

Using AI in Family History Research

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Artificial intelligence (AI) is a popular and growing field. The basic concept behind AI is that computers perform tasks humans do including identifying different visuals, speech recognition, decision-making models, and language translations. AI has many practical applications in corporate environments, technology industry, as well as in genealogy.

Examples of AI Tools

- Chatbots
 - Conversational platform where you can ask questions of an AI tool
 - Provide instant responses to your questions, commands, etc.
 - Available 24/7
 - Personalized recommendations
 - Used for customer service in many industries
 - Ex. ChatGPT, Gemini (Google), Bing Chat (Microsoft), Claude, Perplexity, Watson Assistant (IBM), ChatSpot (HubSpot)
- Translation tools (ex. Google Translate, Transkribus, DeepL)
- Social media content creation (ex. Buffer)
- Image generators (ex. Bing Image Generator, DALL·E (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!

Current AI Tools on Genealogy Web Sites

- Ancestry
 - AI Assistant
 - Assists with family history and DNA questions
- FamilySearch
 - Computer-Aided Indexing
 - Full-Text Search
- MyHeritage
 - AI Biographer
 - Photos:
 - AI Time Machine
 - Colorize photos
 - Enhance photos
 - Deep Nostalgia (animate photos)
 - DeepStory (speaking photos with details from family tree)

Can AI Be Copyrighted?

- August 2023 ruling by U.S. District Judge Beryl Howell said that "Only works with human authors can receive copyrights"

Tips for Using AI

- Be aware that AI can and will likely make mistakes.
- Don't rely on AI to do all 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

Busby, Lynn Zacny, ***How Artificial Intelligence (AI) Can Help Genealogists to Research, Organize, and Document: With Contrasting Examples*** (2024).

Heffernan, James. "How Artificial Intelligence Is Changing Genealogy," ***American Ancestors Magazine***, Vol. 25, no. 1. Spring 2024. Available online at <https://www.americanancestors.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/magazine-AAM-25-1-spring-2024-entire-update-6.14.24.pdf>.

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Taylor, Maureen. "Perplexity: A New Type of AI Tool," ***American Ancestors Magazine***, Vol. 25, no. 1. Spring 2024. Available online at <https://www.americanancestors.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/magazine-AAM-25-1-spring-2024-entire-update-6.14.24.pdf>.

Websites

AI Genealogy Insights Blog by Steve Little - <https://aigenealogyinsights.com>

American Ancestors – www.americanancestors.org

Ancestry – www.ancestry.com

ChatGPT – <https://chatgpt.com>

Claude - <https://claude.ai>

DeepL - <https://www.deepl.com>

FamilySearch - www.familysearch.org

FamilySearch (Full Text Search) - <https://www.familysearch.org/search/full-text>

Genealogy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Facebook Group -
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/genealogyandai>

Google Lens – www.lens.google.com

MyHeritage – www.myheritage.com

OCR Online - www.onlineocr.net

Perplexity - <https://www.perplexity.ai>

Transkribus - <https://transkribus.ai>

