

Robert K. Nelson

Director
Digital Scholarship Lab
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Education

PhD—College of William and Mary, American Studies, 2006
Dissertation: “Society of Souls: Spirit, Friendship, and the Antebellum Reform Imagination”
MA—College of William and Mary, American Studies, 1998
BA—University of Puget Sound, *magna cum laude*, 1995

Professional Positions

Director, Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond, 2009-Present
Associate Director, Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond, 2008-2009
Instructional Technology Liaison to the Humanities, College of William and Mary, 2000-2008
Project Manager, *The Walt Whitman Archive*, 1999-2000

Scholarship

Articles and Essays

- “Mapping Inequality: ‘Big Data’ Meets Social History in the Story of Redlining” (co-authored with N. D. B. Connolly, LaDale Winling, and Richard Marciano) in *The Routledge Companion to Spatial History*, ed. Don DeBats, Ian Gregory, and Don Lafreniere (New York: Routledge, 2018): 502-524
- "Spirit Politics: Radical Abolitionists and the Dead End of Spiritualism," in *Apocalypse and the Millennium in the Civil War Era*, ed. Ben Wright and Zachary W. Dresser (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 2013), 31-51
- "Maps of Change: A Brief History of the American Historical Atlas" (co-authored with Edward L. Ayers and Scott Nesbit), in *History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections*, ed. Alexander Von Lunen and Charles Travis (New York: Springer, 2013), 195-210
- "'The forgetfulness of sex': Devotion and Desire in the Courtship Letters of Angelina Grimké and Theodore Dwight Weld," *Journal of Social History* 37 (Spring 2004): 663-679
- "Debating Manliness: Thomas Wentworth Higginson, William Sloane Kennedy, and the Question of Whitman" (co-authored with Kenneth M. Price), *American Literature* 73 (September 2001): 496-524

Digital Scholarship

American Panorama (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama>), Co-Editor
Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States
(<http://dsl.richmond.edu/historicalatlas>), Project Director
"Mining the Dispatch" (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/dispatch/>), Author
"Travels Across the Plains" (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/oregontrail/>), Editor
"Redlining Richmond" (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/holc/>), Primary Author
The History Engine (<http://historyengine.richmond.edu/>), Co-Director
Voting America (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/voting>), Contributor
The Williamsburg Theater Project (<http://moviegoing.wm.edu/wtp>), Co-Director
The Walt Whitman Archive (<http://whitmanarchive.org/>), Project Manager (1999-2000)
and Editorial Assistant (1997-1999)
"Whitman's Memory" (<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/fdw/volume2/price/>), Co-Author

Reviews, Interviews, Entries, Etc.

"Digital Humanities as Appendix," *American Quarterly* 68 (March 2016): 131-136.
Review of *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Spiritual Life*, by Nancy Koester, *Journal of Southern History* 81 (May 2015): 458-459.
"More than 'Map Porn'? : The Pleasures and Pitfalls of the Historical Gaze," *Perspectives on History*, October 2014, <<http://historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october-2014/more-than-%E2%80%9Cmap-porn%E2%80%9D>>
"Harvesting the Fruits of the Undergraduate Classroom," *Inside Higher Education*, *Higher Ed Beta* blog, December 16, 2013, <<http://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-beta/harvesting-fruits-undergraduate-classroom>>
Review of *The Manliest Man: Samuel G. Howe and the Contours of Nineteenth-Century American Reform*, by James W. Trent, Jr., *Journal of American History* 100 (September 2013): 517-518
Review of "Mapping Texts," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1 (Summer 2012), <http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-3/review-of-mapping-texts-by-robert-nelson/>
"Uncovering Confederate Literary Nationalism: A Review of Coleman Hutchinson's *Apples and Ashes*," *Southern Spaces*, July 17, 2012, <<http://www.southernspaces.org/2012/uncovering-confederate-literary-nationalism-review-coleman-hutchisons-apples-and-ashes>>
"A Conversation with Digital Historians" (with Andrew J. Torget and Scott Nesbit), *Southern Spaces*, January 31, 2012, <<http://www.southernspaces.org/2012/conversation-digital-historians>>
"Of Monsters, Men— and Topic Modeling," *New York Times Disunion Blog*, May 29, 2011 <<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/29/of-monsters-men-and-topic-modeling/>>

- Review of *Distant Revolutions: 1848 and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism*, by Timothy Mason Roberts, H-SHEAR, H-Net Reviews (May 2010) <<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=26372>>
- "The History Engine: Doing History with Digital Tools" (co-authored with Scott Nesbit and Andrew Torget), *Academic Commons* (September 2009) <<http://www.academiccommons.org/commons/essay/history-engine>>
- Review of *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature*, by Ivy Schweitzer, *Legacy* 25.1 (2008): 164-166
- "Elihu Burritt" and "Theodore Dwight Weld," in *Encyclopedia of Antislavery and Abolition*, ed. Peter Hinks and John McKivigan, 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006)
- Review of *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race*, by John Stauffer, and *Truth Stranger than Fiction: Race, Realism, and the U.S. Literary Marketplace*, by Augusta Rohrbach, *American Literature* 75 (June 2003): 433-435
- Review of *Wright American Fiction 1851-1875*, *Journal of American History* 90 (June 2003): 336-337
- "Abolitionism," "The Jungle," and "Reform Movements," in *American Masculinities: A Historical Encyclopedia*, ed. Bret Carroll (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003)

Presentations

Invited

- "Using Collections As Data" (panel participant), Follow the Map: Reflecting on 200 Years of the Harvard Map Collection Symposium, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 2018
- "Smelling Inequality: Beyond the HOLC Redlining Maps," Digital Witness and Testimony Speaker Series, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, April 2018
- "Reckoning with Redlining and Renewal: Visualizing Inequality in American Cities," University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, February 2018
- "Slavery on the Move: The Spatial Logic of the Old South," Virginia Tech Department of History, Blacksburg, Virginia, February 2017
- Print+Web 2: Texts, Publishers, Books Panel, Digital Pragmata Series, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, April 2016
- "Visualizing Urban Inequality," Finding New Knowledge: Archival Records in the Age of Big Data Symposium, University of Maryland, College Park, April 2016
- "The Historical Atlas in the Twenty-First Century," Modeling and Mapping Historical Sites and Events Conference, Rice University, Houston, Texas, April 2016
- "Mapping the Slave Trade" (with Justin Madron), Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, April 2015
- "The Potential and Pitfall of Topic Modeling for Humanities Research," DH Speaker Series, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, February 2015
- "Mapping the Slave Frontier," Summersell Center for the Study of the South, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, September 2014

- "Hardtack and Software: Analyzing the Civil War's Fighting Words through Text Mining," University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, Colorado, April 2014
- "Digital History and Interpretation," University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 2014
- "Computing and the Practice of History," University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, California, February 2014
- "Ideology and Algorithms: The Uses of Nationalism in the American Civil War and Topic Modeling in Historical Research," Digital History Seminar, Institute of Historical Research, University of London (via Skype), October 2013
- "Without the Paraphernalia of Projector, Reel, and Screen: Maps and the Practice and Presentation of History in the Twenty-First Century," Annual History Forum Lecture, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 2013
- "Analyzing Nationalism and Other Slippery 'Isms,'" Topic Modeling for Humanities Research Workshop, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, November 2012
- "New Audiences and New Arguments," South Atlantic Studies Forum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, March 2012
- "Topic Modeling and the Shapes of Civil War Nationalism," Digital Media Symposium, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming, February 2012
- "Topic Modeling and the Shapes of Civil War Nationalism," Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, January 2012
- "Doing DH," Northern Virginia Community College, Reston, Virginia, November 2011
- "Hardtack and Software: Topic Modeling Civil War Newspapers," MITH Digital Dialogues, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, October 2011
- "The Williamsburg Theater Project: Creating a Collaborative World Wide Web Database" (with Arthur Knight), Department of American Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, February 2004

Conferences

- "Federal Policy and Racial and Wealth Inequalities in Twentieth-Century Urban America," Social Science History Association Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada, November 2017
- "Race, Digital Humanities, and the Region" (roundtable panelist), Race, Memory, and the Digital Humanities Conference, Williamsburg, Virginia, October 2017
- "Navigating the Past: Interactive Mapping Platforms to Explore the Factors that have Shaped our Cities" panel, Digital Library Federation Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 2017
- "Reckoning with Redlining," Digital Humanities 2017, Montreal, Canada, August 2017
- "A Composite Work: Undergraduates in Digital Humanities Research," DLF Liberal Arts College Pre-Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 2016
- "Slavery on the Move: Counter-mapping the Domestic Slave Trade," Creating Spatial Historical Knowledge: New Approaches, Opportunities and Epistemological Implications of Mapping History Digitally, German Historical Institute, Washington DC, October 2016

- "Thriving Cities" panel, Human/Ties Conference (50th Anniversary of the NEH), Charlottesville, Virginia, September 2016
- "Drafting History for the Digital Public" (roundtable panelist), National Council on Public History and the Society for History in the Federal Government Joint Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland, March 2016
- "State of the Field: Digital Humanities" (roundtable panelist), Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, April 2015
- "Working across the Spaces of History Pedagogy: Classroom, Exhibit, Community" (roundtable panelist), Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, April 2015
- "Everything Old is New Again: Curation and Interpretation in Digital Scholarship," Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, April 2014
- "Digital Innovations in Southern History: A Roundtable" (roundtable panelist), Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, November 2013
- "Digital Scholarship at Liberal Arts Colleges," Educause 2012 Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado, November 2012
- "Means and Ends in Civil War Nationalism and the Digital Humanities," Digital Humanities 2012, Hamburg, Germany, July 2012
- "Bullets and Ballots: The Instrumental Uses of Civil War Nationalism," Society of Civil War Historians Biennial Meeting, Lexington, Kentucky, June 2012
- "History Engine 2.0: Research Locally, Collaborating Globally" (with Christine Berkowitz), NITLE Symposium: Inventing the Future, Arlington, Virginia, April 2012
- "Killing, Dying, and Genre: Nationalism and the News in the Confederacy," Society for the Study of Southern Literature Biannual Meeting, Nashville, Tennessee, March 2012
- "Visualizing the News: Topic Modeling the *New York Times* and the *Daily Dispatch* during the Civil War," American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, January 2012
- "Of Monsters and Men: Visualizing Sectionalism and Patriotism in the Civil War News," Networks and Network Analysis for the Humanities conference, Los Angeles, California, October 2011
- "Spirit Politics: Antebellum Reform and the Shape of American Spiritualism," American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, January 2011
- "Visualizing the Richmond Slave Trade" (co-authored with Scott Nesbit and Maurie McInnis), American Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 2010
- "Spirit Politics: Perfectionist Reform, Spiritualism, and the Attenuation of Antebellum Millennialism," Millennialism and Providentialism in the Era of the American Civil War Conference, Rice University, Houston, Texas, October 2010
- "Race and Space: Mapping Richmond's History," Virginia Forum, Newport News, Virginia, April 2010
- "The History Engine: Aggregating, Teaching, and Visualizing the Past," American Association for History and Computing, Fairfax, Virginia, April 2009

- "Using and Building Digital Archives for American Studies Teaching and Research: A Roundtable and Discussion," Southern American Studies Association Biannual Conference, Fairfax, Virginia, February 2009
- "Experiments in Twenty-First Century Research and Teaching" (with Andrew Torget), Coalition for Networked Information Task Force Meeting, Washington, DC, December 2008
- "Our professed friends': Abolitionism's Politics of Pathos," Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, Montréal, Canada, July 2006
- "The Williamsburg Theatre Project: Creating a Collaborative World Wide Web Database" (presented with Arthur Knight), American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, November 2004
- "Stronger ties than those of consanguinity': Elihu Burritt and the Work of International Friendship," Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, Providence, Rhode Island, July 2004
- "The Williamsburg Theater Project: Creating a Collaborative World Wide Web Database" (presented with Arthur Knight), Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, March 2004
- "The Williamsburg Theater Project" (with Arthur Knight), "American Cinema and Everyday Life" Commonwealth Center Fund conference, London, England, June 2003
- "The forgetfulness of sex': Charles Stuart in the Courtship Letters of Angelina Grimké and Theodore Dwight Weld," Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 2003
- "Shared Pleasures, Digitized: Creating a Web-Based Database of Film Exhibition" (with Arthur Knight), Society for Cinema Studies convention, Denver, Colorado, May 2002
- "The Classroom Electric', the Web, and Book History" (roundtable panelist), Society for the History of Authorship, Readership, and Publication Conference, Williamsburg, Virginia, July 2001
- "The forgetfulness of sex': Charles Stuart in the Courtship Letters of Angelina Grimké and Theodore Dwight Weld," Making Sense of Differences Conference, Richmond, Virginia, April 2001
- "We use a different rhetoric': Emerson and the Challenge of Fuller's Conversations," Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Buffalo, New York, April 2000
- "A new world somehow to me': Whitman, Young Soldiers, and Romantic Male Friendship in Civil War Washington," Many Cultures of Walt Whitman conference, Camden, New Jersey, October 1998

Other

- Presentation on using digital resources to K-12 teachers (with Scott Nesbit), Joan Oates Institute for Partners in the Arts: Promoting Arts across the Curriculum, Richmond, Virginia, June 2011
- Presentation on using digital resources to K-12 teachers, Teaching American History Academy, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia, March 2011

"The Digital Scholarship Lab," 2009 CIC-NITLE Learning Spaces and Technology Workshop, Richmond, Virginia, March 2009

"Blogging in Class and Outside the Classroom" (with James P. Whittenburg), College of William and Mary Faculty Teaching workshop, March 2006

Institutes, Workshops, Seminars, and Unconferences

Panel participant and workshop presenter, "MLA Workshop: Getting Started in Digital Humanities with DHCommons," Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Seattle Washington, January 2012

The Humanities and Technology Camp (THATCamp), Center for History and New Media, Fairfax, Virginia, June 2011

Networks and Network Analysis for the Humanities: An NEH Institute for Advanced Topics in Digital Humanities, UCLA, Los Angeles, California, August 2010

The Humanities and Technology Camp (THATCamp), Center for History and New Media, Fairfax, Virginia, May 2010

Tocqueville Faculty Course-Development Seminar, University of Richmond, Spring 2010

The Humanities and Technology Camp (THATCamp), Center for History and New Media, Fairfax, Virginia, May 2009

Visualizing the Past: Tools and Techniques for Understanding Historical Processes: A Workshop Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Digital Scholarship Lab, Richmond, Virginia, February 2009

The Humanities and Technology Camp (THATCamp), Center for History and New Media, Fairfax, Virginia, May 2008

International Cinema Audiences Research Group Workshop, Ghent, Belgium, December 2007

Summit on Digital Tools for the Humanities, Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH), Charlottesville, Virginia, September 2005

International Cinema Audiences Research Group, Founding Workshop, Washington, DC, June 2004

Teaching

The University of Richmond:

FYS 100: Human Trafficking: Yesterday and Today

HIST 299: Transatlantic Abolitionism

HIST 299: The Abolitionists and American Society

The College of William and Mary:

HIST 212: The Abolitionists and American Society

AMST 150: Slavery in American Culture and Thought

AMST 470: American Anxiety: Cultural and Social Change at the Turn of the Last Century

Grants, Fellowships, and Awards

The American Atlas, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Co-PI, \$750,000, 2012
NITLE Community Contribution Award, 2009
Price Visiting Research Fellowship, William L. Clements Library, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2000

Service

Humanities in Arts and Sciences Advisory Board, University of Richmond, 2016-
American Studies Advisory Council, University of Richmond, 2010-
NITLE Digital Scholarship Seminars Program Committee, 2011-2012
Faculty of Arts & Science Space Planning Committee, College of William and Mary,
2005-2006
Presentation and Technology Team, SACS Accreditation Project, College of William and
Mary, 2003-2005
Project Working Group, SACS Accreditation Project, College of William and Mary,
2003-2005
President of American Studies Graduate Student Organization, College of William and
Mary, 1999-2000
Search Committee for Director of American Studies, College of William and Mary,
1998-1999
Vice President of American Studies Graduate Student Organization, College of William
and Mary, 1997-1998