Introduction
- We investigated the possible benefits of applying Digital Humanities methods to a historical research project
- Digital Humanities is relatively new
- Digital tools: spreadsheets, visualization software, data-cleaning, digital communication (Zoom, Slack, email, etc.)
- Studied the library of David Oppenheim (1664-1736) – Chief Rabbi of Prague (1703-1736)
- One of the most important and representative collections of early modern Jewish book history
- Our source was a comprehensive catalog of this collection that the Bodleian Library in Oxford owns. It was a static PDF (cannot be sorted, cleaned, or used in other computer programs)

Methods
- Manually input data from Cowley's catalog into spreadsheet
- Discuss data organization, with respect to inconsistencies, unique shelfmarks, naming the works, and what information to include
- Clean data
  - Uncertainty ((), ?, [])
  - Repeated shelfmarks
  - Not enough information
- Revisit spreadsheet and add additional columns as needed
- Tableau visualizations
- Write observations, ask questions, and discuss patterns

Results
- Digitization was a step beyond the PDFs of previous catalogs (Cowley and Steinschneider)
  - Static vs. relational, dynamic data
  - Digitization (entering and cleaning data) took an extremely long time – we still are not done!
  - Dozens of visual displays of the data
  - We observed patterns across countless variables, including where and when books were published, who published them, their language, their size, and their content by re-sorting the spreadsheet and studying the visualizations
  - Virtual setting facilitated collaboration
  - Especially when a variety of communication methods were used

Conclusions
- Digital Humanities is a useful and important next step for the humanities
  - Quantitative analysis, rather than just qualitative, is facilitated by these digital methods
  - What often felt like busy work is a necessary foundation to being able to ask substantive research questions
  - Especially for a large dataset, data was more accessible, searchable, and manipulable for analysis
  - Huge volume of information in digestible chunks
  - Easy to manipulate data organization and to add rows and columns
  - Plug and chug – often you only need make decisions once, then you can repeat for the rest of your data
  - Digital humanities allows you to see otherwise hidden patterns in the data
  - Critical for collaboration
  - Easy to share, upload, and send
  - People can work on it from any location (we were all virtual), at any time, and use sources in any location (ours are in Oxford)
  - Thus, a more continuous process
  - After more cleaning, we plan to upload the dataset into Footprints, a public database

Acknowledgements, References, and Funding