HIS 217
History Bytes:
History in the Digital Age

January 2014
Course Meeting: M-F 10:30-12:20, Beck 321

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Office hours by appointment

We live in a digital world filled with tablets, smartphones, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, Wikipedia, and Wii. For the majority of us, we use technology of all sorts on a daily basis, and they frame our personal and professional interactions. We are a culture increasingly dependent on technology. We have access to knowledge and information at our fingertips. But is that always such a good thing? Are we becoming too reliant on technology?

New technology is not just for entertainment, but can also prove useful for academics, creating new opportunities and new challenges for accessing and presenting research. As we embrace new technologies will printed sources become artifacts of the past? With a greater reliance on technology, are we privileging information to those that can afford to connect, or are we making information more widely accessible? How does technology change the audience for research? Do we use technology for the sake of embracing the modern world, or are the appreciable advantages to using digital resources?

Throughout this course we will discuss how technology influences the research, presentation, and consumption of history (as well as other disciplines) in both positive and negative ways. We will examine how the practice of history and other disciplines in the humanities are being transformed through the use of new media, offering an introduction to the changes that these new technologies are bringing to how we research, write, preserve, represent, and teach the past. But just as the use of technology is ever prevalent in society, we will also discuss the digital divide and those with little or no access to these new technologies. How can we ensure that research reaches a wide audience?

Required Readings:
> Bauerlein, Mark. *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupifies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future*. New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-58542-712-3
> Kenney, Dave. *Gustavus: 150 Years of History*. St. Peter, Minnesota: Gustavus Adolphus College, 2011. ISBN: 978-0-9602240-6-7
> Rosenzweig, Roy. *Clio Wired: The Future of the Past in the Digital Age*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. ISBN: 978-0-231-15085-9
> Online book: Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*. http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/
> Additional readings and websites will be posted on Moodle.

Grading:

Participation		20%
Historical Website Review		10%
Online Archive Review		10%
Historical-Themed Video Game Review		10%
Group Digital Project	Group Presentation	30%
	Individual Contribution	20%

Participation: Coming to class having done the reading and able to engage in the day's discussion is vital for success in this course. Additionally, a portion of class time will be given for the groups to meet and work on the final group project. Therefore it is imperative for everyone to regularly attend class.
> As this is a course on digital history, we will also incorporate **Twitter**. Everyone should have a Twitter account (either use an existing account or open a new one for use during this course); you should share your Twitter handle with me if your full name does not appear on your profile. For each day of class, everyone should write at least one **tweet** – an overview, observation, or reflection of the day's discussion or reading. Use the hashtag **#GACDigiHist**. Feel encouraged to tweet relevant articles or websites, or respond to your classmates and create a discussion.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

As a student at Gustavus, you are expected to know and abide by the College's Academic Honesty Policy as printed in the academic catalog. The policy states, in part, "In all academic exercises, examinations, presentations, speeches, papers, and reports, students shall submit their own work. Footnotes or some other acceptable form of citation must accompany any use of another's words or ideas. Students are especially cautioned that quoting or paraphrasing from electronic sources without proper citation is as serious a violation as copying from a book or other printed source."

By turning in any assignments for this course you are agreeing to the **honor pledge**: "On my honor, I pledge that I have not given, received, or tolerated others' use of unauthorized aid in completing this work." All instances of academic misconduct (such as plagiarism) will result in a zero for that assignment and be reported to the Office of the Provost. A continuing pattern of academic misconduct could result in academic probation or expulsion.

Andrea A. Lunsford offers the following suggestions to "Avoid Plagiarism" in *The Everyday Writer*:

- Maintain an accurate and thorough working bibliography.
- Establish a consistent note-taking system, listing sources and page numbers and clearly identifying all quotations, paraphrases, summaries, statistics, and visuals.
- Identify all quotations with quotation marks – both in your notes and in your essay. Be sure your summaries and paraphrases use your own words and sentence structures.
- Give a citation or note for each quotation, paraphrase, summary, arguable assertion or opinion, statistic, and visual that is from a source.
- Prepare an accurate and complete list of sources cited according to the required documentation style. (192)

Disability Services:

Gustavus Adolphus College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or you think you may have a disability of any nature) and, as a result, need reasonable academic accommodation to participate in class, take tests or benefit from the College's services, then you should speak with the Disability Services Coordinator in the Academic Support Center (x6286), for a confidential discussion of your needs and appropriate plans. I will be happy to work with you, upon receipt of documentation from their office. Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course outcomes. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively. They will review your concerns and decide with you what accommodations are necessary.

Help for Multilingual Students:

Support for English Learners and Multilingual students is available through the Academic Support Center and the English Learning Specialist, Laura Lindell (llindell@gustavus.edu or x7197). She can meet individually with students for tutoring in writing, consulting about academic tasks, and helping students connect with the College's support systems. Laura can provide students with a letter to a professor that explains and supports appropriate academic arrangements. In addition, EL and multilingual students can seek help from peer tutors in the Writing Center.

Course Assignments

Historical Website Review: Find a historical-themed website (one that is not included on our Moodle assignments) and spend time exploring it. Write a 500-word review and post it to the class Moodle site (with a link to the website). What did you like about the site? What did you dislike? Who is the intended audience? Are you confident about the accuracy of the material, why or why not? If you are fluent enough in a foreign language, feel encouraged to review a website available in that language. To be posted by **5:00 pm, Friday, January 10**.

Online Archive Review: Locate an archive online (one that is not included on our Moodle assignments) and spend time exploring it. Write a 500-word review and post it to the class Moodle site. What types of materials are available on the site? Could you conduct research from home, or would you need to go to the physical archive to get sufficient resources? What types of topics are covered in online collections, and what types of resources are either not yet digitized or not made public? If you can read a foreign language, you are encouraged to find an archive using that language. To be posted by **5:00 pm, Friday, January 17**.

Historical-Themed Video Game Review: Choose a video game that has a historical theme. This can be a game for a gaming system like X-Box, Playstation, or Wii; an app for a tablet or smartphone; or a web-based game available through a web browser. Ideally this would be a game you have not previously played. Spend some time playing the game. Write a 500-word review of the game and post it to the class Moodle site. Play particular attention to the historical nature of the game. How is the history presented? Can you learn history from playing the game, and if so, how? Is the history accurate, and how can you tell? Is the focus of the game to teach history, or does the game simply use a historical setting to enhance the action? Why and how is history relevant in the video game? Can you tell if historians were involved in the development of the game (is a historical consultant listed in the credits)? To be posted by **5:00 pm, Friday, January 24**.

Group Project: As a group, create a digital history project on some aspect of Gustavus history. The specific topic covered in the digital project is completely open for the group to decide, as is the type of technology used, although you are not to repeat a topic previously done for this course (see the website for previous group projects). Try to use technology that someone in your group already knows how to use, or could quickly learn, rather than spending the month struggling to learn a new technology.
All groups should contact me in the first week with their ideas for the historical topic. The final project will be presented in class on the final day, and all files must be turned in (either on a disk or brought to the instructor on a thumb drive) at that time. Completed projects will be added to the Digital History Projects website and should include the names of all the group members.
- I am expecting that everyone in the group will bring their unique knowledge and abilities to the group project; you do not need to participate in every aspect of this project, so use your strengths. It is up to the group to decide on the division of labor,

however in the end, everyone should have contributed equally to the success of this project.

- To begin, first identify the topic your group is interested in researching and presenting. Do not focus on the technology until after you have selected the topic and identified the potential audience. In other words, do not let the technology drive your research topic, but rather allow the technology to compliment your topic.
- You will need to be mindful of copyright laws, using only images and/or video that are in the public domain and not covered under copyright laws. This is a factor in limiting you to Gustavus history, although use of any media (music, video) may have copyright restrictions.
- Citations are required, pointing to where you found the resources, such is in books or publications, in the College Archives, etc.
- All projects are to focus on some aspect of Gustavus history, or how a historical event was seen or reflected on the Gustavus campus. Projects with a Gustavus focus have the benefit of using the College Archives for primary sources. Possible project topics could be:
  - The College Presidents
  - Follow a campus event (Christmas in Christ Chapel, Nobel, Homecoming, etc.)
  - Connection to state/national/international events (such as a world war, etc.)
  - Gustavus and St. Peter
  - Nobel Laureates who presented at Nobel, Nobel connections to Gustavus
  - Honorary Doctorates awarded from Gustavus
  - History of a specific department or program
  - Focus on a specific decade
- To view the projects from previous years, visit: http://gustavus.edu/go/DigitalHistory

Your topic is limited to Gustavus history, unless you group can come up with a compelling research topic that is feasible with available primary sources and within the allotted time, and has sufficient resources available that would not violate copyright. Should your group select a non-Gustavus topic, you must seek approval.

Group Project Self-Assessment: Each student in the class is expected to submit a separate evaluation assessing 1) the entire group project; 2) your own individual role in the group project; and 3) each group member's contribution to the overall project.
Submitted online by 4:00 pm, Friday, January 31.