Digitally Speaking

British Library On-Line Project

Below: One of the twelve great books in “Turning the Pages”

The British Library has developed the Turning the Pages exhibit. It is an award-winning interactive Web program that allows users to explore twelve treasured works such as the Diamond Sutra, the Sforza Hours, the Leonardo Notebook, and the Sultan Baybars’ Qur’an.

The books were imaged as physical objects with simulated page turns. A magnifier tool is provided for examining the pages more closely. Users may also choose to listen to an audio clip regarding the significance of the page in view or to read a pop-up descriptive note.

"Turning the Pages" was created by new media developers Armadillo Systems in London. Shockwave was used to animate the page turns. The library hopes to continue to add works as funds allow.

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/digitisation1.html

CALL FOR MONOGRAPH PROPOSALS: TOPICS IN THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES

The University of Illinois Press announced that it is accepting proposals for monographs to be included in a new book series on digital humanities. The organizers recognize that new digital technologies are changing the methods of teaching, research, and publication in the humanities. Accepted manuscripts are intended to “advance and deepen knowledge and activity in this new and innovative field.” Contact the series editors for more information.

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Although cyberinfrastructure improvements have accelerated the support of digital humanities scholarship, humanists at UVA believe that the development of “tailored tools that allow the use of digital resources in sophisticated ways” has not kept pace.

A September 28-30 summit will bring together 35 to 50 humanists who are deeply involved in digital projects. Participants will address the need for textual and non-textual tools for analysis, materials development, education, and presentation, producing a final report with recommendations.

THE ARTIFACTUAL LANDSCAPE OF THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES

As communication is more often accomplished by electronic means, some have lamented the lack of physical artifacts left behind for future study. What substitutes for the letters sent home from soldiers at war, previously saved in a bottom drawer? Where will be the personal exchange between scholars when we want to study their influence on each others thinking?

But electronic communication does leave traces, far beyond a single letter in a trunk in the attic. e-Mail messages are duplicated several times along their route. Databases are produced of transactions, both personal and financial. Shopping preferences are collected. Telephone calls are logged and sometimes even recorded. Photos and videos are sprinkled across the Internet. Some things will be lost. But in the new landscape, humanities research may more closely resemble swimming in an ocean of artifacts than panning for gold.

REPORT ON DIGITAL RESOURCES FOR HUMANITIES RESEARCH

The British Academy has released a report on electronic resources that support research in the humanities and social sciences. The report includes information on funding, access, and preservation and is based on consultation with both representative groups and individual researchers. The authors address organizational issues and policies and provide an analysis that leads to a series of recommendations. The report may be found at... www.britac.ac.uk/reports/eresources