Using AI in Family History Research

Online Research Workshop: Using Technology in Family History Research

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What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages (Source: Oxford Dictionary)

Examples of AI Tools

- Chatbots – a conversational platform where you can ask questions of an AI Tool
  - Examples: ChatGPT, Claude, Bard, Bing Chat, Watson Assistance, etc.
- Translation tools (ex. Google Translate)
- Social media content creation (ex. Buffer)
- Image generators (ex. Bing Image Generator, DALLE (Open AI))
- Writing assistants (ex. Grammarly)

How Can AI Be Used for Genealogy?

- Provide research assistance
- Summarize and extract information from text of a document
- Colorize black and white photos
- Translate records into another language
- Transcribing and indexing handwritten records
- Transcribing and indexing newspaper articles
- Create ancestor biographies
- And more!

FamilySearch

- Handwriting recognition tool helps create an index of names and other information
- The tool notes when it's not sure of a transcription and needs review by an indexer
- The "Get Involved" indexing tool allows users like you to fix computer mistakes with the index
- Full Text Search under FamilySearch Labs

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MyHeritage

- AI Record Finder
- PhotoDater
- AI Biographer

Ancestry

- AI Assistant ("Ask Leif")
  - Can help answer general family history and DNA related questions

Transkribus

- Translation tool that can be used with handwritten or printed documentation
- Currently supports 15 languages

What AI Can't Do for Genealogy

- Replace Genealogy Research
- Organize Your Genealogy Files
- Provide a deep analysis of your DNA results

TIPS:

- Be aware that AI can and will likely make mistakes. Fictitious facts and sources may be presented (known as hallucinations).
- Don't let the computer do your analysis. Review the results summarized and make any necessary edits.
- Don't rely on AI to generate reports for clients.
- Identify where and when AI was used when presenting materials with others.

Publications

James Heffernan, "How Artificial Intelligence is Changing Genealogy", *American Ancestors* Magazine, Spring 2024, pp. 20-24. Accessed online at https://www.americanancestors.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/magazine-AAM-25-1-spring-2024-entire.pdf.

Maureen Taylor, "Perplexity: A New Type of AI Tool," *American Ancestors* Magazine, Spring 2024, p. 27. Accessed online at https://www.americanancestors.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/magazine-AAM-25-1-spring-2024-entire.pdf.

Melanie McComb, "Prompt This: Using ChatGPT and Other AI Chatbots for Genealogy", American Ancestors Magazine, Spring 2024, pp. 25-26. Accessed online at https://www.americanancestors.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/magazine-AAM-25-1-spring-2024-entire.pdf.

Angie Bush, *Genetic Genealogy Basics*. (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2016).

Web Sites

- Ancestry AI Assistant - https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Ancestry-AI-Assistant
- Bing Chat (Microsoft) - https://www.bing.com/chat
- Bing Image Creator (Microsoft) - https://www.bing.com/images/create
- ChatGPT - https://openai.com/chatgpt/
- Claude – https://claude.ai
- FamilySearch Full Text Search – https://www.familysearch.org/search/full-text
- FamilySearch Web Indexing - https://www.familysearch.org/indexing/my-indexing
- Gemini (Google) - https://gemini.google.com
- Genealogy and Artificial Intelligence Facebook Group – https://www.facebook.com/groups/genealogyandai
- Google Translate - https://translate.google.com
- History of Artificial Intelligence - https://data-flair.training/blogs/history-of-artificial-intelligence
- Image to Text Converter – www.onlineocr.net
- MyHeritage ($) https://www.myheritage.com
- Newspapers.com ($) - https://www.newspapers.com
- Perplexity - https://www.perplexity.ai/

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