

100.450 History Lab: Making Maps of Mexico

Spring 2021

Tuesdays, 3:00-5:30pm EST

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TA Alex Young (ayoun112@jh.edu)

Class Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/95823262067>

Meeting ID: 958 2326 2067

Passcode: 273120

Office hours:

Thursdays 12:30-2:00 EST

Sign up at <https://calendly.com/lurtz/office-hours>

For questions about data, GIS, and maps you can see the library [GIS Guide](#) or reach out to:

Data Services, <https://dataservices.library.jhu.edu>

Email: dataservices@jhu.edu

Course Description

Making Maps of Mexico is an experiment in collective, collaborative research and learning. This syllabus is a flexible outline for how the semester will progress. The course is designed to help you learn something about Mexican history in the nineteenth century and something about the basics of qualitative data management and map making.

The course is based around a set of agricultural surveys conducted across Mexico in 1899. We will use the spreadsheets municipal officials filled out to think about the history of data, the history of rural life, the history of globalization, and the potential and the problems inherent in digital humanities.

Your work in this class will contribute to an ongoing project whose aim is a digital atlas that makes this historical data widely available to scholars in an interactive, online format. Our conversations and work will help shape that project, and you will all receive credit for your contributions when it is published.

This class will operate largely in Microsoft Teams rather than on Blackboard. Blackboard has the basics and can direct you to the Microsoft Teams page. Within Teams, the General channel houses files and info for the course as a whole, and each week has its own channel with that week's work. Also in Teams, you each have a OneNote notebook that houses your work in progress and assignments as well as a Collaboration space for shared writing. Assignments make clear where your writing and data should go and when to move it from one place to another. We will go over this on the first day of class.

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the major questions of turn-of-the-century Mexican history
- Discuss some of the potential benefits and difficulties of digital humanities projects and public facing scholarship
- Conduct primary and secondary research in digital archives and libraries
- Manage and standardize qualitative data in tabular databases
- Create and manage metadata
- Make basic maps, shapefiles, and feature layers in ArcGIS using historical data and images
- Create and present a StoryMap

Assignments:

Participation (20%)

This class is a collaborative research exercise and participation is the only thing that will make it work. While Zoom is not the most conducive to casual, easy flowing conversations, we will work collectively to make the best of it. I will not require you to have your cameras on for reasons of privacy, but I still expect everyone to take part.

Constructive discussion is a skill in and of itself and one that we will work on in this class. If you are in need of advice on how to gain confidence in asking questions, responding to colleagues, or moving the conversation forward, please reach out.

Participation for this class also entails keeping up with the group activities and documents in the collaboration space in OneNote and Teams. Weekly assignments indicate where and what to write and read in these spaces. We will also use the chat features of Zoom and Teams.

Above all, this is a space of shared learning., I leave the final word on this to Dr. Miriam Posner of UCLA's Program in Digital Humanities, an expert in the field:



<https://twitter.com/miriamkp/status/1349095892700205057?s=21>

Datasets and Attendant Process Notes (15%)

Final Cleaned Data due in General Data Folder March 2, 2021

- Collaborate with your colleagues to establish norms for cleaning our data
- Clean and standardize your two datasets in accord with our norms
- Demonstrate understanding of Open Refine

- Record the steps you take to clean your data in your process journal
- Produce metadata for your datasets and add to your final assignments tab

ArcGIS Maps and Attendant Process Notes (10%)

Final Standardized Maps due in ArcGIS Online Group April 6, 2021

- Collaborate with your colleagues to establish norms for mapping our data
- Demonstrate understanding of analysis tools in ArcGIS Online
- Create the following maps in ArcGIS Online
 - Map of all the municipalities in your district/state
 - Map of number of properties
 - Map of total size and median size of properties
 - Map of total value and median value of properties
 - One additional map of your choice
- Record your steps you take and the decisions you have made in your process journal
- Produce metadata for your maps and include with your maps in ArcGIS

Shapefiles, Municipal Matching, and Attendant Process Notes (10%)

Final Shapefiles due in ArcGIS Online Group April 6, 2021

- Demonstrate understanding of georeferencing, polygon creation, and feature layer creation in ArcGIS Online
- Create shape files of districts from 1899 Atlas Metódico maps
- Match historical place names to current place names and create a protocol for bringing into alignment
- Record your steps and the decisions you have made in your process journal
- Produce metadata for your files and include in ArcGIS upload

Secondary Source Annotations & Bibliography (10%)

Annotations due March 16 & 23, Bibliography due April 13, 2021, both in your notebook

- Find two secondary sources related to your datasets and write a brief (300-500) annotation of each. Each annotation should be a short summary highlighting key arguments and explaining how the piece applies to your data.
- Compile a bibliography of 7-10 secondary works (including your annotated works) that you will use in producing your StoryMap. You can include texts assigned for this class, but they will not count toward your total. The bibliography should be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style and should include a short description of your planned StoryMap at the top.

Primary Source Collection (10%)

Primary Source Collection due April 20, 2021 in your notebook

- Collect 5-7 primary sources of any sorts for inclusion in your StoryMap.
- Assemble the sources in your OneNote notebook with proper citations.

StoryMap (25%)

Draft due April 27 to ArcGIS Online Group; final StoryMap due May 5, 2021

- Create a StoryMap that draws on your datasets, maps, and sources to tell a story or make an argument about a topic related to the materials we have examined in this class.

- Your StoryMap can be about Mexican agriculture in the late nineteenth century, the history of data and statistics, the field of digital humanities, or anything else that you think makes good use of the materials you have spent time with during this course.
- Include at least:
 - 3 maps and/or data visualizations
 - 3 primary source images
 - 1 embedded feature
 - Text appropriate to communicate your argument or story
- Demonstrate that you can do the following:
 - Communicate effectively using combination of words and text
 - Incorporate maps and data into a presentation
 - Properly cite and link to relevant research and source material

Policies

The following policies are designed to facilitate an accessible, equitable, collaborative, and productive semester for us all. These are strange times and I ask that we all be as accommodating, patient, and understanding as we can be while still moving forward with the work of this class. All that said, being productive in the midst of a pandemic/coup/crisis is a lot to ask and sometimes too much (see [here](#)). Please communicate with me if you need additional time, flexibility, or help.

During our Zoom sessions, please try to stay attentive to the discussion and avoid the temptations of texting, emailing, shopping, etc. We will record Zoom sessions to ensue accessibility for all, especially those called away by illness or care responsibilities, and they will be posted to the Blackboard site but not circulated beyond. We will also make use of the chat function in Zoom and the discussion board on Teams to provide multiple means of sharing thoughts, ideas, and questions. We will collectively establish a set of values and norms to guide discussion in all of these venues in the first week.

If you or we all experience problems with connectivity during class, please have patience. Let me know by email if you are having issues, and if our group as a whole is unable to join Zoom, please pull up the class Teams site and we'll try there.

A number of our sessions will take place with the support of librarians and data specialists. Some of these sessions require asynchronous preparatory workshops. Please be considerate of our guests' time and come to class having completed the suggested seminars. Really, this consideration goes for your classmates and me as well: this class only works if we all do what we can to show up for each other.

Email and office hours

I respond to email during regular business hours (9am – 5 pm), Monday thru Friday. Allow 24 hours for a response. Please use proper formatting and address (I am Professor or Dr. Lurtz) when writing your email. It's good practice.

Come to my office hours – it's what they're there for. You do not need to have a specific question or concern, just come chat about how things are going. Office hours, like everything, are on Zoom. There's a waiting room, and I'll see people in order of arrival.

Late work and drafts

Extensions are available, but only if requested in advance of the due date. Unexcused late assignments will be docked a grade for each day they are late (e.g., an A becomes an A- becomes a B+). Everything for this class should live on our Teams site, which is cloud based, but if you're working somewhere else, please back up your computer and use and use a cloud storage service like Dropbox, Google Drive, or OneDrive – hard drive crashes do not excuse missing work.

I will read drafts, so long as they are received with ample time for comment and revision before the deadline. Students should plan on attending office hours to talk about drafts.

Accommodations

Accommodations will be made for those who need them. Please come talk with me early in the semester to discuss your needs. Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class should also obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Mental Health

Many students experience anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges. Please be in touch with me if you need an extension, reschedule, or other adaptation of the course. If you would like to speak to a counselor, please visit the campus Counseling Center. Information is available on the Counseling Center's website: <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter>

Academic Integrity

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student conduct (or designee) by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 410-516-8208 or via email at integrity@jhu.edu. For more information, see the Homewood Student Affairs site on academic ethics: (<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/student-conduct/academic-ethics-undergraduates>) or the e-catalog entry on the undergraduate academic ethics board: (<http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/#UAEB>)

Course Schedule

Intro

Week 1 – January 26

Assignment due:

- Familiarize yourself with the syllabus and OneNote/Teams interface

Workshop:

- Fill out survey, explore survey results, and think what they tell us about data collection
- What is digital humanities?
 - Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0
(https://www.humanitiesblast.com/manifesto/Manifesto_V2.pdf)
 - <http://whatisdigitalhumanities.com/>
- Explore successful digital humanities project – Mapping Inequality
- Collaborative reading of
Lisa Spiro, “‘This is Why We Fight’: Defining the Values of the Digital Humanities.” In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, eds. Matt Gold and Lauren Klein. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012.
- Create our own values and norms for this class

DATA

Week 2 - February 2

Assignment:

- Your Folder (Teams):
 - Create a folder for yourself in the General Files tab
 - Pick 2 datasets from the General data folder, note your choices in the Available Data spreadsheet, and move your datasets and images into your folder
- OneNote – Works in Progress tab: write a basic profile (with citations and links to maps if possible) of your districts/states and think about how to formulate a survey and spreadsheet that would capture this information for all of our datasets

Reading:

- Primary sources documenting production of surveys from AGN (translations and originals on Teams in files for the week, labeled Fomento.Expo.C67.Exp7)
- Joseph, Gilbert M. and Jürgen Buchenau. “Porfirian Modernization and its Costs.” In *Mexico's Once and Future Revolution*, 15-36. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.
 - If you want more on this, also read Katz, Friedrich. “The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato, 1867–1910.” Chapter. In *Mexico since Independence*, edited by Leslie Bethell, 49–124. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Workshop:

- Collaborative reading of
Tenorio, Mauricio. “Mexican Statistics, Maps, Patents, and Governance.” In *Mexico at the World's Fair*, 125-141. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

- Managing qualitative data
 - Build a survey/spreadsheet to capture the basic info on our datasets
 - Enter basic info into group document
 - Compare original spreadsheets, transcription, and cleaned up data for sample dataset - Aguascalientes
 - What problems are we facing as we try to move from data to digital interface?

Week 3 - February 9

Assignment:

- OneNote – Process Notes Tab:
 - Identify major hurdles to making the two data sets you have selected ingestible and comparable that you've noticed from a first reading
 - Write down some initial ideas for the kinds of information you want to make visible/available and explain why
- Teams Posts for week: Summarize the above and start some discussion about data possibilities
- Workshop prep: Data & GIS Documentation module (see tab in Teams)

Reading:

- Scott, Joan Wallach. "A Statistical Representation of Work." In *Gender and the Politics of History*, 113-138. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

Workshop (with Data Services librarians):

- Cleaning and standardizing tabular data using Open Refine

Week 4 – February 16

Assignment:

- Your Folder: Start cleaning up your data using the tools from last week
- Teams Posts for week: Post a summary of what you've done so far and what problems you're facing, especially those based on differences between places

Reading:

- Escobar Ohmstede, Antonio and Matthew Butler, "Introduction: Transitions and Closures in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Mexican Agrarian History." In *Mexico in Transition: New Perspectives on Mexican Agrarian History, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries/México y sus transiciones: reconsideraciones sobre la historia agraria mexicana, siglos XIX y XX*, eds. Antonio Escobar Ohmstede and Matthew Butler. México, D.F.: CIESAS, 2013.

Workshop:

- How do we bring Escobar Ohmstede & Butler to bear on our data?
- Problem solving data management – what challenges are we all facing and how should we address them? Do we want to redistribute work of data cleaning?

Week 5 - February 23

Assignment:

- Working Group - Come up with norms and code for OpenRefine for your group's assigned columns/tasks and post to [Shared OpenRefine norms \(Web view\)](#) (this is now in this week's Notes tab)
- OneNote – Works in Progress: Narrative of what you & your working group did, what worked and what you're still working on, what kinds of information that might get flattened you want to keep track of
- Teams Posts: Summary of work you and your group did (this can be a post for your whole group rather than everyone reiterating the same thing) highlighting problems you're continuing to face and would like help with and possibilities you see going forward
 - Also, post as you work if you find things you think other groups might need to address or find useful

Reading:

- Johnson, Jessica Marie. "Markup Bodies: Black [Life] Studies and Slavery [Death] Studies at the Digital Crossroads." *Social Text* 36:4 (December 2018): 57–79.
- Data Visualization intro from Stanford's Tooling Up for Digital Humanities
http://toolingup.stanford.edu/?page_id=1247

Workshop:

- Discuss decisions you made about how to reconcile differences in original data set
- Decide which approaches we want to adopt as a class and clarify how we will all modify our data to normalize it
- Breakout groups to examine other data visualization projects online
- Discuss ideas for what kinds of data visualizations we could potentially create with the data we have

MAPS

Week 6 – March 2

Assignment:

- OpenRefine JSON Code document (Week 6 files): Paste the JSON code for your assigned columns into the document by Monday 3/1
- Your Folder: Bring your data into alignment with norms we set previous week, export from OpenRefine as a csv file, and upload csv files for each of your datasets to your folder. Name them something new (like Nayarit1.Cleaned) to distinguish them from the originals.
- OneNote –Final Assignments tab: Write a codebook for the columns you generated JSON code for - see modules from Week 3 for examples. I will use these to create a CodeBook document in general files. Follow this codebook with a narrative of your data normalization process, challenges you faced, decisions you made, and possibilities you think could be pursued. This will be useful for you later when putting together your final StoryMap project.
- Teams Posts: Post any questions you have for the GIS librarians and any thoughts about possibilities of ArcGIS

Reading:

- White, Richard. "What is Spatial History?" Stanford Spatial History Lab
Website: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29>

Workshop prep:

- Intro to ArcGIS Online (see Teams for links)

Workshop (with Data Services librarians):

- Intro to georeferencing, bringing in, and creating data in ArcGIS Online

Week 7 – March 9

Assignment:

- ArcGIS Online:
 - Import your data to ArcGIS online and see what problems pop up as you play around with tools introduced last week
 - Start creating shape files for districts in your states
- OneNote – Process Notes tab: Document your process
- Teams Posts: Reflect on how the Berry reading makes you think about making maps out of this data. See prompts on Teams. Also post Ideas for maps to build, problems you're encountering, municipality matching strategies

Reading (in Perusall):

- Berry, Mary Elizabeth. "Maps are Strange." In *Japan in Print*, 54-103. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Workshop (with Data Services librarians):

- Intro to geoprocessing tools in ArcGIS Online, sharing web maps and data; troubleshooting Q&A

Week 8 – March 16

Assignment:

- ArcGIS Online: Continue work on shape files and maps (see assignment)
- OneNote – Process Notes tab: Continue Process Notes
- Teams Posts: Reflect on the ways in which our work does and does not overlap with the work being done by Craib's cartographers. See prompts on Teams.

Reading (In Perusall):

- Craib, Raymond. "Situated Knowledges: The Geographic Exploration Commission (I)" and "Spatial Progressions: The Geographic Exploration Commission (II)." In *Cartographic Mexico*, 127-192. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Workshop:

- Discuss Berry and Craib readings and how they might shape our work.
- Share progress on maps and problems you've encountered
- Share secondary sources and discuss

Week 9 – March 23

Assignment:

- ArcGIS Group: Have both datasets and both summary tables uploaded, along with whatever progress you've made on mapping them. Have your district polygons uploaded if possible.
- OneNote – StoryMap Ideas: Idea for final project (in no way binding); 2 citations for secondary readings related to your final project idea

- OneNote – Process Notes tab: Ongoing Notes on how you're mapping, what you're summarizing, etc.

Reading:

- Find 2 secondary readings on your potential final project topic
- This [Zotero library](#) should provide a starting point for secondary sources related to rural Mexico, and this [library guide](#) is another good place to look.

Workshop:

- Talk about Berry & Craib readings
- Optional problem solving space for ArcGIS maps

Week 10 – Break!

STORIES

Week 11 – April 6

Assignment:

- ArcGIS Group: Bring maps into alignment with class norms and add to class group
- OneNote - Final Assignments Tab: Guide to your maps and how I should navigate them. Narrative of decisions you made and what you were able to do, as well as what you haven't yet figured out to do.
- Teams Posts: Share links to two Storymaps you like with a brief description of what makes them successful

Reading:

- Browse the [ESRI Storymaps Gallery](#) for examples you find inspiring

Workshop:

- Intro to Storymaps (Data Services librarians)

Week 12 – April 13

Assignment:

- OneNote – Final Assignments tab: Annotated secondary source bibliography (see guidelines on course website)
- OneNote - StoryMap Ideas tab: Work on contexts and text for Storymap
- Teams Posts: Reflect on Putnam piece and our current reliance on digital archives.

Reading:

- Lara Putnam, “The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast” *American Historical Review* 121:2 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/121.2.377>.

Workshop:

- Looking for digitized primary sources (session with Latin America librarian, Joshua Everett)

Week 13 – April 20

Assignment:

- OneNote – StoryMaps Ideas tab: Primary source collection – bibliography and files
- ArcGIS Online Group: Work on Storymap
- Teams Posts: Share your finds and frustrations in looking for primary sources

Workshop:

- Share primary sources folks have found
- Troubleshoot Storymaps

Week 14 – April 27

Assignment:

- ArcGIS Group: Storymap draft due

Workshop:

- Present and workshop Storymaps