



# **The role of the subject librarian in spatial humanities**

Chelcie Juliet Rowell  
2018 ALA Annual Conference  
New Orleans, Louisiana

# My context for spatial humanities

- Previous role in digitization, digital collections, and digital curation
- Current role as hybrid functional-subject specialist





STATE Massachusetts  
COUNTY Middlesex  
TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY X

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920—POPULATION

SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT NO. 140 SHEET NO. 101  
ENUMERATION DISTRICT NO. 227 8 A

NAME OF INCORPORATED PLACE Lowell City

WARD OF CITY Spaulding Street

NAME OF INSTITUTION X

ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 2nd DAY OF January, 1920.

ENUMERATOR Alice Dallaire

PLACE OF ABODE.				NAME of each person whose place of abode on January 1, 1920, was in this family. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. Include every person living on January 1, 1920. Omit children born since January 1, 1920.	RELATION. Relationship of this person to the head of the family.	TENURE.		PERSONAL DESCRIPTION.				CITIZENSHIP.			EDUCATION.				NATIVITY AND MOTHER TONGUE.						Whether able to speak English.	OCCUPATION.			
Street, house number, etc. (See instructions).	House number or farm, etc. (See instructions).	Number of dwelling house in order of visitation.	Number of family in order of visitation.			Home owned or rented. If owned, free or mortgaged.	Sex.	Color or race.	Age at last birth- day.	Single, married, widowed or div- orced.	Year of immigra- tion into United States.	Naturalized or alien.	If naturalized, year of naturaliza- tion.	Attended school Sept. 1, 1919.	Whether able to read.	Whether able to write.	PERSON.		FATHER.		MOTHER.		Trade, profession, or partic- ular kind of work done, as spinner, salesman, labor- er, etc.	Industry, business, or estab- lishment in which at work, as cotton mill, dry goods store, farm, etc.		Employer, salary or wage worker, or working on own account.	Num- ber of farm sched- uled.		
																	Place of birth.	Mother tongue.	Place of birth.	Mother tongue.	Place of birth.	Mother tongue.							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
1	87	67	131	Torrey, Charles M.	Head	1	M	W	50	Un					Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	Filing	Slavery	W	1994		
2				Lora E.	Wife		F	W	51	Un					Yes	Yes	New Hampshire	English	Massachusetts	English	Massachusetts	English	Yes	None				2	
3				Pipe, Olive A.	Sister in law		F	W	73	Un					Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	English	Massachusetts	English	Massachusetts	English	Yes	None				3	
4	93	68	132	Blaga, Antoine	Head	1	M	W	49	Un	1871	Can	1915	Yes	Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	Older	Fruit	Can	4770		
5				Mahina	Wife		F	W	48	Un	1880	Can	1915	Yes	Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				5	
6				Antonette	Daughter		F	W	8	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				6	
7				Lillian	Daughter		F	W	7	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				7	
8				Dreux	Daughter		F	W	5	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				8	
9				Tesier, Arthur	Son in law		M	W	26	Un	1910	Can		Yes	Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	Spicer	Cotton mill	W	522		
10				Amelia	Daughter		F	W	26	Un	X	al		Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				10	
11				Amund, August	Son		M	W	6	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Massachusetts	French	Yes	None				11	
12	99	69	133	Paquette, Arthur	Head	1	M	W	44	Un	1882	Can		Yes	Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	Hamster	General	Can	12612		
13				Rose Anna	Wife		F	W	41	Un	1900	al		Yes	Yes	Yes	Canada	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				13	
14				Alfred	Son		M	W	13	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				14	
15				Josephette	Daughter		F	W	10	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				15	
16				Edgar	Son		M	W	8	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				16	
17				Ronald	Son		M	W	6	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				17	
18				Maril	Daughter		F	W	3	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	None				18	
19	134			Bery, Edmund E.	Head	2	M	W	23	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Canada	French	Canada	French	Yes	William's hand	Cotton mill	W	522		
20				Elizabeth	Wife		F	W	23	Un				Yes	Yes	Yes	Massachusetts	French	Massachusetts	French	Massachusetts	French	Yes	None				20	

# Mapping foreign-born population in Boston

data provider,  
methods consultant,  
data curator

# **Faculty member wants map for her public history site**

- Inspired by a piece of data journalism she saw in a major newspaper, which included an animated map showing change over time
- Wants to visualize historical census data to show over time how much of the population in Boston and its environs is foreign-born

# Questions

- **Data sources?**
  - Historical print volumes of census digitized by U.S. Census Bureau and made available online
  - Community boundary shapefiles from Mass GIS
- **Data structure?** How to structure tabular data in order to generate spatial visualization
- **Were community boundaries stable?** Yes, for the most part

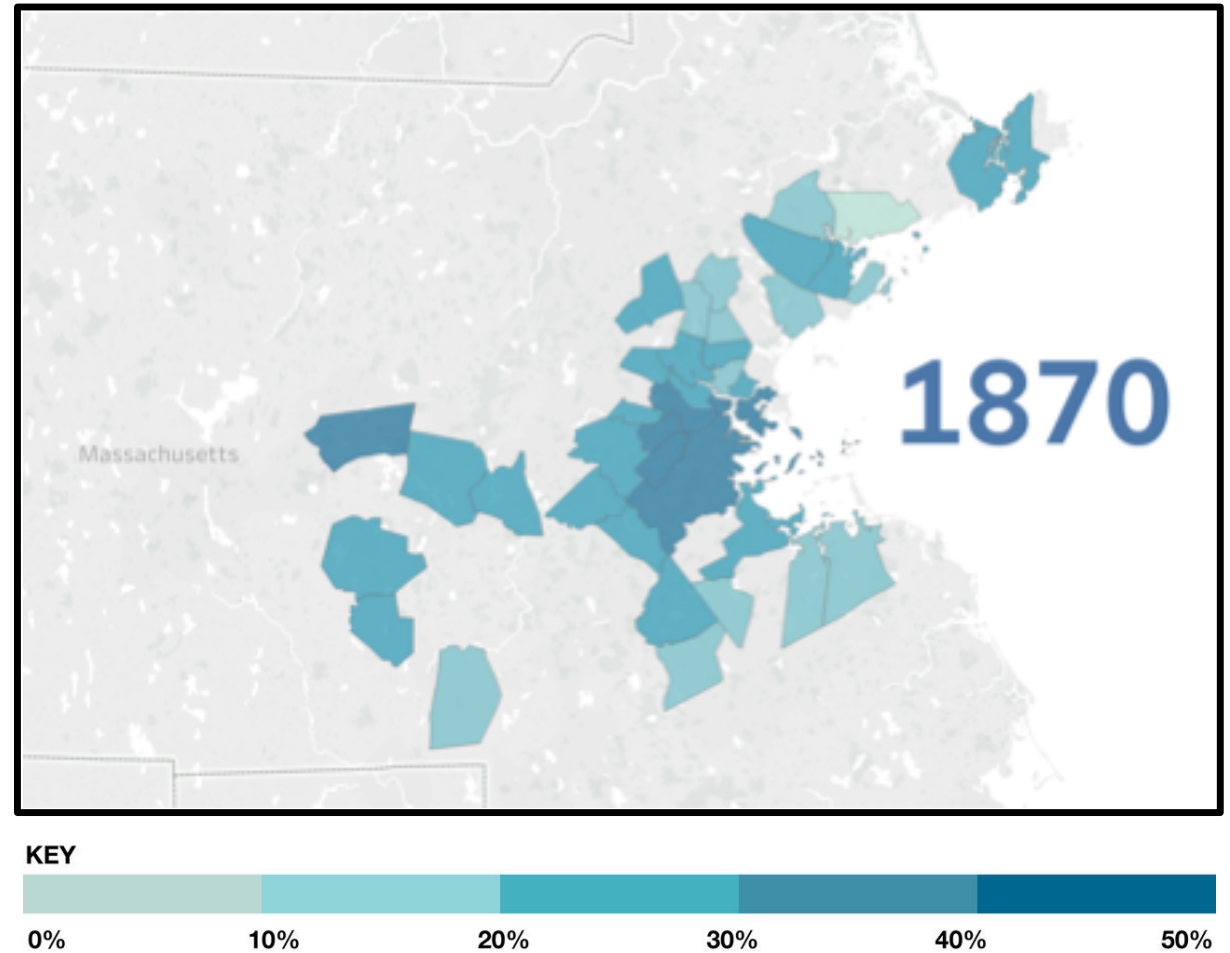
# Collaborators

- **Samuel Davis**, Undergraduate Research Fellow
- **Lynn Johnson**, Professor of History, Boston College
- **Chelcie Juliet Rowell**, Digital Scholarship Librarian and History Liaison
- **Allison Xu**, Data and Visualization Librarian



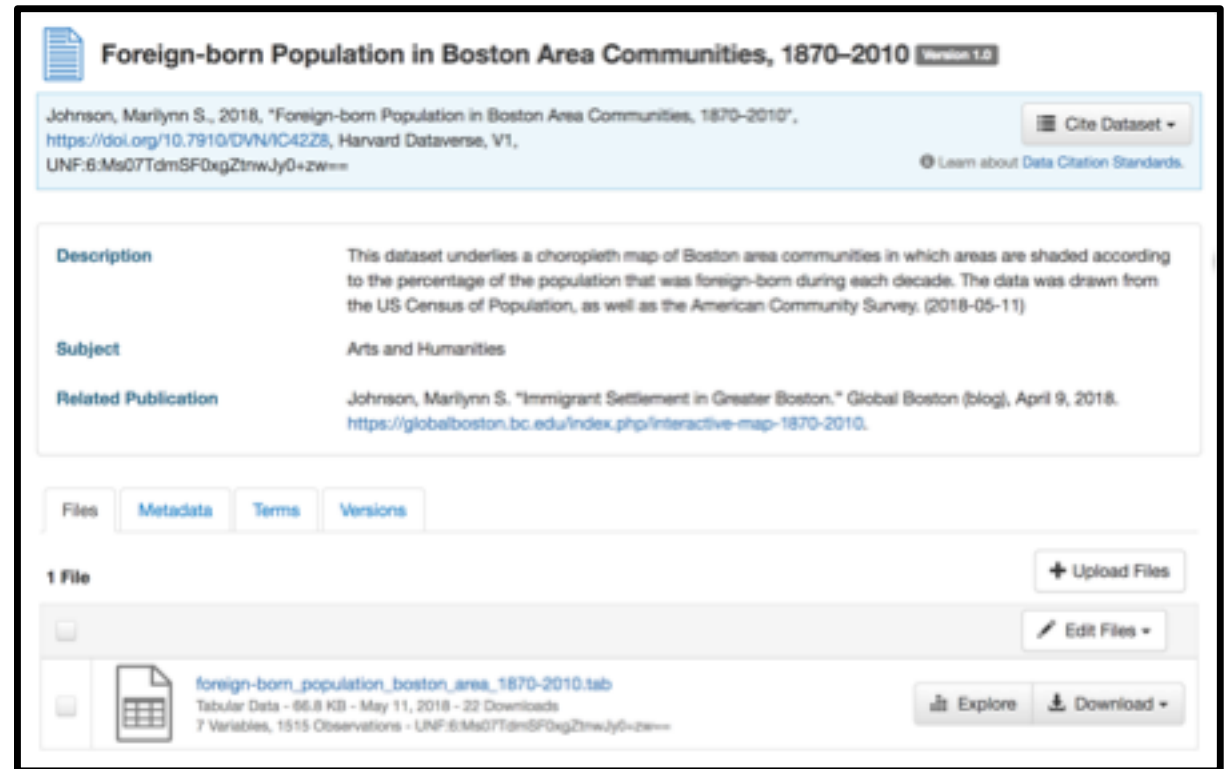
# What we made

- Earlier patterns
  - Followed industrial development along rivers and railroads
  - Decreased following immigration restriction measures of 1920s
- Recent patterns
  - Followed paths of earlier immigrant groups, revitalizing older industrial suburbs



# Inspect or re-use data

We deposited data underlying the visualization in the Boston College Dataverse with robust citation of sources and credit to collaborators.





point, but they were all-  
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ued—In that interview  
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was adultery.

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ved the question and  
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wife was not guilty of  
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argument, Evarts con-  
had been gone over be-

### A FEARFUL OUTRAGE.

**A Negro Murderer Lynched by a Few  
Citizens of Nashville—A Mob Look-  
ing On and Indorsing the Deed.**

**The State Disgraced by a Supine Set of  
Officers—An Unmitigated Outrage  
Against Law and Decency.**

**A Crime for Which the Perpetrators  
Ought to be Made to Pay with Their  
Lives—The Whole State De-**

### JACK FROST.

**Various Effects of the Recent Cold Snap  
on the Grain and Fruit Prospect in  
Indiana, Missouri, Wisconsin,  
Ohio and Kansas.**

#### IN INDIANA.

INDIANAPOLIS, May 3.—The follow-  
ing is a summary from the different sec-  
tions of the State showing the effect of  
the Saturday night's frost upon the  
wheat crop: Madison—The freeze Sat-  
urday night did no material damage to  
the wheat crop, which is very short, not  
exceeding one-fourth the usual crop.  
The fruit is all killed. Terre Haute—  
Wheat considerably injured in this vi-  
cinity. Keokomo—From the best in-

### Attention, Knights Templar.

THE members of St. Elmo Commade-  
ry, No. 15, U. D., are hereby notified  
to meet at Exposition building this  
(TUESDAY) evening, May 4th, at 7½ o'clock  
for drill.

By order of H. F. HALLER, E. C.  
R. W. SHELTON, Recorder.

### Grand Raffle

FOR a lady's fine black walnut inlaid writ-  
ing desk, for the benefit of H. W. Christen-  
sen, Saturday evening, May 8th. Tickets \$1.  
Desk on exhibition at Miss A. A. Walls, two  
doors south of Worsham house.

### IUKA SPRINGS HOTEL

#### TO LEASE OR RENT.

For particulars address

GEO. P. HAMMERLY,  
myd Secretary and Treasurer.

# Mapping lynchings during Reconstruction

methods consultant,  
cheerleader

# Undergraduate thesis writer wants map to accompany thesis

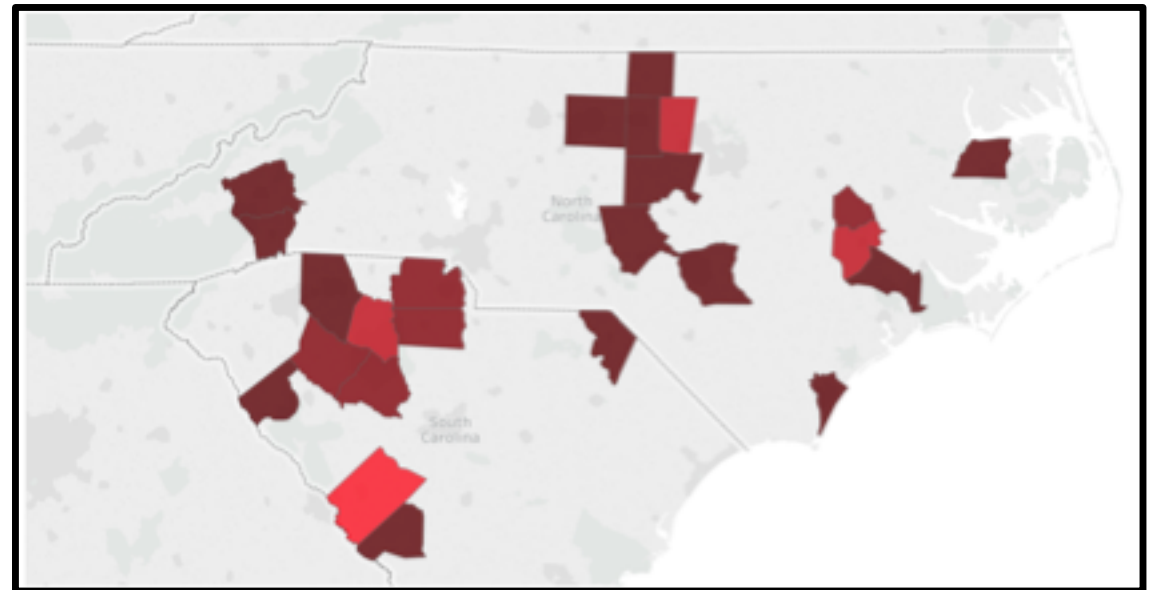
Inspired by the [Lynching in America](#) project created by the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) in partnership with Google.



# She advanced argument by designing map closely on model

Her thesis argued that age of lynching began before Reconstruction.

- Narrower scope: North Carolina and South Carolina, 1865–1877
- Same colors and step increments as key of EJI map







# **Incorporating story map assignment into history course**

instructional designer,  
guest lecturer





# Developing workshop on georeferencing historical maps

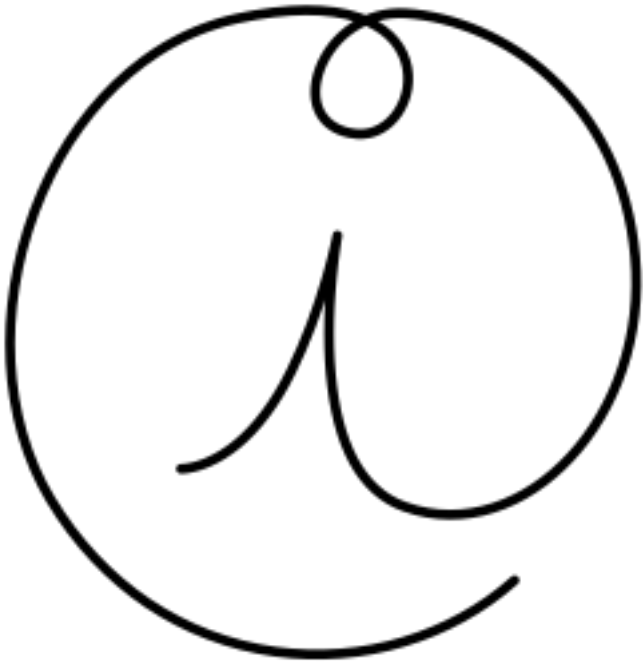
auto-didact,  
co-conspirator



# Reflections

- My earlier ventures into spatial humanities were modeled on specific examples that my collaborators and I could deconstruct and try to recreate with different data.
- I've had to embrace learning as I go, but each experience lays a foundation for the next consultation or project.

**Thank you!**  
**Questions?**



Email me at  
[chelcie.rowell@bc.edu](mailto:chelcie.rowell@bc.edu)  
or say hi on Twitter  
[@ararebit](https://twitter.com/ararebit).

# Project credits

Johnson, Marilyn S., 2018, "Foreign-born Population in Boston Area Communities, 1870–2010," Harvard Dataverse, V1.

Johnson, Marilyn S. "Immigrant Settlement in Greater Boston." Global Boston (blog), April 9, 2018.

# Image credits

1920 Census by Brian Kelly on Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Memphis Daily Appeal, May 3, 1875 on Chronicling America

Shanghai tram, British section, 1920s on Wikimedia Commons (public domain)

Boston (1844) by Henry S. Tanner on David Rumsey Map Collection