

# Digital Humanities and libraries

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27.02.2023

„it is the tool that forms the object of study”

(Adam Pawłowski, 2023)

# Plan

## Introduction to digital humanities

- DH definitions
- Historical outline and factors that foster the development of DH projects
- Fields of research interest
- Subject of research
- DH methods, processes, tools
- Competencies of a digital humanist
- Some examples of projects

## Libraries and the development of the digital humanities

- Scope of activities
- Who is a librarian in the DH?
- Key skills
- Problems and challenges
- DH projects in a library perspective

# **PART 1**

# **INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL HUMANITIES**

# DH definitions

Lack of a single consistent definition

Mostly:

- new research trend
- paradigm

that involves the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools for broadly defined research in the humanities or even social sciences, among other fields such as:

- Archaeology, History, Art History, Linguistics, Literary Studies, Cultural Science....

# DH definitions

„Digital Humanities is not a unified field but **an array of convergent practices** that explore a universe in which: a) print is no longer the exclusive or the normative medium in which knowledge is produced and/or disseminated; instead, print finds itself absorbed into new, multimedia configurations; and b) digital tools, techniques, and media have altered the production and dissemination of knowledge in the arts, human and social sciences..”

(Jeffrey Schnapp, Todd Presner, 2009).

# DH definitions

„a set of cognitive practices and information resources resulting from transferring the cognitive practices of print-based humanities to the digital sphere and enriching them with new functionalities”

(Adam Pawłowski, 2023)

# Short history of DH



1940s.

**Roberto Busa**  
(1913–2011)

A pioneer in the application  
of computer science and  
corpus linguistics to the  
analysis of literature →  
[Corpus Thomisticum](#)



# Short history

## THE JOURNAL OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Volume LXVI

APRIL 1958

Number 2

### THE ECONOMICS OF SLAVERY IN THE ANTE BELLUM SOUTH<sup>1</sup>

ALFRED H. CONRAD AND JOHN R. MEYER  
Harvard University

#### I. OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

THE outstanding economic characteristics of southern agriculture before the Civil War were a high degree of specialization and virtually exclusive reliance on a slave labor force. The large-scale, commercial dependence upon slave labor was to distinguish the ante bellum South not only from other regions in its own time but from all regions at all other times in American agricultural history. Because of this unique historical status, ante bellum southern agriculture has been a subject for special historical attention. Above all else, attention has been focused upon the proposition that, even without external intervention, slavery would have toppled of its own weight. This allegation has its source in the assertions of slave inefficiency to be found in

the writings of men who lived with slavery: American or English liberals like G. M. Weston, H. R. Helper, or J. E. Cairnes and southern slaveowners who, in a religious, self-righteous age, could find every motive for the protection of the slave system except that it was personally profitable. The argument is to be found most strongly stated in the work of later southern historians, especially C. W. Ramsdell and U. B. Phillips, who take the position that the Civil War, far from being an irrepressible conflict, was an unnecessary blood bath. They argue that slavery had reached its natural limits and that it was cumbersome and inefficient and, probably within less than a generation, would have destroyed itself. To the question why emancipation was not resorted to, they reply that slavery was for the southerners an important (and evidently expensive) duty, part of their "unending task of race discipline." On the other side, Lewis Gray and Kenneth Stampp have strongly contested this view, contending that southern plantation agriculture was at least as remunerative an economic activity as most

<sup>1</sup>This paper was presented at a meeting of the Conference on Research in Income and Wealth at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, September 4-5, 1957, and is published here with the kind permission of the Conference. We wish to thank the Harvard Foundation for Advanced Study and Research for a grant for computational and secretarial assistance. The Foundation does not, of course, share in any way the responsibility for the views or conclusions of the paper.

## 1958

Conrad, A. H., & Meyer, J. R. (1958). The Economics of Slavery in the Ante Bellum South. *Journal of Political Economy*, 66(2), 95–130.

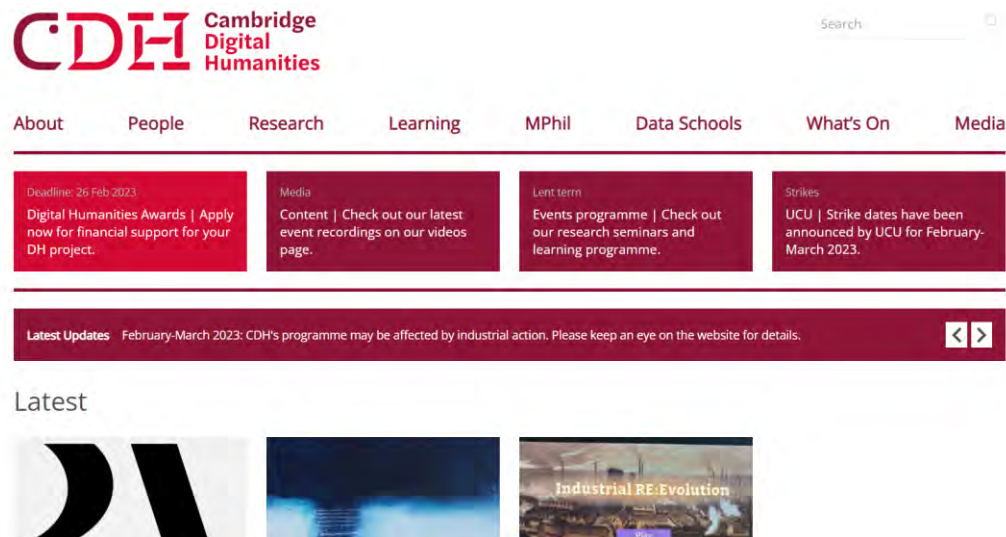
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1827270>

Research on the economic efficiency of slavery in the U.S. carried out using computer techniques

# Short history

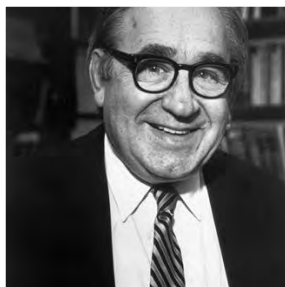
## 1964

Literary and  
Linguistic  
Computing Center  
(Cambridge  
University)



In 2017 integrated with Cambridge Digital Humanities.

# Short history



Robert  
William Fogel

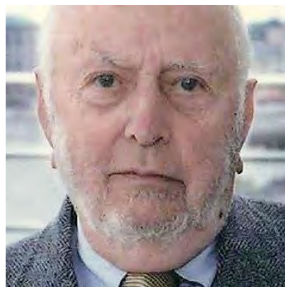
**1970s.**

research in  
economics using  
computer  
techniques

Stanley  
Engerman



Douglass  
North



# Short history

## Late 1980s.

The formation of trends in HC:

- Computational humanities – the study of historical, archaeological and linguistic sources by means of computational methods
- Reconstructionist trend – involving the reconstruction of various types of objects (historical, archaeological)



# Short history

**1990s.**



The first portals to show  
the results of DH  
research

# Short history

## 21st century

- the birth of big data analytics
- increase of importance of machine learning (AI), which are increasingly used by humanists

# Fields of interest

## Ontological field

- Digital objects (digitized and born digital) are the subject of interest)

## Epistemological field

- Analysis of those objects in different approaches – studying of correlations, relations etc.

## Methodological field

- Application of new methodology for new tools

## Axiological field

- Posting analysis and results on the Web for all

## Organizational field

- Teamwork - not individual researchers, but teams often with international scope

# Subject of the study

text

image

sound (speech,  
music)

mixed materials  
(maps, notes,  
manuscripts, comics,  
applied iconography,  
games)



# Methods, processes, tools

processing, analyzing and comparing data and metadata (including but not limited to big data)

character recognition

text mining, data mining

digitization of objects

mapping of geographic data

NLP - Natural Language Processing

visualization of results

process modeling and prediction

use of Linked Open Data technologies

use of AI tools

...

# Competencies of a digital humanist

Domain knowledge (literary studies, archaeology...).

Relatively strong information technology knowledge

- Software support
- Knowledge of programming language (R, Python) + working with programming libraries (e.g. pandas)
- Web development (HTML, Java Script, CSS)
- Advanced skills in visualization of research results

# DH projects

## Digitization projects

- Digitize, develop, publish various types of objects

## Medialabs

- [Medialab Katowice](#) – Oral history archive of Kościuszki street in Katowice
- [Ośrodek „Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN”](#) in Lublin – Digital mockups of the city of Lublin, Secret teaching. Silent heroes

## Creating tools, infrastructure in the form of, for example, web applications

- CLARIN-PL (PWr) – NLP tools
- DARIAH-PL – infrastructure for HC development

## Narrower projects

- Research on computer games, social networks, user-technology interaction

# DH projets

ChronoPress -  
chronological database  
of Polish press texts  
from 1945-1954  
described with metadata  
at the morphosyntactic  
level

ChronoPress  
Portal Tekstów Prasowych

- O korpusie
- Zespół
- Metoda korpusowa
- Prasa w PRL
- Nowomowa
- Jak cytować
- Scenariusze użycia

W grudniu konferencja m...  
wiazku z propozy...  
prawie Berlina?  
(PAP). Rzecznik Foreign Office złożył oświa

Uniwersytet Wrocławski  
Politechnika Wroclawska  
CENTRUM TECHNOLOGII JĘZYKOWYCH CLARIN.PL  
CLARIN

[ChronoPress \(clarin-pl.eu\)](http://clarin-pl.eu)

# DH projects

## Polski korpus listów pożegnalnych samobójców

(skrót *PCSN*; ang. *Polish Corpus of Suicide Notes*)

### Tytuł projektu

Listy  
pożegnalne  
samobójców —  
lingwistyczne  
metody  
ustalania  
autentyczności  
tekstu

Projekt badawczy  
finansowany przez  
Ministerstwo Nauki

### Publikacje związane z korpusem

#### 2015

- Zaśko-Zielińska M., M. Piasecki, 2015, *Lexical Means in Communicating Emotion in Suicide Notes – on the Basis of the Polish Corpus of Suicide Notes*, *Cognitive Studies*, (15), 237-252.
- Zaśko-Zielińska M., 2015, *Sposoby fałszowania tekstu w eksperymentalnie zebranych materiałach Subkorpusu Listów Sfałszowanych*, [w:] R. Cieśla [red.], *Współczesna problematyka badań dokumentów*, [Prace Naukowe Wydziału Prawa, Administracji i Ekonomii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego], Wrocław, 327-334.

#### 2014

- Zaśko-Zielińska M., 2014, *Ślady idiolektów w listach pożegnalnych zgromadzonych w Polskim Korpusie Listów Pożegnalnych Samobójców*, [w:] R. Cieśla [red.], *Dokument i jego badania*, [Prace Naukowe Wydziału Prawa, Administracji i Ekonomii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego], Wrocław: Katedra

# DH projects



STRONA GŁÓWNA / O PROJEKCIE

## O projekcie

W 2011 roku, w stulecie istnienia Muzeum Etnograficznego im. Seweryna Udzieli w Krakowie rozpoczęliśmy realizację projektu, którego celem jest stworzenie Wirtualnego Muzeum Drzeworytów Ludowych. Dokumentuje ono i udostępnia wiedzę o polskim drzeworytnictwie ludowym. Dla profesjonalistów jest miejscem wymiany informacji i doświadczeń. Dla

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### ZESPÓŁ

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#### Koncepcja projektu

Beata Skoczeń-Marchewka

[Virtual Museum of Folk Woodcuts \(drzeworyty.eu\)](http://drzeworyty.eu)

# DH projects



Screenshot of the prototype

Posted on 13 March 2011

## Creating an Amsterdam Time Machine with the AdLib API

A four-hour sprint to create a chronological painting gallery from the Amsterdam Museum collection.

MiracleThings

Projects

Technologies

Get in touch

See also



# DH projects



## Find a bathing water

Look up a bathing water profile by name or location below. To get an overview of multiple bathing water locations, or to download data extracts, see the [data page](#) ».

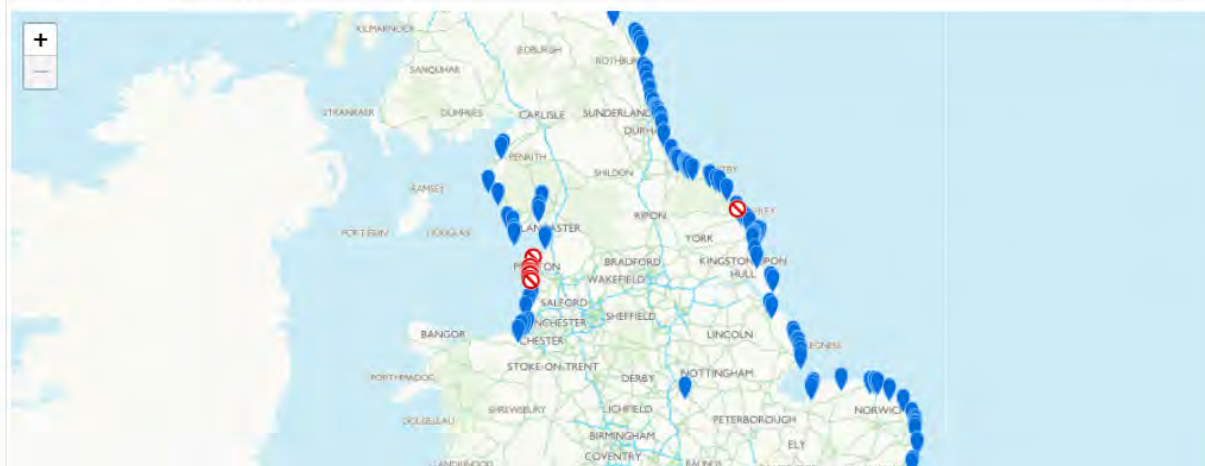
Water quality at designated bathing water sites in England is assessed by the Environment Agency. From May to September, weekly assessments measure current water quality, and at a number of sites daily pollution risk forecasts are issued. Annual ratings classify each site as excellent, good, sufficient or poor based on measurements taken over a period of up to four years. Information about bathing water quality in other countries in the UK can be found here: [Scotland \(SEPA\)](#), [Wales \(NRW\)](#), or [Northern Ireland \(DoE\)](#)

Name, county, district or postcode:

Location, e.g. Cornwall, East Devon or Blackpool

Key: designated bathing water, advice against bathing

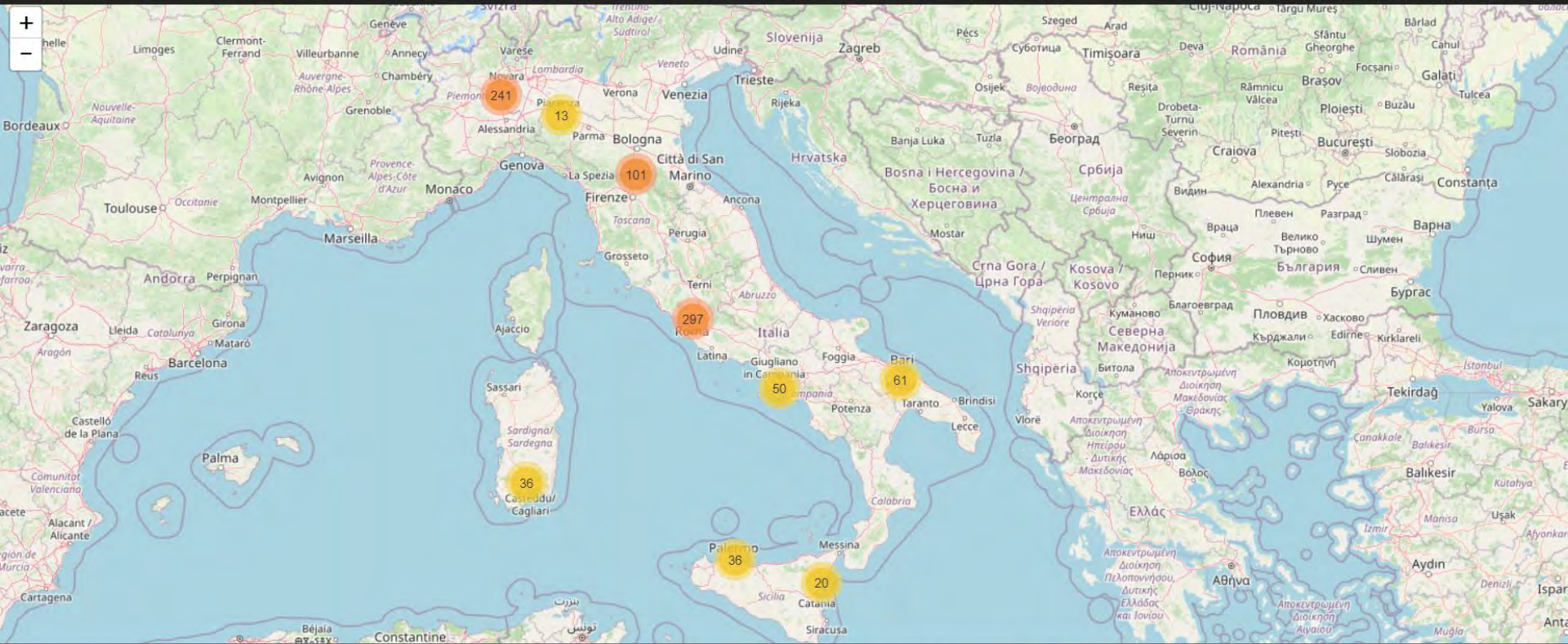
reset map



<http://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>



# DH projects



# DH projects



## American Panorama

An Atlas of United States History

<https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/>

# **PART 2**

# **LIBRARIES AND THE**

# **DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL**

# **HUMANITIES**

# Libraries and DH

## Digitization of research objects

- Digital libraries, digital social archives

## Creation of metadata which can be a basis for analysis

- Bibliographies, library catalogs, controlled vocabularies, ontologies

## Creating teaching aids, manuals, guidelines....

## Cooperation with researchers

- Providing digitization tools, servers...
- Advise on digitization, metadata and data storage strategies

# DH in academic libraries – opportunities

package existing services as a “virtual DH center”

advocate coordinated DH support across the institution

help scholars plan for preservation needs

extend the institutional repository to accommodate DH digital objects

(Jennifer Schaffner & Ricky Erway, 2014)

# DH in academic libraries – opportunities

work internationally to spur co-investment in DH across institutions

create avenues for scholarly use and enhancement of metadata

consult DH scholars at the beginning of digitization projects

get involved in DH project planning for sustainability from the beginning

commit to a DH center

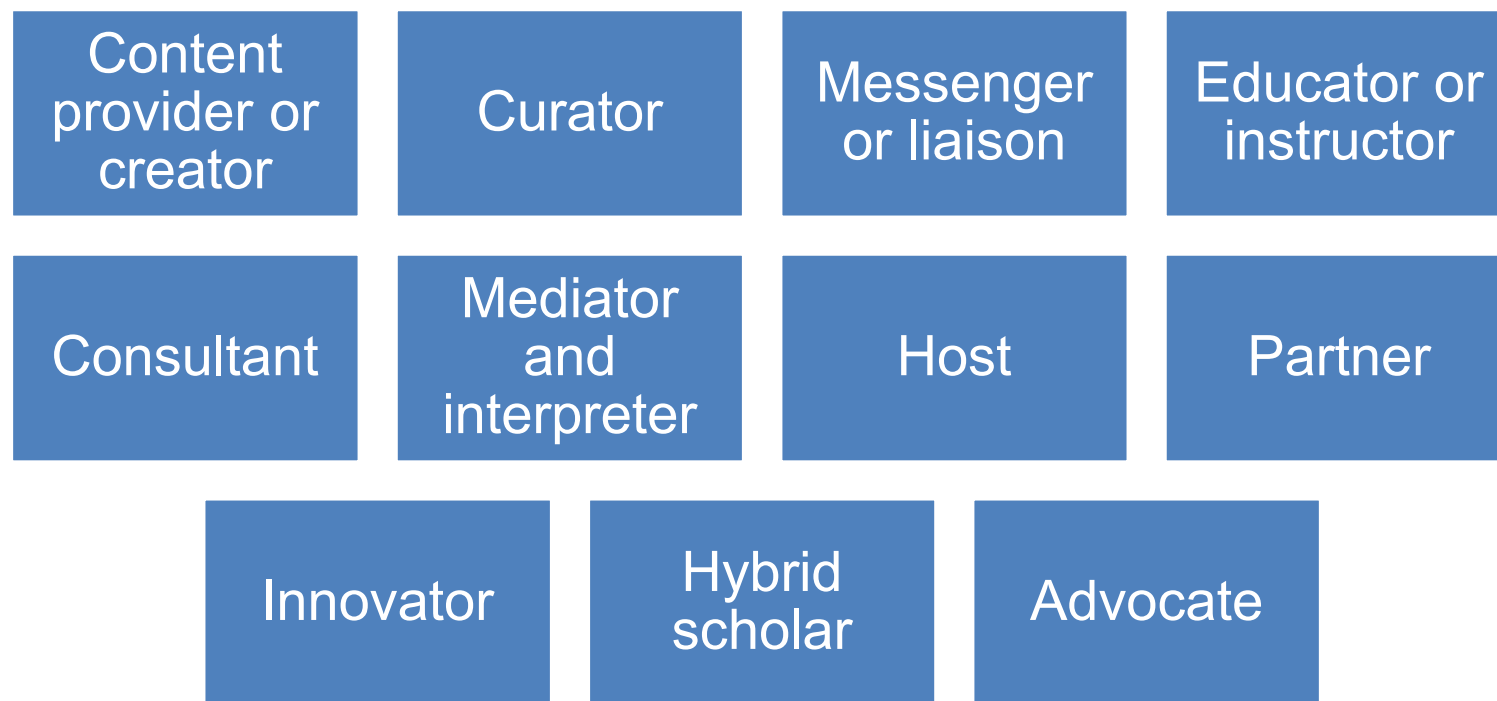
(Jennifer Schaffner & Ricky Erway, 2014)

# DH in academic libraries – opportunities

„In most settings, the best decision is to observe what the DH academics are already doing and then set out to address gaps.”

(Jennifer Schaffner & Ricky Erway, 2014)

# Who is a librarian in the DH?



(Ying Zhang, Shu Liu, and Emilee Mathews, 2015)



# Who is a librarian in the DH?

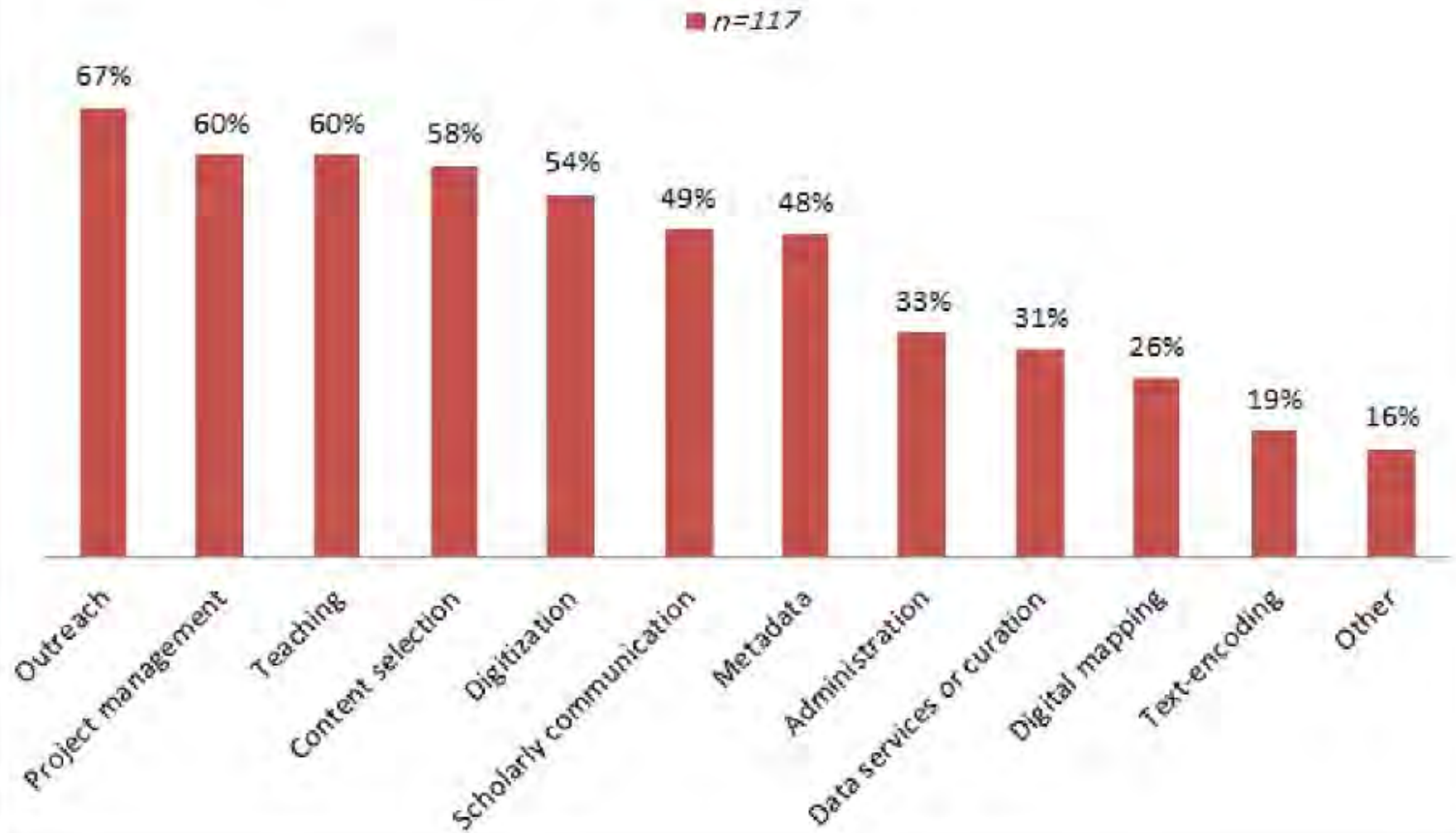
Librarian as  
Concierge

Librarian as  
IT Expert

Librarian as  
Researcher

(Anu Vedantham, Dot Porte, 2015)

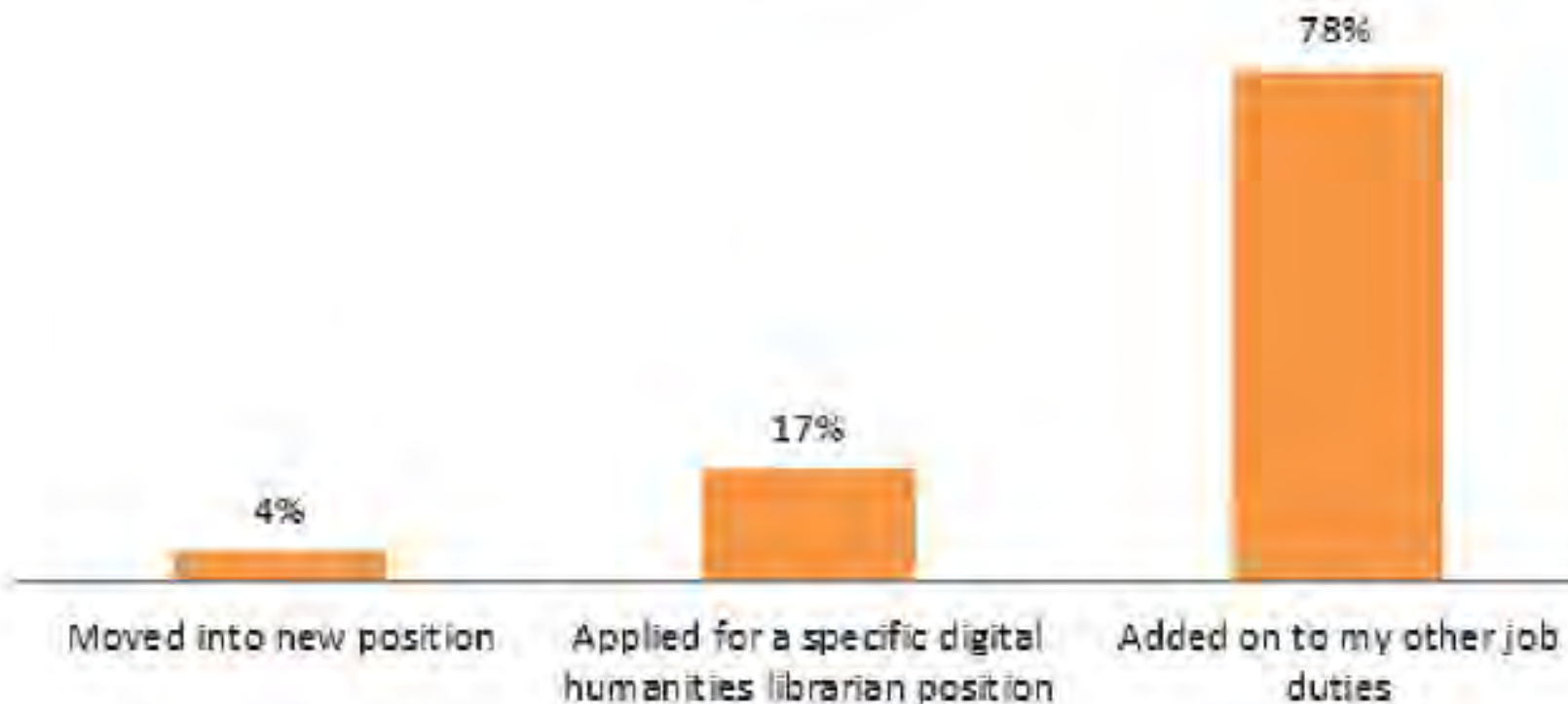
# Which areas of digital humanities are you involved in?



(Molly Dahl Poremski, 2017)

# Did you apply for your digital humanities position or was it added on to another role?

● *n=116*



(Molly Dahl Poremski, 2017)

# Competencies

Knowledge and use of metadata

Knowledge of technology

Knowledge of standards and practices

Visualization of data, results

Analytical skills

Knowledge of research methods

Design skills

Communication skills

Attention to data privacy and security

Knowledge of foreign languages

# Competencies

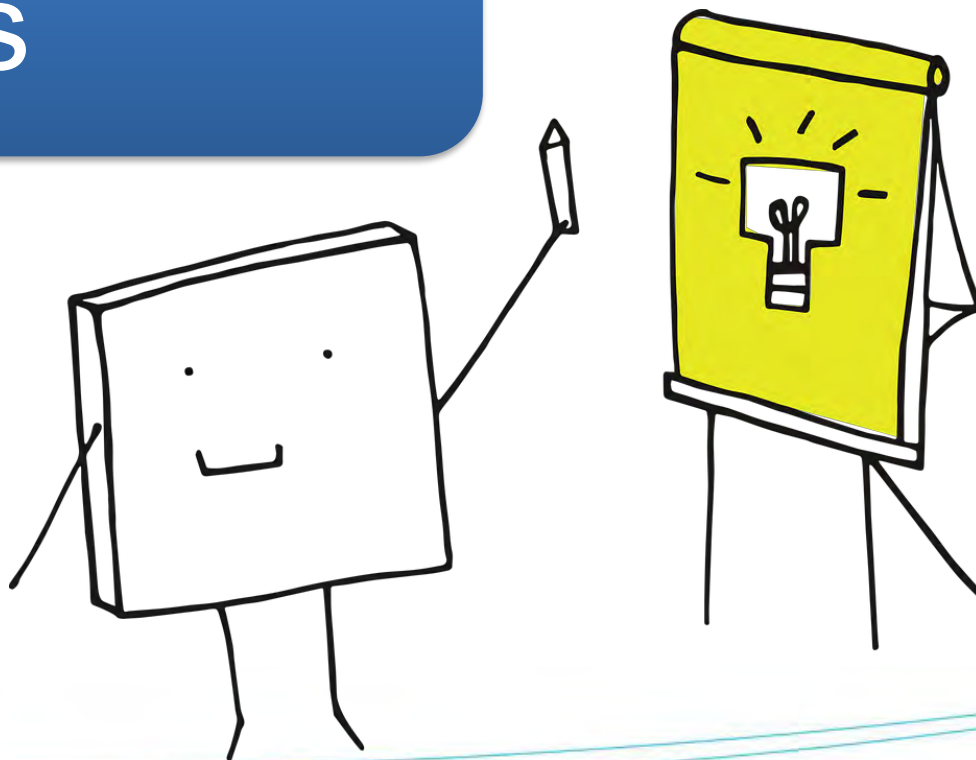
## Most often missing:

- *digital mapping*
- *text encoding*
- *computer programming*

(Molly Dahl Poremski, 2017)

# Problems

Insufficient training opportunities



(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Problems

Lack of support for  
librarian-conceived  
initiatives



(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Problems

Too many tasks,  
too little time

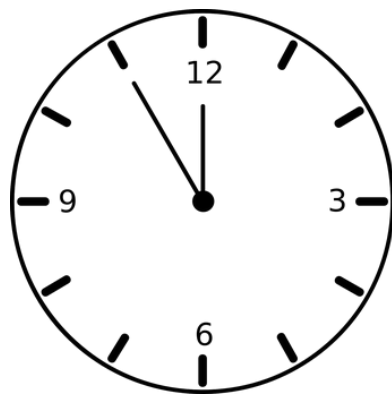


(Miriam Posner, 2013)



# Problems

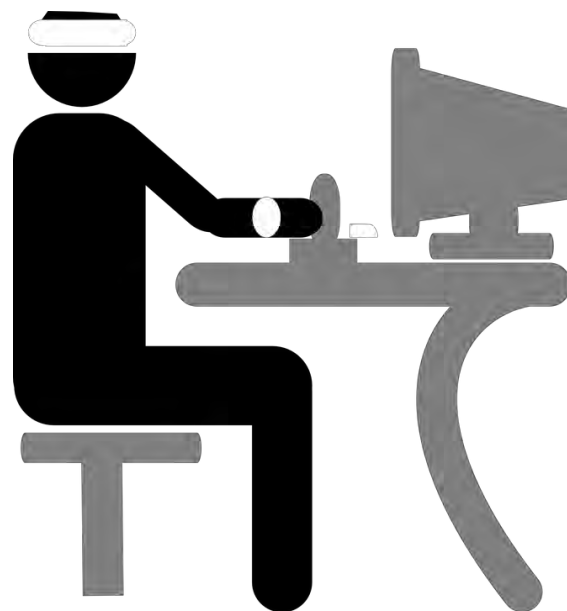
Lack of authority to marshal  
the appropriate resources



(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Problems

Inflexible  
infrastructure



(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Problems

Lack of incentive



(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Problems

The complexity of collaborating with faculty

Overcautiousness

Diffusion of effort

Lack of a real institutional commitment

(Miriam Posner, 2013)

# Challenges

## Digitization and data storage

- Different types of resources
- Provision of infrastructure and technology
- Ensuring data security and sustainability

## Technological challenges

- Keeping up with the rapid development of technology

## Privacy and data security

- compliance with legal regulations

# DH projects in libraries

The screenshot shows the website for Dolnośląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa. At the top left is the logo 'dbc' and the text 'DOLNOŚLĄSKA BIBLIOTEKA CYFROWA'. To the right are links for 'PL | EN', 'Kontrast', 'Udostępnij', and 'Zaloguj się'. Below this is a navigation menu with 'KOLEKCJE', 'INDEKSY', 'O BIBLIOTECE', and 'HISTORIA PRZEGLĄDANIA'. The main content area features a large background image of a town with a search bar and a search icon. Below the search bar is a link for 'Wyszukiwanie zaawansowane'. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'OSTATNIO DODANE' with a list item: 'Applausus Hieroglyphici Sedecim Nobilibus Ingenuis Ac Eruditis Artium Liberalium Et Philosophiae Licentiatis, [...]'.

dbc DOLNOŚLĄSKA BIBLIOTEKA CYFROWA

PL | EN Kontrast Udostępnij Zaloguj się

🏠 KOLEKCJE INDEKSY O BIBLIOTECE HISTORIA PRZEGLĄDANIA

Dolnośląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa udostępnia 94 332 obiektów cyfrowych

🔍

[Wyszukiwanie zaawansowane](#) > ?

OSTATNIO DODANE

Applausus Hieroglyphici Sedecim Nobilibus Ingenuis Ac Eruditis Artium Liberalium Et Philosophiae Licentiatis, [...]

# DH projects in libraries



Kujawsko-Pomorska  
Biblioteka Cyfrowa

PL | DE | EN

Kontrast

Udostępnij

Zaloguj się



O PROJEKCIE

KOLEKCJE

INDEKSY

HISTORIA PRZEGLĄDANIA

Kujawsko-Pomorska Biblioteka Cyfrowa udostępnia 253 790 obiektów cyfrowych

Przeszukaj zbiory biblioteki...



Wyszukiwanie zaawansowane

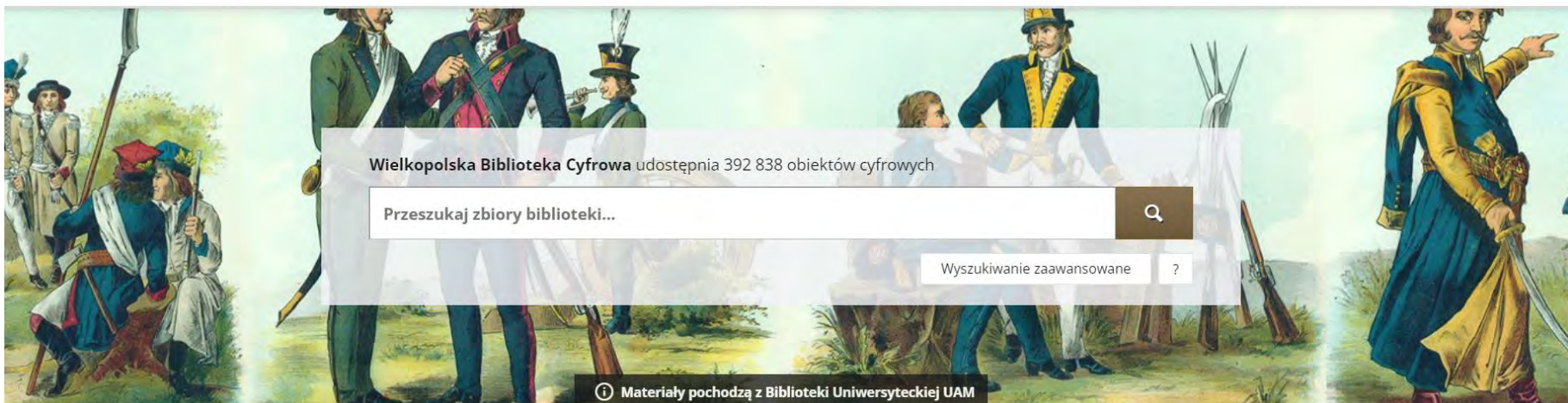


Mirosław Piotrowski, Widok miasta Torunia z 1684 roku wg Hartknocha. **Materiał pochodzi z Kujawsko-Pomorskiej Biblioteki Cyfrowej**

**OBIEKTY** ostatnio dodane

**Mandat delegata na V Ogólnopolski Sejmik Aktywu Klubów Studenckich - 1983**

# DH projects in libraries



Wielkopolska Biblioteka Cyfrowa udostępniła 392 838 obiektów cyfrowych

Przeszukaj zbiory biblioteki...



Wyszukiwanie zaawansowane



Materiały pochodzą z Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej UAM

## KOLEKCJE

Tutaj takie kolekcje jak:

-Czasopisma i gazety

-Książki adresowe  
i spisy osób

Narodowy Zasób  
Biblioteki  
Uniwersyteckiej w

Historia  
gospodarcza  
Wielkopolski -





# Research based on bibliographic data

Green, J., McIntyre, F., & Needham, P. (2011). The Shape of Incunable Survival and Statistical Estimation of Lost Editions.

<https://doi.org/10.1086/680773>

- analysis of the state of preservation of old print production
- basis: digitized bibliographies, databases of incunabula and old prints

## The Shape of Incunable Survival and Statistical Estimation of Lost Editions

JONATHAN GREEN, FRANK MCINTYRE, AND  
PAUL NEEDHAM

FROM the moment that Johannes Gutenberg and his associates began printing books in Mainz, the products of their and later printers' presses began to disappear, the victims of calamity or obsolescence or everyday wear and tear. As bibliographers and librarians over the intervening centuries preserved and recorded the earliest printed books, they recognized that there were some editions whose copies had all been lost. But how many? Concerning the number of lost incunable editions, those works printed in the fifteenth century for which no copy survived long enough to be registered by any bibliographer, estimates diverge dramatically, from a few percent of all fifteenth-century editions to 20–40 percent or more. The discrepancy has significant implications for the study of fifteenth-century books, reading, and literature: do we think our primary evidence is substantially complete, or is it a perhaps unrepresentative fraction of what once existed?

Estimates towards the low end might be referred to as the “truth in advertising” school of thought. After summarizing all

Jonathan Green (270 Sylvan Dr., Goleta, CA 93117) held a Humboldt fellowship at the Universität Erlangen before teaching German at the University of Texas and is the author of a forthcoming volume on prognostication in the fifteenth century.

Frank McIntyre (130 FOB, Department of Economics, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602) is an applied econometrician with interests in development economics, and legal studies.

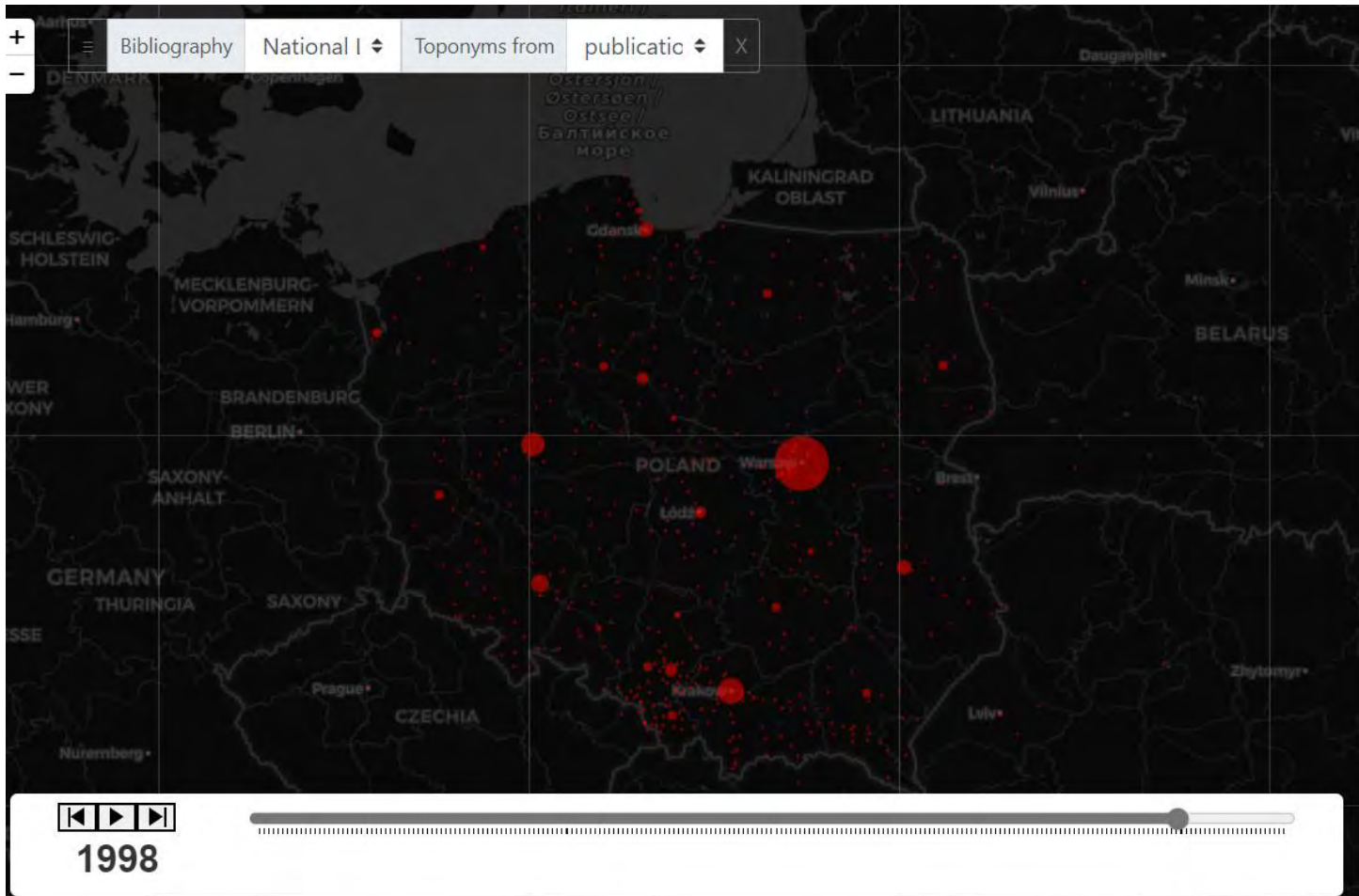
Paul Needham (Princeton University Library, One Washington Road, Princeton, NJ 08544) is Scheide Librarian at Princeton University.

*PBSA* 105:2 (2011): 141–75



# Research based on bibliographic data

**Wrocław  
Bibliodata  
Website**



# Research on metadata

## Andreas Lüschow i José Calvo Tello (2021)

- Method of identifying selected literary genres in library catalogs
- Using machine learning methods and technologies, Python language and scikitlearn library
- Source:
  - German distributed catalog Gemeinsamer Verbundkatalog (GVK) - descriptions (more than 740,000 records)
  - Gemeinsame Normdatei - list of literary genres (1,319, of which 1,150 were used in GVK)
- Goal: to develop the most effective solution that can be applied to research using large bibliographic resources

# Projects using bibliographic data

## AVOBMAT

a digital toolkit for analysing and visualizing bibliographic metadata and texts



[What is AVOBMAT?](#)

[Research COVID-19](#)

[Features](#)

[Help](#)

[Get in touch](#)

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**ACCEPT**

<https://avobmat.hu/>

# Projects using digitized materials

Unlocking the Mary Hamilton papers

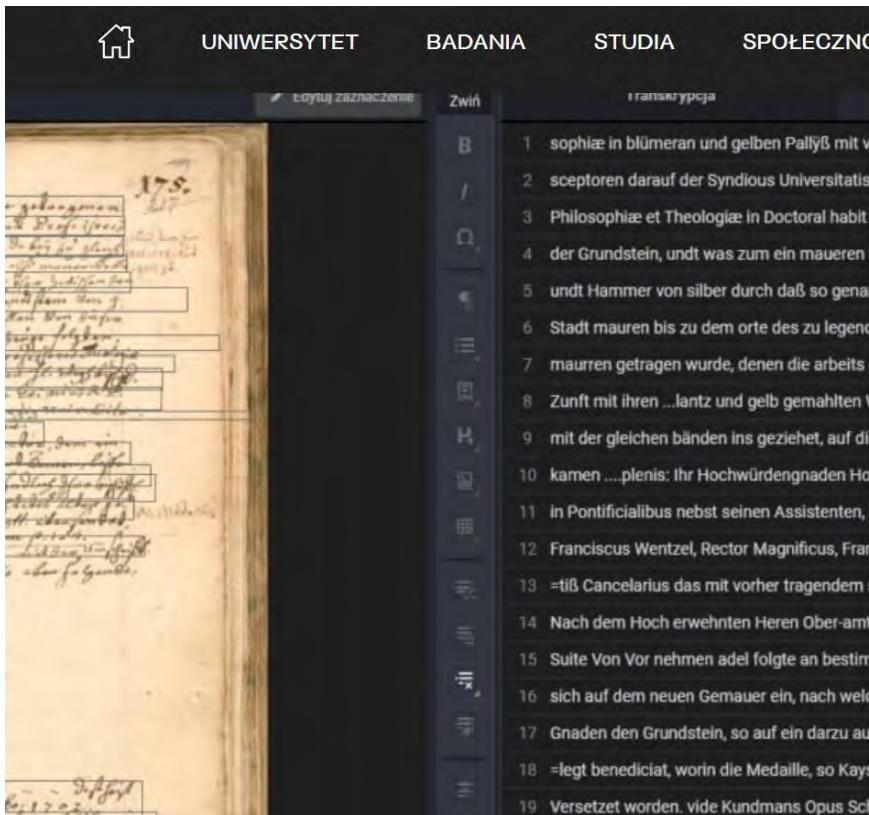
About Mary Hamilton Blog Edition Text Search People Further Reading Background: the Image-to-Text Project Contact

Unlocking the Mary Hamilton Papers  
*A window onto eighteenth-century life, literature and language*



<https://www.maryhamiltonpapers.alc.manchester.ac.uk/about/>

# Projects using digitized materials



The screenshot shows a digital manuscript viewer interface. On the left, there is a thumbnail of a handwritten page with the number '175' visible. On the right, the transcribed text is displayed in a list format. The interface includes a navigation bar at the top with various menu items and a search icon.

UNIwersYTET    BADANIA    STUDIA    SpoŁECZNOŚĆ    WSPÓŁPRACA    Q    EN    INTRANET    EYE

1 sophia: in blümeran und gelben Pallyß mit v  
2 sceptoren darauf der Syndious Universitatis  
3 Philosophia: et Theologia: in Doctoral habit  
4 der Grundstein, undt was zum ein mauerer  
5 undt Hammer von silber durch daß so gena  
6 Stadt mauren bis zu dem orte des zu legend  
7 maurren getragen wurde, denen die arbeits  
8 Zunft mit ihren ...lantz und gelb gemahiten v  
9 mit der gleichen bänden ins geziehet, auf di  
10 kamen ....plenis: Ihr Hochwürdegnaden Ho  
11 in Pontificalibus nebst seinen Assistenten,  
12 Franciscus Wentzel, Rector Magnificus, Fran  
13 =tiß Cancelarius das mit vorher tragendem  
14 Nach dem Hoch erwehten Heren Ober-amt  
15 Suite Von Vor nehmen adel folgte an bestim  
16 sich auf dem neuen Gemauer ein, nach welc  
17 Gnaden den Grundstein, so auf ein darzu au  
18 =legt benediciat, worin die Medaille, so Kays  
19 Versetzt worden. vide Kundmans Opus Sch

Strona główna / Zmieniamy się / Workflow do opracowania publikacji cyfrowych na...

## Wirtualne Laboratorium Transkrypcji

WLT, czyli Wirtualne Laboratorium Transkrypcji, jest narzędziem chmurowym, będącym częścią zaplecza usług cyfrowych Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego powstały w ramach projektu Leopoldina online. Ma ona na celu wspieranie działań naukowych z użyciem źródeł archiwalnych, muzealnych i bibliotecznych udostępnionych w postaci cyfrowej.

...

# Digital ontologies and dictionaries

The screenshot shows the Finto website interface. At the top right, there are navigation links: Sanastot (Dictionaries), Tietoja (About), Palaute (Feedback), and Ohje (Help). Language options are available: "på svenska" and "in English". A search bar is present with a dropdown menu set to "kaikista sanastoista" (from all dictionaries) and "suomi" (Finnish). A "Hae" (Search) button is to the right of the search bar.

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features the "finto" logo and a welcome message: "Tervetuloa Finto-palveluun!" (Welcome to the Finto service!). Below this, it states: "Finto on suomalainen sanasto- ja ontologiapalvelu, joka mahdollistaa sanastojen julkaisun ja selailun. Palvelu tarjoaa myös rajapinnat sanastojen ja ontologioiden hyödyntämiseen muissa ohjelmistoissa." (Finto is a Finnish dictionary and ontology service that enables the publication and browsing of dictionaries. The service also provides APIs for the use of dictionaries and ontologies in other software systems.)

The right column is titled "Sanastot ja ontologiat" (Dictionaries and ontologies) and contains two sections:

- YLEISET** (General):
  - Allärs - Allmän tesaurus på svenska
  - KOKO-ontologia
  - Metatietosanasto
  - Pondus-kategoriat
  - Suomalainen lajityyppi- ja muotosanasto
  - Suomalaiset yhteisönimet
  - YSA:n ja YSON käsite-ehdotukset
  - YSA - Yleinen suomalainen asiasanasto
  - YSO - Yleinen suomalainen ontologia
- YHTEISKUNTA** (Community):
  - IPTC NewsCodes
  - JUHO - Julkishallinnon ontologia
  - Julkisten palvelujen luokitus

# Projects supporting DH in libraries



Harvard Library Lab

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Projects

Below is an index of all of the Library Lab Projects today. Use the tags below to sort through them.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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DATA ANALYSIS

DISCOVERY

INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

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TAGGING/ANNOTATION

WORKFLOW

Archives and Special Collections  
Class Request Tool



Archivist's Workstation (CS 96)



Atlas Viewer





# DH projects

## Digital Humanities: Examples

Support for researchers using the Library's collections with Digital Humanities techniques.

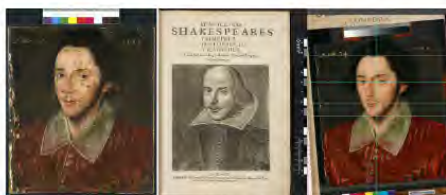
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Ask a  
question

### [Using facial recognition techniques to compare portraits associated with Shakespeare](#)

A recent experiment was carried by Ray Evans, Research Fellow in Psychology at the University of Manchester, who used forensic image recognition software to compare the face in the Grafton portrait with the engraving of Shakespeare by Martin Droëshout.



<https://subjects.library.manchester.ac.uk/digitalhumanities/examples>

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# Thank you!

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