Storytelling with Mapping: KnightLab StoryMap

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HIST 5237: Issues and Methods of Pubic History

Prof. Angel David Nieves

Fall 2021

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Workshop Agenda

- Learn about StoryMap as a mode of conveying data and content
- Best practices and questions to consider before creating your StoryMap
- Steps for using Knight Lab's StoryMap
- Start building!

Slides, handouts, and data available at:

https://bit.ly/diti-fall2021-nieves-storymap

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Learning Objectives

- Articulate the choices you make when telling a story using a map
- Follow a step-by-step guide for creating, saving, and publishing maps using KnightLab's StoryMap
- Upload data into StoryMap, including location information, images, and text
- Navigate StoryMap's map markers and location-finding system

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What is a "story map"?

Telling a **story** using **maps**!

"You combine authoritative maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content. They make it easy to harness the power of maps and geography to tell your story."

- ESRI Story Maps Website

Example Projects Using Maps to Tell Stories

- "[Boston Parks and Playgrounds: Community Scan](#)": uses a mix of textual, image, and geo-location data to tell a story about playgrounds in Boston's neighborhoods.
- "[Mapping Shared Spaces: A Visual History of Boston's Black and Jewish Communities](#)": presents the story of migration of Boston religious communities by following the changing locations of places of worship.
- "[Commonwealth: A Offshore wind hub](#)": uses textual, image, video and geo-locations data to showcase key infrastructure of Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's (MassCEC) Offshore Wind Energy Initiative.

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StoryMap best practices

- Think carefully about the **audience** you are trying to reach with your map. This will impact your language, the order of your points, and the media that you choose.
- Think also about the **tone of the map**: the default for StoryMap can be very upbeat and informal, and that may not match the content you are sharing (think, for example, about renaming the button that says "start exploring")
- **Test your map** after you have created it, to make sure that all the narrative points flow and that the language is clear and concise

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Optional: Spreadsheet Template

Make a copy of the StoryMap template below and use it to fill in the different sites you want to map, images you want to include, and so on.

Important: make a copy, do not edit the main template!!
(Go to File > Make a copy)

StoryMap Spreadsheet Template

—Template based on the StoryMap Spreadsheet Template created by Molly Brown, Reference and Outreach Archivist, Northeastern University Library.

Spreadsheet data collection

fx | http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126

	Slide #	Site Name	Site Location	Image URL/File Location	Image Credit	Image Caption	Headline	Historical Profile/First Person Narrative	Citation(s)	Additional Media	Additional Media Caption & Credit
2	Title Slide	n/a	n/a	http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126	Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections	Back Bay Fens, Boston, Mass.	Walking the Emerald Necklace	This is an introduction to the project that will continue on.			
3	Site 1	Back Bay Fens Community Gardens	42.344888, -71.093221	http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20157723	Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections	Community garden in Back Bay Fens.	Back Bay Community Gardens	Two men tend community garden in the Back Bay Fens. A public water building can be seen on the left. The Back Bay Fens (also called The Fens, or Fens) is a freshwater marsh and lagoon area within Boston's larger Emerald Necklace park system.			

1. The slide number can serve as the order in which your sites appear on your map and the site name can be used to label sites on your map

2. The site location is used to identify a point on your map where the site is physically located (address or coordinates)

3. The image URL/File location is useful in keeping track of images of sites. Always credit your images to indicate their origin. Also include a caption describing your image

4. The headline can serve as the official title or label of your site. Including a narrative provides more context as to why your site is important.

5. Don't forget to cite your sources! Also, you may want to include additional media related to your site (e.g. newspaper clippings, additional photos, etc.)

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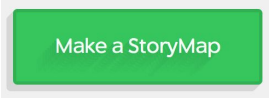### NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks
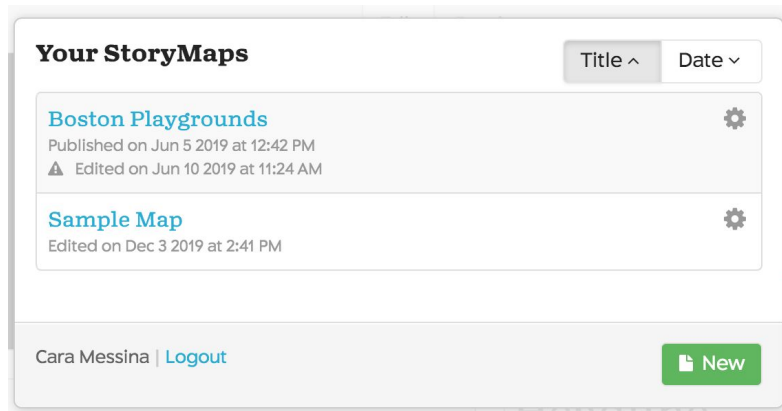
Adding to StoryMap

Once you're happy with the organization and order of the items in your spreadsheet, you can copy from these into StoryMap, following the directions above for adding images, locations, and so on.

This can help you stay organized and keep track of your resources. It's a quick way to storyboard your project, making sure that your flow between locations makes sense, your writing is consistent, and you have the right amount of research and info at each location.

Create a StoryMap

- Go to https://storymap.knightlab.com/
- Click "Make a StoryMap"   [Make a StoryMap]
- Either create a new account or sign in through Google
- Once you're signed in,
  click "New Map" (once you have
  created your map, it will be there
  for you to work on)
- Name your project

Your StoryMaps   Title ^   Date ˅

Boston Playgrounds
Published on Jun 5 2019 at 12:42 PM
⚠ Edited on Jun 10 2019 at 11:24 AM

Sample Map
Edited on Dec 3 2019 at 2:41 PM

Cara Messina | Logout   📄 New

Your StoryMap

Overall options (like changing map layout)

SAVE OFFEN!

Preview your slides

Preview the geographic points in all of your slides

Title and content of your text box

Color or image for text box background

Uploading photos or other media! Document what you upload

Check out and add new slides here
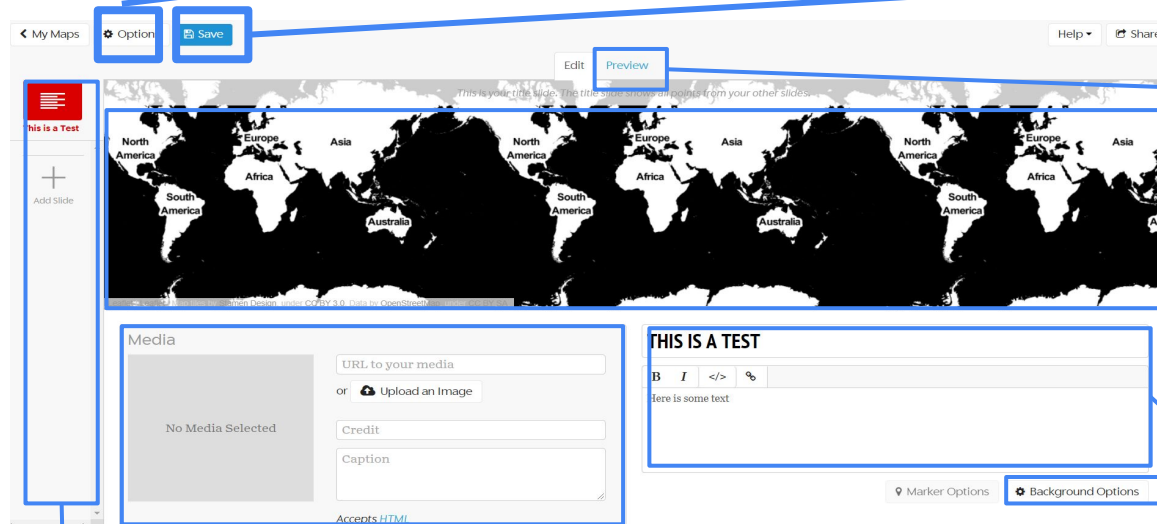
Slides, or map markers

Each slide is a different marker point on your map/image. Each slide contains:

- Title and text. The text box reads basic HTML.
- A background image/color.
- A map marker, which can be placed using Google Maps locations or by placing the marker manually.
- Media: images, videos, and sound files can be uploaded. Since only *one* media file can be uploaded per slide, you can use the text box's HTML to integrate an image or another media type.
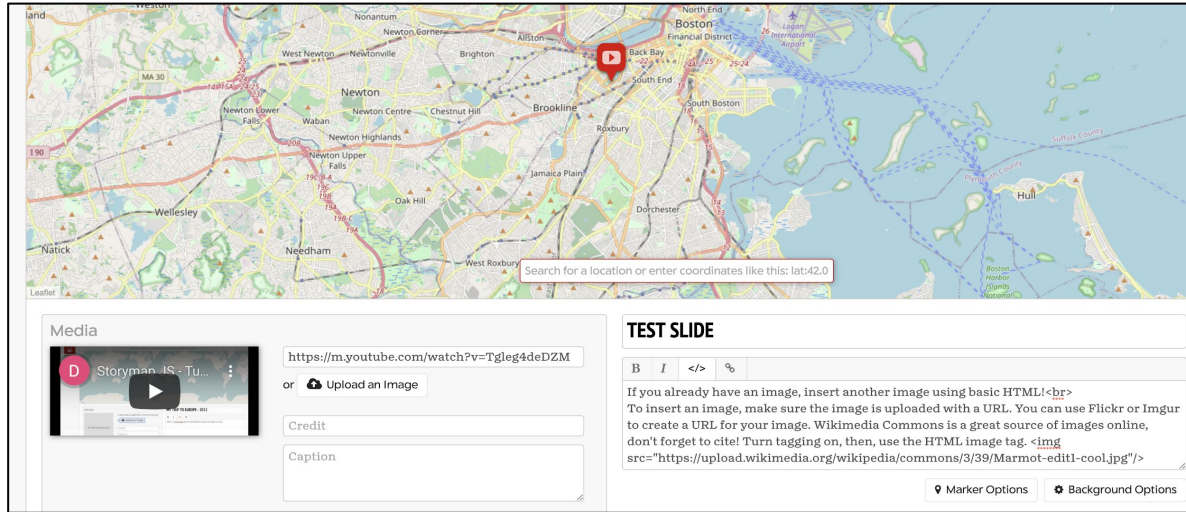
Add A Location
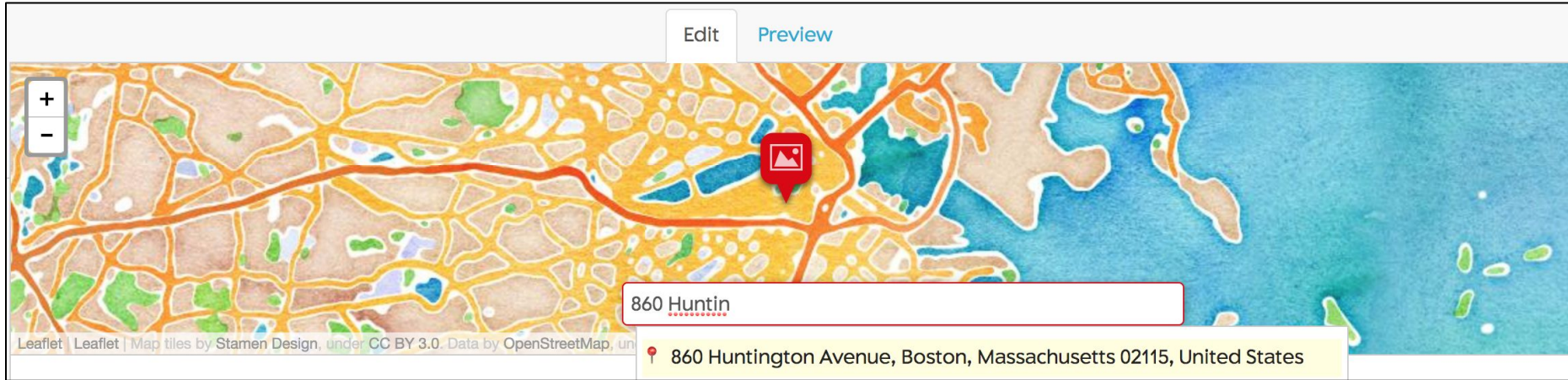
KnightLab StoryMap uses **Google Maps** to locate addresses

StoryMap, however, does **not** always recognize place names; you might need to know the **address** or location of particular structures

You can also **drag and drop the map markers** to the specific location

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Add Media and Images to a Slide

Use "media" to upload files. You can upload an image or put a **URL** of an image OR a video (like a YouTube video). If you want to include your own video, you will first have to upload it to YouTube and copy that link.

If you have an image or a video in the "media" section, but want to include an image in the **text**, you can! The text box reads basic HTML.

1. Click the </> button (turn on HTML)
2. Get a URL of your image. Wikimedia Commons is a great source of images. Make sure to use the embed file code--don't forget to cite!
3. Use the HTML tag to insert the image.
4. Check the "Preview" to see the image

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Adding Audio to StoryMap

- Use "media" to upload audio files
- StoryMap can upload URLs from SoundCloud directly through the "media" section
- If you have your own sound recording, upload it to SoundCloud and use the URL to embed it into your StoryMap
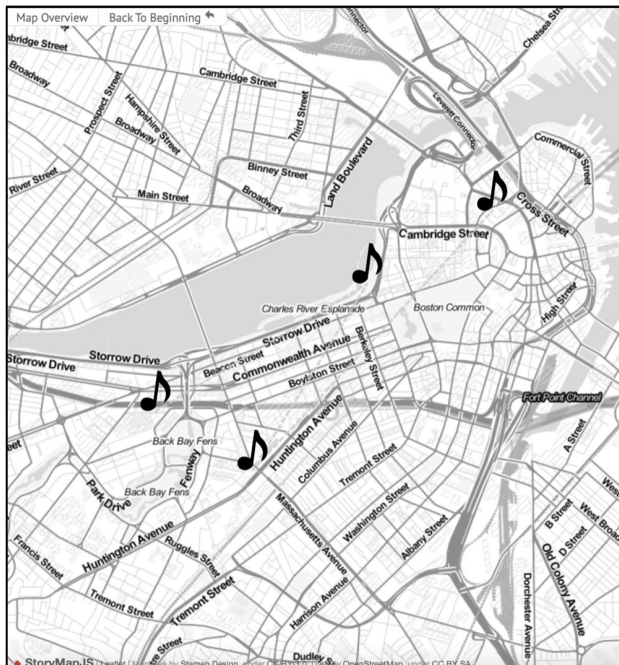
StoryMap Demo

—Demo Map Link

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A Note on Save States

StoryMap does not keep older versions of your project, so once you make and save changes, **you cannot retrieve a previous version**. You can also accidentally overwrite new content if you have your StoryMap open in multiple browser tabs or windows at once. This is one reason why it is a good idea to plan out your StoryMap in a separate document: if you lose progress, you will have your content saved somewhere else.

Hands-On Demo

1. Identify **your** hands-on practice and troubleshooting needs—this practice time should work for **you**!
2. Practice setting up **map markers**
3. Practice adding **video or images** to your markers
4. Try using HTML to embed an image to your map

Thank you!

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If you have any questions, contact us at **nulab.info@gmail.com**

Have questions? Schedule an appointment with us! **https://calendly.com/diti-nu**

Link to Online Materials: **https://bit.ly/diti-fall2021-nieves-storymap**

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