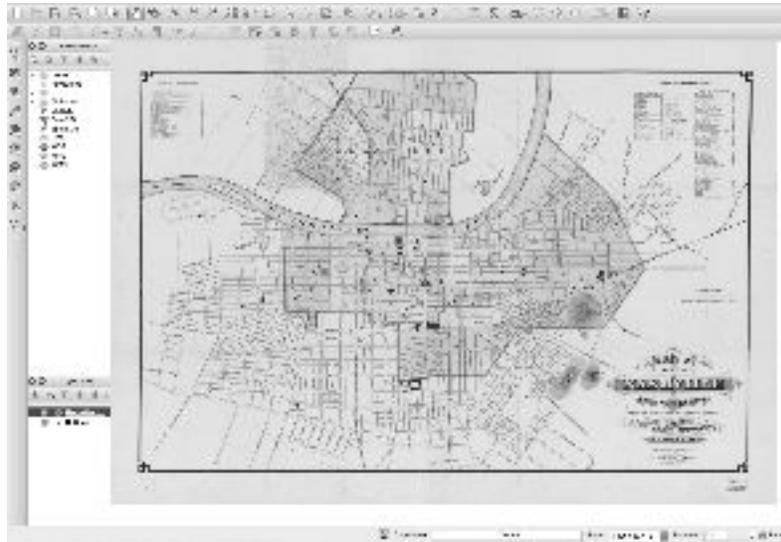


HIST 3870: **Doing Digital History: The City of Nashville**

Fall 2017: Peck 213, Mondays & Wednesdays 12:40-2:05pm



“The city does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls.” -Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

Historians, by definition, focus on time. However, spatial relations embody and explain the pattern of changes over time. This course takes a spatial history approach to studying the city of Nashville to consider how human history is shaped by our built environments. Nashville will be our lens for examining the economic, political, and social forces that drive urban evolution.

The city of Nashville has grown up with our nation and the trajectory of Nashville’s development tracks with wider trends of American frontierism, industrialization, race relations, suburbanization, and urban revitalization. The particularities of Nashville as an early railroad hub, a Civil War shipping port, and now “Music City” make Nashville an excellent study for what cities are and how each develops unique and shared qualities.

This course has two goals: to explore the history and significance of Nashville in the context of cities in the human experience and to develop the analytical and technical skills to draw and communicate our conclusions. We will accomplish the first goal through primary and secondary sources as well as our own observation. We will accomplish the second goal utilizing digital tools to create an immersive experience of

the city. Your final project is a Curatescape map of Nashville. The points on the map will link “stories” that draw on your primary research on a particular section of Nashville. These stories must address in some way what that place signifies about the larger trends of Tennessee and American history.

There are two mandatory and one suggested visit to Nashville for this course (one before your midterm project is due on October 23 and one on December 6). Please let me know right away if we need to arrange transportation for you or if you have a scheduling conflict.

By the end of class, you should:

- be familiar with what digital history is and how it can be useful to historians
- understand the local city in the context of the history and importance of cities in the South, in the U.S., and the world
- be able to analyze texts, images, maps, and audio sources to draw conclusions
- be able to compose appropriate content for different media

Instructor information

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10-12pm and Thursdays, 10:40-11:10am

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Graduate Assistant: John Gillespie (email: jpg3u@mtmail.mtsu.edu)

GA Office Hours: TBD

Grading

- 20% participation
- 20% reading responses and exercises
- 20% midterm project
- 40% final project

Table 1 - Grading Scale

		77-79	C+
		73-76	C
90-100	A	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D

80-82	B-	60-62	D-
		<59	Failing

Assignments

Readings - Most readings are either available online or provided by me. The only required text for this class (available at Phillips Bookstore) is Kenneth Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, 1985.

In-class participation - Digital History (or Humanities) is about experimentation and collaboration. Therefore, it is essential that we hear ideas from everyone in the class. Discussion will sometimes take the form of small group brainstorming exercises. Other times, we will come together as a whole class to discuss the assigned readings or a DH project that we look at together. I expect everyone to have at least one thing to contribute per class and I expect that every comment will be received with respect and attention from fellow students (which means no texting or checking unrelated websites!). You earn a **zero for participation** if I see you texting or otherwise distracting me or your classmates with your phone.

Out-of-class responses and exercises - Our class Slack channel is DoingDH-2017. This is where you will contribute your 200-400 word responses to the week's readings. These must be finished the night before class (usually for Monday's class) so that we can use the comments to kick-start class discussion. Besides being an opportunity to reflect on the class topic for the week, this is also where you get to practice a more informal mode of intellectual discourse.

Exercises offer hands-on practice of a DH skill. Usually, these take the form of a tutorial for a technology.

Extra-credit work: If you attend a DH related event and write a 200-400 account of it (posted to #extra.credit on Slack), you can get an extra point on your final grade (depending on the quality of your account of the event).

Mid-term project - In week 6, we will divvy up Nashville sites. For this project, you will do a "deep read" of your site, looking at the topographical, historical, economic, and formal planning aspects that shape a city. Using a 300-400 word narrative script you have (carefully composed), record a 3-4 minute podcast based on your deep read. I will

provide a detailed prompt with further details. **Due on Monday, October 23** for class presentation.

Final project - The final project is the culmination of many skills we are focusing on this semester. The final project grade consists of the following “build-up” assignments that will all become part of the final Omeka website:

- Bibliography of primary sources pertaining to your site: **Nov. 1**
 - these include historical maps (digital and atlas maps), photographs, directories, local histories or memoirs
- List of points of interest at your site: **Nov. 8**
- First story: **Nov. 15**
- All stories: **Nov. 29**
- Walking tour in Nashville: **Dec. 6**
- Final reflection paper due to me by email: **Dec. 12**

Accommodations

Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the Disability & Access Center (DAC) website and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or dacemail@mtsu.edu.

Academic Misconduct

Middle Tennessee State University takes a strong stance against academic misconduct. Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. Please see the Office of the Provost’s definitions of misconduct or ask me, if you have any questions. http://www.mtsu.edu/provost/fac_handbook/syllabus.php

Schedule

- Week 1: Introductions

Monday, August 28	Intro to Course
Wednesday, August 30	<p>Intro to Digital History</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Douglas Seefeldt and William Thomas, "What is Digital History," 2009. <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2009/intersections-history-and-new-media/what-is-digital-history>• Mark Tebeau, "Listening to the City: Oral History and Place in the Digital Era" <i>Oral History Review</i>, Volume 40, Number 1, Winter/Spring 2013, pp. 25-35. [Available through Walker Library & Project Muse] <p>Exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign up for class Slack channel: Team URL: doingdh-2017.slack.com• Take class survey: http://bit.ly/2wwUE7v

- Week 2: Intro to Urban History and Public History

Monday, September 4	Labor Day, no class
Wednesday, September 6	<p>Intro to Urban & Public History</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Council on Public History 2015 conference notes by Chris Cantrell:

	<p>http://dh-ph.tumblr.com/post/116919503527/session-notes/embed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jill Liddington, “What is Public History? Publics and Their Pasts, Meanings and Practices.” <i>Oral History</i>, Vol. 30, No. 1, Spring 2002), pp. 83-93. [Available through JStor] • Timothy J. Gilfoyle “White Cities, Linguistic Turns, and Disneylands: The New Paradigms of Urban History,” <i>Reviews in American History</i> 26, no. 1 (March, 1998): 175-193. [Walker website]
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- Week 3:

<p>Monday, September 11</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmund Bacon, <i>Design of Cities</i>, 1974 [selections to be provided]. • Richard White, “What is Spatial History?,” Spatial History Project, February 2010. https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29
<p>Wednesday, September 13 11:30-1pm Walker Library 264A for StoryMaps workshop</p>	<p>Exercise: Review an urban digital history project: prompt and suggestions on Slack</p>

- Week 4

Monday, September 18	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Crabgrass Frontier</i>, Ch. 1-4 • “The Magic of Crabgrass: Thirty Years Later, An Appraisal of Kenneth Jackson’s <i>Crabgrass Frontier</i>,” <i>Tropics of Meta Blog</i>, October 15, 2014, https://tropicsofmeta.wordpress.com/2014/10/15/the-magic-of-crabgrass-thirty-years-later-an-appraisal-of-kenneth-jacksons-crabgrass-frontier/
Wednesday, September 20	<p>Exercise: Mapping 1 & Check-in survey: https://goo.gl/forms/R6hzu6OMxqIP1I3I3</p>
Friday, September 22 Walker Library	<p>Extra-credit seminar: Trials, Triumphs, and Transformations</p>

Week 5

Monday, September 25	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Crabgrass Frontier</i>, Ch. 5-10 • Thomas Surgue, “The Deindustrialization of Detroit”, 1996 [Selections from <i>The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Post-War Detroit</i> to be provided].
Wednesday, September 27	<p>Exercise: Mapping 2</p>

Week 6

Monday, October 2	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Crabgrass Frontier</i>, Ch. 11-16 • Christine Kreyling. “Nashville Past and Present.” <i>Urban Design/Policy Brief</i>,
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	https://www.sitemason.com/files/d0tIEU/History_web.pdf .
Wednesday, October 4	Exercise: Mapping 3

Week 7: Seeing our surroundings

Monday, October 9	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucy Salmon essays on “The City and the World of Objects” in History and the Texture of Modern Life : Selected Essays [ca. 50 pages, available digitally through Walker Library] • Clay, <i>Close-up: How to Read the American City</i> [selections to be provided] • John Stilgoe. <i>Outside Lies Magic. Regaining History and Awareness in Everyday Places</i>. [Intro & Ch. 1 to be provided]
Tuesday, October 10, 11:30-1pm Walker Library 264A	Extra-credit (and recommended) podcast workshop
Wednesday, October 11	Exercise: “My street” podcast

Week 8

Monday, October 16	Fall Break: no class
Wednesday, October 18	<p>Guest Lecture by Bill Taylor, ASLA</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> TBA</p> <p><u>Exercise:</u> Mid-term check-in survey: https://goo.gl/forms/wLDYE6lQe3HctWwe2</p>

Week 9

Monday, October 23	Site reading & Podcast presentations DUE: Site reading & Podcast
Wednesday, October 25 11:30-1pm Sanborn Maps workshop @ Walker Library	Exercise: Life-cycle of a Digital Project

Week 10

Monday, October 30	Reading: Other tour guidebooks for Nashville
Wednesday, November 1	DUE before class: Your bibliography of primary and secondary sources

Week 11

Monday, November 6	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jay Young, "Stepping into the Past with Historical Walking Tours," 2013, http://activehistory.ca/2013/10/a-step-by-step-guide-to-historical-walking-tours/ • John Veverka, "Planning interpretive walking tours for communities and related historic districts." https://portal.uni-freiburg.de/interpreteurope/service/publications/recommended-publications/veverka_planning-interpretive-walkingtours.pdf • Ron Thomson, "A Different Path for Historic Walking Tours." AASLH Technical Leaflet, 1996. [To be provided]
Wednesday, November 8, Digital Projects Showcase at Walker Library	DUE before class: List of points of interest at your site

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Week 12

Monday, November 13	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig. "Building an Audience," in <i>Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web</i>. http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/audience/index.php • Other readings on publicity [TBA]
Wednesday, November 15	DUE before class: First story (bring 2 paper copies with you to class)

Week 13 Workshop

Monday, November 20

Wednesday, November 22

Week 14 Workshop

Monday, November 27

Wednesday, November 29: Beta testing!

DUE before class: All remaining stories

Week 15

Monday, December 4 Final editing

Wednesday, December 6 **Last day of class: Walking Tour of Nashville**

Week 16 **Finals period**

Reflection paper due: December 12 at 11:59 pm. Please email directly to John and me.

Primary research corpora (Just a selection!):

David Rumsey Map Collection

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Singleton's Nashville business directory for 1865, Nashville: Singleton, 1865

Historical map collections at Walker: <http://libraryguides.mtsu.edu/mappingtnhistory>

Library of Congress Maps: <http://www.loc.gov/maps/?q=nashville>

Further Secondary Readings:

Bill Carey. *Fortunes, Fiddles, & Fried Chicken: A Nashville Business History*. Franklin, Tennessee: Hillsboro Press, 2000.

Don Doyle. *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860–1910*, 1985.

Benjamin Houston. *The Nashville Way: Racial Etiquette and the Struggle for Social Justice in a Southern City*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012.

Kevin Kruse. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*.

Louis Kyriakouides. *The Social Origins of the Urban South: Race, Gender and Migration in Nashville, and Middle Tennessee, 1890-1930*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.