

Workshop – Data Visualisation

Intro to Digital History, University of Hertfordshire
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We're going to extract some historical data about the Trans-Atlantic slave trade from the 'Slave Voyage Database': <http://www.slavevoyages.org>

I want you to spend some time (10 minutes) exploring this database to see what data is available. Then choose some data that you think is interesting, and try different ways of graphing it using Microsoft Excel's 'Chart' features.

- 1) Go to <http://www.slavevoyages.org>
- 2) Under the 'Voyages Database' menu, select 'Search the Voyages Database'.

Try the following searches to ensure that you know how to use the site:

- 1) Click on the 'Summary statistics' tab and take a look at the information provided (note that there is a 'Download table data' button).
- 2) Then click on the Tables button next to Summary statistics and use the tables to perform the following searches:
 - a. In 'rows' select '25 year periods' from the drop down box
In 'columns', select 'broad disembarkation regions'
In 'cells', select 'sum of embarked slaves'.

Click the 'Download table data' (or copy and paste into Excel), and try graphing some of the data. What type of graph is most useful for understanding this data? Play around with the settings of the various charts. Keep in mind that you don't have to graph all of the data to find something interesting.

- b. In 'rows', select '10 year periods'
In 'columns', select 'flag'
In 'cells', select 'sterling cash price in Jamaica'.

Again, try graphing this information in different ways.

- c. Find your own combination of data using the filters and graph it. What can you learn about the slave trade that is surprising or that would tell a good story?