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Visualizing a Wired World's Past (<https://rampages.us/wiredworldspast/>)

Sharing Humanity's Cultural Heritage with a City and the World

Bringing Back the Right Side of the Brain

By Marjorie Burnett

As a social work student at Virginia Commonwealth University, I spend a lot of my time focused on work that involves helping others. I chose social work as my field of study because I am passionate about it and I love the feeling that I get when working with clients at my internship. While I feel that this major is the right one for me, the playful, creative side of my personality does not get to come out in my school work as often as I would like.



([//rampages.us/wiredworldspast/wp-content/uploads/sites/6894/2015/09/1.jpg](https://rampages.us/wiredworldspast/wp-content/uploads/sites/6894/2015/09/1.jpg))

I met with my advisor a few weeks before the bike race to make sure that I was on track to graduate. Because I am a senior planning to graduate this May, she proposed that I take a bike race course to finish the last general education credit that was necessary for graduation, an art credit. I was reluctant at first as I am a Resident Assistant on campus and I would be spending part of the bike race

week planning hall programs and other time completing hours at my internship agency. I decided, though, that I would challenge myself and enroll in a class. While looking through the course book one class in particular caught my attention. This class, entitled Visualizing a Wired World's Past, was described as a compilation of archaeology, art, and history. I was not familiar with the Virtual Curation Laboratory or with 3D printing in general, but I wanted to use the week of the bike race to experience something I had not done before. This class was the perfect opportunity.



(//rampages.us/wiredworldspast/wp-content/uploads/sites/6894/2015/09/2.jpg)



(//rampages.us/wiredworldspast/wp-content/uploads/sites/6894/2015/09/3.jpg)

As bike race week approached, I contacted the professor of the class, Dr. Bernard Means, to ask a few questions. Luckily, he was very helpful and understanding when I told him that I had never taken an archaeology course or used a 3D printer. I was guided by Dr. Means, but I was able to take the lead on my project and incorporate the research skills that I have learned in social work courses to prepare my project for this class. I used vibrant paint colors that I have collected for craft projects over the past few years to mix shades that were more appropriate for my Aztec artifacts. When making descriptive videos about the artifacts that I had chosen, I was nervous. Just as I had never used a 3D printer, I had never before worked with video technology. Once I started painting and recording, though, I knew that I was going to enjoy the work I did for this class. I was able to use parts of my brain that I do not utilize much throughout the semester in my academic life.



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Although I was unable to view the races due to working at my internship agency, I felt a change in the city this past week. While many local business owners and students were frustrated with inconveniences that the race caused, there was also a feeling of excitement in the air. Residents in the city decorated their porches with flags of both the United States and other countries participating in the races as tourists drank coffee in cafes that they may have never visited if not for the race. VCU and Richmond in its entirety were able to experience something new just as I had during the bike race week.

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