on the Sundays before seminar. Each week, be sure to set aside some time to **review them** before our seminar meeting.

Discussion – Digital collections as historical artifacts.

Guest speaker: Michael Edmonds, Wisconsin Historical Society, who curated an online collection of documents on Freedom Summer and edited a companion reader.

Reading in preparation for discussion:

- Fischer, Suzanne. “Nota Bene: If You 'Discover' Something in an Archive, It's Not a Discovery.” *The Atlantic*, June 19, 2012. Available online and on Canvas.
- Papioannou, Helena Iles. “Actually, Yes, It *Is* a Discovery If You Find Something in an Archive That No One Knew Was There.” *The Atlantic*, June 21, 2012. Available online and on Canvas.
- Mbembe, Achille. “The Power of the Archive and Its Limits.” In *Refiguring the Archive*, edited by C. Hamilton et al., 19-26. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002. Available online and on Canvas.
- Featherstone, Mike. “Archive.” *Theory Culture Society* 23 (2006): 591-596. Available online and on Canvas.
- Grafton, Anthony. “Apocalypse in the Stacks? The Research Library in the Age of Google.” *Daedulus* 138 (Winter 2009): 87-98. Available on Canvas.
- Agarwal, Kritika. “Doing Right Online: Archivists Shape an Ethics for the Digital Age,” *Perspectives on History*, November 2016. Available on Canvas.
- Putnam, Lara. “The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast,” *American Historical Review* (April 2016): 376-402. Available online (through the UW library catalog) and on Canvas.

Training session – Working with Word (Dunlavy)

Assignment due by Feb. 12 – Syllabi for the 21st Century

The typical syllabus today could have been produced on a 1970 IBM Selectric; your task in this assignment is to update it for the twenty-first century.

- Troll the web for digitally-enhanced syllabi and use your own imagination.
- Take any exclusively printed-based syllabus that you have in digital form (or ask me for one) and transform it into a digitally-enhanced syllabus for the 21st century, something that could be distributed in pdf format.
- Post your syllbus on our blog with a note explaining anything that you want the seminar members to know about your experience.

USING IMAGES YOU FIND ONLINE

What usage rights do you have to images that you find online? To see what your options are, do a Google keyword search for the kind of image you want, then click Images – Tools – Usage Rights and choose an option. (Notice that you can also filter by color, type, time period, and more.)

February 13



Review and discussion of assignments – Syllabi for the 21c

Training session – Prezi

Prezi is an online presentation software that is more dynamic than PowerPoint or Keynote. You will need to create a username and password at <https://prezi.com/pricing/edu/> (educational pricing). Choose the 30-day free trial of Edu Pro and enter your wisc.edu email address; you will receive a verification email.

For a pre-training introduction to Prezi, review the following sites:

- The Design Lab's Prezi [page](#)
- Prezi's gallery of [most popular Prezis](#)
- Prezi's [YouTube channel](#)
- Prezi's page on [sharing a private Prezi](#). If you opt to keep your Prezis private, you will need to share your Prezi assignment – see below – so that the other members of the seminar can view it.
- BBC Active, "[Using Prezi in Education](#)"
- [Prezi tutorial](#) at GCFLearnFree.org (Goodwill Community Foundation International)

Assignment due by Feb. 19 – A Prezi presentation

Create a Prezi based on a topic of your choosing (e.g., reflecting your research or teaching interests). Share the Prezi with the seminar members by 6 p.m.

February 20

Review and discussion of assignments – Prezi presentations

Training session – Infographics

Reading in preparation for the training:

- Check out the DesignLab's [Toolkit](#)
- Lankow, Jason, Ross Crooks, and Josh Ritchie. *Infographics: The Power of Visual Storytelling*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. – Introduction and ch. 8, "What Makes a Good Infographic?" (on [Canvas](#); the book is available online through the library catalog – browse other chapters of interest).
- easel.ly's [Complete Guide to Infographics](#) (also available on [Canvas](#)).
- Search the web for examples of infographics and related websites, e.g., this [useful review](#) of websites/software for creating infographics
- Check out the following infographics-creation sites to see which appeals most to you:
 - [Piktochart](#) (my preferred site)
 - [Infogr.am](#)
 - [Easel.ly](#)

Assignment due by Feb. 26 – An infographic

- Using the infographics creation site of your choice, create an infographic based on a question or topic of your choosing. Save/export it in whatever format gives the best image and post it on our blog.



OPTIONAL EVENT

In anticipation of our upcoming “boot camp” on data visualization (March 6), please try to attend one of [Daniel Rosenberg](#)’s talks on February 24:

- “Toward a Quantitative History of Data,” History of Science Brown Bag, noon, 204 Bradley Memorial
 - “Keyword ‘Keyword,’” 3:45 pm, 976 Memorial Library (Special Collections)
-

February 27



Review and discussion of assignments – Infographics

Training – Theory Comix

From the [Design Lab](#): “Theory comix are illustrated texts in the form of comix, with students often casting themselves and class authors as characters pursuing a question or quest. Theory comix may contain narratives but the quest itself is conceptual, with characters offering help or presenting obstacles. The key is exploring different approaches to the quest, which may or not be resolved.”

Read in preparation for the training:

- [DesignLab page](#) on Theory Comix – be sure to browse the Examples links.
- [Comic Life](#), the software we’ll be using – click the “Try It Free!” button and download the software; give it a preliminary try.
- Prof. Jon McKenzie, former UW-Madison Professor of English and Director of the [DesignLab](#), [lecture](#) on the digital humanities and theory comix.
- Browse Google [images of theory comix](#).

Assignment due by March 5 – Theory Comix

Using the [Comic Life app](#), create a theory comic based on a topic or question related to your research or teaching interests. Save it as a pdf and post it on our blog.

March 6



Review and discussion of Theory Comix

Training – Data visualization

Reading in preparation for the training:

- Rosenberg, Daniel. “Data before the Fact.” In “*Raw Data*” is an *Oxymoron*, edited by Lisa Gitelman, 15-40. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013. Available on [Canvas](#).
- The DesignLab’s [handout on data visualization](#) tips and sources.

- Few, Stephen. “35. Data Visualization for Human Perception.” In *The Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction*, edited by Mads Soegaard and Rikke Friis Dam, 2d ed., Interaction Design Foundation, available [online](#).
- Refresh your memory of Excel.

Assignment due March 12 – Data visualization

Think about what kind of data might be useful for your research or teaching interests, and search around the web to find some (keep it very basic—numbers of something over time). Using Excel, create one or more data visualizations that emphasize the points that you want the viewer to notice in the data. Print your visualization as a pdf and post it on our blog.

March 13



Review and discussion of assignments – Data visualization

Training – Graphic essays

We will be using Atavist to create graphic essays. Atavist offers a storytelling platform as well as a magazine of graphic essays.

Reading (and doing) in preparation for the training:

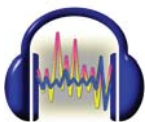
- DesignLab’s page on the [Graphic Essay](#)
- [Atavist Magazine](#) – read some of the essays, paying attention to form and visual features
- On the Atavist software site (<https://atavist.com/>),
 - Click Get Started,
 - Create an account,
 - Select Create a new publication,
 - Give your publication a name and complete the URL
 - Select the “free” option,
 - Skip the avatar upload (unless you have one you want to use),
 - Select the “Creative” = free option,
 - Try it out!

Assignment – Graphic essay

Take a piece of your own writing (seminar paper or the like) and, using Atavist, convert it (or a portion of it) to a graphic essay. Post the URL to your project on our blog.

March 20 – Spring break

March 27



Review and discussion of assignments – Graphic essays

Training – Podcasts

Reading in preparation for the training: **TBA**

Assignment due April 2 – Podcast

Make a podcast on a topic of your choice – something that you could imagine using in teaching or to explain your research to a wider (non-academic) public. Maximum length: 3 minutes. Post your podcast on our blog.

OPTIONAL EVENT

History Department podcast workshop, March 29, 12:00-1:30, Curti Lounge, featuring:

- Mike Duncan, creator of the award-winning “The History of Rome” podcast
- Mark Linsenmayer, founder of the podcast “The Partially Examined Life”
- Craig Eley, ACLS Public Fellow on the radio show “To the Best of Our Knowledge”

April 3



Review and discussion of assignments – Podcasts

Training – WordPress website

- Review Slate.com’s list of the most browsable websites of 2016 at:
 - [Part One](#)
 - [Part Two](#)
- Read the DesignLab’s [handout on portfolio and professional websites](#)
- Browse Software Training for Students’ classroom manual on Wordpress. Available on [Canvas](#).

Assignment – Build a WordPress website

This could be a personal/professional website that showcases you and your research interests or it could be devoted to a topic relating to your research or teaching interests. Post your URL on our blog.

Part 3 – Individual projects

In this last segment of the seminar, you will have a few weeks to develop an independent project. Collaborative projects are also a possibility.

For your project, you may choose to use the digital tools introduced in Part 2 to “remediate” a larger piece of your own work – e.g., by translating it into a series of infographics, Theory Comix, or podcasts or building a website. Or you may choose explore other options that seem especially appealing for your interests and goals, e.g., making videos, constructing a digital timeline, using the web publishing platform [OMEKA](#), or [Scalar](#), a platform for scholarly engagement.

(continued on next page ☺)

April 10



Review and discussion of assignments – Websites

Discussion – Property in a digital age

Reading:

- UW Library’s Research Guide on copyright and fair use:
<http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/c.php?g=177941&p=1169847>
- The DesignLab’s infographic on copyright:
<https://designlab.wisc.edu/images/Copyright-Flowchart.jpg>
- Anderson, Rick. “Open Access, Copyright, and Licensing for Humanists.” *Perspectives on History*, November 2016. Available on [Canvas](#).

Discussion – individual project ideas

April 17



Discussion – Standards for evaluating digital scholarship

- American Historical Association’s *Guidelines for the Professional Evaluation of Digital Scholarship in History* (also posted on [Canvas](#)).
- Delmont, Matthew. “Does It Count?” Scholarly Communication and African American Digital History.” *Perspectives on History*, November 2016. Available on [Canvas](#).

Discussion – Individual project ideas

April 24



Reports on and discussion of individual projects

May 1



Reports on and discussion of individual projects

May 12



Final projects are due by the end of exam period

How you will submit your project depends on what it is – we’ll discuss this in the last part of seminar.