Digital Humanities and Research: From the Perspective of the University Librarian

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What’s Digital Humanities?

• Started in the 1940s as humanities computing -representation of human record
• Pioneer: Italian Priest, Roberto Busa, for linguistic and literary analysis
• Major text and digital archives in 1990s: Women Writers Project, the Rossetti Archive, and the William Blake Archive text-encoding for literature
• “Humanities computing” changed to “digital humanities” in early 2000
• Office for Digital Humanities – U.S. federal agency established in 2008
• 2009 MLA convention in Philadelphia - "the first 'next big thing' in a long time
...digital humanities today is about a scholarship (and a pedagogy) that is publicly visible in ways to which we are generally unaccustomed, a scholarship and pedagogy that are bound up with infrastructure in ways that are deeper and more explicit than we are generally accustomed to, a scholarship and pedagogy that are collaborative and depend on networks of people and that live an active 24/7 life online.

—Kirschenbaum, Matthew (2010). What is Digital Humanities and what’s it doing In English Departments? University of Maryland.
What’s Digital Humanities - Continued

• What is the Role of the Humanities at this Historical Conjuncture?
  – The relationship between culture & technology
    • Forms of human relationship
    • Modes of communication
    • Forms of expression
    • Knowledge creation
    • Knowledge dissemination
  – Practices & Infrastructures of Cultural Reproduction

Anne Balsamo, Dean, School of Media Studies The New School, New York. *Mini Digital Humanities Conference*, HKBU
Interdisciplinarity as a Foundation

• To create new knowledge across the disciplines
• To identify the horizons of new research
• To engage multiple intelligences
• To create deep knowledge: to know something is to “know it” from multiple perspectives
• To be a leader among peers
• To create the institutional culture for the education of the next generation of scholars, scientists, engineers, humanists, teachers, artists, and global citizens

Anne Balsamo, Dean, School of Media Studies The New School, New York. Mini Digital Humanities Conference, HKBU
Why Digital Humanities?

• Five areas where digital humanities aims beyond traditional academic scholarship:
  – Provide wide access to cultural information
  – Enable manipulation of data
  – Transform scholarly communication
  – Enhance teaching and learning
  – Make a public impact

Lisa Spiro: Director of National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE) Labs and Editor of the Digital Research Tools (DiRT) Wiki
Why Digital Humanities Research?

- Technology enabled research
  - New tech tools
  - New scholarship
- Interdisciplinary driven
  - Cross disciplinary
  - Multi disciplinary
- Market-driven
  - Traditional job market
  - Emerging new market
- Institutional/professional policy shift
  - MLA Guidelines in 2012
    - Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media
  - AHA Guidelines in 2015 (draft)
    - Guidelines for the Professional Evaluation of Digital Scholarship in History
Support for Digital Humanities

• Government Support
  – United Kingdom
    • Arts & Humanities Research Council
    • JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee)
  – United States
    • National Endowment for the Humanities
    • Office of Digital Humanities

• Non-government/Foundation Support
  – Andrew Mellon Foundation
  – Levelhulme Trust
Digital Humanities Projects
-- Examples 2015

- Office of Digital Humanities, National Endowment for the Humanities, US
  - Cornell University -- Freedom on the Move: A Crowdsourced, Comprehensive Database of North American Runaway Slave Advertisements
  - Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. -- Notoriously Toxic: Understanding the Language and Costs of Hate and Harassment in Online Games
  - Ohio State University -- Automatic Music Performance Analysis and Comparison Toolkit (AMPACT)
  - Research Foundation CUNY for the Graduate Center -- DH Box: A Digital Humanities Laboratory in the Cloud
  - University of Virginia -- Cohorts of Women in Biographical Collections
  - Wheaton College -- Easing Entry and Improving Access to Computer-Assisted Text Analysis for the Humanities
  - Vanderbilt University -- Deep Mapping the Reducción: Building a Platform for Spatial Humanities Collaboration on the General Resettlement of Indians

Tools/Standards: **DH Research Tools**

- **Bamboo DiRT: Digital Research Tools** (a comprehensive list of digital tools)
- **Circos** (circular visualization)
- **DH Syllabi** (collection of syllabi for digital humanities courses)
- **Digital Copyright Slider** (copyright)
- **Dublin Core Metadata** (metadata standard)
- **Google NGram Viewer** (text analysis)
- **Many Eyes** (data visualization)
- **Neatline** (maps and timelines)
- **Omeka** (content management system for digital collections and exhibits)
- **RAW** (Online data visualization build on the D3.js language)
- **Scripto** (crowdsourcing transcription)
- **ableau Public** (data visualization app for Windows with web display)
- **TagCrowd** (text analysis)
- **Viewshare** (collection visualization)
- **Voyant Tools** (text analysis)
- **WordPress** (cms for blogs and other websites; also has a free .com version)

- University of Alabama Libraries: http://www.lib.ua.edu/digitalhumanities/resources#tools
Tools/Standards: **DH Research Tools**

- **Scripto** (crowdsourcing transcription)

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difficulties, merited a very different fate; mine is the unhappy station, in which I must hear complaints, without having it in my power to redress the grievances.

"September 30, 1782."

"The moment you have taken your determinations, what"

The moment you have

then will be no doubt, in case Charleston should be evacuated, indeed, we had almost better give any price, than think of

seducing it from us. We have met with so many losses by

delays, that we have little hope of success, should it be again attempted; however, if the clothing cannot be had with you,

must go from hence."

"November 5, 1782."

http://scripto.org/
Neatline allows scholars, students, and curators to tell stories with maps and timelines. As a suite of add-on tools for Omeka, it opens new possibilities for hand-crafted, interactive spatial and temporal interpretation.
Complexity of Digital Humanities

- Texts
- Maps
- Music
- Art
- Manuscripts
- Image
- Media
- Other data

louisdietvorst.wordpress.com

Hong Kong Baptist University
Examples: Dunhuang Cave Art 敦煌

– Dunhuang Mogao Caves or Mogao Grottoes; Caves of the Thousand Buddhas;
– Some of the finest examples of Buddhist art spanning a period of 1,000 years (from 4th – 14th century);
Dunhuang Cave Project  敦煌研究

- Promotion 弘扬方面，运用虚拟漫游技术制作的**虚拟敦煌石窟 (Virtual Dunhuang Cave Project)**，为游客欣赏敦煌艺术提供了在洞窟现场难以看到的实景，还可应用人工智能和图像处理技术创作敦煌风格的艺术作品和旅游纪念品，等等

"敦煌壁画的数字化."
刘刚, 鲁东明,
《敦煌研究》
(兰州) 2003年04期,
第102～104页.
Examples: Valley of the Shadow Project

– A digital history project hosted by the University of Virginia Library: [http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/](http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/)
Valley of the Shadow Project

“The Valley of the Shadow is ... more like a library than a single book. There is no "one" story in the Valley Project. Rather, what you'll find are thousands of letters and diaries, census and government records, newspapers and speeches, all of which record different aspects of daily life in these two counties at the time of the Civil War. As you explore the extensive archive and you'll find that you can flip through a Valley resident's Civil War diary, read what the county newspapers reported about the battle of Gettysburg, or even search the census records to see how much the average citizen owned in 1860 or 1870.”

Mapping the Republic of Letters - Stanford University
Mapping the Republic of Letters

- Developed by Stanford University
- Collaboration with international partners
- Digitization and Visualization
- Repository for metadata on early-modern scholarship
- 1600-1810 e.g. An Intellectual Map of Science in the Spanish Empire, 1600-1810

http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/casestudies/spanishempire.html
Role of Libraries in Digital Humanities

- Recreating
  - Data curation/information management
- Collecting
  - Digital collection development policy – scholarly information
- Managing
  - Emulation/migration – periodic transfer from one Hardware/software configuration to the other
- Disseminating
  - Democratizing dissemination of information
  - Role of IR
- Preserving
  - Evaluation of technological tools
  - Sustainable model
- Accessing
  - Enabling technology
  - Information equality
Partnership & Collaboration

• Tradition of faculty-library partnerships
  – Rossetti Archive at the University of Virginia
  – Walt Whitman Archive at the University of Nebraska
  – Women Writers Resource Project at Emory University
  – London Lives at the University of Sheffield
DH publications 2001-2014 -
Data gathered from *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts*
Role of Libraries

• Academic library efforts
  – Digital Humanities Center, Columbia University
  – Digital Humanities Commons, UCLA
  – Digital Services Center, Rutgers-Newark
  – Digital Humanities Center, University of Alabama

• Examples of DH librarian job responsibilities
  – Brown University-Digital Humanities Librarian
    http://library.brown.edu/cds/pages/job-posting-digital-humanities-librarian
  – York University-Digital Humanities Librarian
    http://webapps.yorku.ca/academichiringviewer/viewposition.jsp?positionnumber=1186
Digital Humanities Librarian
- Brown University

• Position Description Highlights
  – integration of digital resources and methodologies with traditional resources and approaches into the research, teaching, and learning missions
  – keep abreast of digital methodologies and to use such tools and skills in the solution of humanities research problems
  – advise teaching faculty on the creation of digital objects and providing technical support for use of analytical tools;
  – maintain a strong level of competence in scholarly communications issues such as new forms of publication, copyright, open access, repositories, data curation, and licensing of online resources
  – knowledge of available print and electronic resources to build appropriate collections
Digital Humanities Librarian
- York University

• Position Description Highlights

  – A strong educational background in the humanities
  – A solid understanding of the research process and the ways in which new technologies are affecting the production, dissemination, and reception of texts in the humanities
  – Demonstrated ability and interest in exploring and evaluating emerging technologies in support of digital humanities
  – Broad knowledge of print and digital information resources relevant to the social sciences and humanities
  – Expertise with current web technologies
  – Evidence of leadership ability, professional initiative, and flexibility
  – Excellent analytical, interpersonal, and communication skills
  – Strong public service ethic and background.
Digital scholarship creation/data management

- Align libraries closer to University mission: support for learning, teaching & research
- Digital production services
- Digital Humanities
- Three pillars in collaborative digital projects
  - Faculty – content provider
  - Librarian – information/data management
  - IT Officer – technical support provider
Digital Humanities at Duke University Libraries

• A digital humanities center is an entity where **new media** and **technologies** are used for **humanities-based** research, teaching, and intellectual engagement and experimentation.

• The goals of the center are to further **humanities scholarship**, create **new forms of knowledge**, and explore **technology’s impact** on humanities based disciplines

• **Partnership**: Scholar, Librarian, and IT Expert

• DC3: Duke Collaboratory for Classics Computing
Tri-College Library Partnership in Digital Humanities

- Tri-College:
  - Harverford
  - Swarthmore
  - Bryn Mawr

- Quakers & Slavery
  - IMLS support in 2009
  - Triptych, the virtual home of the Quakers and Slavery collection
  - Sharing of technical structure and support
  - Sustainability
Institutionalizing Support for Digital Humanities at HKBU Library

• Strategic direction
• Library restructuring
  – Repurposing the library organization
  – Redeploying staff
  – “Low-hanging fruit”
• Services to offer:
  – Discuss and provide recommendations on database structure
  – Provide inputs to enhance data fields, from the perspectives of
database functionalities and database user behaviors
  – Take the responsibility of database programming, user interface
programming, and website graphic design
  – Convert content to appropriate formats
  – Try and co-submit internal or external grant applications
Support at HKBU

• Digital Scholarship Grant
  – Award for the Library by Research Committee
  – HK$300,000 annually to support 3 projects
  – Areas to support:
    • Project staff
    • Copyright fees (if necessary)
    • Technical resources & Services (if necessary)
    • Supplies & other materials
Project Partnerships with Library

• HKBU Heritage with six departments
• History in Data with History faculty
• Early Chinese Films 1900-1950 with Film faculty
• HKBU Corpus of Political Speeches with English faculty
• Media Ecology Project
• Other:
  – Mini-conference on Digital Humanities 2013
  – Doing Scholarship In/On Digital Culture 2014
Library-Faculty Collaboration

- **史 History in Data**
  - Data curation in history
  - Partnership with Dept. of History
  - Tributes to Emperors in Qing Dynasty
  - Bilingual: English and Chinese

Future Development

• Reframing the library as a **productive** place, a **creative** place, producing and creating something – whether that be digital scholarly works or something else entirely – will open the door to allow the library into the life of the user.

• One role for the library in DH, then, is to **support the journey of research** as a means in itself, and encourage **imaginative, new, transformative** uses of the products of research.

  — Kirschenbaum, Matthew. (2010). What is Digital Humanities and what’s it doing in English Departments?
Thank You!

Questions?