Final Project, History 390-04
Due in Blackboard by 11:59 EST, Wednesday May 1
Proposal due in Blackboard by 11:59 EST, Tuesday April 16

The major goals of the course was to teach you how to be a critical consumer of information technology, especially in researching and finding trustworthy sources of information and using algorithmic methods to organize and analyze information to guide decision making. You also learned about historical analysis and how to make arguments using primary and secondary sources. This final project will allow you to use what you've learned to create a final product.

For this project, you will create an exhibit in Omeka S that showcases your own research and analysis about a historical topic. You should clearly communicate that your project adds something new or different to historians' typical understanding of that historical topic. Note a *historical* topic is a study of a person, event, or subject from the past–NOT a contemporary topic, which is a topic relevant only in our present moment. For example, if you want to study a person, they should no longer be living.

All the claims you make in this exhibit should be supported with properly attributed evidence. You can use parenthetical in-text citation (Last name of author, page number). Use Chicago style format for the bibliography on the last page.

You need to send me (via email) a final project proposal by midnight on April 16th. This proposal can be brief, but must contain the following elements:

1. Your selected historical topic.
2. A brief outline or idea of how you plan to organize the entire project and an idea of what argument you hope to make about that topic.
3. Your proposed visualization(s) for the project.
4. At least one online database you plan to use to look for primary sources, and at least one specific secondary source (book or article) you plan to use to help you answer your questions and make your argument. This list should use the Chicago citation style.
5. If it is a group project, state who the 2-3 members are. You must include a breakdown of the labor each member plans to take on. (You are not tied to this division of labor but it will be a useful starting point for your group).

I will provide feedback about your proposal and then you can go ahead with working on the project. We will check in together in class on Tuesday April 23rd. Be prepared to informally share what your project is and a report on its status.

By 11:59 EST Wednesday May 1st each project should include:

1. **One website in Omeka S, with at least 3 pages that showcases your research project.** 1 welcome/landing page that can include your name, title, and introduction paragraph, at least 1 page that includes the content/main argument section with

corresponding visualizations and images, and 1 final page that includes both a methods section (paragraph describing why you made the choices you did in terms of finding trustworthy sources of information and creating the specific visualization) and bibliography (should be in Chicago format). I will create a site for everyone and assign them as manager of that site, even though you will have editor level privileges for the class installation. If you form a group, let me know and I will change the settings accordingly.

Within that Omeka S site, each person should add:

2. **4-6 primary source items that contribute to your argument,** such as newspaper articles, photographs, memoirs, books published/written during the period under study, artwork, videos, songs, etc. Each item should have properly filled out metadata that relates to their citational information (rights is a <u>required</u> field!). (You can use sources you have already used for past assignments, but if so, scale them up slightly. For example, add another metadata field or add a caption to the item image on the page). You do not have to include all items on your site's pages, but if you would like to, an easy block to add is "item showcase."

3. **At least one visualization with explanatory text about how it helps your project's argument.** It must be a visualization you make, not a visualization you find elsewhere and use. Examples include either using the mapping block, timeline exhibit block, and/or embedding a graph/chart from Google Sheets in the HTML block as source code. If you choose the mapping block, you must substantially modify the visualization in one way (such as changing the zoom-level for the map or editing the marker icon). Describe why you made that specific visualization in the way you did in the methods section of the last page.

4. **One technical advanced level of your Omeka site that adjusts the design** in an attempt to account for easier user experience such as changing/modifying the theme setting, adding item breaks, section headings, and/or adding an item showcase/browse preview section on one of the pages. Describe this part in the methods section.

5. Your site should include enough text that a visitor can make sense of the argument you are making, the content you are presenting (and why), and how the work you have done contributes a new understanding of the topic. So, there is no hard minimum word count but at least 500 words describing your argument and analysis of the sources on the main content page should suffice. The written portion will be graded so make sure to write clearly, spell check, and have topic sentences at the start of each paragraph.

Note: If this is a group project, the group's total work will be one Omeka S website, and each person is responsible for one exhibit within the site. So, the website should have 4-6 items per person, 1 visualization per person, and 1 technical Omeka adjustment for design per person. All group members will then contribute to the introductory text and final page with methods and bibliography. Each group member must also fill out a separate participation evaluation form.

An IMPORTANT tip is to draft and SAVE your text on a separate Word Doc/Google Doc locally saved on your device elsewhere. Omeka S will not recover any deleted page so it is important to always have a copy saved elsewhere!

You should all submit the URL link via Blackboard to your Omeka S page before/by the deadline of May 1st at 11:59 EST.

This project will require troubleshooting technical issues, which happens to everyone involved in DH work! If you have a problem, first consult the Omeka S user manual guide, check the resources section in this document (below), then try Googling, then ask for help in the #tech-help channel. I recommend starting on this early and to utilize the days built in the schedule to start working out the conceptual and technical issues that will arise. Class is canceled Thursday April 4 and Thursday April 11 for you to focus on drafting the proposal and wrapping up other assignments. And Tuesday April 23rd and the reading day of April 30th are both dedicated times that I will be available to help you troubleshoot in person.

Resources

The following resources will be helpful in getting started or for troubleshooting:

1. For finding primary and secondary sources: GMU's library catalog, GMU's databases, Library of Congress' Chronicling America, Library of Congress' Print and Photographs Catalog, and the Digital Public Library of America.
2. For technical parts in Omeka S:
   a. This is a useful quick resource guide about how to create an item set, add pages, edit pages, etc. There is also documentation about editing pages created by the developers of Omeka, including information about adding page blocks. For different kinds of page blocks, there is HTML, item showcase, browse preview, and the mapping and timeline modules.
   b. Creating a draft page plan is a smart way to develop content and organize information. Here is an example of a draft design page that RRCHNM historians used to create the final product page "Artist Feature: Ernie Barnes" in a beta site for the HCAC project.