Mapping Violence: Visualizing State-Sanctioned Racial Violence on the Mexico/Texas Border (1900-1930)

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This poster will describe recent work on *Mapping Violence*, a digital project that makes visible decades of state-sanctioned acts of violence in the United States during the first decades of the twentieth century. From 1900 through 1930, vigilantes and Texas Rangers killed hundreds of ethnic and national Mexicans along the Mexico/Texas border. "A man's life just wasn't worth much at all," recalled eyewitness Roland A. Warnock, "There were so many innocent people killed in that mess that it just made you sick to your heart to see it happening." This period of conflict is one of the largest episodes of civil unrest in American history and still impacts the struggle for justice and civil rights that continues today in Texas and in America at-large. However, this history is widely unknown. Like Visualizing Emancipation (University of Richmond), Digital Harlem (University of Sydney), and other projects that remind us of the hyperlocal stories and histories of particular geographic regions, Mapping Violence aims to recover and make accessible lives, events, and acts of oppression that continue to impact later generations in various ways.

Mapping Violence is part of Refusing to Forget, a public humanities initiative involving collaborators from Brown University, Loyola, Texas A&M, the University of Texas, and South Texas College (among others) that is working to raise awareness about this history of racial violence and its legacies. Mapping Violence is complemented and informed by additional endeavors by the Refusing to Forget team: academic articles and books, applications for Texas historical markers acknowledging this history, collaborations with Texas public school educators to develop curriculum, and exhibitions of material with the Bullock Texas State History Museum. In Mapping Violence, we envision a project that functions as a database of primary and secondary sources for researchers studying this history, a curated and dynamic resource for classroom use, a memorial space that honors and remembers the victims of these acts of violence, and a corrective to historical narratives and commemorations that erase or mute these moments in the history of Texas, Mexico, and the United States.

This poster will document recent and ongoing work at Brown University on the completion of the first public-facing iteration of Mapping Violence (currently scheduled to launch in the fall of 2017). It will provide an overview of the creation of a database of material derived from primary and secondary texts, narrate the iterative processes of mapping and annotating data about state-sanctioned violence, and consider the ways in which the design of the project is informed by its stakeholders and its range of imagined audiences (educators, academics, activists, students, among others). The poster will highlight the significant roles undergraduate collaborators (from a range of academic disciplines including Computer Science and Ethnic Studies) have played in the project at various stages: as researchers, programmers, designers, developers, and curators. We will also document the project's timeline, workflow, and challenges. What are the challenges inherent in creating a digital space that is both an act of commemoration and a source of research (challenges faced by projects with similar inclinations like Our Marathon: The Boston Bombing Digital Archive and The 9/11 Digital Archive, among others)? In what ways can database creation and digital curation productively remediate and recontextualize controversial historical events for public audiences? How do we navigate desires to tell hyper-specific, localized stories about individual victims of violence with inclinations to inventory and resituate these events within larger narratives about race, gender, and nationalism?

A working demo of *Mapping Violence* will accompany the poster, provided there is room and available resources to do so.