

HUMANITIES SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION

Philadelphia Negro GIS

University of Pennsylvania School of Design

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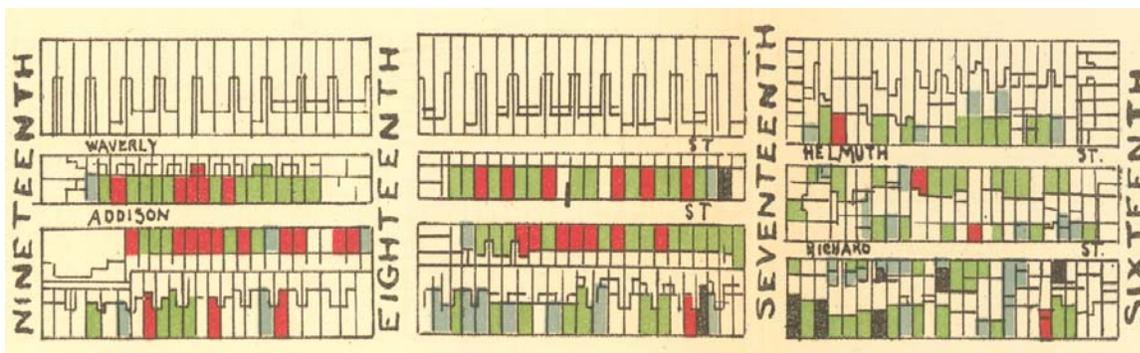
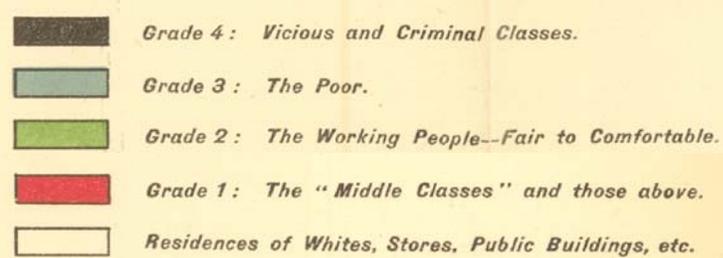
Institution

The University of Pennsylvania's School of Design had graduate programs in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Fine Arts, Digital Media, Visual Studies, Historic Preservation, and City and Regional Planning. The Department of City and Regional Planning is the leader in teaching geographic information systems (GIS) on campus and is home to the Philadelphia Negro GIS project.

Project Description

The Philadelphia Negro GIS project aims to recreate the survey W.E.B. DuBois completed in 1897 of a 60-block area in downtown Philadelphia using archival data and GIS technology. DuBois's *The Philadelphia Negro* is recognized as a classic work of urban history and social science for its methodological innovations and as an invaluable source of information about African American life at the turn of the 20th century. In touching on race-based housing and economic discrimination, religion, education, and crime, this study offers a tremendous framework for teaching students about many of the critical issues in American history. By integrating DuBois's survey data with information from historical censuses, fire insurance maps, photographs, newspaper articles, and public records, this project aims to support new scholarship and the development of a unique, publicly-accessible interactive mapping system for teaching high school and college students.

The image shows a small piece of DuBois's class map from the original color version of The Philadelphia Negro. DuBois was among the first to suggest that there was a class structure among African Americans.



The main humanities theme for this project will be the history of racial discrimination in housing, education, and employment. Primary attention will be given to the era DuBois studied, the late 1900s when many black Philadelphians of all classes were confined to the narrow Seventh Ward. A secondary focus will be urban change during the 20th Century. Most African

Americans have since moved from that area—now part of some of Philadelphia’s most expensive Center City neighborhoods including Rittenhouse Square—as it experienced urban renewal, gentrification, and nearly had a cross-town expressway built along its southern edge during the 1960s and 1970s. The ways in which government programs and the built environment have been used to contain and displace people of color is a major part of 20th century urban history, not just Philadelphia history or African American history.

Data collection is expected to take two years (January 2006-December 2007). As that phase of the project is completed, the online mapping system will be developed in collaboration with partner high school and college students and teachers. We also hope to develop a walking tour using hand-held PC computers equipped with wireless and GPS technology so the digital data can be accessed while walking through the area. Finally, we hope this project will lead to an exhibit at one of the local history museums. This project is being conducted in conjunction with the GeoHistory Network, a Melon Foundation-funded project led by the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries (PACSCL). Partnerships with the Athenaeum, Atwater Kent Museum, African American Museum of Philadelphia, and Philadelphia Historical Society are also being explored.

Amy Hillier, the principal investigator of this project, is an assistant professor in City and Regional Planning. She is currently working with three research assistants (one graduate and two undergraduate students) this spring to begin the GIS and data collection work. She has applied for two research grants to support this project: the University of Pennsylvania Research Foundation will make a decision by the end of January; the National Endowment for Humanities will make a decision by the end of March. Summer 2006 work on this project is not contingent on those funds, but should either grant be awarded, there will be a larger team working on this.

Description of Work

Because this is such a large research undertaking, the Humanities Intern would have the opportunity to work on several aspects of the project and work with the supervisor to determine the best assignments based on his/her interests and skills. The most time-consuming part of the project, which we are starting this winter, involves collection of 1900 U.S. Census manuscript data for the approximately 3,500 households within the study area. The Humanities Intern would be expected to spend about half of his/her time collecting these data from microfiche records at the Van Pelt Library. The images below show snapshots of the original census manuscript data (*above*) and resulting table (*below*).

TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES.

SCHEDULE No. 1.—POPULATION.

State Pennsylvania County Philadelphia Supervisor's District No. 137 Enumeration District No. 137

Township or other division of county Center City Name of Institution X

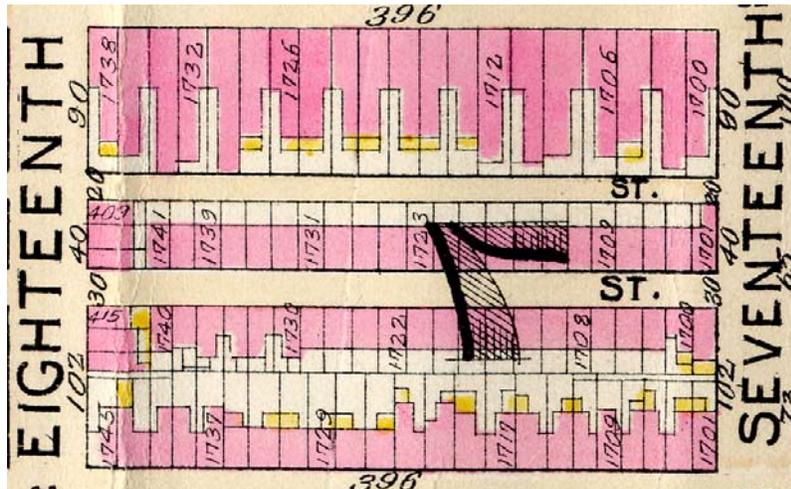
Name of incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division Center City Ward of city, 137

Enumerated by me on the 26 day of June, 1900. William E. Calver Enumerator.

LOCATION	NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	NATIVITY			CITIZENSHIP	OCCUPATION, TRADE, OR PROFESSION	EDUCATION				VALUED IF BORN ABROAD
				Foreign born	Foreign born	Foreign born			Not attended	Attended	Completed	Advanced	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1774	Center City												
1775	Center City												
1776	Center City												
1777	Center City												
1778	Center City												

Last name	First Name	Relation	Race	AGE	BIRTH	Father	Mother	Occupation	Read	Write	English
Grimmage	Nathan	Head	B	57	PA	DE	DE	Cook	Y	Y	Y
Grimmage	Margaret	Wife	B	45	MD	MD	MD	Dressmaker	Y	Y	Y
Grimmage	Kay	Daughter	B	20	PA	PA	MD	Dressmaker	Y	Y	Y
Grimmage	Duke	Son	B	13	PA	PA	MD	At School	Y	Y	Y
Grimmage	Madeline	Daughter	B	12	PA	PA	MD	At School	Y	Y	Y
Phinnizia	Katherin	Lodger	B	48	SC	SC	SC	Dressmaker	Y	Y	Y
Turner	P.	Lodger	B	28	MD	MD	MD	Electrician	Y	Y	Y
Newman	William	Lodger	B	23	VA	VA	VA	Cook	Y	Y	Y
Turner	Bessie	Sister	B	21	MD	MD	MD	Servant	Y	Y	Y

Other work the Intern could undertake: design of a website and graphic materials for marketing the project; locate and scan historical photographs, locate newspaper articles from the time period; research public health, crime, housing, migration, and individual religious, business, and cultural institutions; develop a database for managing the census, photographs, newspaper, and archival data; and build the GIS map layers needed for the project. Everyone who works on the project is expected to read *The Philadelphia Negro*.



This 1895 Bromley fire insurance map will provide the basis for the GIS map layers to which we will attach the census and archival data. GIS work will include digitizing this map and linking the addresses to those in the census database.

The two undergraduate students working on the project during the spring 2006 semester will spend approximately half of their time collecting census data and the other half conducting research based on their interests. One, who is an experienced photographer, is scouring local special collections for historical photographs and taking new photographs of the buildings and areas that appear in the historical photographs. The other, who completed a senior thesis on the spatial distribution of prostitution in Philadelphia during the 20th Century, is searching for address-level data on saloons, hotels, and other institutions to help illustrate the themes DuBois addressed in his chapters on crime and pauperism. The Humanities Intern would be invited to develop a similar research area.

Necessary Skill

A team of students, staff, and faculty with a range of different skills and interests will be needed to complete this project. In the short-term, we would value someone who brings one of the several different skills to the project and a willingness to learn new ones. Archival research experience would be very helpful—the ability to review large amounts of data to find that needle in the haystack, patience, ability to take careful notes and build good relationships with special collection staff. GIS knowledge—the ability to digitize and edit map layers in ArcView—database skills (any software) and web design experience (any software) would also be helpful. The

Humanities Intern would definitely have the opportunity to learn about archival research and a limited amount of GIS. Depending upon the other graduate and undergraduate students working on the project this summer, the intern might also have the opportunity to learn some database and web design skills.

The intern must be a team player who is willing to both learn from others and teach others. A background or interest in Philadelphia, urban history, racial discrimination, and W.E.B. DuBois is also important.

Work Schedule

Individual supervision and team meetings will take place weekdays during business hours (9:00 am to 5:00 pm), as will the bulk of the work on this project. Many of the special collections in Philadelphia are only open during these hours. However, the census manuscripts are available at Penn's Van Pelt Library which is open weekends and evenings during the summer, so some of the intern's work could be done then.

Special Challenges

Data collection can be tedious. The 1900 Census manuscripts are difficult to read because they are written in script and, in some cases, are water-damaged. Collecting data carefully will require great patience. In collecting such detailed data, it may be difficult for the student intern to see the forest among the trees—to understand the value of each record and the patterns that emerge. Individual supervision and team meetings will be aimed at continuously showing the value in this data collection and the progress our team is making together.

Special Rewards

A summer internship working on this project should serve as an excellent introduction to what academic research is like—exciting and creative but also tedious and slow. This could be particularly valuable for a student considering graduate school in the humanities or social sciences. Being part of a team of undergraduate and graduate students, each making their own contributions to the project, should make this work more enjoyable than working alone. And being in the City of Philadelphia during the summer, with all of the cultural opportunities, has its own rewards.

Supervision

Amy Hillier will provide individual supervision to the Humanities Intern on a weekly basis, at the very least. She will also lead weekly team meetings that would include the intern and other students working on the project over the summer.

Haverford College Symposium

In addition to teaching her own classes, Amy Hillier is a frequent guest lecturer in social work and urban studies classes at Penn other local colleges where she talks about historical GIS and her research on mortgage redlining in Philadelphia. She also regularly participates on panels at professional history meetings. She is eager to talk about the Philadelphia Negro GIS project and would welcome the opportunity to do so at Haverford College, either as a guest lecturer in a class or as part of a panel.