

History & New Media: Historical Maps
History 615
Summer 2004
Fine Arts B202
M W 7:20-10:00

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MAPS ON THE WEB

Monday,
June 7 — Housekeeping & Introductions
Discussion: Map Ideas

Wednesday,
June 9 Internet Visits: Thinking About Maps
David Rumsey Collection: Lewis & Clark Expedition
<http://www.davidrumsey.com/GIS/lewisclark.htm>
American Memory: Panoramic Maps: Learning Connections
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/collections/pmap/history.html>
History Matters: Making Sense of Maps
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/maps/>
Practicum: *Classroom-in-a-Book: Illustrator*, Chap. 1 & 2 **OR**
Macromedia Flash MX 2004 HOT, Chap. 2 & 3

MAPS AS EVIDENCE

Monday,
June 14 — Reading:
Alan R.H. Baker, *Bridging the Divide*
Jeremy Black, *Maps & Politics*
Internet Visits: Map Collections
Odden's Bookmarks
<http://oddens.geog.uu.nl/index.html>
American Memory Collection Finder
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/finder.html>
Sanborn Insurance Maps
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trr016.html>
American Memory: Built in America
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/hhhome.html>

Wednesday,
June 16 — Practicum: *Classroom-in-a-Book: Illustrator*, Chap. 3 & 4 **OR**
Macromedia Flash MX 2004 HOT, Chap. 6 & 8

RETHINKING MAPS

Monday,
June 21 — Reading:
Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*
David Staley, *Computers, Visualization, and History*
Mark Monmonier: *Mapping It Out*
Internet Visits: Mapmaking Resources
WorldKit
<http://www.brainoff.com/worldkit/index.html>
MapMaker Plus
<http://www.fontcraft.com/mapmaker/>
Cartagram
<http://www.cartagram.com/writing/illustrator.html>
Shaded Relief
<http://www.shadedrelief.com/>

Wednesday,
June 23 — Practicum: *Classroom-in-a-Book: Illustrator*, Chap. 5 & 6
GREAT MAP HUNT ASSIGNMENT DUE

GIS FOR HISTORIANS

Monday,
June 28 — Reading:
Ann Knowles, *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History*
Ian Gregory, *A Place in History*
Internet Visits:
Practicum: Terrain Generator

Wednesday,
June 30 — Practicum: Terrain Generator

Monday,
July 5 — **NO CLASS/4th of July**

Wednesday,
July 7 — Practicum: Flash

INTERACTIVE MAPS

Monday,
July 12 — Practicum: Flash
3-D MAP/3-D LANDSCAPE ASSIGNMENT DUE

Wednesday,
July 14 — Practicum: Flash

Monday,
July 19 — Practicum: Flash

Wednesday,
July 21 — Practicum: Flash

Monday,
July 26 — **PRELIMINARY INTERACTIVE MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE**

Wednesday,
July 28 — **FINAL INTERACTIVE MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE
SELF-EVALUATION DUE**

COURSE

Historians are most accustomed to dealing with maps as topographical or political descriptions, but maps can be read as evidence in their own right. This course sets out to accomplish three goals: to introduce students to maps as historical evidence, to impart the skills to make a reasonably sophisticated interactive map, and to experiment with the application of GIS data to historical visualization.

The course will begin by rethinking maps (loosely defined as any spatial arrangement), proceed to examining maps as evidence, and will extend its inquiry to analyzing how maps can be used on the Web. It will carry on by ferreting out maps suitable for digital adaptation and thence to creating a well-designed map in a vector-based application (Illustrator/Flash). The course will then turn to a vector authoring program (Flash) to add interactivity or animation to the map. Finally, the course will include a brief introduction to GIS and historical research.

This course is designed for students in either traditional or applied tracks (New Media) in the history graduate program or advanced undergraduates. Graduate students, for example, who contemplate using maps in their dissertation work will find the course extremely helpful. Although the course has a heavy computer component, it is intended for those with intermediate computer skills and assumes no prior knowledge of vector software. Students who have completed Clio 2 (HIST 697-Creating History in New Media) or who possess a solid computer background (the ability to build a web page and edit an image) will find their skills equal to the demands of the course.

BOOKS

The texts (of one kind or another) serve two purposes: 1) to provide you with the background in several areas that might be relatively unfamiliar to historians; and 2) to augment your technical, reference library. We will discuss some of the books briefly, some in depth, and some not at all, but they all should be read either *in toto* or in small bites, depending on the text. All the books are available at the campus bookstore.

Alan R.H. Baker, *History and Geography: Bridging the Divide*

Jeremy Black, *Maps & Politics*

Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images As Historical Evidence*

David Staley, *Computers, Visualization, and History*

Mark Monmonier, *Mapping It Out: Expository Cartography for the Humanities and Social Sciences*

Anne Kelly Knowles, *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History*

Ian Gregory, *A Place in History: A Guide to Using GIS in Historical Research*

Adobe Team, *Classroom-in-a-Book: Illustrator CS*

Rosanna Yeung, *Macromedia Flash MX 2004 Hands-On Training*

TYPEPAD

You are required to obtain a Plus-level subscription to Typepad, an online blogging service. All of your projects will be posted to your Typepad blog. The cost is \$8.95 per month or roughly \$15.00 for the summer session (the cost of a trade paperback). The best thing to do is sign up for a free trial; this will furnish you with a month's free service. At the end of the term, you can cancel your subscription. Or, you may discover that you like blogging so much that you retain your subscription. The reasons for making the blog a part of the course are two: its photo album capability and its ease of use. It also furnishes the class with a "web presence" without spending time with web editing software. (We'll have enough software challenges without coping with web design and construction.)

Alternatively, you can obtain the Movable Type software. (GMU has a license.) It is free, but the installation of the software is challenging and you will need to contact the IT folks here at GMU to arrange installation. *I do not do tech support for Movable Type.* Six Apart, the company that created Movable Type will install the application for you for a \$40.00 fee, but you will need to arrange to have CGI and MySQL in place on your ISP. Be aware that most free web page areas do not support CGI or MySQL or charge extra. I do not recommend this option unless you have some solid computer skills and access to a sophisticated ISP, but there may some in the class who can avail themselves of this option. I am aware that there are "free" blogging applications available, but they come with the price of advertising, and the course is not a commercial venue. You are, of

course free to use any blogging application that suits you, but it should have photo album capability and no, I repeat, no advertising.

ATTENDANCE

By its nature, this is a small class and offers the participants a singular opportunity to learn new skills and new ways of thinking about history. The class also introduces its participants to elements of multimedia production. As such, the class asks that you prepare for class and participate energetically. And you cannot participate without attending class. Attendance is especially critical for the software practica in which you will be introduced to useful techniques and strategies.

A NOTE ON COMPUTER USE

Computers are a great boon to historians. But, as with any technology, you must take steps to minimize the problems that computers inevitably cause—and, believe me, in a course like this, you *will* have problems. Do not expect to get through the term without having at least one computer meltdown. Prepare for this well in advance. Back up your work and have “plan Bs” for obtaining computer use or software access, if your primary options fail you. I will not accept computer problems as excuses for missed assignments. (Oh, all right, maybe in this course there will be some latitude but not much.) You must also keep backup copies of submitted assignments—either in electronic form or hard copy. You might wish to invest in a Zip drive for the purposes of archiving your material and transporting your projects.

Most, if not all, of the assignments in the course depend on your having access to a computer and an internet account. Please obtain an internet account at the earliest available moment and become comfortable with the software and protocols. Should you work at home or off campus, learn how to do remote access so that you can be productive no matter your location. Although the university does not require the purchase of a computer, I would encourage you to consider the investment. Because of the nature of the course, you cannot depend on the university’s public clusters or the availability of software. Your enrollment in the course indicates your interest in computerish things, and your tool set should reflect that interest.

GRADES

Grades, including +s and -s, will be assigned in the following manner. **REMEMBER THEY REPRESENT AN EVALUATION, NOT A REWARD.** To rephrase Smith-Barney, the investment folk, we do grades the old-fashioned way—earn them.

A—Outstanding work, complete mastery of the material presented, combined with some originality.

B—A solid command of the material with some gaps or mistakes in a basically sound essay or discussion.

C—Some knowledge of the material; mistakes and confusion are acceptable if mixed with some understanding. Not a reward for attendance or effort.

I—There are no “incompletes” given in this course except in cases of bona fide and documented instances in accordance with the regulations of the university.

P—For a “pass” a “C” average is required.

The nature of the course suggests that breaches of academic integrity will be difficult to accomplish. If, however, a class member engages in plagiarism or other forms of cheating, he or she will receive a zero for that assignment and an accompanied trip to the Dean’s Office to discuss further academic action.

If you receive a grade or criticism that seems unfair or if you desire further explanation, come and see me. If you come to argue for a better grade, come prepared to present your case in the most coherent and organized manner possible.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the course are as follows: (1) Great Map Hunt (30%); 2) 3-D Map OR 3-D Landscape (30%); (3) Interactive Map Web Project (40%); and (4) a self-evaluation (1 page, typed, single-spaced) assessing your performance in the course (not graded but required).

ASSIGNMENTS

There are two preliminary and one major assignment in the course. They are:

1) The Great Map Hunt (preliminary)

The goal of this assignment is to begin the preliminary work for your final project. To that end, select a topic or explore an idea that includes analysis of a map for successful interpretation. You might, for example, begin with a historical question in which a map plays a major role. Find several examples of the map or maps on the web. As part of your weblog, write a brief commentary in which you describe the historical topic or question and assess how each of the maps might be used or not in your project. In your conclusion, speculate about how the map might be used in your project. What, for instance, might have to be done to the map to make it more legible? More explanatory? More easily explored? Your blog entry should also include illustrations or be accompanied by a photo album. Most important, your last illustration should be the first draft of your Illustrator/Flash map.)

2. 3D Map (Low Tech) OR 3-D Historical Landscape (high tech) (preliminary)

For this iteration of the course, there are two choices: a 3-D Map or a 3-D Historical Landscape. There are advantages and disadvantages to each assignment, but both aimed at introducing you to the world of three-dimensional maps.

3-D Map (Low Tech)

This assignment is frankly designed to get you to use the left side of your brain and get your hands dirty. It's also intended to be a bit fun. (Oh, yes, this assignment does have a serious purpose; it provides a modest introduction to the world of 3D.) Here goes. Create a 3D historical map. The completed 3D map should include the following:

- 1) Add to our understanding of history
- 2) Occupy a 12-inch x 12-inch piece of foamboard
- 3) Have dimension
- 4) Capable of being hung on a wall
- 5) Contain standard map apparatus
- 6) Durable and lasting (no perishable materials)

Several materials suggest themselves immediately: PlayDoh, polymer clay, cardboard (a la architectural models), paper mache, silly putty, and a host of other materials. There are also any number of recipes on the web for do-it-yourself "clay" and "playdough." Don't forget tempera paint, magic marker watercolors, soft sculpture materials, and an exacto knife.

Once you have finished your map, make a digital photograph (probably an "aerial" view would be the most effective), write a brief account of your strategy for completing the assignment, and post both the photograph(s) and mini-essay to your blog. You might also consider documenting the process as you construct your project.

3-D Historical Landscape

For this assignment, you will need to invest in terrain or architectural software. Although there are several applications available the three that are most readily available at a reasonable price are: Bryce (Corel or also on Ebay; no try-out), Vue 4 (e-on Software; try-out with disabilities), Natural Scene Designer (Natural Graphics; no tryout), and Sketch-up (try-out). Once you've made your choice, find a DEM or other terrain description of your location (if you are contemplating a landscape), import it, and press on. The sky's the limit. You should have done some preliminary research for information on time and botany, for not only can these programs generate terrain, they can also create trees, trees, foliage, time of day, and weather. If you're interested in working on an architectural recreation, SketchUp is a good choice. Again, preliminary research is necessary, but building plans and photographs can be found all over the web. Probably the best source is most likely Built in America <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/hhhome.html>>

3. Interactive Map (final)

The overarching goal for the major project is the creation of a modest interactive map and a short, 5–7-page accompanying historical essay that provides the context for your map. As is the case with all other digital projects, the content should be solid and engaging. Second, the blog entry and map should be clear in its purpose and audience.

SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINES

Oftentimes, a letter grade does not reflect the effort that students put into a course, the amount a student has learned, or the skills that a student has acquired. A self-evaluation is one way of remedying this deficiency by illustrating and documenting your participation in the course from your perspective. This is the time to argue for yourself and put your best foot forward. In fact, it is in your interest to do the best job that you can on this assignment. The self-evaluation should be a one-page, typed single-spaced paper in which you address the following topics:

- I. Evaluation of your participation in the class
 - A. attendance
 - B. class participation
 1. in-class contributions
 2. peer work
 3. class preparation
 - C. time devoted to the materials
 1. assigned reading
 2. preliminary assignments
 3. interactive map
 4. blog
 - D. the ways in which you think you improved or not
 - E. the problems you encountered in your effort to complete the class assignments to your satisfaction.
 - F. what you would have done differently
 - G. some of the skills or knowledge that you acquired
- II. A general assessment of how you will apply what you have gained (or not) from the class in the future
- III. Other activities of a historical or new media nature that you participated in