Introduction to Digital Public Humanities  
Black Digital Humanities  
Thursdays, 5:30pm-8:10pm  
Conklin Hall 447

Instructor Information:
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Description:
This course will introduce students to the emerging field of Black Digital Humanities. As scholar Kim Gallon writes, "the black digital humanities help to unmask the racialized systems of power at work in how we understand the digital humanities as a field."¹ What is the relationship between digital humanities and African American Studies? What can each field learn from each other? In addition to readings, in lab sessions students will learn digital technologies and skills. These may include blogging, social media, mapping, and digital archiving. Through these labs we will apply theory to praxis, improving both.

We will use and critically examine digital tools like Omeka, mapping software, content management systems, and social media. By the end of the semester, students will have conceptualized a digital public humanities project, written a grant application for potential funding, and built a prototype.

Course Website:  
https://digitalpublichumanities.wordpress.com/

Expectations:
- This course will expect you to engage deeply with readings on the history, theories, and methods of digital humanities, African American studies and cultural studies, while also applying those materials to work with digital tools on projects. Come to class having read the materials and prepared to discuss them.
- You are not expected to have any specific technical knowledge before coming to this class. You are expected, however, to be an independent learner who will attempt to solve problems.
- You will be expected to respond to emails from me in a timely manner. Because we only meet once per week, it will be necessary for me to communicate with you by email outside of class. I recommend strongly that you link your Rutgers email account (which is what is connected to Blackboard) to your personal email so that you are sure to get all the emails that I send.
- If you have a laptop, please bring it with you to class.

Objectives:
By the end of this course, students will have:

¹“Making the Case for the Black Digital Humanities,” Debates in the Digital Humanities.  
http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/55
• Become conversant with the literature in digital humanities, black digital humanities, African American studies and cultural studies, understanding the major issues, theories and methods of each;
• Learned new digital technologies, used them for digital projects, and critically analyzed them;
• Conceptualized a black digital humanities project, including developing a prototype;
• Written a grant proposal.

Assignments:

• **Blog Posts Reading Responses**: Using the course website, you will be expected to write a response to readings and labs several times throughout the semester. These posts should engage with one or more of the readings or connect the lab work with readings. These are due by Monday at 12pm. You should also read your classmates’ posts and comment on at least one each week.

• **Analysis of a Digital/Public Humanities Project**: More information to be distributed later.

• **Digital Projects for the Public Proposal**: The cumulative project for the semester will be for you to conceptualize a digital public humanities project and write a grant proposal to fund it. We will use the NEH’s digital projects for the public application as our guide. This project will be completed in several steps with peer review.

Attendance and Participation:

You will be expected to attend class having completed readings and assignments and be prepared to actively participate. If you cannot attend class, please let me know at least 24 hours before class (except in the case of emergencies).

Academic Integrity:

You will follow the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity, which falls under the Code of Student Conduct. The policy and the consequences of violating it are outlined here: [http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/office-dean-student-affairs/academic-integrity-policy](http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/office-dean-student-affairs/academic-integrity-policy).

I strictly follow the University’s rules regarding plagiarism and other academic irregularities. Please consult me if you have any questions about what is and is not appropriate regarding the use of sources or citation.

Grading:

• **Participation and Attendance**: 15%
• **Blog Post Reading Responses**: 25%
• **Analysis of a Digital Public Humanities Project**: 20%
• **Digital Projects for the Public Proposal**: 30%
• **Peer Review**: 10%

Late Assignments:

I expect assignments to be completed on the day they are due. Any late submissions without an approved excuse will lose a half-grade every day it is late.

Required Texts:

There are two books you must buy or borrow for this course:

We will also discuss readings from the open access digital book:


Other readings are either linked below or available on the blackboard site for our class.

**Disability Statement**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines).

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form). For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973)353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

**Weekly Schedule:**

**Week 1/September 6 Introduction to the Class**

Reading like a grad student

Structure of the class

**Week 2/September 13 Intersections**

- Combahee River Collective Statement (BB)

Due: Blog Reading Response

**Week 3/September 20 Critical Engagements with Technology and Culture**

- Lipsitz, George. “Popular Culture: This Ain’t No Sideshow,” from *Time Passages*. (BB)
- hooks, bell. “Selling Hot Pussy,” from *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. (BB)

Due: Blog Reading Response

Week 4/September 27 Critical Engagements with Technology and Culture


Due: Blog Reading Response

Week 5/October 4 The Digital Humanities Project


Due: Blog Post - Project Abstracts – 1-2 paragraphs, including project topic, goal, significance and digital component

Archives

Week 6/October 11 Politics of Archives


Due: Blog Reading Response

Week 7/October 18 The Data of Digital Archives

Presentation by Sheridan Sayles, archivist at Rutgers Special Collections


Due: Analysis of a Digital Public Humanities Project
NOTE: “Intentionally Digital, Intentionally Black” Conference, October 18-20, University of Maryland. Follow @aadhum on Twitter. More info at: https://aadhum.umd.edu/conference/

NCPH Twitter minicon also taking place! Follow @NCPH for more info

Week 8/October 25 Curating Data For Audiences

- Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels* excerpt. (BB)
- Larry Borowsky, “Telling a Story in 100 Words,” AASLH Technical Leaflet (BB)

Lab: Imagining audience, telling a story, basics of Omeka

**Producing Knowledge/Asking Questions**

Week 9/November 1 Visualizations

- John Theibault, “Visualizations and Historical Arguments,” *Writing History in the Digital Age* (2013) [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:8/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1#8.1](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:8/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1#8.1)

Lab: VOYANT and text analysis

Week 10/November 8 Maps: Power/Resistance

- Stephen Robertson, “Putting Harlem on the Map,” *Writing History in the Digital Age*. [http://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:8/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1#8.2](http://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:8/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1#8.2)

MAYBE KRISTA

**Networks and Community**

Week 11/November 15 Social Media and Community


MAYBE PEER REVIEW SESSION 1

**NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 22 – Enjoy the holiday!**

Week 12/November 29 Social Media and Social Movements

- Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*

Due: Blog Reading Response

Week 13/December 6 Peer Review of Project Proposals

Final Proposals DUE: TBD