HIS 631: Digital History

Curry 331
Tuesday 6:30-9:20
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Hours: W, 9-12
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About this course

The digital age presents historians and public historians with a range of problems and opportunities as constructivist museums transform into participatory community centers. Digital natives, steeped in sensibilities of immediacy, visual enticement, lowered barriers to entry, and an abundance of publicly available information, will be the audience museums must reach. Digital technologies infuse a vast array of historical practices, including virtual exhibits, online collections, audio/visual components in museum spaces, approaches to learning, and traditional historical research and writing. In this class, students will become familiar with the ways that historians, museums, and other institutions can utilize digital and social technologies to create interpretations and collaborations that meet the needs of the audiences of the future.

We will accomplish this learning goal by reading, discussing, exploration, and application. Our class will collaborate with staff at Alamance Battleground State Historic Site to develop a digital interpretive plan. The plan will make recommendations based on our understanding of current opportunities with digital technologies and social media, combined with new interpretive goals that Alamance Battleground is currently developing. The class will work in teams to actually build some, or all, of the applications that we recommend.

This class will not be just application, but an opportunity to understand broadly the deep implications of digital technologies and social media on learning in museums, and the many ways museums are integrating tools into interpretive programming. In addition to the plan development and implementation, you will explore and report on current debates, issues, tools, applications, and trends in digital and social technologies in public history.

Reading

All reading will be available on Canvas on as Internet links.

A NOTE on the schedule and reading: We will read, together, all the assigned material for the first four or five weeks. Readings for subsequent weeks will be assigned to individual teams and be aligned with recommendations we make (e.g.: the team that designs the digital media strategy will read that material and teach it to the class on their assigned evening.) Since our digital interpretive plan will be an iterative process, we will not know until several weeks in how this will shake out on the schedule. Therefore, readings in topic areas are listed separately and will be amended and assigned a date as the semester unfolds.

Your team will be responsible for leading class discussion on your specific topic.
Assessment

Team work and implementation (including leading class discussions): (40%) 

In-class participation: (30%)

Active and unprompted engagement in classroom discussion is expected.

Report on tool: (15%)

This will be a substantive written and verbal discussion about a particular digital or social tool. You will describe it, analyze it’s strengths, weaknesses, and potential for application. You will assess examples of it in use. Written submissions and classroom presentations are expected and will be scheduled in the first few weeks of class.

Report on project: (15%)

This will be a substantive written and verbal review of a digital project or social media initiative. Written submissions and classroom presentations are expected and will be scheduled in the first few weeks of class.
SCHEDULE

(Subject to Change)

January 12: Opportunities and challenges in the digital environment

Kristi Ala-Mutka, *Learning in Informal Online Networks and Communities* (.pdf)

Kate Halley Goldman, “Social Media Review,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)


Dana Allen-Griel, “Exhibition Studies: Learning and Sharing Expertise with Social Media,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)

Dana Allen-Griel and Ellen Snyder-Grenier, “Glossary of New Media Terms,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)

Emily Black Fry and Jennifer Holland, “Remix: Design, Media, and Shaping Experiences,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)


Manuel Castells, “Museums in the Information Era: cultural connectors of time and space,” Parry, *Museums in a Digital Age*


Alamance Battleground State Historic Site, website

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_the_Regulation

January 19: Interpretive planning and visit Alamance Battleground


Sree Sreenivasan, “How the Met Museum Approaches Innovation: With Lessons for All Museums, Big and Small,” in Decker, Technology and Digital Initiatives


Building Histories of the National Mall: A Guide to Creating A Digital Public History Project mallhistory.org/Guide/ (including “rationale,” “interpretive approach,” “design,” “development,” “outreach,” and “social media strategy.”)

**January 26: Workshop and Evaluation**

Daniel Cunliffe, et. al., “Usability Evaluation for Museum Websites,” in Parry, Museums in a Digital Age


**February 2: Workshop**

**February 8: Workshop**

**February 15: Workshop, Draft Recommendations**

**February 22: Workshop**

**February 29: Workshop**

**March 8: [SPRING BREAK]**

**March 15: Workshop**
March 22: Workshop

March 29: Workshop

April 5: Workshop

April 12: Workshop

April 19: Workshop

Online exhibits and remote visits

Antonio M. Battro, “From Malraux’s Imaginary Museum to the Virtual Museum,” in Ross Parry, ed., Museums in a Digital Age

Andrea Bandelli, “Virtual Spaces and Museums,” in Ross Parry, ed., Museums in a Digital Age

Roland Jackson, “The Virtual Visit: Toward a New Concept for the Electronic Science Center,” in Ross Parry, ed., Museums in a Digital Age

Areeti Galani and Matthew Chalmers, “Empowering the Remote Visitor: supporting social museum experiences among local and remote visitors,” in Ross Parry, ed., Museums in a Digital Age


Sabra Thorner and John Dallwitz, “Storytelling Photographs, Animating Anangu,” in Decker, Technology and Digital Initiatives

Patrick Frederickson and Erik Greenberg, “Pulling Back the Curtain: Turning Internal Content into External Exhibitions on the Web,” Exhibitionist (Fall 2013)

Outreach and education

Matthew MacArthur, “Can Museums Allow Online Users to Become Participants?” in Herminia Din and Phyllis Hecht, eds., *The Digital Museum: A Think Guide*


Allegra Burnette and Victorian Lichtendorf, “Museums Connecting with Teens Online,” in Herminia Din and Phyllis Hecht, eds., *The Digital Museum: A Think Guide*

Mobile


Social Engagement and Social Media


Nik Honeysett, “Reach More and Earn More: Connecting with Audiences Online,” in Herminia Din and Phyllis Hecht, eds., *The Digital Museum: A Think Guide*

Porchia Moore, “An Exploration of Race, Social Media, and Museums,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)

**Digital Technology in Exhibits**


Helene Alonso and Jeff Hayward, “Creating Apps for In-Gallery Interpretation,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)


Paul Sparrow, “A Case Study: Unfiltered User-Generated Content in the Newseum’s New Media Gallery,” *Exhibitionist* (Fall 2013)


Heather Marie Wells, “Setting the Table for Tablets,” in Decker, *Technology and Digital Initiatives*

**Collections/objects/digitization/shared curation**

Rihoko Ueno, et. al., “Engaging Primary Sources through Social Media: A Case Study about World War II’s Monuments Men Collections at the Archives of American Art,” in Decker, *Technology and Digital Initiatives*


Steve Zeitlin, “Where are the Best Stories? Where is My Story?—Participation and Curation in a New Media Age,” in Bill Adair, et. al., *Letting Go?*


Matthew MacArthur, “Get Real! The Role of Objects in the Digital Age,” in Bill Adair, et. al., *Letting Go?*

Mia Ridge, “Unlocking Potential: Where Next for Open Cultural Data in Museums?”
[www.museum-id.com](http://www.museum-id.com)

**Mapping and Augmented Reality**

Tools
Omeka
Curatescape
HistoryPin
(Augmented Reality and Mapping)
Google Cultural Institute

Projects
Historyopolis
Crafting Idaho
Mapping the Second Ku Klux Klan
Museum of Durham History: History Beneath Our Feet
Tennessee Civil War GIS Project