How did they make that?

📅 August 29, 2013 (http://miriamposner.com/blog/how-did-they-make-that/)   👤 Miriam (http://miriamposner.com/blog/author/admin/)   🗂 Digital Humanities (http://miriamposner.com/blog/category/digital-humanities/)

(Cross-posted on UCLA's DH Bootcamp blog (http://dhbasecamp.humanities.ucla.edu/bootcamp/2013/08/28/how-did-they-make-that/))

Edit: Dot Porter (http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/staff/record.html?id=619) made a Zotero collection (https://www.zotero.org/groups/howdidtheymakethat/items) for this post! Thanks, Dot!

Many students tell me that in order to get started with digital humanities, they'd like to have some idea of what they might do and what technical skills they might need in order to do it. Here's a set of digital humanities projects that might help you to get a handle on the kinds of tools and technologies available for you to use.

I've tried to include a few different types of projects, but it's hard to provide a really representative list. If you'd like to see more digital humanities projects, you can find directories at art-humanities.net (http://arts-humanities.net/project) and DHCommons (http://dhcommons.org/).

Here, I discuss:

- a gallery of primary sources
- a digital scholarly edition
- a mapping project
- a network visualization
- computer-aided text analysis
- a historical 3D model
- a longform, media-rich narrative

A Gallery of Primary Sources: Making the History of 1989

(http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/)

What it is

A collection of primary sources related to the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, accompanied by teaching materials and interpretive essays.
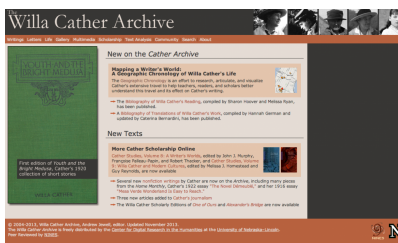
What you'd need to know

- Omeka.org (http://omeka.org/) (which forms the basis of the site), or you could use Omeka.net (http://www.omeka.net/) if you aren't so picky about the way the site looks and acts
- HTML and CSS (optional; to customize the way the site looks)
- PHP (optional; to customize certain site functions, like the way items display)

Get started

- Up and Running with Omeka.net (http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/up-and-running-with-omeka)
- Up and Running with HTML (http://www.lynda.com/HTML-tutorials/Up-Running-with-HTML/108128-2.html?srchtrk=index%3a9%0alinktypeid%3a2%0aq%3ahtml+css%0apage%3a1%0as%3arelevance%0asa%3atrue%0aproducttypeid%3a2)
- Introducing PHP (http://www.lynda.com/PHP-tutorials/Introducing-PHP/123485-2.html?srchtrk=index%3a0%0alinktypeid%3a2%0aq%3aphp%0apage%3a1%0as%3arelevance%0asa%3atrue%0aproducttypeid%3a2)

A Digital Scholarly Edition: The Willa Cather Archive

(http://cather.unl.edu/)

What it is

A carefully edited digital archive of the writings of Willa Cather, along with extensive scholarly essays, analysis, and multimedia galleries.
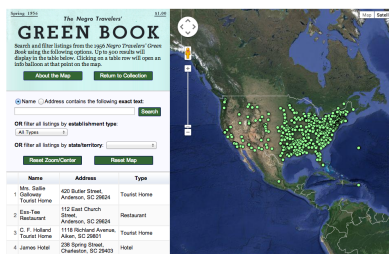
What you'd need to know

- TEI (http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml) (the markup language designed for scholarly editing)
- XSLT (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XSLT) or an XML publication system (http://www.teibyexample.org/docs/software.htm?target=Publication)

Get started

- TEI by Example (http://www.teibyexample.org/)

A Mapping Project: The Negro Travelers' Green Book

(http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/greenbookmap.html)What it is

A searchable map of the addresses contained in the 1956 *Negro Travelers' Green Book*, which the user can filter by state or establishment type.

What you'd need to know

- Google Fusion Tables (http://www.google.com/drive/apps.html#fusiontables)
- Google Maps (https://maps.google.com/)
- Some JavaScript (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JavaScript) (to get the map to display properly)

Alternatives

There are almost too many mapping technologies to list, but some popular tools include Neatline (http://neatline.org/) (which you'd use together with Omeka), GeoCommons (http://geocommons.com/) (a relatively simple mapping application), and ArcGIS (http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis) (used for complex or large-scale mapping projects). If you're serious about learning to build dynamic web-based maps, you'd be wise to learn the client-side language JavaScript (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JavaScript) (to control the way things show up on browsers), a server-side language like PHP (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PHP) (to interact with data), and the database language SQL (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SQL) (to manage your geospatial data). More mapping tools (http://dirt.projectbamboo.org/categories/mapping).

Get started

- Learn how to clean (http://spatial.scholarslab.org/cleaning-wikileaks-data-for-use-in-google-mapping-applications-part-1-of-2/) and map (http://spatial.scholarslab.org/mapping-wikileaks-afghan-war-diary-data-using-google-fusion-tables-part-2-of-2/) data using Google Maps and Google Fusion Tables

A Network Visualization: A Co-Citation Network for Philosophy

(http://kieranhealy.org/blog/archives/2013/06/18/a-co-citation-network-for-philosophy/)
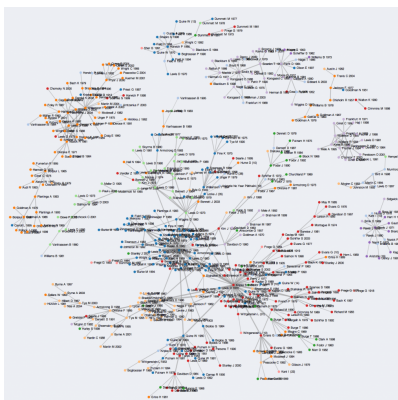
What it is

A visualization of the authors referenced together in a corpus of philosophy journals.

What you'd need to know

- D3.js (http://d3js.org/), a JavaScript library for producing visualizations on the web.
- The programming language Python (http://www.python.org/), for manipulating your data.
- A dataset. This one came from the Web of Science (http://thomsonreuters.com/web-of-science/), which allows you to download citation data for academic articles.

Alternatives

You can make network visualizations without (necessarily) coding by using the web-based ManyEyes (http://www-958.ibm.com/software/data/cognos/manyeyes/) or the free Gephi (https://gephi.org/) or Cytoscape (http://www.cytoscape.org/). Other tools for data visualization (http://dirt.projectbamboo.org/categories/visualization?field_platform_value=All&field_cost_value=All&term_node_tid_depth=All&sort_by=title&sort_order=ASC).

Get started

- Use Cytoscape to make a simple network visualization (http://miriamposner.com/blog/?p=909)
- Learn to use Python (http://programminghistorian.org/languages)
- Demystifying networks (http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=6279)

Computer-Aided Text Analysis: Topic Modeling Martha Ballard's Diary

(http://historying.org/2010/04/01/topic-modeling-martha-ballards-diary/)
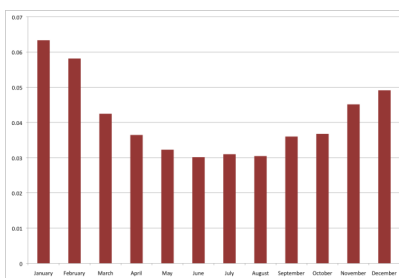
What it is

An analysis of a historical document that uses a statistical method called topic modeling to group together the "topics" found in a large set of texts.

What you'd need to know

- MALLET (http://mallet.cs.umass.edu/index.php), a Java-based software package for text analysis (including topic modeling)
- R (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R_(programming_language)), a programming language for statistical analysis and graphics
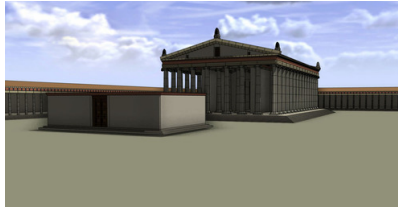
Alternatives

The Topic Modeling Tool (https://code.google.com/p/topic-modeling-tool/)provides a simpler-to-use graphical user interface for topic modeling, as does Paper Machines (http://metalab.harvard.edu/2012/07/paper-machines/) (which produces topic models from your Zotero library). But topic modeling is just one kind of textual analysis. Find a rundown of different kinds of text analysis here (http://toolingup.stanford.edu/?page_id=981). Often, people who are new to text analysis enjoy starting with the web-based Voyant Tools (http://voyant-tools.org/). I also like the Lexos (http://wheatoncollege.edu/lexomics/tools/) suite. More tools for text analysis (http://dirt.projectbamboo.org/categories/text-mining).

Get started

- Very basic strategies for interpreting results from the Topic Modeling Tool (http://miriamposner.com/blog/?p=1335)
- Special issue of the *Journal of Digital Humanities* on topic modeling (http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/2-1/dh-contribution-to-topic-modeling/)

A Historical 3D Model: Digital Magnesia

(http://sound-and-space.net/post/31799513082/magnesia)

What it is

A painstakingly researched re-creation of the Hellenistic city of Magnesia.

What you'd need to know

This particular model is created using the procedural modeler CityEngine (http://www.esri.com/software/cityengine).

Alternatives

The easiest way to create 3D models is probably with SketchUp (http://www.sketchup.com/). Serious 3D modelers often use Maya (http://www.autodesk.com/products/autodesk-maya/overview) or Rhino (http://www.rhino3d.com/).

Get started

Intro to 3D modeling (http://www.lifehacker.com.au/2012/07/intro-to-3d-modelling-lesson-1-getting-to-know-your-software/)

A Longform, Media-Rich Narrative: The Nicest Kids in Town

(http://scalar.usc.edu/nehvectors/nicest-kids/index)

What it is

An essay, accompanied by photographs, video, and sound, that can be reconfigured by the viewer to be read in multiple ways.

What you'd have to know

- Scalar (http://scalar.usc.edu/), a multimedia authoring platform
- CSS (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets) (optional, to add custom styling to Scalar)

Get started

- Scalar webinars (http://scalar.usc.edu/webinars/past-webinars/)

August 30: Post edited to reflect that you don't need Python to download Web of Science data. Thanks for the correction, Scott Weingart!

3D computer graphics (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/3d-computer-graphics/)

3D computer graphics software (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/3d-computer-graphics-software/) Cytoscape (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/cytoscape/)

digital humanities (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/digital-humanities-2/) Geographic information system (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/geographic-information-system/)

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topic modeling (http://miriamposner.com/blog/tag/topic-modeling/)

71 thoughts on "How did they make that?"

Older Comments (http://miriamposner.com/blog/how-did-they-make-that/comment-page-1/#comments)

Pingback: 3D Mapping | UMass Honors 391 (https://honors391spr2014.wordpress.com/2015/10/08/3d-mapping/)

Pingback: A Digital (N)Ethnographic Journey through the Roots and Routes of Boylesque | Digital Methods (https://astrdigitalmethods.wordpress.com/2015/10/29/a-digital-nethnographic-journey-through-the-roots-and-routes-of-boylesque/)

Pingback: A Digital (N)Ethnographic Journey through the Roots and Routes of Boylesque | The Roots and Routes of Boylesque (http://www.boylesque.info/2015/10/29/a-digital-nethnographic-journey-through-the-roots-and-routes-of-boylesque-2/)

Pingback: How did you make that (digital) literary geography? | David Joseph Wrisley (http://djwrisley.com/?p=282)

Pingback: Lab 5 | Jane Wagar (https://janewagarhst251.wordpress.com/2016/01/27/lab-5/)

Pingback: HST251 PROJECT REVIEW II – laurensiyulu (https://laurensiyulu.wordpress.com/2016/01/27/hst251-project-review-ii/)

Pingback: CFP: How Did They Make That? ← dh+lib (http://acrl.ala.org/dh/2016/01/28/cfp-how-did-they-make-that/)

Pingback: (recent) beginners' resources for dh | The Linked Librarian (https://linkedlibrary.wordpress.com/2016/02/01/recent-beginners-resources-for-dh/)

Pingback: Week 3/Feb 22: Let's all get it done together | ITP Core 2 Spring 2016 (https://2016core2.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2016/02/19/week-3feb-22-lets-all-get-it-done-together/)

Pingback: Humanities Data In The Library: Integrity, Form, Access | 神刀安全网 (http://www.shellsec.com/news/2724.html)

Pingback: A Real DH Project Example!… and a few extra thoughts on the matter. – Hype from Abby (https://hypefromabby.wordpress.com/2016/09/03/a-real-dh-project-example-and-a-few-extra-thoughts-on-the-matter/)

Pingback: September 3 – Freaks On the Fringe (https://freaksonthefringe.wordpress.com/2016/09/04/september-3/)

Pingback: Digital Projects – An Intro to the Digital Humanities (https://mydigitalhumanitiesweb.wordpress.com/2016/09/04/digital-projects/)

Pingback: ¿Cómo lo hicieron? – Silvia Gutiérrez (https://silviaegt.wordpress.com/2016/10/05/como-lo-hicieron/)

Pingback: Syllabus "The Humanist in the Computer: Digital Humanities and Social Justice" COLT 18.02 – Dr. Kirstyn Leuner, Postdoctoral Fellow (Dartmouth College) (https://kirstynleuner.wordpress.com/2016/11/29/syllabus-the-humanist-in-the-computer-digital-humanities-and-social-justice-colt-18-02/)

Pingback: Project Profile: Mean Green Mapped | Digital Humanities (https://blogs.library.unt.edu/digital-humanities/2017/01/25/project-profile-mean-green-mapped/)

Pingback: Project Profile: Organs of the Soul | Digital Humanities (https://blogs.library.unt.edu/digital-humanities/2017/03/02/project-profile-organs-of-the-soul/)

Pingback: Project Profile: 3DHOTBED | Digital Humanities (https://blogs.library.unt.edu/digital-humanities/2017/03/29/project-profile-3dhotbed/)

Pingback: Digital Humanities: A Starting Point | ArLiSNAP (http://arlisnap.arlisna.org/2017/05/digital-humanities-a-starting-point/)

Pingback: Project Profile: The Queer Zine Archive Project | Digital Humanities (https://blogs.library.unt.edu/digital-humanities/2017/07/12/project-profile-the-queer-zine-archive-project/)

Pingback: Mighty Mitch (https://torkelsnob.wordpress.com/2017/09/03/35/)

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❮ Using Mozilla Popcorn Maker to Create an Interactive Video (http://miriamposner.com/blog/using-mozilla-popcorn-maker-to-create-an-interactive-video/)

A dead-simple weekly email: A little workflow for bringing people together ❯ (http://miriamposner.com/blog/a-dead-simple-weekly-email-a-little-workflow-for-bringing-people-together/)

ABOUT ME

My name is Miriam Posner, and I'm an assistant professor of information studies and digital humanities at the University of California, Los Angeles. You can read more about me here (http://miriamposner.com/about.html).

MEET WITH ME

UCLA people are welcome to book a meeting with me by grabbing a time here (https://miriamposner.youcanbook.me/).

Search...   🔍

COURSE SITES

DH101: Introduction to Digital Humanities (http://miriamposner.com/dh101f15/)

DH150: Digital Labor and Materiality (http://digitalmateriallabor.org/)

DH150: Selfies, Snapchat, and Cyberbullies: Coming of Age Online (http://miriamposner.com/dh150w15/)

WORKSHOPS & TUTORIALS

Getting Started with Palladio (https://github.com/miriamposner/palladio_workshop/blob/master/Getting_Started_with_Palladio.md)

Google Fusion Table Basics (https://github.com/miriamposner/fusion_tables/blob/master/fusiontables.md)

Download journals in bulk with wget (https://github.com/miriamposner/downloadmhljournals)

Working with Medical Images (http://miriamposner.com/classes/medimages/)

Network Analysis with Cytoscape (https://github.com/miriamposner/cytoscape_tutorials)

My highly opinionated guide to DH tools & tutorials (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z-14hgZPMIiAzT6vx1mVg5l60zkRVU9EHgZgK9HHdU4/edit?usp=sharing)

TRAVEL & TALKS

April 6-7

Rochester Institute of Technology

April 14

Stanford University

April 19-20

Research Data Access and Preservation Summit (https://www.asis.org/rdap/), Seattle (participating virtually!)

April 21

Dartmouth College

April 27-29

Western Association of Women Historians, San Diego

May 2-3

csv,conf,v3 (https://csvconf.com/), Portland, Oregon

May 4-5

DH+Design Symposium (http://pwp.gatech.edu/dhdesign/), Georgia Tech, Atlanta

June 13-15

University of Texas, Austin

September 14-15

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

September 18

University of Richmond

October 20

Librarians' Association of the University of California, Berkeley

November

Fondazione Levi and Fondazione Cini, Venice, Italy

ARCHIVES