

Proposed Readings for a Minor Field in Digital History

Digital Humanities

- Berry, David. *Understanding Digital Humanities*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Burdick, Anne, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld, Todd Presner, and Jeffrey Schnapp. *Digital Humanities*. The MIT Press, 2012.
- Gold, Matthew K., ed. *Debates in the Digital Humanities*. Minneapolis: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2012.
- Gibbs, Fred, and Trevor Owens. "Building Better Digital Humanities Tools: Toward Broader Audiences and User-centered Designs." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (2012). <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/6/2/000136/000136.html>.
- Ramsay, Stephen. *Reading Machines: Toward an Algorithmic Criticism*. Topics in the Digital Humanities. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011.
- Unsworth, John. "Scholarly Primitives: What Methods Do Humanities Researchers Have in Common, and How Might Our Tools Reflect This?," May 13, 2000. <http://people.lis.illinois.edu/~unsworth/Kings.5-00/primitives.html>.
- Hall, G. "Towards a Post-Digital Humanities: Cultural Analytics and the Computational Turn to Data-Driven Scholarship." *American Literature* 85, no. 4 (2013).
- Prescott, Andrew. "Consumers, Creators or Commentators? Problems of Audience and Mission in the Digital Humanities." *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 11, no. 1-2 (February 1, 2012): 61-75. doi:10.1177/1474022211428215.

Perspectives on new media--June 13th

- Gee, James Paul. *New Digital Media and Learning as an Emerging Area and "Worked Examples" as One Way Forward*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2010.
- Hayles, N. Katherine. *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Landow, George P., ed. *Hyper/Text/Theory*. 1st ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994. (Look at the subsequent editions, too.)
- Liu, Alan. "When Was Linearity?" Accessed November 26, 2012. <http://digitalhistory.unl.edu/essays/liuessay.php>.
- Manovich, Lev. "Database as a Genre of New Media." *AI & Society*. Accessed March 29, 2011. http://vv.arts.ucla.edu/AI_Society/manovich.html.
- Manovich, Lev. *Software Takes Command*. New York: CONTINUUM PUBLISHING CORPORATION, 2013.
- Morozov, Evgeny. *To Save Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism*. PublicAffairs, 2013.
- Murray, Janet Horowitz. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. New York: Free Press, 1997.

Discussion Questions:

Mandy:

1. Morotov talks of the dangers of solutionism and of epochalism. How do these critiques affect digital scholarship and methodologies? Do they offer any suggestions as to how we might approach digital scholarship?
2. The assumption in Murray is that the computer allows for “the ability to see multiple patterns in the same elements, might also lead to compelling narratives that capture our new situation as citizens of a global community.” However, historians have struggled with implementing hypertext into their work in ways that don’t mimic traditional scholarship. (i.e. footnotes that jump you down to the bottom of the page.) Can historical arguments be represented without linearity? Are linearity and “graphical knowledge” at odds? Or, is graphical knowledge, as Liu argues, just a reconfiguration of the values of linearity?
3. How is historical scholarship affected and is anything lost in non-linear, hypertext/interactive scholarship? How is history altered through the use of databases and algorithms that don’t necessarily require linearity?
4. What might a non-linear, interactive, digital piece of scholarship (or digital dissertation) look like? How might the argument be altered and what is lost when we move away from linearity? If it (the argument) is represented digitally, is it scholarship? (This is super vague but has been at the back of my mind all week. I don’t really have an answer, just something I’ve been thinking about.)

Jannelle:

1. Do databases (in the sense of Manovich’s article) make sense for historians?
2. What “worked examples” (Gee) do we have for Digital History?
3. Putting Morozov’s work in context: how did you respond to his critique of “the Internet”? How do (or don’t) the other authors we’ve read - particularly Manovich, Hayles and Murray - respond to the critiques Morozov raises about ‘Internet-centrism’ and “solutionism”?
4. Combining this with the previous set of readings: what do digital tools “do” differently? What motivates/encourages/requires a shift from traditional disciplinary to new media/digital approaches?

Anne:

1. Manovich examines narrative and databases within his article and states, “Another erroneous assumption frequently made is that by creating her own path (i.e., choosing the records from a database in a particular order) the user constructs her own unique narrative. However, if the user simply accesses different elements, one after another, in a usually random order, there is no reason to assume that these elements will form a narrative at all. “ Is this issue why many digital history projects seem to lack a narrative? Is there a way to remedy this lack of narrative in the projects?
2. Similarly, Liu examines non-linearity in his article. Although the emergence of non-linearity in digital history has provided new methods and projects, what is lost from it? What can be gained? How useful is it to think beyond the traditional narrative structures of history?

3. Clearly, narrative is an ongoing theme throughout these works, and digital historians will and do struggle with the issue of how to incorporate narrative. In Murray's work, it is demonstrated that media, such as video games, will not hold attention without some element of storytelling. How can we incorporate lessons from other digital mediums into our own works?
4. What can we learn from video games in regards to narratives and storytelling in new digital formats? Are there any other lessons to be gained from studying video games?

Changing theories of history

- Clark, Elizabeth A. *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*. Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Dougherty, Jack, ed. "Writing History in the Digital Age." *Writing History in the Digital Age*, May 22, 2011. <http://writinghistory.trincoll.edu/>.
- Jones, Adrian. "Word and Deed: Why a Post-Poststructuralist History Is Needed and How It Might Look." *The Historical Journal* 43, no. 02 (2000): 517–541.
- Moss, Mark. *Toward the Visualization of History: The Past as Image*. 1st ed. Lexington Books, 2010.
- Price, Kenneth M. "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection: What's in a Name?" *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3, no. 3 (2009). <http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html>.
- Staley, David J. *Computers, Visualization, and History: How New Technology Will Transform Our Understanding of the Past*. Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 2003. (Updated/New Edition published in 2013)
- "Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Historians." Accessed April 30, 2013. <http://www.sr.ithaka.org/research-publications/supporting-changing-research-practices-historians>.
- White, Hayden. "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory." *History and Theory* 23, no. 1 (February 1984): 1–33.
- ———. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1980): 5–27.
- David Armitage, and Jo Guldi. "The Return of the Longue Durée: An Anglo-American Perspective." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 69 (2014). <http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/armitage/files/rld Annales revised 0.pdf>.
- Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," (preprint, 2014) <http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/20882/1/PutnamDigitalShadowsPrePrint.pdf>

Anne:

1. Armitage and Guldi speak about the possibilities of exploring "long" history again because of digital history. What other opportunities could possibly be explored through digital means? Are there any studies of history that could inherently be better for the consumer of that history due to a digital format?
2. Staley argues for the importance of visualizations to history. Since many of the works that we've been reading discuss narrative, how can we think of the

marriage of visualizations and narrative? Is it necessary, especially since visualizations are not inherently linear or narrative-based?

3. Moss's work was particularly interesting to me, as he examined how visual mediums (sources) could be utilized to tell history or understand history and the culture that surrounded the production of the visual medium. How can these methods be utilized by historians further? What is important to understand about the increasingly visual culture, and how does that affect (or could affect) how we tell the stories of history?

Mandy:

1. Putnam's article encourages thinking about not just the computational tools that have emerged in digital history but also the very act of using a computer to do key-word searches in the first place. What is missed by relying on digitized sources and how crucial is it that we understand the technology we're using? Can we eliminate missing potentially important pieces by better understanding the technologies we use?
2. Putnam, Staley, Armitage and Guildi all discuss scale in varying ways. Does Putnam's version of scale differ? What can be gained from examining large time-scales and what kind of scale is realistic for an accurate and useful study?
3. Can a visualization represent a historical argument on its own? Do we have any models of this other than maps? (Although even many of the maps we've seen don't have an explicit argument.)

Jannelle:

1. How are we doing history differently? Is digital history "transformative" as we read in previous weeks?
2. Price raises interesting questions about naming practices - how do we describe the work that we do, and how do the words we use shape how it is understood - how do you feel about building an "arsenal"? a "digital thematic research collection"? Do we need new ways to describe our work?
3. Was anybody surprised by the Rutner/Schonfeld (Ithaca S+R) report? As current grad students - what reactions did you have to the questions/concerns the report highlighted - what was missing for you?

Space

- Bodenhamer, David J., John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris, eds. *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship*. Indiana University Press, 2010.
- Gregory, Ian N, and A Geddes. *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History*, 2014.
- Monmonier, Mark, and H. J. de Blij. *How to Lie with Maps*. 2nd ed. University Of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Silver, Mike, and Diana Balmori. *Mapping in the Age of Digital Media: The Yale Symposium*. 1st ed. Academy Press, 2003.
- Robertson, Stephen. "Putting Harlem on the Map." In *Writing History for the Digital Age*. Digital Humanities. University of Michigan Press, 2013.

- Burrows, Simon. "How Swiss Was the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel? A Digital Case Study of French Book Trade Networks." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/how-swiss-was-the-stn-by-simon-burrows-and-mark-curran/>.
- Meeks, Elijah. "Modeling Networks and Scholarship with ORBIS." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/modeling-networks-and-scholarship-with-orbis-by-elijah-meeks-and-karl-grossner/>.
- ———. "ORBIS: An Interactive Scholarly Work on the Roman World." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/orbis-an-interactive-scholarly-work-on-the-roman-world-by-elijah-meeks-and-karl-grossner/>.
- Torget, Andrew. "Building New Windows into Digitized Newspapers." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/building-new-windows-into-digitized-newspapers-by-andrew-torget-and-jon-christensen/>.
- ———. "Mapping Texts: Visualizing American Historical Newspapers." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/mapping-texts-project-by-andrew-torget-and-jon-christensen/>.
- Hitchcock, Tim. "Place and the Politics of the Past." Blog. *Historyonics*, July 11, 2012.
<http://historyonics.blogspot.com/2012/07/place-and-politics-of-past.html>.
- Presner, Todd. "HyperCities: A Case Study for the Future of Scholarly Publishing." *OpenStax_CNX*. Accessed April 18, 2014.
<http://cnx.org/content/m34318/latest/>.
- Burrows, Simon. "The French Book Trade in Enlightenment Europe Project and the STN Database." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, October 1, 2012.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/the-french-book-trade-in-enlightenment-europe-project-by-simon-burrows-and-mark-curran/>.
- Blevins, Cameron. "Space, Nation, and the Triumph of Region: A View of the World from Houston," *Journal of American History* June 2014.

Anne:

1. What do we gain from looking at space digitally? How is it different from illustrations? What are the benefits of digital mapping, such as HyperCities and Digital Harlem? What are the downfalls?
2. Mapping isn't necessarily about a location. For example, in "Mapping Texts" graphs and patterns are mapped to organize newspapers. By considering mapping in this manner, what benefits can we get from this version? Does this change your perspective on what can be considered mapping?
3. What is the difference in mapping and visualization? How do/can we distinguish between the two?

Jannelle:

1. This week provided a number of examples of digital mapping projects- did these examples help to put theory into practice? Do you feel that these experiments are effective? What similarities/differences did you notice?
2. "Not only is it easy to lie with maps, it is essential." (Monmonier 1) How does Monmonier's work shape your thinking about digital mapping projects?
3. How do maps make arguments? Last week Staley suggested that contemporary learners are increasingly adept at understanding visualization and Monmonier suggests that visualizations like maps are manipulated to convey particular information. What does a critical reading of maps/visualization look like?
4. Last week Putnam reminded us to think about what exists in the shadows of text analysis. This week Hitchcock, with the example of McKay, reminds us about what is missing from maps. In what ways can digital mapping projects capture these features?

Mandy:

1. Last week Staley's book grouped maps underneath the umbrella of visualization. After this week's readings on space, are maps visualizations? Or are they different?
2. This week several of articles discussed different GIS projects each which was formatted and designed slightly differently. How do projects like Digital Harlem, ORBIS, and Mapping Texts differ and what can we learn from the various implementations of GIS technology?

Topic Modeling & Visualization

- Ted Underwood. "Theorizing Research Practices We Forgot to Theorize Twenty Years Ago." *IDEALS*, April 17, 2014.
<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/48906>.
- Lauren F Klein. "The Image of Absence: Archival Silence, Data Visualization, and James Hemings." *American Literature* 85, no. 4 (2013)
- Blei, David M. "Topic Modeling and Digital Humanities." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 8, 2013.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/topic-modeling-and-digital-humanities-by-david-m-blei/>.
- Goldstone, Andrew. "What Can Topic Models of PMLA Teach Us About the History of Literary Scholarship?" *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 6, 2013.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/what-can-topic-models-of-pmla-teach-us-by-ted-underwood-and-andrew-goldstone/>.
- Meeks, Elijah. "The Digital Humanities Contribution to Topic Modeling." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 9, 2013.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/dh-contribution-to-topic-modeling/>.
- Rhody, Lisa M. "Topic Model Data for Topic Modeling and Figurative Language." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 7, 2013.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/topic-model-data-for-topic-modeling-and-figurative-language-by-lisa-m-rhody/>.
- ———. "Topic Modeling and Figurative Language." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 7, 2013.
<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/topic-modeling-and-figurative-language-by-lisa-m-rhody/>.

- Schmidt, Benjamin M. "Words Alone: Dismantling Topic Models in the Humanities." *Journal of Digital Humanities*, April 5, 2013. <http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/words-alone-by-benjamin-m-schmidt/>.
- Lauren Klein, "[Talk at Digital Humanities 2014 \[on TOME\]](#)" (July 23, 2014)

Discussion Questions:

Mandy:

1. Several of the readings this week discussed the importance of understanding what is happening inside the "black box". However, visualizations of topic models often mask the hard data and the processes by which they were generated. How can we craft a visualization or a practice that makes the black box more transparent for both researchers, peer reviewers, and readers?
2. Andrew Goldstone and Ted Underwood's visualization of their PMLA research ([Available here](#)) is an interesting visualization for topic modeling. Does this succeed at making the metadata present and linking the articles to the data as some of the authors this week discussed?
3. It seems that scale, as we've talked about all summer, is an issue in regards to Topic Modeling as well. How can we manage the range of dimensions that are returned in a topic model? What kinds of visualizations best represent the depth & scale of a topic model? Can mapping or representing a topic model spatially help us to understand and explore the results? (I'm thinking of both Schwartz's geodata example here but also [this blog post by Klein](#) that was shared on twitter this morning).

Janelle:

1. Schmidt raises an interesting concern with topic modeling - words don't work as well as numbers, they aren't stable and meanings change over time. How does this complicate the work of digital historians?
2. Rhody, and the others, emphasize the value of LDA topic modeling as "revealing patterns and relationships that might otherwise have remained hidden." How effective do you think this is if, engagement with the conclusions you draw "will be limited to those who understand how topic modeling works" (Schmidt) ?

Anne:

1. As the three of us learned while engaged in topic modeling, and as Schmidt and Rhody state, the words themselves in topic modeling can be misleading or have a double meaning. What is the best way (and honestly, there may not be a *best* practice yet, although we do have suggestions in the articles) to engage in a useful analysis while acknowledging these issues? Further, as Klein mentions in the blog post, some data is exposed and others obscured in topic modeling. As historians, we are trained to examine silences in text. What can silences in topic modeling tell us, and how do we represent that data?
2. Historians tend to write history through the discovery of sources. Will topic modeling and their visualizations become a new method of discovering new connections within already known sources that is commonly used? Since digital historians are limited in that many people do not understand how topic modeling works, how do we present it in a way that is useful to non-digital historians?

3. In their work, Meeks and Weingart refer to topic modeling as another tool in the “ever-growing shed” for digital historians/humanists. Many of the topics we’ve read through this semester also follow this idea. As digital historians, how do we determine which tool/s are the best for our project? Is it overwhelming to use multiples?

Networks and Crowds

- Benkler, Yochai. *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*. Yale University Press, 2007.
- Evans, Max. “Archives of the People, by the People, for the People.” *American Archivist* 70, no. 2 (2007): 387–400.
- Guy, Marieke, and Emma Tonkin. “Folksonomies.” *D-Lib Magazine* 12, no. 1 (January 2006). doi:10.1045/january2006-guy.
- “Making Sense of Historic Photographic Collections on Flickr The Commons: Institutional and User Perspectives | MW2013: Museums and the Web 2013.” Accessed April 29, 2013. <http://mw2013.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/making-sense-of-historic-photographic-collections-on-flickr-the-commons-institutional-and-user-perspectives/>.
- Shirky, Clay. *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*. Penguin Press HC, The, 2010.
- ———. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. Reprint. Penguin Books, 2009.
- Sunstein, Cass R. *Infotopia: How Many Minds Produce Knowledge*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2008.