Principles of Your First Project

The Five Parts of a Research Project

a question, problem, or provocation

sources (primary or secondary)

an analytical activity

an audience

concrete products

Question

What is the role of Richmond, VA in the American Civil War?

Problem

George Alfred Townsend (1865) and Kenneth Noe (1997): "Richmond ... remains an offstage presence, a sort of metropolitan version of Hamlet's father, mentioned with frequency but rarely seen."

Provocation

"Mining the Dispatch," seeks to explore—and encourage exploration of—the dramatic and often traumatic changes as well as the sometimes surprising continuities in the social and political life of Civil War Richmond.

Creating and/or Refining your Question

who?
what?
when?
where?
why?
how?

to describe
to contribute
to develop
to explore

for what purpose?

Language and Boundaries

Pre-suppositions about computing, computational scientists, and humanists

Probability versus certainty: Does A+B really equal C? and what constitutes C anyway?

Recognizing what systems can and cannot do for humanists and computational scientists

Sources and Materials

scarcity and abundance

primary and secondary

feasibility

quality and complexity

Serving Many Masters

"the roots of the concepts [of interdisciplinarity] lie in a number of ideas that resonate through modern discourse—the ideas of a unified science, general knowledge, synthesis and the integration of knowledge."

- Julie Klein, Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice. Detroit: Wayne State University, 1990.

Concrete Products

Concrete Products

Each project transforms the questions and opens up new sources

If your research wouldn't change anything, why are you doing it?

Your idea for research might be the product of an earlier one

Failure is a product

Types of Product

promotional materials

blog post

press releases

code

websites

tweets/social media

apps

books

article (peer-reviewed v non-peer)

presentations

lessons/guides

Tracking your Products

frequency (re-tweets/re-posts)

location (distribution network)

citations

engagement (comments, visits)

Reporting Your Products

copy of each product should be
available digitally

link to each "raw" file

analysis of each product and how
it fits into the whole of the
project