VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Digital Humanities

INFORMATION ONLY

DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Kathleen Woodward will provide a brief overview of how new computing technologies and new communication media are transforming research and scholarship in the humanities and will offer examples of work done at the University of Washington. Two people from the University of Washington who are deeply involved in the digital humanities – **Raymond Jonas**, Professor of History, and **Jentery Sayers**, doctoral candidate in English – will also be at the meeting to answer questions from the Regents.

Woodward, Professor of English at the University of Washington, has been director of the Simpson Center for the Humanities since 2000. In 2005 she announced an initiative on the digital humanities which has supported visiting speakers, special workshops, a task force, faculty research, and graduate and undergraduate courses, and culminated in 2009 with a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Challenge Grant of $625,000 to endow the UW Digital Humanities Commons. Requiring a $1,875 million match from new resources to the University of Washington, the Digital Humanities Commons, when fully funded, will be an annual summer think-make tank for collaborative, interdisciplinary projects of UW faculty, graduate students, and staff. As then NEH Chairman Bruce Cole said in making the award, "The Simpson Center will serve as a national model for the transformation of traditional humanities centers in the digital age."

The author of *Statistical Panic* (2009), Woodward is the editor of *The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture* and the coeditor of *The Technological Imagination: Theories and Fictions.* In addition to grants from NEH, Woodward has been project director on grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Paul K. Allen Family Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and has participated in many recent digital humanities projects undertaken by the Mellon Foundation. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the international consortium HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Advanced Collaboratory) and was president of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes

Digital Humanities (continued p. 2)

(CHCI) from 1995-2001. Woodward's first appointment as a tenure-track faculty member was at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in conjunction with the NEH-funded Program in Cultural and Technological Studies, an innovative undergraduate curriculum supported by the School of Engineering and the College of Arts & Sciences. Woodward holds a B.A. in Economics from Smith College and a Ph.D. in Literature from the University of California at San Diego.

Email: kw1@uw.edu

Raymond Jonas

I grew up in Silicon Valley. My best friends in high school in the seventies were techies whose idea of fun was building computers from components – something I still do and still enjoy. Since then, my interests in scholarship and technology have never strayed far from one another. Part of my training as a graduate student involved querying tape-mounted nineteenth century demographic data via punch cards. A program I wrote as a graduate student at Berkeley to maintain my teaching and research bibliographies "PBR – Personal Bibliographic Reference" was picked up by the University of Washington in 1985 and marketed – with manual and 5.25" floppy – as part of an effort to generate revenue from faculty-written software.

At the risk of sounding like a scaled-down version of Al Gore, I am proud to claim credit for the creation, in 1991, of the listserv now known as H-France. Today, H-France is *the* forum and information clearing house for thousands of scholars working on francophone studies worldwide.

Visualization – increasing information bandwidth through images – has been a core theme in my scholarship. In my first book *Industry and Politics in Rural France, 1870-1914* (Cornell UP, 1995) I used graphical (AutoCAD) and mathematical software (123, QuickSurf) to map complex demographic data as isopleths. In effect, I invoked the analogy of contours in the landscape to show demographic change as 'peaks' and 'valleys' that the lay reader could easily interpret.

France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart: An Epic Tale for Modern Times (California UP, 2000) concerned the political culture of counter-revolution in France after 1789, especially as it related to Catholic rituals and monuments. I used pilgrimage records and GIS to map the geography of pilgrimage over space and time and to show that pilgrimage – stimulated by special train fares, group hotel rates, and hosted package tours – pioneered some of the recognizably modern forms of organized leisure.

My current research concerns Ethiopia – the only African country to fend off colonization during the Scramble for Africa. *The Color of Africa: Black and White at the*

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Digital Humanities (continued p. 3)

Battle of Adwa (Harvard UP, forthcoming) is the story of Africans seeing to their own freedom. I have secured the domain name BattleOfAdwa.org and, over the coming months, I will flesh out my vision of the digital monograph by posting animations, voiceover, interview footage, location shots. This "short-form digital content" will extend the concept of the scholarly monograph at the same time that it validates alternative forms of scholarly production in the humanities.

Going forward, I believe that the great challenges facing the digital humanities concern visualization, collaboration, and venue. How can visualization enhance the richness and accessibility of knowledge? How can collaboration – the sharing of scholarly and technical tasks – facilitate that process? How can we develop new venues and new audiences for the humanities and how can we maintain the highest scholarly standards as we do so?

Email: Jonas@uw.edu

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Digital Humanities (continued p. 4)

Jentery Sayers is a PhD Candidate in English at the University of Washington, Seattle, and a Project for Interdisciplinary Pedagogy Fellow in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Bothell. Supported by a Simpson Center Fellowship in 2009-2010, Sayer's dissertation is a cultural history of magnetic recording from 1860 to the present.

Sayers was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Fellowship on "Broadening the Digital Humanities" at the University of Southern California to digitally compose his dissertation as a form of multimodal, web-based scholarship. He has published his work in the electronic journal *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* as well as in the collection of essays *Writing and the Digital Generation: Essays on New Media Rhetoric* (2010).

At the University of Washington, he has taught technology-focused courses in English composition, literary criticism, cultural studies, media studies, and the comparative history of ideas. He received the 2010 K. Patricia Cross Future Leader Award from the Association of American Colleges & Universities, the 2010 Undergraduate Research Mentor Award from UW's Undergraduate Academic Affairs at the UW, and the 2008 *Kairos* & Bedford St. Martin's Press Graduate Student & Adjunct Faculty National Teaching Award for computers and composition.

He is currently co-organizing The Humanities and Technology Camp Pacific Northwest, which will occur at the UW in late October. He also serves on the steering committee for the University of Victoria's Digital Humanities Summer Institute, the steering committee for the national consortium Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Technology Advanced Collaboratory (HASTAC), and the editorial board for *Kairos*.

Email: jentery@uw.edu

Digital Humanities at the University of Washington

Kathleen Woodward

Director, Simpson Center for the Humanities
Professor, English

Pioneer Projects

- Early Buddhist Manuscript Project

  Richard Salomon (Asian Languages & Literature)

- Digital Egypt

  Scott Noegel (Near East Languages & Civilization)

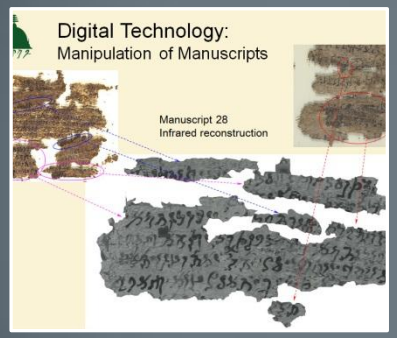
- Electronic *Piers Plowman*

  Míċeál Vaughan (English) & Terry Brooks (iSchool)

Early Buddhist Manuscript Project

Richard Salomon (Asian Languages & Literature)

Infrared Reconstruction



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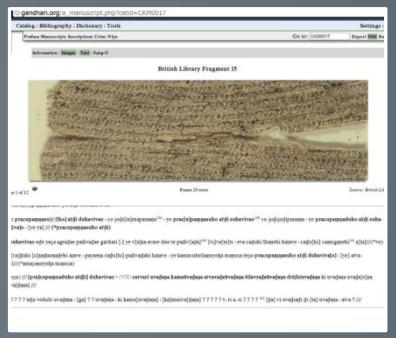

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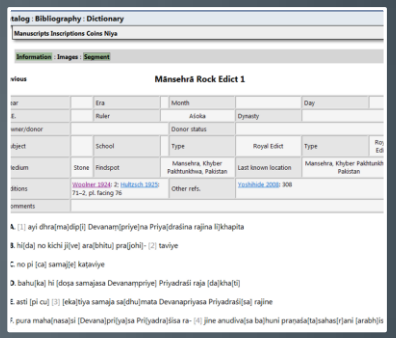

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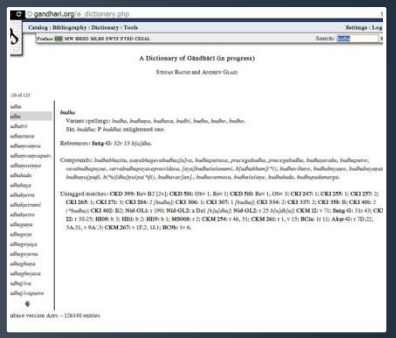
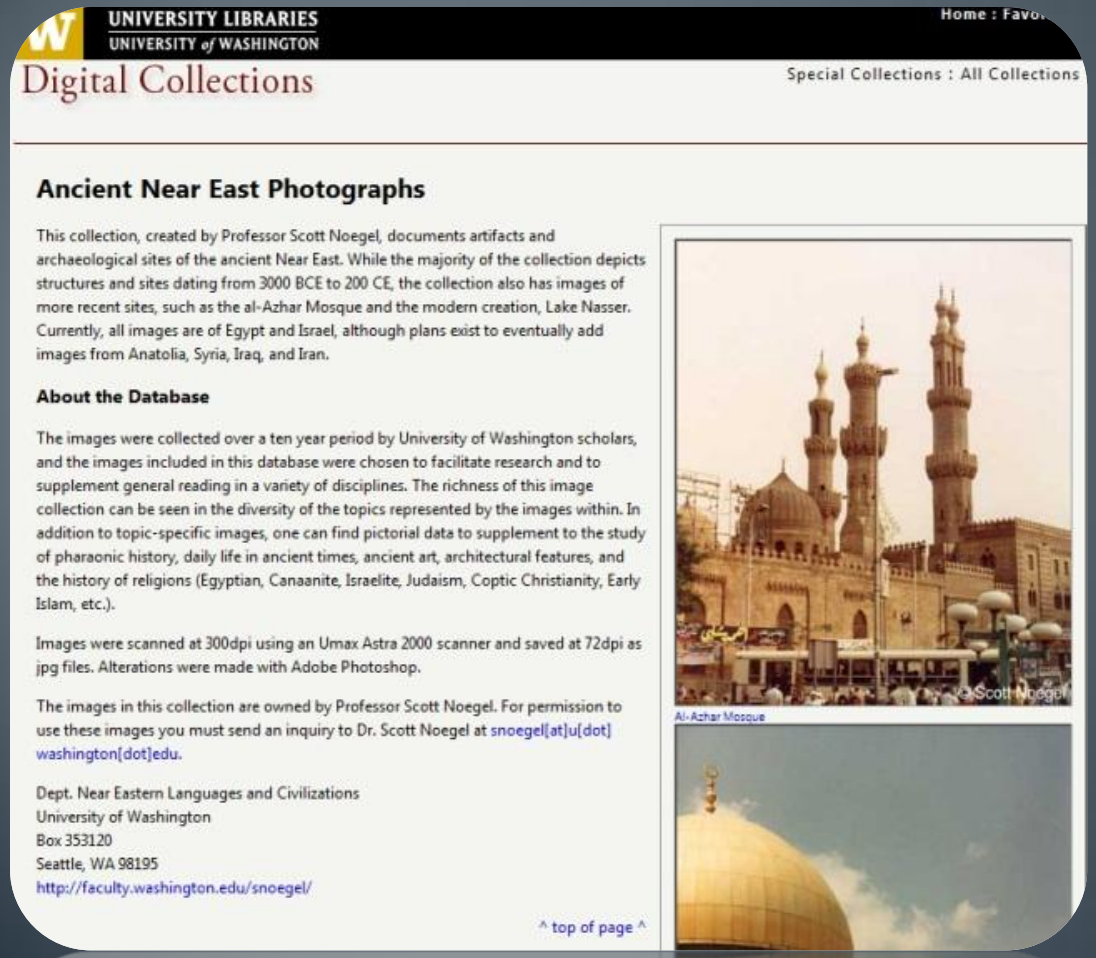


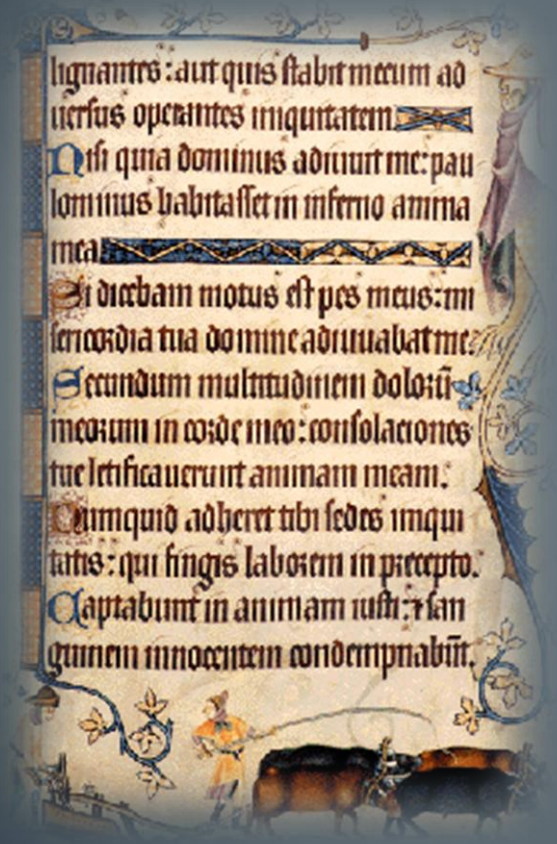
Digital Egypt

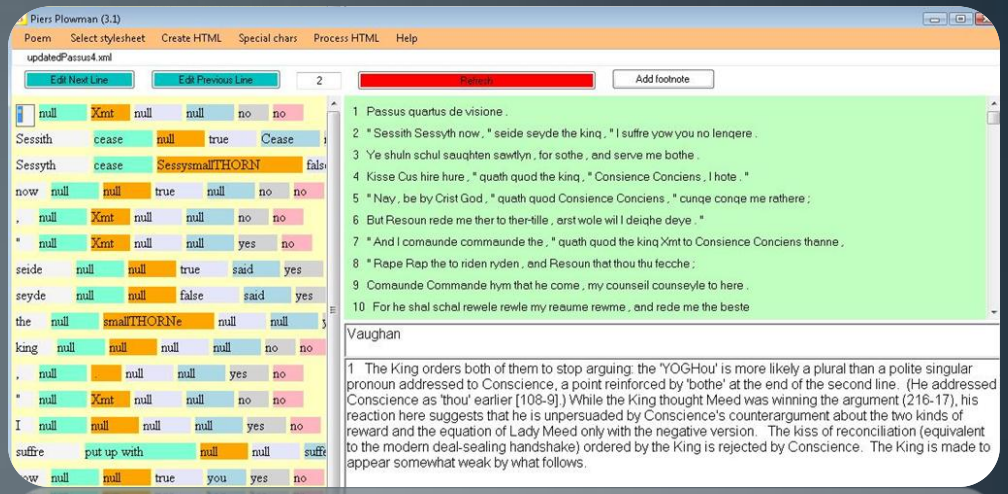
Scott Noegel (Near Eastern Languages & Civilization)



Electronic *Piers Plowman*

Míċeál Vaughan (English) & Terry Brooks (iSchool)



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Larger Publics

- The September (11th) Project
  David Silver (formerly Communication)
- Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History
  James Gregory (History)
- Great Depression in Washington State
  James Gregory (History)

The September (11th) Project

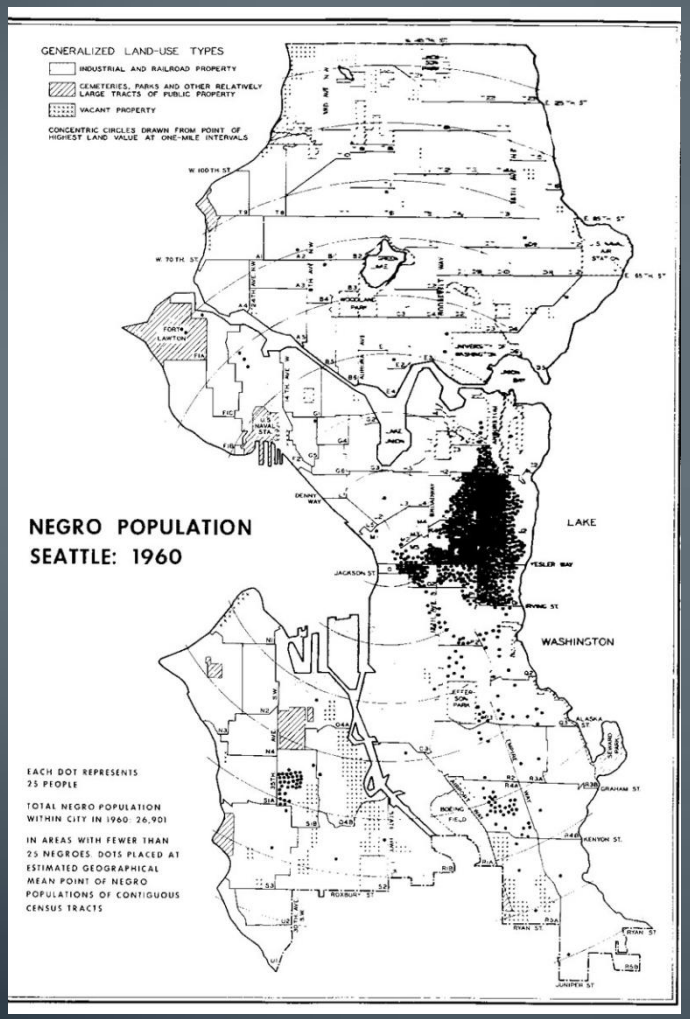
David Silver

what's YOUR LIBRARY doing on September 11? 2005

Connecting the World
One Library at a Time

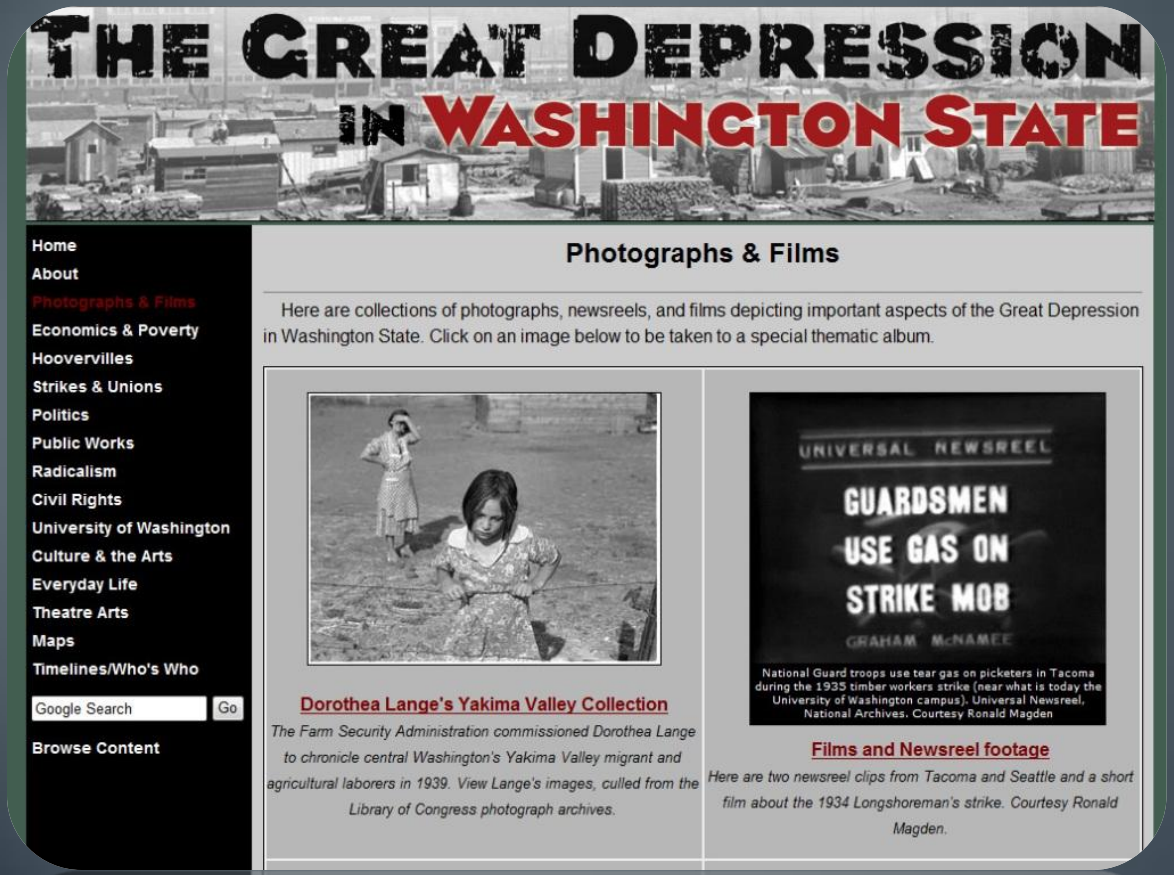
Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History

James Gregory (History)



The Great Depression in Washington State

James Gregory (History)



Computational Humanities & Data-Mining

- Indus Script

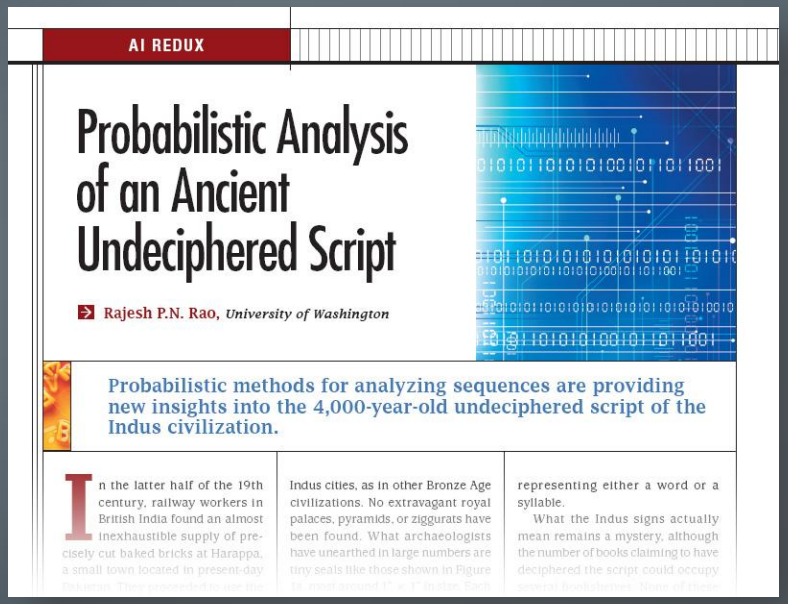
  Rajesh Rao (Computer Science & Engineering)

- Google Books

  Peter Leonard (Doctoral Student, Scandinavian Studies)

Deciphering the 4500-year-old Indus Script

Rajesh Rao (Computer Science & Engineering)



AI REDUX

Probabilistic Analysis of an Ancient Undeciphered Script

Rajesh P.N. Rao, *University of Washington*

Probabilistic methods for analyzing sequences are providing new insights into the 4,000-year-old undeciphered script of the Indus civilization.

In the latter half of the 19th century, railway workers in British India found an almost inexhaustible supply of precisely cut baked bricks at Harappa, a small town located in present-day

Indus cities, as in other Bronze Age civilizations. No extravagant royal palaces, pyramids, or ziggurats have been found. What archaeologists have unearthed in large numbers are tiny seals like those shown in Figure

representing either a word or a syllable.

What the Indus signs actually mean remains a mystery, although the number of books claiming to have deciphered the script could occupy

Google Books

Peter Leonard (Doctoral Student, Scandinavian Studies)

The Official Google Blog

Insights from Googlers into our products, technology, and the Google culture.

Our commitment to the digital humanities

7/14/2010

It can't have been very long after people started writing that they started to organize and comment on what was written. Look at the 10th century Venetus A manuscript, which contains scholia written fifteen centuries earlier about texts written five centuries before *that*. Almost since computers were invented, people have envisioned using them to expose the interconnections of the world's knowledge. That vision is finally becoming real with the

The Seattle Times

YOUR MONDAY

A Seattle connection to the massive Google Books project

LIT LIFE |

BY MARY ANN GWINN
Seattle Times book editor

Like many people who grew up in the pre-Internet world, I regard Google with a combination of fear and awe. How does it do what it does? What happens to the information it collects? And what is the point, really, of that I'M FEELING LUCKY button?

So I was heartened to hear that Google is attending to something I can understand and appreciate — advancing the cause of literary research.

A word about Google Books: It's an ongoing project by Google to scan most of the books on the world's library shelves and place them in an accessible online archive. As Leonard explains, "Google has partnered with many of the largest research libraries in the world," — Oxford, Stanford, Columbia University, Harvard, the New York Public Library, among others — to digitally scan the books in their collection (generally out of print books and those without copyright restrictions).

The project is controversial — there are ongoing battles over copyright protection and author rights. There are questions — "There's an enormous amount of secrecy around how Google scans books," Leonard said. "Even the libraries are not allowed to

be read intensively for more clues.

A test project for Leonard and Tangherlini: analyzing books to show how folklore spread through 19th-century Scandinavian literature, a subject in which Tangherlini already has expertise. While Scandinavian language books are a small fraction of the Google Books corpus, the two hope to develop strategies that will be "germane and applicable to someone who's studying Italian literature, or the American literature of the South.

"It's interesting what an equalizer technology is," says Leonard, that two experts in languages spoken by a fraction of the world's people can suddenly access most of the world's books in those languages. For free. Who knows where the scary magic of search engines will lead next?

MARY LEVIN / UW

Peter Leonard, above, a doctoral student in Scandinavian studies at the University of Washington, and UCLA professor Tim Tangherlini have received $45,000 to create tools for large-scale literary analysis through Google Books.

Expanding the Book Beyond Print: Multi-Modal Tracks

- Ray Jonas (History)
- Jentery Sayers (English)

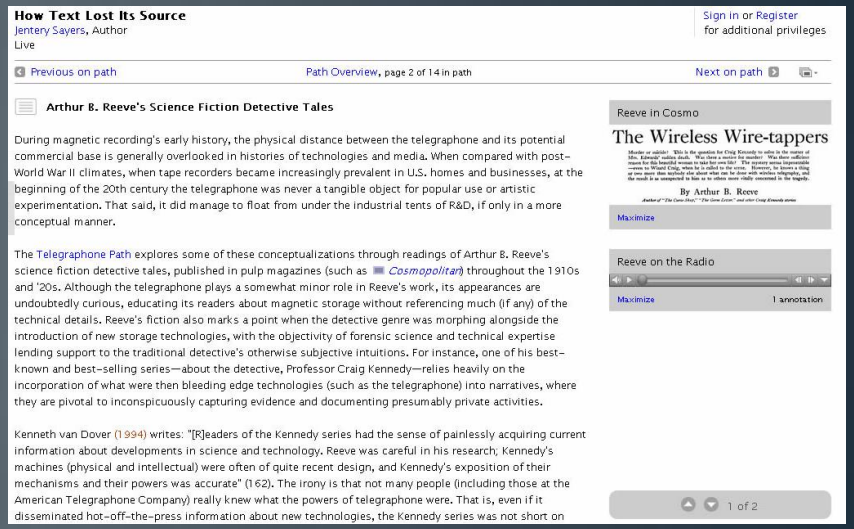
Ray Jonas

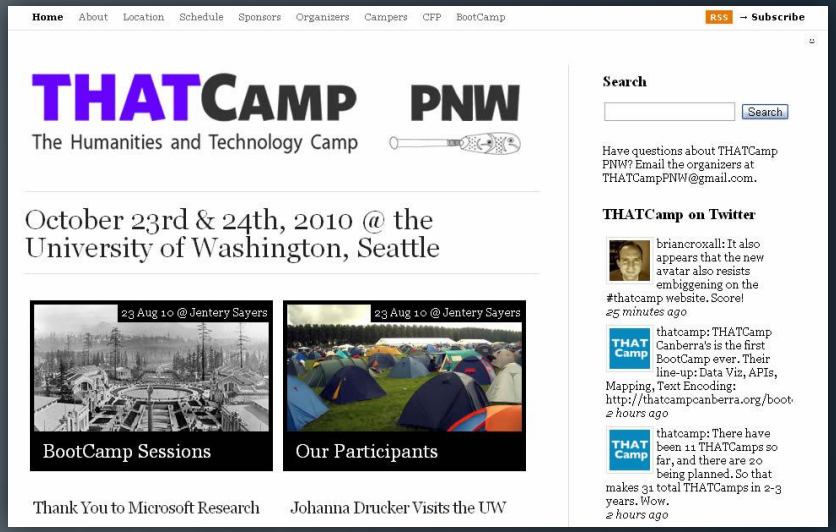
The Color of Africa: Black & White at the Battle of Adwa

Harar	Menelik March	Menelik	Adwa

Jentery Sayers

Sound Reproduction Technologies & 20th-Century Literature



Jentery Sayers

Teaching & Learning