HIS 302W/402
Research Seminar
Spatial History: Putting the Past in its Place

Spring 2024   Prof. Michael Jarvis
MW 2:00-3:20 pm   Rush Rhees 441 & 445
Rush Rhees 362   Michael.Jarvis@rochester.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 pm or by appt.   585-485-9870

Overview: This research seminar will introduce you to the recent "spatial turn" in historical scholarship and History GIS (HGIS) as a research approach to studying the past. It is essentially a research incubator organized collectively around a methodological approach attuned to the interplay between time and space on various scales, rather than specifically focused on any one particular historical period or region. That said, I am a specialist in the Early Modern Atlantic Maritime world and the global spread of European empires and networks to circa 1820, as well as a social historian and archaeologist interested in finding hidden connections and behavioral patterns within households and communities. Many of the case studies we will consider will be drawn from these areas.

Over the semester, you will develop skills in
- defining and developing a research topic focused on historical change or movement across space (broadly conceived) or framed by cultural constructions of place.
- critically evaluating existing historical scholarship
- understanding different historians' theoretical and methodological approaches
- identifying, evaluating and interpreting primary and secondary sources (including non-documentary evidence)

- considering perspective and bias present in historical evidence and scholarship and
- constructing historical arguments and explanations orally and in written work

By the end of the semester, you will produce EITHER a well-crafted 3,000-5,000 word (12-20 page) research paper that explores a geographically grounded historical topic of your choosing, using primary source evidence and likely employing GIS or other
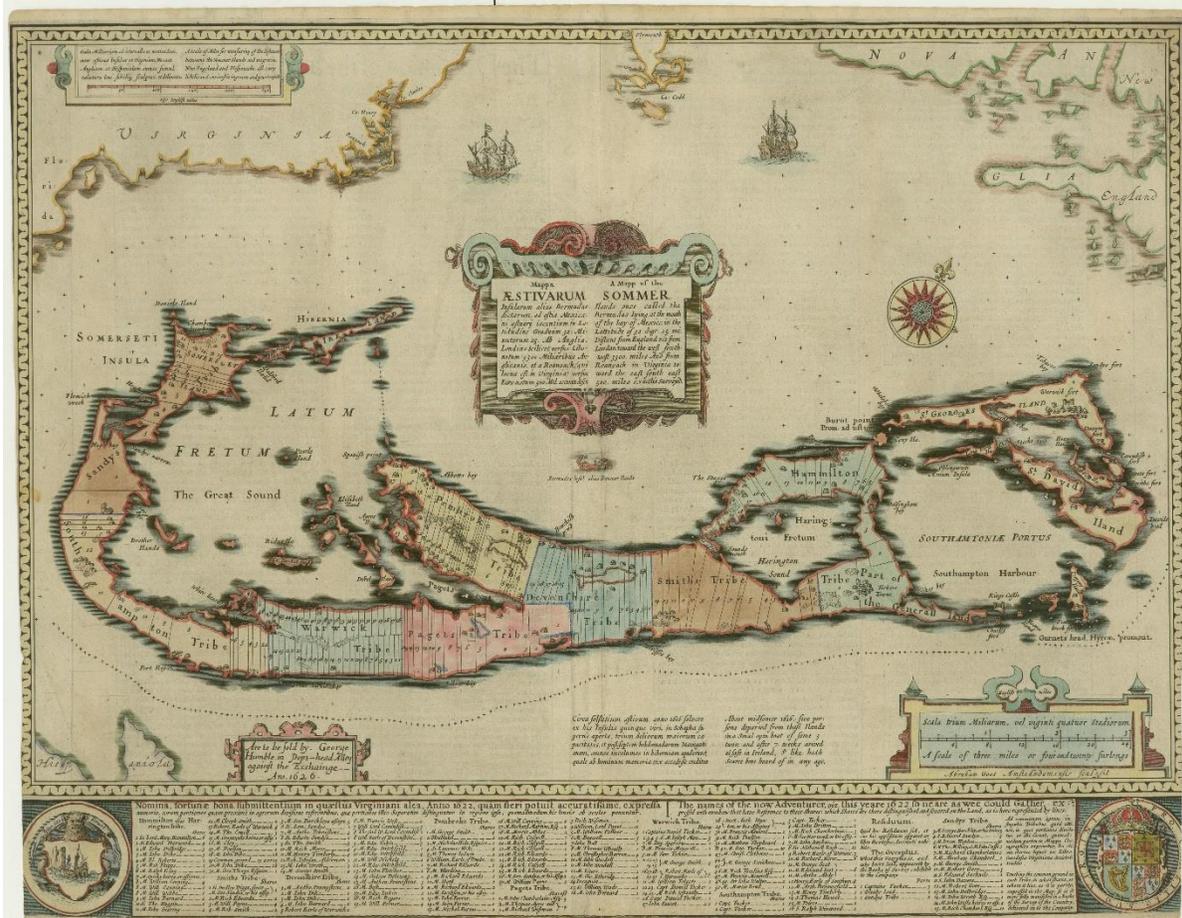
1626 John Speed map of Bermuda, surveyed into 400 twenty-five-acre "shares" (tracts) with the names of their owners listed below: an early GIS

computational tools to analyze, visualize, and/or disseminate your findings (*traditional/analog option*) OR a digital project (such as a website, ArcGIS StoryMap, smartphone app, or videogame engine-based simulation) equivalent in text size that explicitly curates and interprets historical evidence and makes a substantive historical argument (*digital history option*). The skills you will learn this seminar will provide a strong analytical foundation for doing historical research and communicating your discoveries in new ways.

Organization: In essence, this course is an open-ended conversation about history, what historians do, and how they do it. I approach history as being part of a continuing debate between scholarly interpretations, as opposed to learning a fixed, stable script about what happened in the past. Studying the physical historical world is a significant part of understanding history as a process and a discipline. In most weeks, our discussions will focus on sets of questions for you to consider and debate, using material from short assignments or assigned readings and your own experiences and perspectives. Your written assignments will also help you develop and display skills critical to historical understanding and analysis. Our classroom is also an arena for raising questions generally about academia, liberal arts, and the purpose and value of history in modern society. At heart, we are entering into a collaborative intellectual venture in which we will all hopefully come to a better understanding of the past through conversations and mutually teaching each other.

Assessment: Your grade in this class is based on class participation (30%), a reflective journal that engages with weekly readings, class interaction, thought prompts and experiential learning (20%), and work linked to a primary source-based research paper (50%). Your journal entries will be reviewed periodically over the course of the semester. Preparing them will help you participate effectively in class participation. Your class participation grade may also include various short exercises, small writing assignments, and in-class debate over the course of the semester.

Class Participation: You are expected to attend every class, read the assigned material beforehand, and come prepared to discuss what you have read. Seminars are by nature question-driven, so you will be expected to think on your feet. In contributing to discussion, quality is more appreciated than quantity. Be courteous and respectful to each other. A history seminar is not a spectator sport: if you are silent, I will assume you are unprepared rather than brilliant but shy. If it becomes apparent that you have not done the readings or otherwise prepared for class, you will be considered absent that day. Unexcused absences will also cause your class participation grade to suffer.

Reflective Journaling: You will keep a journal throughout the semester with at least two entries each week that summarizes and critiques assigned readings before class and also records your thoughts and understanding of subjects and material after class discussion. The journal is also your place for keeping together all the research you do while developing your research paper topic or digital project. In effect it documents the work you do and the skills you learn as you engage in historical research. Ideally, your journal will reveal your thought process and chart your individual growth over the course of the semester as you come to better understand history, the world, and historical processes. It should be personal and engaged, more than just a tally of hours spent doing stuff or reading assigned material. Your journal can take a digital form (Word doc) or you can channel your Inner Frederick Douglass and actually write in a notebook (I'm happy to provide one!). KEEP YOUR JOURNALS UP TO DATE! I will

periodically collect individual journals - if yours is not current you will be marked down for this.

We will develop your final **research paper or project** incrementally throughout the semester. Think about potential topics NOW and have one or two tentatively in mind from the start. You have until at least February 12 before you have to commit fully to any topic. On February 28 you will hand in a written prospectus or digital project design document, identifying your topic choice, a bibliography listing primary and secondary sources, and your research progress thus far. This will be graded and is worth 5% of your research paper grade. On March 18, you will turn in an outline of your developing paper or a wireframe prototype (site mock-up and layout) and present your progress in class, which is also worth 5% of your research paper grade. A full-text, properly referenced draft of your research paper or working digital site is due on April 22 and is worth 10% of your grade. This should NOT be a "rough draft" and will be graded as if it is your final submission. You will get back two sets of comments and suggestions (one from me, one from a student peer) that should guide you to make further refinements and improvements before submitting the revised, final version of your research paper on Wednesday, May 6 by 2pm. This will be worth 30% of your grade. Late submissions will not be accepted and your earlier submission grade will be counted instead.

Required Texts:
Bodenhamer, Corrigan, and Harris, eds., *The Spatial Humanities* (2010)
Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana* (2001)
Steven Johnson, *The Ghost Map* (2008)
Anne Kelly Knowles, *Placing History* (2008)

NOTE that there are also many articles and chapters from books for which you are also responsible. You will find most of them on the course UR Student/Blackboard webpage or can get them via JSTOR (see the Rush Rhees Databases), Google Books, or the OG way: paper copies in the library stacks.

The College's credit hour policy for undergraduate courses is to award 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of two periods of an hour and twenty minutes each week. Students enrolled in HIS 302W are expected to devote at least one hour each week to identifying the main lines of argument in course readings to prepare for discussions and in researching their topics for the final seminar paper.

UR Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program: Over the course of the semester while developing your short reaction and research papers, you are allowed -- and very much encouraged -- to work with writing tutors and specialists in the College WSAP Center (http://writing.rochester.edu/center.html, Rush Rhees Ground floor). They will help you to improve your prose and organization and can serve as ideal readers/sounding

boards as you develop your research projects. As a fortune cookie I once opened stated, "Good writing is clear thinking made visible." The writing center staff can help you to achieve this ideal - if you work with them.

Rush Rhees Research Librarians: You are also encouraged to consult Rush Rhees research librarian Lara Nicosia (lnicosia@library.rochester.edu; 585-275-9298) early and often while developing your research paper. Lara is a specialist in U.S., British, and European history sources and can help you at all stages of the research project, especially in finding relevant source materials. You can book an appointment with her HERE...

Intellectual Honesty Students and faculty at the University must adhere to high standards of academic honesty in all the work that we do. You have already read and signed an academic honesty policy statement indicating that you understand the general principles upon which our work is based. The College Board on Academic Honesty website gives further information on our policies and procedures: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

You are encouraged to discuss course readings and assignments with your fellow students. All written work, however, must be done independently and not in collaboration with one another. To gain appropriate help for your essays, I encourage you to consult fellows in the College Writing, Speaking, & Argument Program. Your papers will require footnotes/endnotes and a "Works Cited" section, following the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, format. The Chicago Manual is accessible via the River Campus Libraries catalogue. If you are in doubt about citation methods (which we will go over in class) or are worried about situations that may violate the U of R honor code or constitute plagiarism, I am happy to advise you in advance of submitting your work.

For a helpful discussion of plagiarism (including subtle instances), see the American Historical Association's "Defining Plagiarism," https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism . Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Anyone who engages in such activities will be turned over to the College Board on Academic Honesty for disciplinary action, as outlined at http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty

Please include the UR honor pledge at the end of every paper you submit: "I affirm that I have not given or received any unauthorized help on this assignment, and that this work is my own."

Chat GPT and other AI writing platforms: Writing is a key component of public and academic discourse and is a learned, constantly practiced, evolving skill. New AI

platforms can synthesize enormous bodies of texts for you but do so in an uninformed, mindless way and generally fall well short of the concise, targeted writing you will need to do for this course. It also cannot make use of unpublished and manuscript sources, upon which original historical research usually draws. Until I am convinced otherwise, I will not permit you to use AI tools in your writing assignments without prior explicit permission (and a good reason from you why I should). Unauthorized use of ChatGTP and other AI will therefore constitute an academic honesty violation since you would be presenting work as your own that has been artificially enhanced. I reserve the right to ask for earlier drafts and notes and/or to see your marked-up/annotated readings in order to verify that your written work is your own creation.

Accommodation If you have a condition for which you require academic accommodation, you are encouraged to contact the Office for Disability Resources and me. We will work together to find a solution. Access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. The director of disability resources is Amy Wight (amy.wight@rochester.edu). The access coordinators are Pamela Spallacci (pamela.spallacci@rochester.edu) and Elizabeth Carpenter (elizabeth.carpenter@rochester.edu). The access assistant is Anne Staub (anne.staab@rochester.edu). The Office of Disability Resources is located in Taylor Hall, can be reached via telephone at 585-276-5075, and maintains a website at http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/.

Inclusion: The University of Rochester and I am committed to inclusion and welcome students of all backgrounds and abilities. Services and reasonable accommodations are available to students with temporary and permanent disabilities, to students with DACA or undocumented status, to students facing mental health issues, other personal situations, and to students with other kinds of learning needs. Please let me know if there are circumstances affecting your ability to participate in class. Some resources that might be of use include:
- In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. (disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall)
- Undocumented/DACA Student Support Contacts
- University of Rochester CARE Network
- University Health Center UCC (University Counseling Center)
- Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)

A Note on Communication: It is your responsibility to get to class on time and to submit all your work on time or early in paper form. I check email and phone messages regularly and usually am good about responding to **correct and courteously worded**

missives, but don't expect instant responses and do not assume I got your email. Informal and poorly punctuated/capitalized emails annoy me. If a truly urgent or important situation arises, try to contact me in person, relay a message via the history department, or call me at home (585-485-9870), rather than trust email alone. Also, do not simply "disappear" if you find yourself overwhelmed or struggling: I can only work with you if I know this is happening, and an early timely intervention can do far more than damage control at semester's end.

Grading Scale: For the papers and other assignment graded out of 100 points, I use the following scale:

* A: 93–100	* C: 73–76
* A-: 90–92	* C-: 70–72
* B+: 87–89	* D+: 67–69
* B: 83–86	* D: 63–66
* B-: 80–82	* D-: 60–62
* C+: 77–79	* E: Failure (59 or below)

CLASS SCHEDULE

MONDAYS will usually focus on readings and discussion
WEDNESDAYS will usually focus on Spatial and Digital Sources and Projects

* Denotes required reading; all non-book required reading can be found in the "Readings" Tab on the left column in Blackboard

Jan. 17 (W) -- Spatial History: What is it?
Introducing the course, its concepts, and each other.

Week I -- Definitions and Approaches

Jan. 22 (M) Space and Place
* Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, chs. 1-2, 5, 8-9, 12-13.

Jan 24 (W) Exploring Maps: Paper and Digital
In-class workshop on cartography and geography

Week II – Spatial History & GIS

Jan 29 (M) Spatial History
* Richard White, "What is Spatial History?" Stanford Univ Spatial History Lab Papers, 2010
* Anne Knowles, "GIS and History" in *Placing History*, 1-25
* *Spatial Humanities*, Introduction
* David Bodenhamer, "The Potential for Spatial Humanities," *Spatial Humanities*, 14-30
* Trevor Harris, "GIS in Archaeology," *Placing History*, 131-143

For next class: Visit Stanford's Spatial History website **(FROZEN IN 2022)** (http://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/projects.php) and browse its gallery/lists of projects. Select THREE projects and write a 2 to 3-page summary of each project's aims, design, content, and state of completion. SEE IF YOU CAN MAKE THEM WORK OR FIND FUNCTIONAL VERSIONS OF THEM. End with your ranking of the three projects and their overall effectiveness.

Jan 31 (W) Discussion and Critiques of Spatial Projects and problems with digital platforms

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Week III – The First GIS?
London, Cholera, & Multi-scalar History

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Feb 5 (M) John Snow and the birth of GIS
* Steven Johnson, *The Ghost Map*, all

Feb (7) Introducing ArcGIS
Workshop with Digital Scholar Technologist Blair Tinker

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Week IV -- Maps and Mapping Events:
Making and Unmaking Historical Arguments

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Feb 12 (M)
***All students should meet with me this week in Tuesday office hours or by appointment to discuss potential research paper topics.
* David Rumsey & Meredith Williams, "Historical Maps in GIS." *Past Times, Past Places*, 1-18
* Benjamin Ray, "Teaching the Salem Witch Trials," *Past Times, Past Places*, 19-33
* Robert Churchill & Amy Hillier, "Teaching with GIS," *Placing History*, 61-81

Feb 14 (W) Practicing GIS Analysis
* Jarvis, "Bermuda's 'Domesday Book': Richard Norwood's surveys and the development of the Somers Islands, 1616–63"
In-Class Project: working with Richard Norwood's 1663 Bermuda Survey & Virtual St. George's
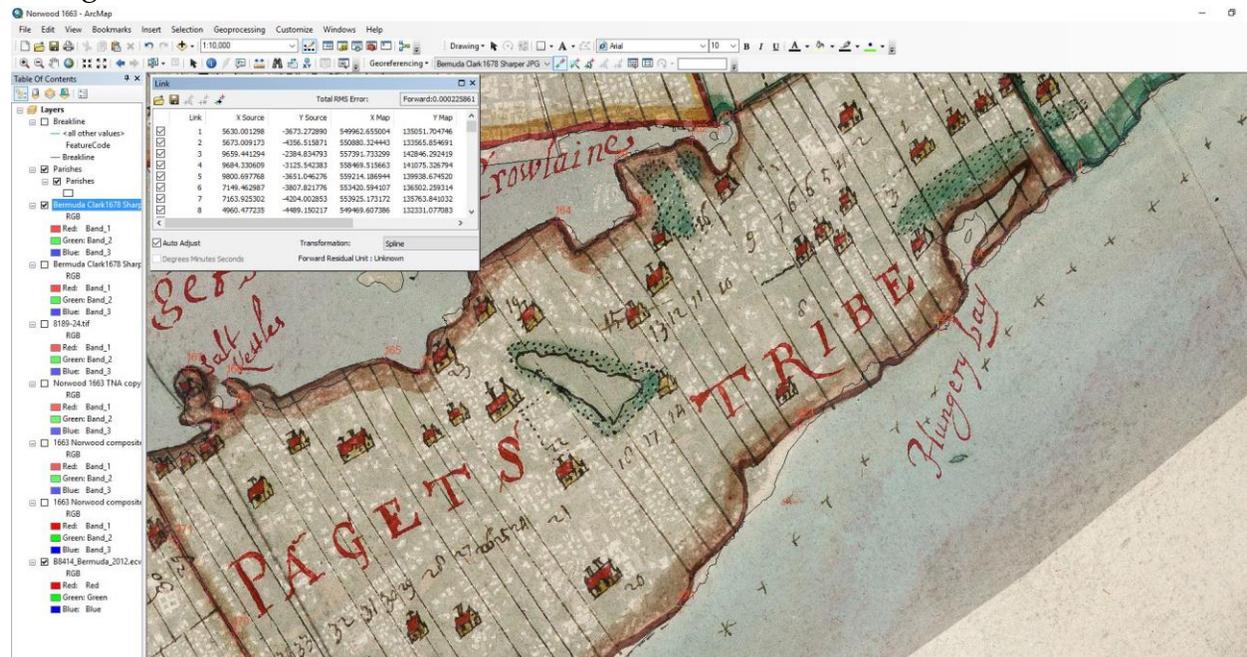
Week V
Mapping Communities & Networks

Feb 19 (M)
* Amy Hillier, "Redlining in Philadelphia," Past Times, Past Places, 79-92
* VISIT Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America.

Feb 21 (W)
In-Class Project: The City of Rochester Maps & Censuses

Week VI - Epidemics & History

Feb 26 (M)
* Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana*, all (especially the second half) and think about how you might create a digital/spatial project for this book.

Feb 28 (W)
***RESEARCH PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE: report on your topic and goals in class, identifying the data you will use, the scholarship you are engaging, and your research platform (paper, website, StoryMap, simulation, etc.)
ALSO BRING examples of the data you'll be working with!

Remainder of class: Pick a disease - any disease! – and use the UR's *America's Historical Newspapers* database word search to create a timeline of a particular epidemic in an American or Caribbean city or town. Suggestions include smallpox, yellow fever (Colonial and Early Republic US), and cholera (Rochester).

Week VII - History in Very Big and Quite Small Spaces:
Empires, Oceans & Ships

March 4 (M)
* Ian Steele, *The English Atlantic*, 3-93, 132-167 (pay particular attention to "The Papers")
* Michael Jarvis "The Material Culture of Ships," in *Jack Tar and Memory*.
* WATCH: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVnuWXk8w4g&t=6s
Resurfacing the Past – Mapping World War II Shipwrecks
https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/41d4bd6029044afbb1b9ad805a4731d8

March 6 (W) Slave Voyages and Shipping Lists: setting past worlds into motion
* Watch *A Year in Early American Shipping*:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVnuWXk8w4g&t=6s
* Visit Slavevoyages.org (website) and explore its maps and database through queries

In Class Project: We will work with *America's Historical Newspapers* databases or Naval Office Shipping Lists to reconstruct ship voyages.

Also check out:
Old Weather (https://www.oldweather.org/index.html) – a crowd-sourced initiative to study climate change using historical ship logs.
Weather Time Machine (https://graphics.reuters.com/CLIMATE-CHANGE-ICESHIPLOGS/0100B4QE2FC/index.html) an infographic on Arctic Ice conditions.

Week VIII
SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS!

Week IX
Defining and Designing your Research Projects
With Guest Expert Blair Tinker

March 18 (M)
*** Research Paper Outline or Digital Project Design Document due in class
Mini-Conference: Report on your research project development or present digital project wireframe (10 minutes max, no more than 3 powerpoint slides).
What problems are you encountering? How can we help you?

March 20 (W) – Gathering, Managing, and Massaging your Data
* Michael Goodchild, "Combining Space and Time," *Placing History*, 179-197
* Karen Kemp, "GIS and Spatial Analysis," *Spatial Humanities*, 31-57

Week X
Videogames and Virtual Reality:
Immersive Spatial Experiences

March 25 (M) – Digital Experiential Learning: Videogames and Digital History
* Jeremiah McCall, "Playing with the Past: History and Video Games" *Journal Geek Studies*
* Erik Champion, "Indiana Jones and the Joystick of Doom,"
* PLAY TEST *Digital Kormantin* in the Digital History Lab (RR 445) before class

Who created this tour? An international team of historians, archaeologists, heritage professionals, and students at the University of Rochester have been studying Fort Amsterdam since 2016.

March 27 (W) – VR and Embodied Experience of Historic Spaces
We will meet this week in Studio X (Carlson Library) to sample some historical VR experiences.
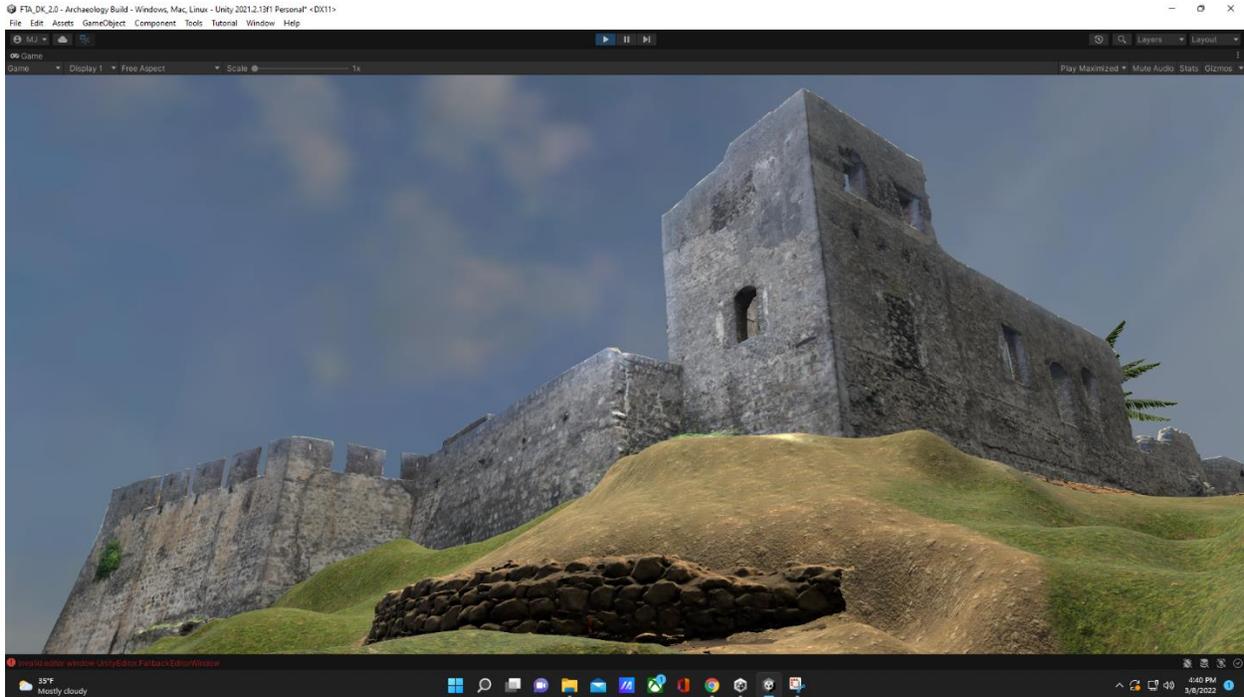
Week XI

Make-up Class or Work Session for Research Project Development

April 1 (M) Come to class prepared to report on your research progress since March 18, your experience working with sources and organizing data, and modifications you may have made to your topic.

April 3 (W) – mentoring and troubleshooting session for research and project development

Week XII-XIII -- No Formal Classes

April 8 (M)
April 10 (W)
April 15 (M)
April 17 (W)

Use these weeks to develop your research papers and projects. Blair and I will be in the Digital History Lab (Rush Rhees 445/446) during scheduled class time for consultation should you need help or to talk though research and technology issues

Week XIV

April 22 (M)
*** Research Papers or Digital Projects ROUND ONE DUE (MUST BE an electronic submission)
Peer Review: I will team your paper or project up with another student, who will give you formal written feedback before our next class. PEER REVIEWERS should also send a copy of their feedback to me (which will be graded).

April 24 (W) Meet to give peer feedback on projects, respond to critiques, and plan revisions.

Week XV - Final Class

April 29 (M) Maxi-Conference: Formal In-Class public presentations of your research topics or projects. You will be limited to 3 Powerpoint/presentation slides and 10 minutes, with 5 minutes for Q&A. Bonus points if you address how the technologies you used shaped or influenced how you organized and communicated your research and why spatial aspects of history matter.

May 6: Endgame
*** FINAL REVISED PAPERS DUE at NOON

RANDOM POSSIBLE RESEARCH TOPICS:

- Cobblestone Architecture in Western NY (GIS)
- Frederick Douglass's Abolition Circuit, 1842-1845 (GIS & Newspapers)
- Frederick Douglass's Rochester: interactive city map circa 1850, with canal, municipal, commercial, religious & Black Community spheres (GIS)
- Caribbean, Atlantic or Global ports and shipping patterns (Colonial Office records)
- Mapping and Documenting West African Gold and Slave Trade forts (GIS & photos)
- Slavery in New York: Western NY Black Communities before 1827 (Census, maps, GIS)
- UR before the River Campus (photos, maps, GIS, 3D models of University Avenue campus)
- The Global Reach of the *North Star* (GIS of Frederick Douglass's newspaper circulation, using RBSC account books)
- Virtual St. George's (Bermuda) – community profiles of slavery, gender, and society

Powell's Point

Gallows Island

Storehouse Island

Stiles Point