Introduction to the Digital Humanities

Richard Wisneski
Head, Acquisitions and Metadata/Cataloging
Kelvin Smith Library
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What is “Digital Humanities”?

“The digital humanities comprise the study of what happens at the intersection of computing tools with cultural artifacts of all kinds. This study begins where basic familiarity with standard software ends. It probes how these common tools may be used to make new knowledge from our cultural inheritance and from the contemporary world. It equips students to analyze problems in terms of digital methods, choose those best for the job at hand, apply them creatively and assess the results. It teaches students to use computing as an instrument to investigate how we know what we know, hence to strengthen and extend our knowledge of the world past and present.”

--The Centre for Humanities Computing at King's College, London University

Introduction by Scott Hamlin (Wheaton College):
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KB5xizZzqZE

Dan Cohen (esp. 8–minute mark to 13 minute mark).
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xu6Z1SoEZcc
Why even bother with the Digital Humanities?

- Growing field – opportunities continue to pop up.
- Great way to enhance teaching and learning – to make, for example, close reading take on new meaning, integrate technology with humanist study.
- To provide greater access to material – reach out to and assist others in one’s respective field of study.
- Potentially make a greater cultural and social impact.
- Make available data, and provide means to mine, expand, and manipulate that data.
- Opportunities for collaboration, interdisciplinary work.
Selected Resources for Digital Humanities

Selected Resources for Digital Humanities -- Continued

Explore one of the aforementioned resources

- What are some of its features?
- What does it contain to help you learn about the field?
- Why should someone take the time to read it and go through its contents?

Quick Exercise
Academic Programs in the Digital Humanities

- University of Maryland, UCLA, Univ. of Nebraska, University of Florida, University of Virginia, University of Iowa, Georgia Tech, Texas A & M, London University, and many, many more.

- Kent State University School of Digital Sciences. [http://www.kent.edu/dsci/whatisdsci/index.cfm](http://www.kent.edu/dsci/whatisdsci/index.cfm)

- Examples:
  - UCLA. [http://www.cdh.ucla.edu/instruction/dhgradcertprog.html](http://www.cdh.ucla.edu/instruction/dhgradcertprog.html)
Modern Language Association (MLA) and the Digital Humanities

- Guidelines for Institutional Support of and Access to IT for Faculty and Students. [http://www.mla.org/resources/documents/rep_it/it_support](http://www.mla.org/resources/documents/rep_it/it_support)
Conferences, Workshops, Seminars

- THATCamp (Humanities and Technology “camps”). [http://thatcamp.org/](http://thatcamp.org/)
- NINES Summer Workshop. [http://www.nines.org/about/community/workshop.html](http://www.nines.org/about/community/workshop.html)
- Digital Humanities Conference. [http://digitalhumanities.org/conference](http://digitalhumanities.org/conference)
- Women Writers Project (Brown University) workshops and seminars. [http://www.wwp.brown.edu/outreach/seminars/](http://www.wwp.brown.edu/outreach/seminars/)
- Digital humanities at Oxford. [http://digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk/](http://digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk/)
Grants for Digital Humanities

Explore one of the aforementioned grants

- What kinds of projects does it support?
- How involved is the application process? What exactly *is* involved?
- What are the deadlines?

Quick Exercise
Jobs in the Digital Humanities

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- HASTAC. http://hastac.org/topics/academia/careers-publishing-tenure
Selected Digital Humanities Projects

- 18th Connect. [http://www.18thconnect.org/](http://www.18thconnect.org/)
- Euclid Corridor Project. [http://www.riderta.com/kiosk/content/csul/](http://www.riderta.com/kiosk/content/csul/)
More Projects

- Voices of the Holocaust. [http://voices.iit.edu/](http://voices.iit.edu/)
- Transcribe Bentham Project. [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/)
- Quilt Index. [http://www.quiltindex.org/](http://www.quiltindex.org/)
Explore one of the aforementioned projects

- What are some of its features?
- What search features does it contain that are different from what a simple keyword search would provide?
- In what ways would it aid research in its subject?
Some Tools

- PhiloLogic3. [http://sites.google.com/site/philologic3/](http://sites.google.com/site/philologic3/)
- TAPoR. [http://portal.tapor.ca/portal/portal](http://portal.tapor.ca/portal/portal)
- Voyeur Tools. [http://hermeneuti.ca/voyeur](http://hermeneuti.ca/voyeur)
Some Tools -- Continued

- Xcruciate. [http://www.xcruciate.co.uk/overview](http://www.xcruciate.co.uk/overview)
Explore one of the aforementioned tools

- What does the tool mainly do?
- What are some of its features?
- What would it take to use this tool? How steep is the learning curve?
Digital Humanities: Project Planning

- Identify a project.
  - What is the project?
  - Who is your audience?
  - What is your goal(s)/objective(s)? What do you want your audience to get out of it?

- Research existing projects related to the one you are considering.

- Research tools that can assist you.
  - On-line tools (e.g. visualization tools, Omeka, WordPress, etc.)
  - Text-encoding and metadata software
  - Digitization hardware and software (see Freedman Center)

- Consider the size of your project.
  - How many assets does your project comprise?
  - How large is each asset?
Time.
- How much time will you be able to devote to this project?
- How manageable is it?

Staff.
- Can you do this project alone?
- Who else can assist you – practicum students? Interns? Programmers?
- What campus services can provide assistance (KSL, IT, Baker-Nord, Freedman Center)?

Budget.
- What grants can you apply for (national regional, local)?
- If you have to buy hardware or software, how much will it cost you?
- Can you outsource any of the work?

Learning Curve.
- Digitizing audio, video, texts, etc.
- Programming, marking up text, etc.

Duration.
- Do you want this project to live on forever?
- Can you afford storage space to have it live forever?
If I want to digitize a text using TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) standards, I have to:

- Decide level of encoding
- Decide how to encode material
- Decide about regularization, normalization, transcription
- Decide what to encode
- Know what aspects of the text’s content will be enhanced by encoding
- Know what level of granularity I want to encode at? (paragraphs? individual words?)

AND, bear in mind everything discussed in the previous slides
Start to map out a possible project.

- Refer to Digital Humanities sampler for ideas:
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cx9DRazb6ZE
Bibliographies

- Digital Humanities, A Select Bibliography, by Dr. Laura Mandell.  
  http://www.units.muohio.edu/technologyandhumanities/dighumbibl.htm

- Analyzing Visual Culture, A Select Bibliography, by Laura Mandell et al.  
  http://www.units.muohio.edu/technologyandhumanities/analyzevisual.htm