

Clio Wired I: Theory and Practice of Digital History

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Course Description

Mondays, 7:20 to 10:00, Fall 2012 4th Floor Conference Room, Research 1 Building This course is designed to introduce history graduate students to the theories and methods of digital history. Over the last 14 years (check out the [syllabus from 1998](#)), the course has prepared a generation of graduate students to do cutting edge historical work in a digital environment, using digital tools and methods. Through the semester we will pursue both the technical and theoretical aspects of digital history. This means that our work will include a combination of readings in the field, assessments of existing digital sites and tools, and hands on work with those tools. In the end, you will be equipped to attack your own digital history projects.

Course Goals and Objectives

By the close of the semester you will have:

1. formed an understanding of the scope of the field of digital history and the work that has been produced in that field;
2. gained a familiarity with the scholarly community that works on digital history and their current major debates;
3. developed a sense of the ways that digital history work fits into the larger concerns of scholarly communication and the digital humanities as a whole;
4. established a working knowledge the basic tools and methods of digital history;
5. and established a scholarly digital identity and begun creating your own digital history work.

Texts

Most of the readings for the course are available online and are linked to the course schedule. Additionally, I have ordered two required books:

- Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (Verso, 2007);
- Kathleen Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy* (NYU Press, 2011);

and one optional book:

- Julie C. Meloni and Michael Morrison, *Sams Teach Yourself HTML and CSS in 24 Hours* (SAMS, 2009).

Also, you are required to explore each of the sites and tools on the schedule before their assigned class period.

Grade Distribution

- **Participation and Attendance (10%):** This course cannot be successful without the engagement and participation of the members of the class. We have only one evening a week together and a tremendous amount of material to cover so that we meet our learning goals. Therefore, you will be responsible for attending every class period, taking an active part in discussion, and respectfully offering feedback to your classmates.
- **“Works in Progress” Site and Out of Class Conversation (20%):** Outside of the classroom, you will be responsible for offering a written response to the weeks' materials and practicum assignments. You should post all of this work and your reflections on a course blog that you will create for the first class meeting. In particular, it would be nice if your reflections reached out into your other course work to reflect the larger context of your professional interests and train. In addition to posting your reflections each week, you should read and comment on those of your classmates. I would like very much for this interaction to constitute an organic exchange outside of our time together, so I hope that you will eventually do beyond the basics of these requirements. In addition to our face to face discuss, I invite you to use your “Works in Progress” site and twitter as a means to share materials and insights. Our hashtag for the semester will be #clioF12.
- **Leading one week of class discussion with a partner (15%):** You will be responsible for leading one discussion with one of your classmates. I will grade the quality of your preparation and your ability to engage your colleagues with the material for the week, including the readings, the tools, and the websites on the syllabus.
- **Major Project #1:** ODH-SUG, Level II Proposal (25%)
- **Major Project #2:** Digital History Project Proof of Concept (30%)

Late work will not be accepted, and I will not issue incompletes.

Other Useful Stuff

- Last Day to ADD and DROP (w/ NO \$ penalty): September 4, 2012
- Last Day to Drop (67% penalty): September 28, 2012

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Acknowledgements

In putting this syllabus together I have drawn upon the lessons and successes of many other

instructors, including Dan Cohen, Fred Gibbs, Trevor Owens, and Christopher Hamner.

Projects

Work in Progress Site

Each student will be responsible for maintaining a blog where they chronicle their practicum work for the course, the development of their major projects, and their reflections on the course readings. Following the "spokes" model for blogging, each member of the course should engage their colleagues in the comments on individual blogs and through twitter.

Class Discussion

Students will conduct class discussion in groups of two. It may be helpful to pose discussion questions for your colleagues to consider prior to reading. Also, discussion leaders should take special care to work with the practicum items, tools, and sites for the week. Each of these should enter into the plan for the class conversation.

Major Project #1: Digital Humanities Start-up Grant Proposal (Level II)

Part 1:

For the first major project of the semester, you will draft a grant proposal to fund a digital history project under the guidelines for a Level II NEH Office of Digital Humanities Start-up Grant. These proposals need not be confined to the production of a traditional website, but rather could include the development of new tools, or mobile computing applications. The key here will be that you establish the need for your project that relates to historical method or inquiry and propose a sound solution to that need.

Following the [guidelines](#), you will have to fully imagine the project, situate it in the context of other digital humanities projects, and plan for its completion. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to include appendices that support your proposal, including mock-ups, and workflow diagrams. The length of the narrative is limited to six single spaced pages, but you may include up to 10 pages of graphic appendices.

Drafts due: October 15, 2012. Drafts and attachments should be made available through your website.

Part 2:

Once the drafts are complete, you should review and comment your colleagues proposals. The goal here is to be able to offer constructive criticism.

During class, each student will have 5 minutes to make presentation about their project using [Prezi](#). We will then have a brief discussion. Time will be tight on this, so focused and helpful criticism is important. Everyone will have a week to revise her proposal and appendices based on the comments

and discussion.

Presentations: October 22, 2012.

Final Projects due: October 29, 2012

Major Project #2: Digital History Scholarship Proof of Concept

For your major project for the semester you will build an alpha version of your proposed digital history scholarship project. The scope and shape of your project will likely change through the semester as you discover more about digital history methods and tools.

Additionally, you will produce a six to eight page whitepaper discussing the ways that the choices you've made with respect to design and functionality relate to the historical inquiry question that drives your work.

Presentations and discussion: December 3, 2012

Final Projects due: December 14, 2012 at 5:00pm

Late work will not be accepted.

Schedule

Week 1 Internet Basics (August 27)

Reading:

- [How the Internet Works in 5 Minutes](#)
- [RSS in Plain English](#)
- Amanda French, [Make "10" Louder, or, the Amplification of Scholarly Communication](#)
- ["Creating Your Web Presence: A Primer for Academics."](#) *Profhacker* (February 14, 2011)
- [Introduction to Zotero](#)
- Julie Meloni, ["Web Hosting 101,"](#) *Profhacker* (August 25, 2009).

Practicum:

- Sign up for a [WordPress.com](#) account
- Join [Twitter](#)
- Set-up [Google Reader](#)
- Download and [install Zotero](#)

Writing:

- Write an Introductory blog post -- Intellectual and technical autobiography

- Send a tweet about the blog post using the class hashtag (#ClioF12)

Tools:

- RSS and RSS Readers
- FTP
- Web Browser
- Zotero
- Twitter
- WordPress

Sites:

- [Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media](#)
 - [DHNow](#)
 - [ProfHacker](#)
 - [GradHacker](#)
 - [National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Digital Humanities](#)
 - [Project Bamboo, DiRT Wiki](#)
 - William Turkle and Alan MacEachern, [The Programming Historian](#), (NiCHE, 2007-2011)
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Week 2: Labor Day (Sept 3)

Week 3 What is Digital History? (Sept 10)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Susan Hockey, [“History of Humanities Computing.”](#) *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.
- Cohen and Rosenzweig, “Exploring the History Web,” [Digital History](#)
- William Cronnon, ["Getting Ready to Do History."](#) Carnegie Essays on the Doctorate, Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate, Carnegie Foundation, Palo Alto , 2004, 1-18.(pdf)
- [“The Promise of Digital History.”](#) *Journal of American History*, September 2008.
- Robert Townsend, [“How Is New Media Reshaping the Work of Historians?,”](#) *Perspectives* (November 2010).
- Tim Sherratt, [“It’s all about the Stuff: Collections, Interfaces, Power and People.”](#) *Discontents*

Practicum:

- Search [teachinghistory.org's website reviews](#) or [World History Sources' website reviews](#) for sites in your field

- Select two sites on the same or a related topic
- Conduct a comparative website review
- Reflect on your criteria for the review

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:**Sites:**

- [American Social History Project|Center for Media and Learning](#) (CUNY)
 - [Virginia Center for Digital History](#) (UVA)
 - [Digital History](#), University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 - [Network in Canadian History and Environment](#) (NiCHE)
 - [teachinghistory.org Website Reviews](#)
 - [World History Sources' website reviews](#)
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Week 4 Site Planning and Design, Agile Development (Sept 17)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Cohen and Rosenzweig, "Getting Started," "Becoming Digital," "Designing for the History Web," [Digital History](#)
- Steven Krug, "[How We Really Use the Web](#)," *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability* (2005, 2nd Edition)
- Jeffrey Zeldman, "[Understanding Web Design](#)," *A List Apart* (November 20, 2007).
- Keith Laferriere, "[Flexible Fuel: Educating the Client on IA](#)," *A List Apart* (December 2, 2008).
- Shawn Medero, "[Paper Prototyping](#)," *A List Apart* (January 23, 2007).
- Jason Santa Maria, "[On Web Typography](#)," *A List Apart* (November 17, 2009).
- Cassie McDaniel, "[Design Criticism and the Creative Process](#)," *A List Apart* (January 11, 2011).

Practicum:

- Fill out the design survey for CHNM
- Map the information architecture for a site you like and a site that you don't like

Writing:

- Practicum reflection

- Reading reflection

Tools:

- [Omeka.org](#)
- [Omeka.net](#)
- [Omeka Documentation and Screen Casts](#)
- [Drupal Gardens](#)
- [Web Developer Toolbar](#)
- [Firebug](#)
- Photoshop Elements (Educational Discount available)

Sites:

- [A List Apart](#)
 - [Smashing Magazine](#)
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Week 5 Public History/Citizen History (Sept 24)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Jeff Howe, "[The Rise of Crowdsourcing](#)," *Wired*, 14:06 (June 2006).
- Roy Rosenzweig, "[Can History be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past](#)" (June 2006).
- Martin Kalfatovic, Effie Kapsalis, Katherine Spiess, Anne Van Camp, and Michael Edson, "[Smithsonian Team Flickr: a library, archives, and museums collaboration in web 2.0 space](#)," *Archival Science* (n.d.).
- Trevor Owens' 4 post series on [Crowdsourcing](#)
- Rose Holley, "[Crowdsourcing: How and Why should Libraries do it?](#)" *D-Lib Magazine* 16: 3/4 (March/April 2010)
- "[Grappling with the Concept of Radical Trust](#)," *History News*, (July 2010).
- L. Sprichiger and J. Jacobson, "[Telling an Old Story in a New Way: Raid on Deerfield: The Many Stories of 1704](#)," (Museums and the Web Proceedings, 2005).
- "[Digital Strategy Catches up with the Present, an Interview with Michael Edson](#)," The Signal

Practicum:

- Edit or start a wikipedia entry related to your work
- Transcribe a document from PWD
- Review and critique a public history website

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:**Sites:**

- [Wikipedia](#)
 - [Flickr Commons](#)
 - [Wikimedia Commons](#)
 - [What's on the Menu?](#)
 - [Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800](#)
 - [Trove](#)
 - [Children of the Lodz Ghetto](#)
 - [NARA's Citizen Archivists Dashboard](#)
 - [Raid on Deerfield: The Many Stories of 1704](#)
 - [Price of Freedom](#)
 - [Gulag: Many Days, Many Lives](#)
 - [Martha Washington: A Life](#)
 - [Bracero History Archive](#)
 - [Cleveland Historical](#)
 - [History Pin](#)
 - [Civil War Data 150](#)
 - [PhillyHistory.org](#)
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Week 6 Data Mining/ Distant Reading/ Visualizations (Oct 1)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (Verso, 2007).
- Tim Burke's [response](#) to Moretti
- Daniel Cohen, "[From Babel to Knowledge: Data Mining Large Digital Collections,](#)" (March 2006).
- Gregory Crane, "[What do you do with a million books?](#)" *D-Lib Magazine* 12:3 (2006).
- Daniel J. Cohen, "[Initial Thoughts on the Google Books Ngram Viewer and Datasets,](#)" (December 19, 2010).
- Ted Underwood, "[Where to Start with Text Mining,](#)" *The Shell and the Stone*
- John Theibault, "[Visualizations and Historical Arguments,](#)" *Writing History in the Digital Age*, eds. Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki

Practicum:

- Review Voyant [overview movie](#) and the [Quick Guide for Users](#), or the [User Manual](#) for Voyant (Voyeur)
- Select a key text of interest, and use Voyant to do some data analysis
- Explore one of the other tools

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:

- [Wordle](#)
- [Many Eyes](#)
- [TAPoR](#)
- [Voyant](#) (formerly Voyeur)
- [Google Books N-Gram Viewer](#)

Sites:

- [Digging Into Data Challenge](#)
 - [With Criminal Intent](#)
 - [Google Books Advanced Search](#)
 - [Open Library Full-text Search](#)
 - [HathiTrust Digital Library](#)
 - [Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers](#)
 - [Time Magazine Corpus](#)
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Week 7 Spatial History(Oct 8)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Tim Hitchcock, "[Place and the Politics of the Past](#),"
- Todd Presner, "[HyperCities: A Case for the Future of Scholarly Publishing](#),"
- [Spatial Technologies and Methodologies](#), Scholarly Communications Institute 7 (2009).
- Richard White, "[What is Spatial History?](#)" Stanford University Spatial History Project.
- Jo Guldi, "[What is the Spatial Turn?](#)" Spatial Humanities (Scholars Lab).
- Alan Liu, "[When was Linearity? The Meaning of Graphics in the Digital Age](#)," University of Nebraska-Lincoln (August 2008).
- Martin Jessop, "[Digital Visualization as a Scholarly Activity](#)," *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 2008.

Practicum:

- Create a map using the [Neatline Sandbox](#)
- Create a visualization using one of the other tools

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:

- [Viewshare](#)
- [Scalar](#)
- [Neatline](#)
- [GeoCommons](#)
- [Google Earth](#)
- [Map Warper](#)

Sites:

- [Spatial Humanities Project](#)
 - [David Rumsey Map Collection](#)
 - [Mapping the Republic of Letters](#)
 - [Social Explorer](#)
 - [HyperCities](#)
 - [Ghost Metropolis](#)
 - [Philaplace](#)
 - [Euclid Corridor Transportation Project](#)
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Week 8 What Difference Does New Media Make? (Oct 15)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Lev Manovich, "[Database as a Genre of New Media](#)," *AI & Society*
- Dan Cohen, "Idols of Scholarly Publishing," Paper at [Online Humanities Scholarship: The Shape of Things to Come](#) and "[Eliminating the Power Cord](#),"

Practicum:**Writing:**

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection
- Draft of ODH Start-Up grant application due.

Tools:**Sites:**

- [“Irish in Australia: History Wall,”](#) National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 - [“The Real Faces of White Australia,”](#) Invisible Australians
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Week 9 Project Presentations (Oct 22)**Practicum:**

- NEH Office of Digital Humanities Start-Up grant application Prezi presentation

Sites:

- NEH ODH Start-up Grant [Guidelines](#)
 - NEH ODH [Grant Database](#)
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Week 10 Scholarly Communications and Digital Scholarship (Oct. 29)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Kathleen Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence* (NYU Press, 2011).
- William Thomas, [“Writing a Digital History Article from Scratch: An Account,”](#) University of Nebraska-Lincoln (December 2007).
- [“Part 1: Re-Visioning Historical Writing,”](#) *Writing History in the Digital Age*, eds. Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
- Working Group on Evaluating Public History Scholarship, “Tenure Promotion and the Publicly Engaged Academic Historian,” (June 2010), [Report](#) and [White Paper](#).
- [“Emerging Genres in Scholarly Communication,”](#) Report from the 8th Scholarly Communications Institute

Practicum:

- Read and comment on [Open Review](#)
- Draft guidelines for evaluating digital history scholarship.

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection
- Final ODH Start-up grant application due

Tools:**Sites:**

- [MediaCommons](#)
 - [PressForward](#)
 - [Journal of Digital Humanities](#)
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Week 11 Digital Collections, Archives, and Digital Preservation (Nov. 5)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- [Plan for the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program](#) (2002).
- Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, et al., "[Digital Forensics and Born Digital Content in Cultural Heritage Collections](#)," CLIR Report (December 2010).
- Kenneth M. Price, "[Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection: What is in a Name?](#)" *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3:3 (2009)
- Sheila A. Brennan and T. Mills Kelly, "[Why Collecting History Online is Web 1.5](#)," (March 2009).
- Daniel J. Cohen, "[The Future of Preserving the Past](#)," (June 2005).
- Kate Theimer, "[The Problem with the Scholar as 'Archivist,' or is there a Problem](#)," with comments, ArchivesNext and Kate Theimer, "[Archives in Context and as Context](#)," *Journal of Digital Humanities*, 1:2 (Spring 2012).
- *The [NINCH Guide](#) to Good Practice in the Digital Representation and Management of Cultural Heritage Materials*, Chapters V-VIII, XIV.
- Susan Manus, "[Digital Preservation in a Box -- Have a Look Inside](#)," The Signal

Practicum:

- Work through the Digital Preservation in a box material.
- Make a plan for your data.

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:**Sites:**

- [Digital Preservation](#) (Library of Congress)
 - [Internet Archive](#)
 - [September 11 Digital Archive](#)
 - [Hurricane Digital Memory Bank](#)
 - [Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800](#)
 - [SNAC: The Social Networks and Archival Context Project](#)
 - [Metadata Resources](#)
 - [Seeing Standards: A Visualization of the Metadata Universe](#)
 - Society of American Archivists: [Standards Portal](#)
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Week 12 Open Access/Open Source (Nov. 12)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Lawrence Lessig, *Free Culture*, "[Free Content.](#)"
- Elena Giglia, "[Open Access, Open Data: Paradigm Shifts in the Changing Scholarly Communication Scenario.](#)" *D-Lib Magazine*, 17:3/4 (March 2011).
- Peter Suber, [Open Access, the Book](#)
- Karl Fogel, [Producing Open Source: How to Run a Successful Free Software Project](#)

Practicum:

- Read the [Creative Commons licenses](#).
- Implement one on your blog, if you choose.

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:**Sites:**

Week 13 Teaching and Learning (Nov. 19)**Reading:**

- Sam Wineburg, [“Thinking Like a Historian.”](#) *TPS Quarterly*
- Daisy Martin and Sam Wineburg, [“Seeing Thinking on the Web.”](#) *The History Teacher* 41:3 (May 2008):
- Mark Sample, [“Building and Sharing When You’re Supposed to Teaching.”](#) *sampler* reality
- Mills Kelly, *edwired.org*, [all the posts with the “Hoaxes” tag](#),
- Michael Coventry, et. al., [“Ways of Seeing: Evidence and Learning in the History Classroom.”](#) *Journal of American History* 92:4(March, 2006)
- [Academic Commons](#), [The Difference that Inquiry Makes](#): Collaborative Case Study on Technology and Learning, from the Visible Knowledge Project

Practicum:

- Work through an [HTM](#) module
- Create a lesson of your own that uses primary materials and digital technologies to teach an historical thinking skill

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:**Sites:**

- [Historical Thinking Matters](#)
 - [teachinghistory.org](#), especially the best practices section
 - [National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education](#)
 - [Academic Commons](#)
 - [Reading like a Historian](#)
 - [History Virtual Training Suite](#): Developing Internet Research Skills
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Week 14 Gaming (Nov 26)**Discussion Leaders****Reading:**

- Laura Zucconi, Ethan Watrall, Hannah Ueno, Lisa Rosner, [“Pox and the City: Challenges in Writing a Digital History Games.”](#) *Writing History in the Digital Age*, eds. Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
- James Paul Gee, [“Good Video Games and Good Learning,”](#) and other articles
- [Special Section on Gaming, Journal of Digital Humanities 1:2 \(Spring 2012\)](#)
- [Play the Past](#)

Practicum:

- Play a game
- Plan a game

Writing:

- Practicum reflection
- Reading reflection

Tools:

Sites:

- [Playing History](#)
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Week 15 What difference does new media make?: Project Presentations (Dec. 3)

Practicum:

- Three minute presentation of you digital scholarship project.

Writing:

- Wrap-up blog post
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Final Projects Due: December 14, 2012