**Data Mining THATCamp – Hollis Peirce, Graham Undergraduate Digital History Research Fellow,**

(Abstract)

Big data tools are not just for ‘big data’. In the humanities, they can provide a macroscopic view of patterns in materials that are otherwise difficult to analyze computationally. In this poster, I present the initial results of an analysis of the conversations at ‘THATCamp Accessibility 2012’, a conference held at Carleton in October 2012, using ‘overviewproject’, a system developed by data journalists for finding topics in data using term frequency-inverse document frequency methods.

THATCamp Accessibility 2012 was an ‘unconference’ (a series of free-form discussions) that explored issues of digital and physical access to humanistic research and materials. Sessions explored how digital tools help accessibility, designing accessible courses, digital museums and libraries, augmented reality, game based learning, and other ideas. These seminars were then recorded for future analysis. This project takes one of these conversations, on accessible museums and libraries, and analyzes it to identify underlying hidden themes and patterns of discourse.

Oral history normally transcribes the complete verbatim speech of a session; with these digital mining tools, we instead created an annotated bag-of-words by timestamp, analyzing this list via the overviewproject.org interface. While still in its early days, this project promises to accelerate the analytic step in oral history practice, removing one element of the subjectivity of oral history in favour of a dialetic between so-called ‘distant’ and ‘close’ readings of those transcripts.