DLA
the Digital Liberal Arts

Note from the Associate Director

March finds much to report at the DLA.

We had a productive visit from Seth Denbo '90, Director of Scholarly Communication & Digital Initiatives at the American Historical Association, to give a talk about History in the Era of the Web and discuss the AHA's guidelines for promotion and tenure in relation to digital scholarship. Seth also met with various faculty about their digital research and teaching and, as an added bonus, enjoyed returning to his alma mater.

Amy Collier and Mike Roy hosted an Academic Roundtable on What Is Digital Fluency & Why Does It Matter? at which faculty and staff from across Middlebury began to discuss what it means for students (and faculty and staff) to be fluent in digital technologies. We paid particular attention to the growing significance of digital technologies for policy, politics, economics, culture, civic engagement, social justice, and education itself. What do we need to know both within particular disciplines and across them in the broader liberal arts at Middlebury? How can students (and all of us) learn the skills needed to navigate these new contexts with an improved critical awareness; and how can we advance knowledge more fruitfully within the digital paradigm? We will be following up on this meeting with a monthly series of conversations about particular digital topics, beginning with an exploration of databases on April 4. Regardless of digital expertise, students, faculty, and staff are welcome to attend (and enjoy lunch) at the CTLR Lounge.

We also continue our Behind the Scenes series with two "reports from the digital field." Matthew Dickerson will discuss his video work with a student during his place-based research and writing in Wyoming. Sarah Laursen will talk about her ongoing research on ancient Chinese gold, which includes the construction of a database to organize her English and Chinese data, as well as her preparations for an exhibition at the Middlebury College Museum of Art, which includes 3D digital models made using photogrammetry, interactive maps, and videos about metalsmithing. Please join us!

Our current DLA Fellows—Sarah Laursen along with Florence Feiereisen and Amy Morsman—continue on their digital projects. As always, you can consult with us on digital scholarship at any stage of research, course preparation, or scholarly thinking. Look forward to meeting you if I have not already and to continuing conversations that have already begun.

—Michael Kramer, Associate Director of the DLA, Assistant Professor of the Practice, Digital

History/Humanities

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DLA Behind the Scenes: Digital Story-Telling about Trout and Ecology—Matthew Dickerson

Join us for lunch on **Tuesday, March 20th from 12:15-1:30pm in the CTLR Lounge** for our next Behind the Scenes presentation.

Matthew Dickerson worked with a student summer research assistant on digital storytelling. The student went with him on a month-long place-based research and writing trip to Wyoming. While Matthew worked on his personal research and a book project, he worked with the student to communicate that same material th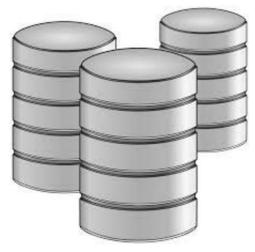rough short narrative and narrated videos. Matthew was responsible for content, but together they collaborated and script and storyline. The student had considerable creative flexibility in presenting the final videos.

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP so that we can order enough food.

RSVP for Behind the Scenes

Digital Fluencies 01: Databases

Please join us for lunch on **Wednesday, April 4th from 12 pm-1:30 pm in the CTLR Lounge** for the first gathering in our Digital Fluencies series. Sign up to

receive link to PDFs of readings and so we know how much lunch to order.

Databases undergird almost every digital publishing project, platform, interface, and tool. How do we better understand what databases are—and what they can be—as a key aspect of the digital liberal arts? We'll gather to explore the topic. **Faculty, students, and staff at all levels are welcome to attend participate regardless of digital skills.** Readings include: N. Katherine Hayles, "Databases," in *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 37-40, pdf provided when you sign up); Lev Manovich, "Database as Symbolic Form," *Convergence* 5, 80 (1999), 80-99; Christiane Paul, "The Database As System and Cultural Form: Anatomies of Cultural Narratives," in *Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow*, ed. Viktorija Vesna Bulajic (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 95-109. Optional Readings: Sarah Whitwell, "Resistance, Racialized Violence, and Database Design," *Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship*, McMaster University, 26 February 2018; Matthew E. Davis, "The Database as a Methodological Tool," *Digital Medievalist*, 10 August 2017. Case study: Ryan Clement, Data Services Librarian, will lead us through a comparison of two different database structures, how they have been used and why they were chosen as a way to consider how we might use databases more critically in digital liberal arts projects.
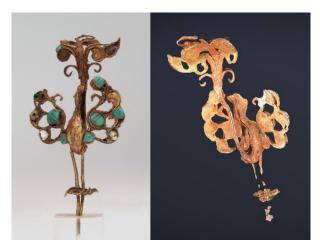
What Is the Digital Fluencies Series? The Digital Fluencies series investigates what it means to develop critical awareness, engagement, and competency with digital technologies. Meetings general combine 1-3 readings (a link to materials will be provided when necessary) and a case study for hands-on exploration. **Faculty, students, and staff at all levels are welcome to attend participate regardless of digital skills.**

Digital Fluencies 02: Algorithms will be held on May 9, 12-1:30 pm. Future topics include: Bots, Data, Platforms, Archives, Gender in Code, Digital Racism, Open Access, Podcasting, Remix, Publishing and Peer Review, Animation, Gltiching and Deformance Tactics, Memes, Web Design, the Template, Data Visualization, GIS and Spatial Data/Thinking, User Experience, and other topics. Feel free to suggest a topic as well.

Co-sponsored by DLA, CTLR, Davis Library, and DLINQ. Organized by Leanne Galletly, User Experience & Digital Scholarship Librarian, and Michael J. Kramer, Assistant Professor of the Practice, Digital History/Humanities and Associate Director of the Digital Liberal Arts Initiative.

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Learn More About Digital Fluencies 01: Databases

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DLA Behind the Scenes Series: Museums Enter the Digital Age—Sarah Laursen

Join us for lunch on **Tuesday, April 17th from 12:15-1:30pm** for our next Behind the Scenes presentation.

Sarah Laursen is researching ancient Chinese gold for a book project and an exhibition that will be held at the Middlebury College Museum of Art in the fall of 2019. She will discuss the process of creating a database to organize her English and Chinese data, as well as her preparations for the exhibition, which will include 3D digital models made using photogrammetry, interactive maps, and videos about metalsmithing.

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP so that we can order enough food.

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RSVP for Behind the Scenes

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*If you have any questions about the DLA,
please contact us at dla@middlebury.edu.*

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