

Specs for Portfolio Tools (Original and Revised along with Remaining Work)

Specs from Grant (9/2004)

Tools

Flexible digital tools are essential to *The Lessons of History* making an interactive resource center that will engage students directly in exploring primary documents and learning American political history. Because *The Lessons of History* will be developing seventy-five lessons and because those lessons will draw on more than one hundred different U.S. history websites accessed through EDSITEment, these tools need to work with a diversity of websites and types of historical resources. The goal of the tools, overall, is to allow students to gather and then closely analyze the online historical resources that they encounter. The tools will be used explicitly as part of the lesson plans and interactive exercises. In other words, the lesson plans and exercises will regularly ask students to make use of the tools in their work, and the tools will provide a structure for engaging students when working with textual and visual materials.

To that end, the Center for History and New Media will develop three tools:

1. *Text collection and annotation tool*: This tool will allow students to easily gather primary sources (or sections of them) that they find online and save them in a personal folder. They will be able, then, to share their folders with other members of the class—for example, other members of an assigned group—and with the instructor. They will also be able to annotate the text document and share those annotations with other class members and the instructor. These annotations could include both general reflective comments about the document as well as more specific questions and comments tied to particular passages.
2. *Image collection and annotation tool*: This tool will be similar to the text collection and annotation tool and will, in fact, make use of a shared folder or scrapbook and will be fully integrated with the text tool. The differences obviously are that it will allow both the collection of images and their annotation. The tool will also allow students to present their findings with its exhibition building feature
3. *Image manipulation tool*: One of the key goals is to get students to slow down and look closely and carefully at historical sources. The image manipulation tool will encourage students to do that with historical images. It will allow students to take images that they find online and bring them into the virtual lightbox offered by the tool. Within that, they will be able to compare two images closely or blow up an image or specific parts of an image to look at it more thoroughly.

The Center for History and New Media is well positioned to build these tools for *The Lessons of History*. Over the past four years, it has devoted considerable attention to developing free digital tools for historians and history teachers. For example, its Survey Builder allows historians to quickly and easily create web-based forms for collecting “oral history” reminiscences online. Its Scribe note-taking database is a free note-taking and annotation databases directed especially at historians and history teachers. Its Syllabus Finder allows teachers to find quickly tens of thousands of history syllabi. All of these tools are available through the CHNM tools page: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/tools>.

Revised Portfolio:

Shared folder system with image annotation and text annotation system (cloning of files,

- Inbox – uploading of documents
- Administrative, Teacher, and Student Logins (as part of class)
- Classes – individual and batch loading
- Comments on Documents, Gallery
- Sharing by Folder Permissions Set by Teacher
- Nesting of Folders
- Document Details (Title, Citation, Instructions, etc)

Admin UI

Bookmarklets

Gallery Features – Zoom, Print, Web Page

Help Files (onscreen, help document)

What is Remaining:

1. Shared Folders: Ability of Teacher to see final student work in student folder (this feature is contained in specs as well as subsequent discussions – very critical for ability of teacher to evaluate student work on lessons). There appears to be folders shared with a class. For example for the class ccny – student galleries – as part of the shared folders for that class. But it is not clear how the teacher (djaffee) would view the students' work in that class.

2. Gallery Print

- Print Icon for user to print an individual document
- Print All – ability to print all the documents in the Gallery

3. Help

- Update screenshots in draft Help Document
- Introductory Tour (possibly- this needs to be discussed with EDSITEment)

4. Bugs – fix remaining bugs
5. Code – well organized code that can be turned over to EDSITEment