

Mobile Technology Reveals True History



Heidi Rae Cooley
Associate Professor, Visual Art and Design

CURRENT RESEARCH


Giving a voice to the marginalized communities of South Carolina while engaging participants in the state's future

It has been said that "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In light of this all too frequent truth, the challenging social and racial history of the US South is an important history to record, share, and elucidate. Dr. Heidi Rae Cooley, Associate Professor in the School of Visual Art and Design, and Dr. Duncan Buell, Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of South Carolina, conduct projects that "help citizens know and understand all the history that brought us to this point in time, including the history of those who were left out of the process of decision-making." With the belief that in order to move forward, we must reconcile past history with the present, their team uses mobile devices, on location, to allow participants to engage with history and achieve an empathic awareness of the impacts of political actions on real people. It is their hope that those who will never truly know what it was like to be affected by political decisions might nonetheless become more aware of what it would have felt like, and furthermore, to use that knowledge to ensure that future political decisions serve all people.

Projects led by Dr. Cooley and Dr. Buell have uncovered the unspoken history of slavery that made possible the construction of South Carolina College, now known as the University of South Carolina, whose historic Horseshoe is the heart of the Columbia campus. In the process, this project documents the stories, artifacts, and events that played a large role in a University history that has in many ways been hidden from view. Future projects hope to give voice to the Ward One community, whose members were displaced during the 1950s through...

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AFFILIATION

 University of South Carolina

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. 2007, Critical Studies, University of Southern California
- MA, Visual Studies, University of California, Irvine (2003)
- MA, English, California State University, Fullerton (1995)
- BA, English, Minor: Spanish, California State University, Fullerton (1992)

AWARDS

- 2015 Anne Friedberg Innovative Scholarship Award, Society for Cinema and Media Studies
- University of South Carolina Breakthrough Star (2014)

RESEARCH AREAS

Humanities, History, Virtual Arts

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Heidi Rae Cooley and Dr. Duncan Buell, of the University of South Carolina, as they develop mobile devices and media to deliver history in an interactive way. Donations will fund the necessary \$130K/year to support personnel, \$5K/year for travel, and \$5K/year for supplies and licenses. In choosing to donate, you will play a role in the restoration of history in an engaging and interactive way!