

Creating Digital Humanities Projects for the Mobile Environment

Dene Grigar, John F. Barber, Brenda Grell, Will Luers,
Brett Oppegaard, Nicholas Schiller, Greg Philbrook

The Creative Media & Digital Culture Program
Washington State University Vancouver

2013 Digital Humanities Summer Institute
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University of Victoria
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada



Monday, May 20, 13

Abstract: Shares best practices for designing and building apps drawn from faculty and student efforts in The CMDC Program. These best practices should be helpful to those seeking to teach or learn app design and development in digital humanities classrooms, and help with effective curriculum design, emerging perspectives of app aesthetics, associated technical requirements, and teaching resources.



app design and development
in digital humanities classrooms

emerging perspectives of app aesthetics

associated technical requirements

resources

dtc-wsuv.org/wp/dhsi

Monday, May 20, 13

Note the website: dtc-wsuv.org/wp/dhsi



THE INTREPID CMDC FACULTY

A motley bunch but eminently qualified, with fun to spare

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We are faculty and staff from The Creative Media & Digital Culture Program at Washington State University, Vancouver, WA, . . .



Dene Grigar, PhD, Program Director

emerging technologies and cognition,
electronic literature, ephemera

Guest Curator, The Library of Congress

"A Villager's Tale" & "Grand Emporium
of the West" for Fort Vancouver

Monday, May 20, 13

We are led by Dene Grigar, director of the CMDC program . . .



John F. Barber, PhD, COIK

database and archival narratives, digital humanities, usability and interface design, radio art performance

Brautigan.NET

The Brautigan Library, CCHM

RadioNospace.net

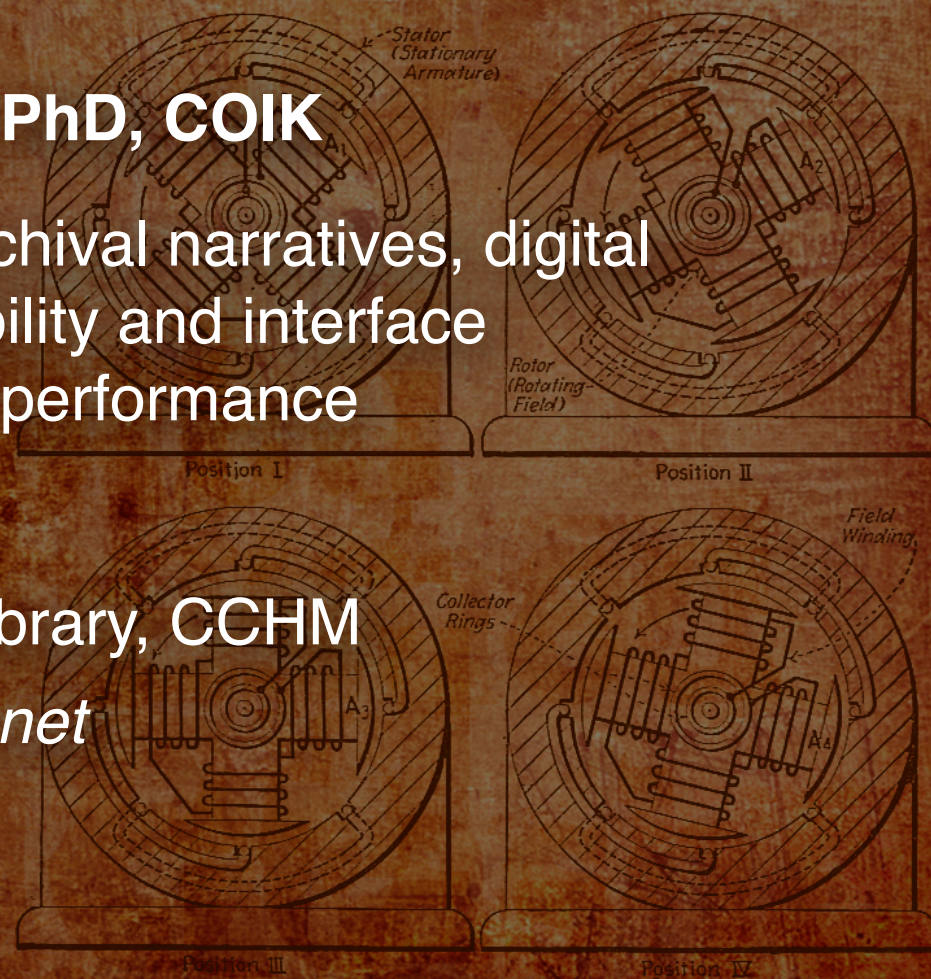


FIG. 237.—The operating principle of the synchronous motor.



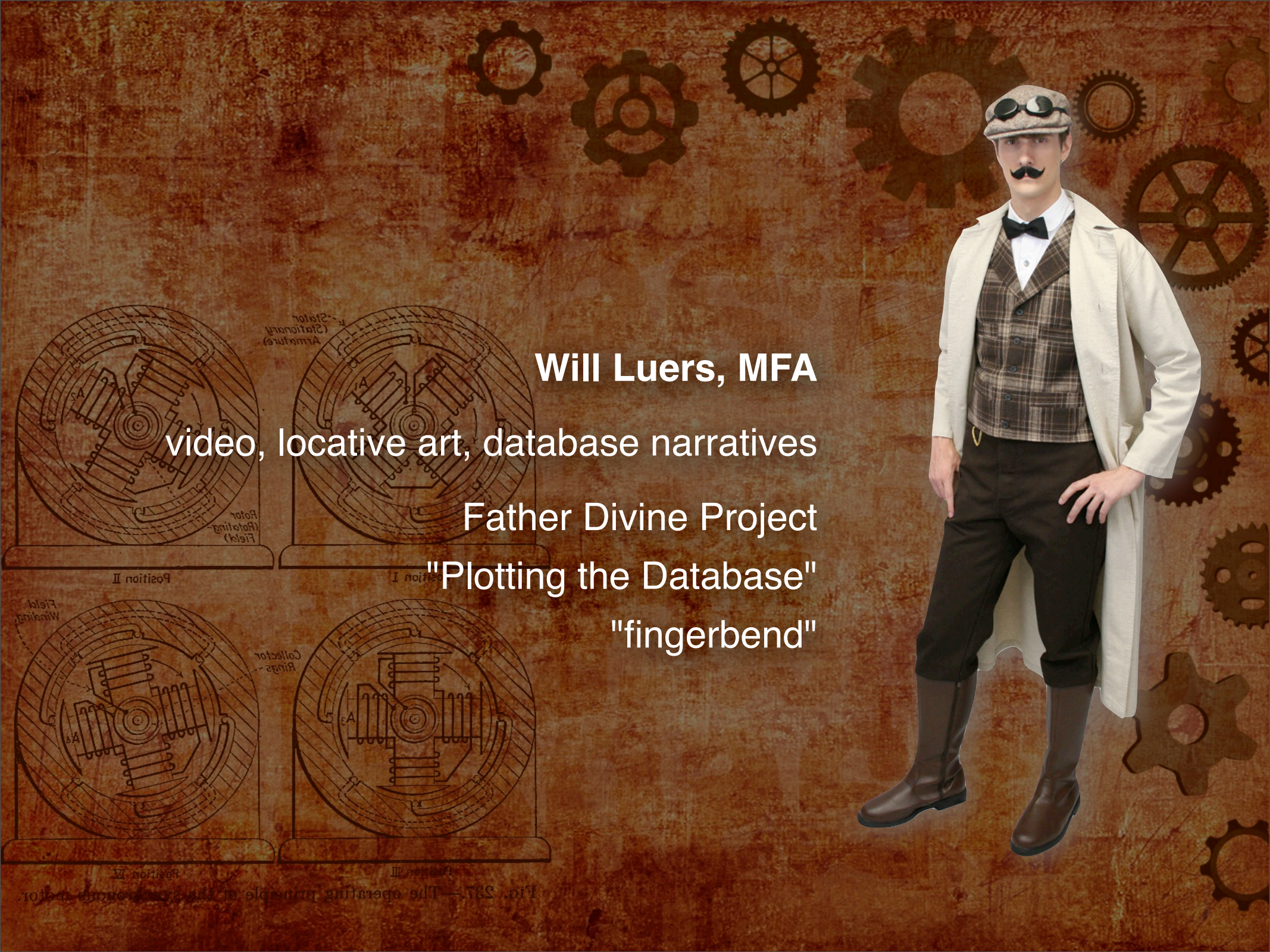
Brenda Grell, MFA

Animation, robotics, video

3-D animations and full-dome design for
OMSI's Kendall Planetarium

"Exceedingly Feminine"

Monday, May 20, 13



Will Luers, MFA

video, locative art, database narratives

Father Divine Project

"Plotting the Database"

"fingerbend"

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Brett Oppegaard, PhD

mobile media, new journalism,
electronic communication

"A Villager's Tale" & "Grand Emporium
of the West" for Fort Vancouver



FIG. 237.—The operating principle of the synchronous motor.



Nicholas Schiller, MLS

information architecture, metadata,
social knowing

"Search Engine Optimization,
Knowledge, and Information
Literacy"

"Mobile Technologies in Higher
Education Workflows"



Greg Philbrook

social media, ethics, strategic
communication, quantitative and
qualitative research methodology

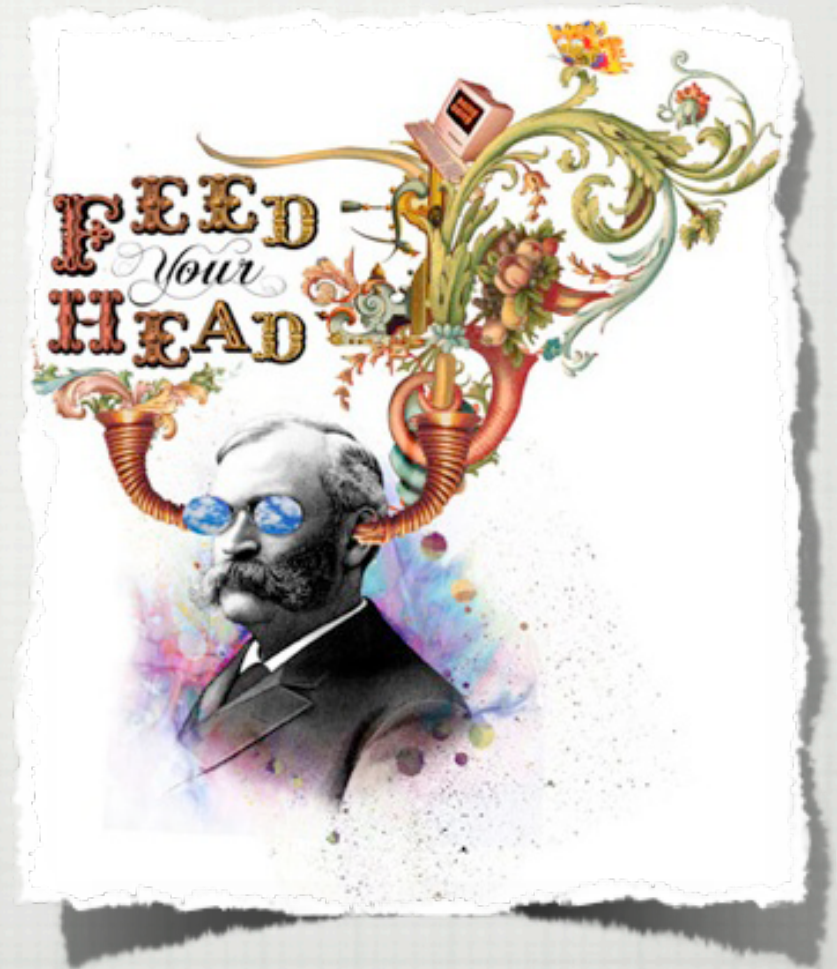
"The Old Apple Tree app: A
comparative analysis"

"So exactly what IS a digital
media major?"

CREATING DH PROJECTS

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS FOR THIS COURSE?

- ☐ CONCEPTUALIZE SPACE(S) AND AFFORDANCES OF MOBILE DEVICES/ TECHNOLOGY
- ☐ UNDERSTAND ARCHITECTURE, USABILITY, DESIGN, AND MULTIMEDIA CONTENT PRODUCTION FOR MOBILE PROJECTS
- ☐ UNDERSTAND THE APP BUILDING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES FOR MOBILE DEVICES . . .



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These are the overarching goals we intend to reach with the week of classes . . .

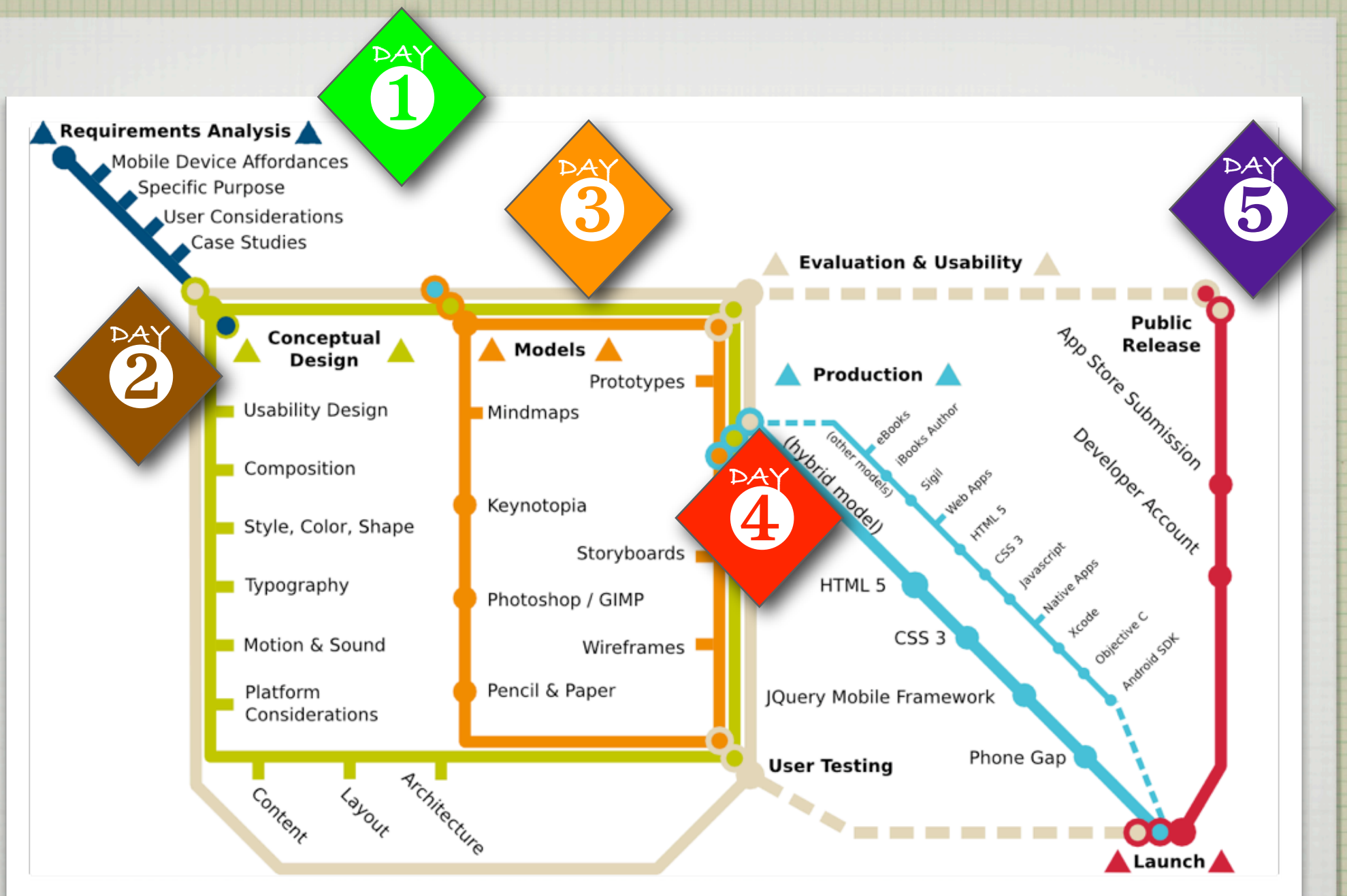
Note that the actual building of a finished app is beyond the scope of what we can do in this one week of classes, but we do intend to help you finish the week with a solid understanding of what it takes to conceive, develop, and actually build your app by providing you with a process and a ton of resources that will be very helpful . . .

Course website: dct-wsuv.org/wp/dhsi



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Each day this week we will introduce new concepts and opportunities for you to learn and practice. Infographically, our week looks like this, with each day and its topic so indicated. Parenthesis are used to indicate the more traditional names for each stage of the design and build process . . .



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Here is a more detailed overview of what we are going to talk about this week. What you can see here are the various topics we will discuss each day, as well as how everything connects

DAY 1

THE MOBILE ENVIRONMENT AND ITS AFFORDANCES

OVERVIEW OF THE MOBILE ENVIRONMENT

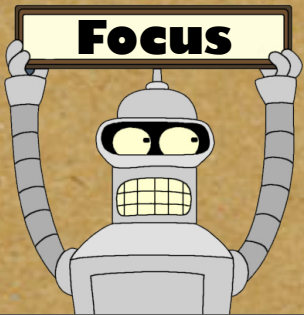
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN APPS AND
MOBILE-BASED WEBSITES

DIGITAL DOCS

APPS TAXONOMY

MOBILE MEDIA THEORY

END OF DAY: CASE STUDIES THAT HELP
TO LEAD YOU TO PLAN & DEVELOP YOUR
OWN PROJECTS



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Even more specifically, our daily focus begins today with . . .

DAY 2

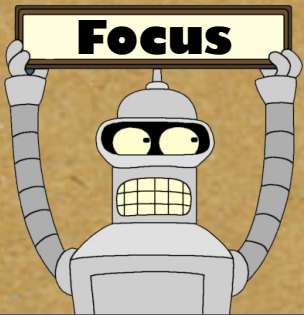
ARCHITECTURE & USABILITY FOR MOBILE PROJECTS

ARCHITECTURE FOR PROJECTS

USABILITY THEORIES AND APPROACHES

MINDMAPPING, STORYBOARDING, AND
WIREFRAMING

END OF DAY: DEVELOP INFORMATION
STRUCTURE FOR YOUR OWN PROJECTS



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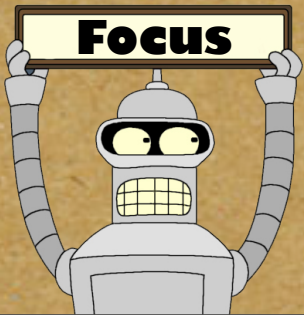
DAY 3

ART & DESIGN FOR MOBILE PROJECTS

DIGITAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES...
COMPOSITION AND LAYOUT, STYLE,
COLOR, SHAPE, TYPOGRAPHY, MOTION
AND SOUND DESIGN

PLATFORM LAYOUT CONSIDERATIONS

END OF DAY: PRODUCE DRAFT OF
INTERFACE OF YOUR PROJECT



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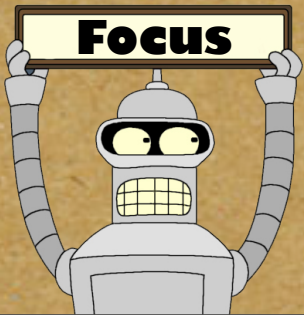
DAY 4

MULTIMEDIA AUTHORIZING AND CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

WHY HTML 5? WORKING WITH TEXT,
IMAGES, VIDEO, SOUND, AND OTHER
DIGITAL CONTENT FOR MOBILE DEVICES

CODING LANGUAGES AND TOOLS FOR
THE MOBILE ENVIRONMENT

END OF DAY: CREATE PROTOTYPE OF
YOUR PROJECT



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DAY 5

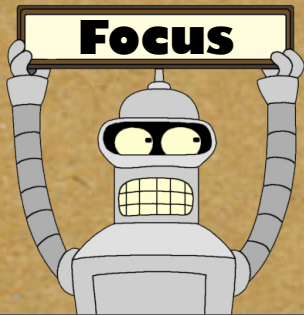
CODING & PROGRAMMING

MOBILE PROJECTS

GETTING ASSETS READY FOR THE APP
STORE & MARKET

THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

END OF DAY: PARTICIPANTS HAVE GOOD
IDEA OF PRODUCTION METHOD FOR
THEIR PROJECT; RESOURCES NEEDED TO
COMPLETE THEIR WORK



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NOTE: this focus changed to "Narrative"

Mobile technology



Monday, May 20, 13

Some theory to underpin our discussions: Caroline Bassett argues, and we agree, that users of mobile technology are "no longer embedded in [their] immediate locality or environment." Instead, these users are connected simultaneously to other people in remote places/spaces. As a result, they can discover new perspectives because they can both be reached and reach out via their mobile devices. For these users there is no dislocation between themselves and the world beyond. Instead of a boundary, mobile devices provide an interface.



Monday, May 20, 13

We are talking this week about "apps" and we should start by defining this term. Simply put, an app is a small program or utility that runs on a mobile device. Generally, an app does something for someone. It is built for that purpose. Beyond that purpose, an app may not be particularly useful.



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Mobile apps are unique in several ways . . .



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There are three kinds of apps we will talk about this week . . .

The web app is a website designed for a mobile device, or, a website REDUCED for optimum display on mobile devices

The native app is purpose using a particular mobile device OS; written in a language for that device; cannot be shared across platforms; acquire through webstore systems for particular device

The hybrid app, on which we will concentrate in this course, is initially built using HTML and CSS, but is later translated into native OS using a variety of special-purpose programs and resources about which you will hear much later

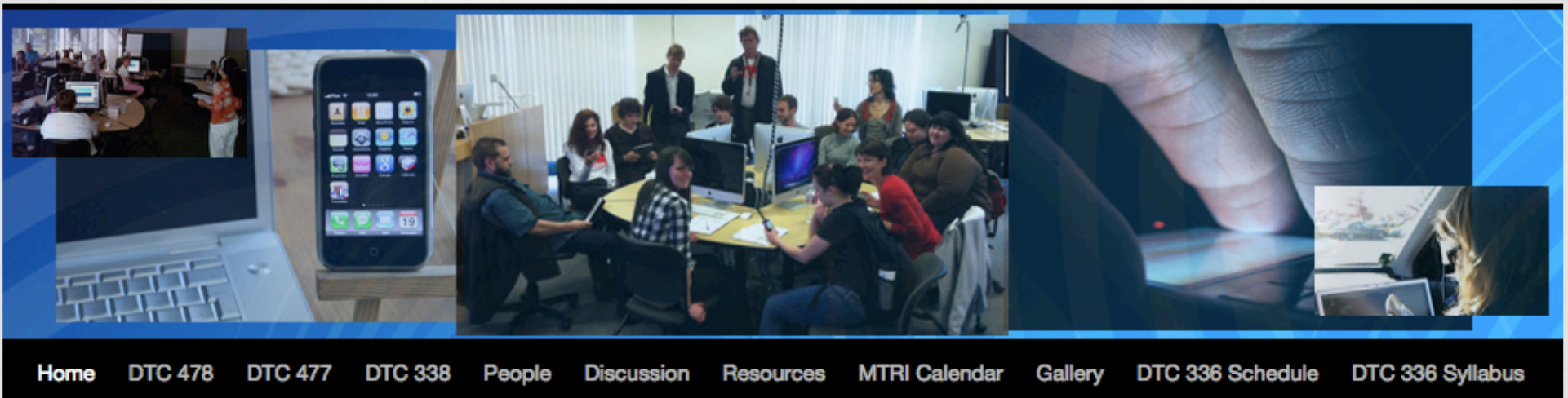


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As was the case with the world wide web, current-day designers and developers of apps often build innovation, design, and narrative standards "on-the-fly." Because of the newness of the endeavor and the fact that much of app development has generated from a commercial or "DIY" sensibility, teaching digital humanities app design and development is not common in academic institutions.

Mobile Tech Research Initiative Summer 2011

DESIGNING AND BUILDING MOBILE APPS



learn • think • build

the
CMDC

WWW.DTC-WSUV.ORG/CMDC

COOL
PROGRAM,
THAT CMDC!

WHAT ARE
THEIR
FINDINGS?

WHAT ABOUT
BEST
PRACTICES?



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Seeing this lack of academic focus, we faculty developed The Mobile Tech Research Institute (MTRI) during the spring and summer 2011 aimed at teaching undergraduates to conceive and create both native and web apps. Together, they built curriculum, pedagogies, and methodologies for teaching app design and development, and then using these best practices built two apps from the ground up: one developed by a faculty-led research team funded by a NEH grant and the other created by students funded by a local business. This course presents our findings and best practices, distilled from our initial 12-week endeavor in this one-week course, and additional projects since . . .