De/Post/Colonial DH at HILT 2015 - Syllabus

Instructors
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Welcome to the De/Post/Colonial DH course at HILT 2015! We are looking forward to working with you to explore the advantages, limitations, affordances, and difficulties of doing DH from postcolonial and decolonial perspectives. When we designed the course, we drafted the following course description:

…we must discuss, we must invent…" —Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth
From Sandra Harding's interventions in postcolonial science studies to Radhika Gajjala's articulation of digital subalternity to Kavita Philip's work on postcolonial computing, postcolonial approaches to technology have provoked lively discussion. New conversations have emerged around essential questions: can the digital be "decolonized?"; what are the limits of decolonial, postcolonial, or anti-colonial approaches to digital cultures?; and how can these theoretical approaches be marshaled to build communities, tools, and justice? Together, we will explore these questions at the intersections of theory and praxis as we consider how tools can be theorized, hacked, and used in service of decolonization. This course undertakes this task through three goals: 1) learning about, understanding, analyzing the history and present processes of colonization, decolonization, neocolonialism and the postcolonial, with attention to local, hemispheric and global contexts; 2) analyzing digital technologies, with attention to how they intersect with humanities disciplines such as art, literature and performance, and how they produce, reproduce or enact processes of colonization; and 3) inventing new and/or alternative technologies, or new uses of existing technologies, that work against colonization and post-colonial legacies that maintain social injustice.
Our days will be spent engaging with theory, hands-on experimentation, and reflection on practice. Theoretical topics may include digital labor, subalternity, embodiment, and aesthetics. Applied activities may include Scalar-based game design, mobile media/film/photography, digital exhibits, and mapping. In the spirit of our theoretical approach, we emphasize accessiblity and low-cost technology, as well as creativity and interpretation. Therefore, no prior experience with theory or practice is required, just an openness to discuss and invent the theories and practices of De/Post/Colonial Digital Humanities.

Taking into account this description, we have identified a list of projects and readings to guide our work together. We have set a schedule for the first three days of the course but will be begin on Monday by collectively setting the agenda for the remainder of the week, with the goal of creating a blend of discussion and hands-on application, culminating in projects developed during the week. This approach is indicative of what we see as a non-hierarchical and collaborative ethos informing De/Post/Colonial approaches to digital humanities.

In preparation for the course, we ask the following:

1. Read the material assigned for Monday, July 27th.
2. Familiarize yourself with the reading list for the course and identify readings of most interest to you.
3. Take a look at the list of projects below and identify ones that are most interesting to you.
4. Identify your personal goals for the taking the course.

Material to Consider

Projects for Inspiration and Critique

[1947 Partition Archive](#)
[African American AIDS History Project](#)
[African Diaspora PhD](#)
[Around DH in 80 Days](#)

[Early Caribbean Digital Archive](#)
[Education in Our Barios](#)
[Elizabeth Lapenseé - Indigenous Game Designer and Artist](#)

[Chicana Por Mi Raza - Digital Memory Collective](#)

[Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society](#)

[Decolonizing the Digital / Digital Decolonization](#), [Center for Global Studies and the Humanities](#)

[Decolonizing the Transgender Imaginary](#), *Transgender Studies Quarterly*

[HyperCities: Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities](#)
[Invisible Australians](#)
[Latino/a Mobility in California History](#)
[Mapping Police Violence](#)
[Mapping Racist Tweets](#)
[Mukurtu](#)
[Not Alone](#)
[Papakilo Database](#)
[Performing Archive: Curtis and "the Vanishing Race"](#)
[Postcolonial Digital Humanities](#)
[Reciprocal Research Network](#)
[Redshift and Portmetal](#)
[Soweto '76](#)
[South Asian American Digital Archive](#)
[Transatlantic Slave Trade Database](#)
[Transborder Immigrant Tool](#)
[Um'O'Ho Indian Heritage](#)

Suggested Reading
#dhpoco Open Thread
http://dhpoco.org/blog/2013/05/10/open-thread-the-digital-humanities-as-a-historical-refuge-from-raceclassgendersexualitydisability/
Ali, "Towards a Decolonial Computing"
https://www.academia.edu/6524133/Towards_a_Decolonial_Computing
Anderson "Postcolonial Technoscience"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9zI7ZT_vIx9NlgzR21EelZwTzQ/view?usp=sharing
Earhart, "Can Information Be Unfettered" http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/16
Fanon, "Reciprocal Bases of National Culture and the Fight for Freedom"
https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/national-culture.htm
Fanon, conclusion, *Wretched of the Earth*
https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/conclusion.htm
Gitano and Salinas, Towards a Third Cinema
http://documentaryisneverneutral.com/words/camasgun.html
Harding, "Postcolonial and feminist philosophies of science and technology: convergences and dissonances"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9zI7ZT_vIx9TkJKa1R1em83bVk/view?usp=sharing
Hirsch and Olson, "Starting from Marginalized Lives: A Conversation with Sandra Harding"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9zI7ZT_vIx9c2dzdEs0aTU0cjQ/view?usp=sharing
Keeling, "Queer OS"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9zI7ZT_vIx9ZWdKTXI0NXBtYlk/view?usp=sharing
Lothian and Phillips, "Can Digital Humanities Mean Transformative Critique?"
http://journals.dartmouth.edu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Journals.woa/xmlpage/4/article/425
McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities so White?"
http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/29
Mignolo, Decolonial Aesthesis:
http://waltermignolo.com/decolonial-aesthesis-from-singapore-to-cambridge-to-duke-university/
Mignolo, "Delinking"
http://waltermignolo.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/WMignolo_Delinking.pdf
Phillip et al. "Postcolonial Computing: A Tactical Survey"
http://www.humanities.uci.edu/critical/kp/pdf/Postcolonial_Computing_STHV2010.pdf
Tuck and Yang, Decolonization is Not a Metaphor
http://decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/18630

Schedule

Monday - Postcolonial DH

9:30-10:45am Introductions, collaboratively generated goals and expectations, collaborative agenda-setting for Thursday-Friday, discussion: #dhpoco Open Thread (question to get us started: what are the issues arising from this thread that are most compelling to you?)

11:00am-12:00pm Discussion of projects for inspiration and critique (question to get us started: which projects are most appealing to you, whether they are compatible with your work, interesting from a technical standpoint, or have a theoretical basis that is oriented towards social justice?)

1:00-2:30pm Discussion: Harding, "Postcolonial and Feminist Philosophies of Science and Technology," Phillip, et al. "Postcolonial Computing," Ali, "Towards a Decolonial Computing. (question to get us started: the texts under consideration emerge from Science and Technology Studies, which has started to become a source that gets more attention among digital humanists. Which ideas in these texts are most resonant for you in terms of thinking through the stakes of postcolonial approaches to the digital humanities? In what ways can we use or apply them to digital humanities methods and tools?)

2:45-4:30pm Planning and hands-on work session for course project.

Note: The schedule for class meetings for Thursday and Friday will be set collaboratively with the class to best account for the interests and goals of the group.

Tuesday - Decolonizing Sensing

9:30-10:45am - Decolonial Foundations
Discuss
Fanon, conclusion, *Wretched of the Earth*
https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/conclusion.htm
Gitano and Salinas, Towards a Third Cinema
http://documentaryisneverneutral.com/words/camasgun.html

How do digital technologies embody processes of colonization? Can we decolonize digital technologies?

10:45am-12:00pm - Decolonial Aesthetics
Mignolo, Decolonial Aesthesis:
http://waltermignolo.com/decolonial-aesthesis-from-singapore-to-cambridge-to-duke-university/
Tuck and Yang, Decolonization is Not a Metaphor
http://decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/18630

How can we understand our vision and our lives as shaped by colonization, in order to find other ways of seeing and living?

Projects for discussion
[Elizabeth Lapenseé - Indigenous Game Designer and Artist](#)
[Redshift and Portmetal](#)

1:00-2:45pm - Scalar hands on workshop part 2

3:00-5:00pm - Project planning and working time

Wednesday - #transformDH

9:30-10:45am
Discuss
Lothian and Phillips, "Can Digital Humanities Mean Transformative Critique?"
http://journals.dartmouth.edu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Journals.woa/xmlpage/4/article/425
Keeling, "Queer OS"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9zI7ZT_vIx9ZWdKTXI0NXBtYlk/view?usp=sharing

What are the stakes of doing digital humanities work, as scholars concerned with social justice? In whose interest has the field of Digital Humanities been formed?

10:45am-12:00pm
McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities so White?"
http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/29
Introduction, [Decolonizing the Transgender Imaginary, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*](#)

How do issues of race and gender shape the field of Digital Humanities in a way that reinforces Western conceptions of identity? What other possibilities exist for ontologies of identity?

Projects to discuss
[Transborder Immigrant Tool](#)
[Local Autonomy Networks](#)

1:00-2:30pm - Hands on workshop - Hacking existing archives

2:45-4:30pm - Project planning and working time

<u>Thursday & Friday - To be determined based on needs and interests of class participants</u>