HIST 3814 week 2 notes

Listen:

* With the final product of digital history projects, it can often be hard to see who contributed and the hard work involved in digitizing material and making it ready to analyze
* A lot of labour in digital history is hidden
  + It’s bad history to do this
  + Loose info about scholarly choices that went into creating material
* Take notes, screenshots, error messages, and put these in your “notes”
* Then, reflect
  + Who is paying for work?
  + How is it getting online?
  + What does it mean to put the labour of digital history onto the audience?
  + Contextualize your work in the kinds of history you’ve already done
* Transcribe for the multicultural history society of Ontario
  + I don’t know who the interviewers are, their background, why they choose to ask certain questions and not others

Making such bargain: Transcribe Bentham and the quality and cost-effectiveness of crowdsourced transcription

* Crowd-sourced (volunteer) transcription
* Tagging, identifying, text-correcting, annotating, and transcribing information creates new data
* Volunteers mostly do it to contribute to something which will be of enduring benefit to others
  + Less about persuasion and more of a call to action
* Variables that tell the researchers about the quality of the volunteer or the work that they were transcribing
* How coding can help with mapping patterns of transcription that help to gather data about both the transcriber and the manuscript
* Also dependent on the accuracy of the code/coding language (in this case, TEI markup)
* Data can be used to evaluate the success of the transcription method/software (Transcription Desk)
  + This did not come free, but can now be used for other projects and institutions (pg 479)
* Cost-effective in the long-term, especially for longer manuscripts
* Volunteers need to be interested in the stuff that they’re transcribing

Transcription maximized; expense minimized? Crowdsourcing and editing The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham

* Encode features of the manuscripts with TEI-compliant Extensible Mark-up Language (XML)
* Transcription Desk: interface that hosted the manuscript images and transcription tool
  + How the interface facilitates ease of transcription and volunteer experience
* Long-term curation and preservation of transcripts and manuscripts
* Digital publication is an asset
* People who transcribed a significant number of manuscripts were in the minority
  + Need to motivate volunteers
  + Sense of contributing to greater good
  + Interest in the subject
  + Enjoyment of the process
* lack of time discourages volunteers
* issues with transcription desk
* difficulty reading Bentham’s writing
* staff must promptly acknowledge volunteers
* a success?
  + Did not quicken the pace of transcription (up to when the article was written)
  + Employees spent their time moderating, responding to volunteers, publicity, testing the interface rather than transcribing
  + Initial cost of establishing the program would be offset by future savings
  + Mutual respect and trust with volunteers
  + Crowdsourced transcription projects need to have a sense of longevity—no threat that grant money will run out or something and the project will have to stop
  + *Transcribe Bentham* has successfully publicized the field, more than any other project before it
  + For volunteers, there should be less emphasis on encoding so that they can concentrate on deciphering the manuscripts
  + Exciting implications for future crowdsourced transcription projects