Presentation By John Beaumont

Genealogy and Your Family History

Class Six: Generative AI

Some Images in This Presentation Were Created Using ChatGPT

Disclaimer!

Generative AI cannot do the research for human genealogists; it can only augment their skills.

All results from Generative AI must be "qualified" by an experienced genealogist to ensure accuracy.

All work should be original, cited, and underpinned by robust research.

A good genealogist would never claim generative AI output as their own.

All work should be based on original qualified research and thoroughly verified.

All “published” work should still meet the Genealogy Proof Standards.

What's Ahead: Generative AI

In this class, we will cover:

- Generative AI Overview
- Benefits of Gen-AI
- Gen-AI Best Practices
- Challenges and Controversies
- The Future of Genealogy with Gen-AI
- Live Examples Using ChatGPT

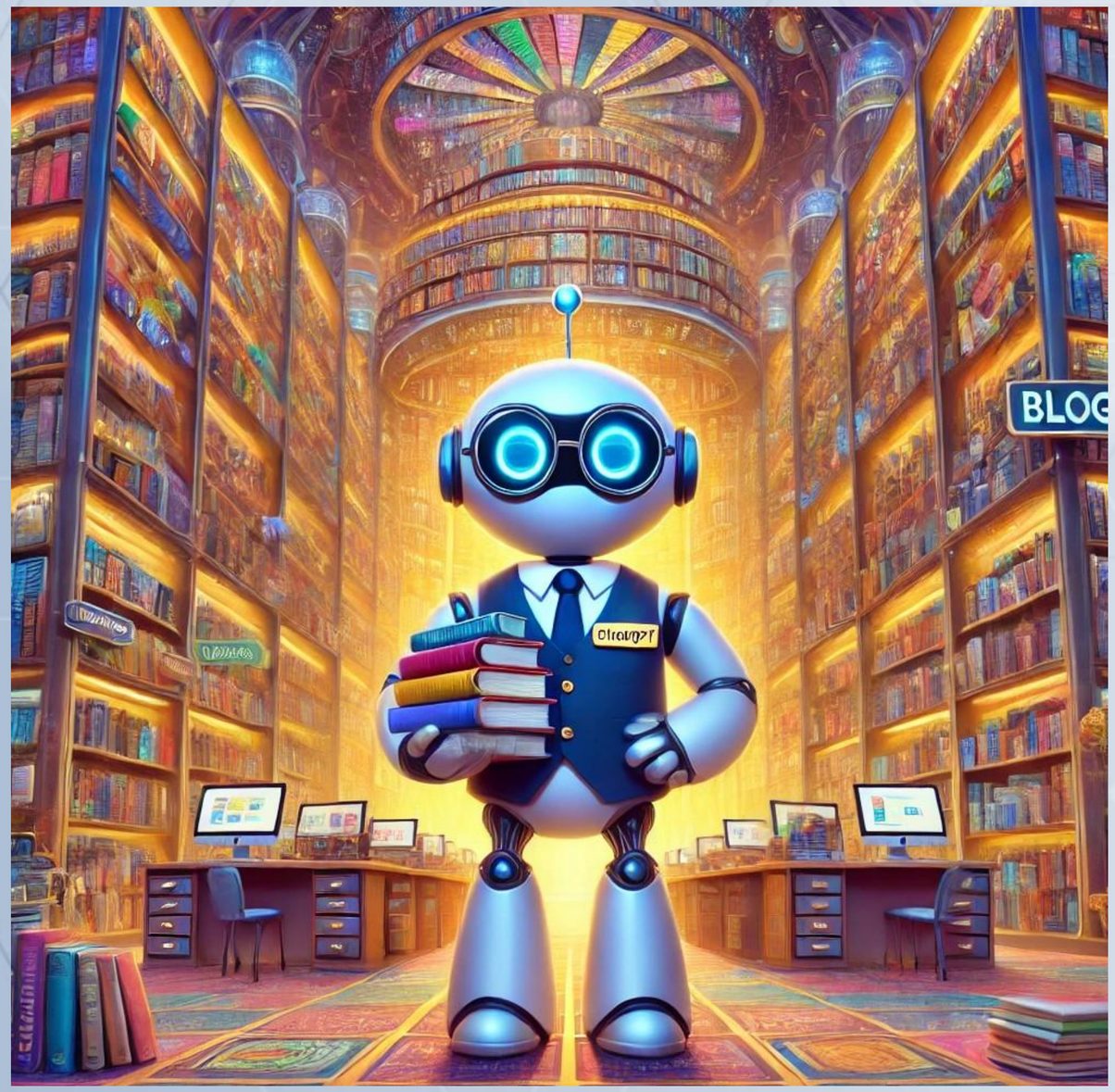
Generative AI Overview

What is Generative AI?

Generative AI

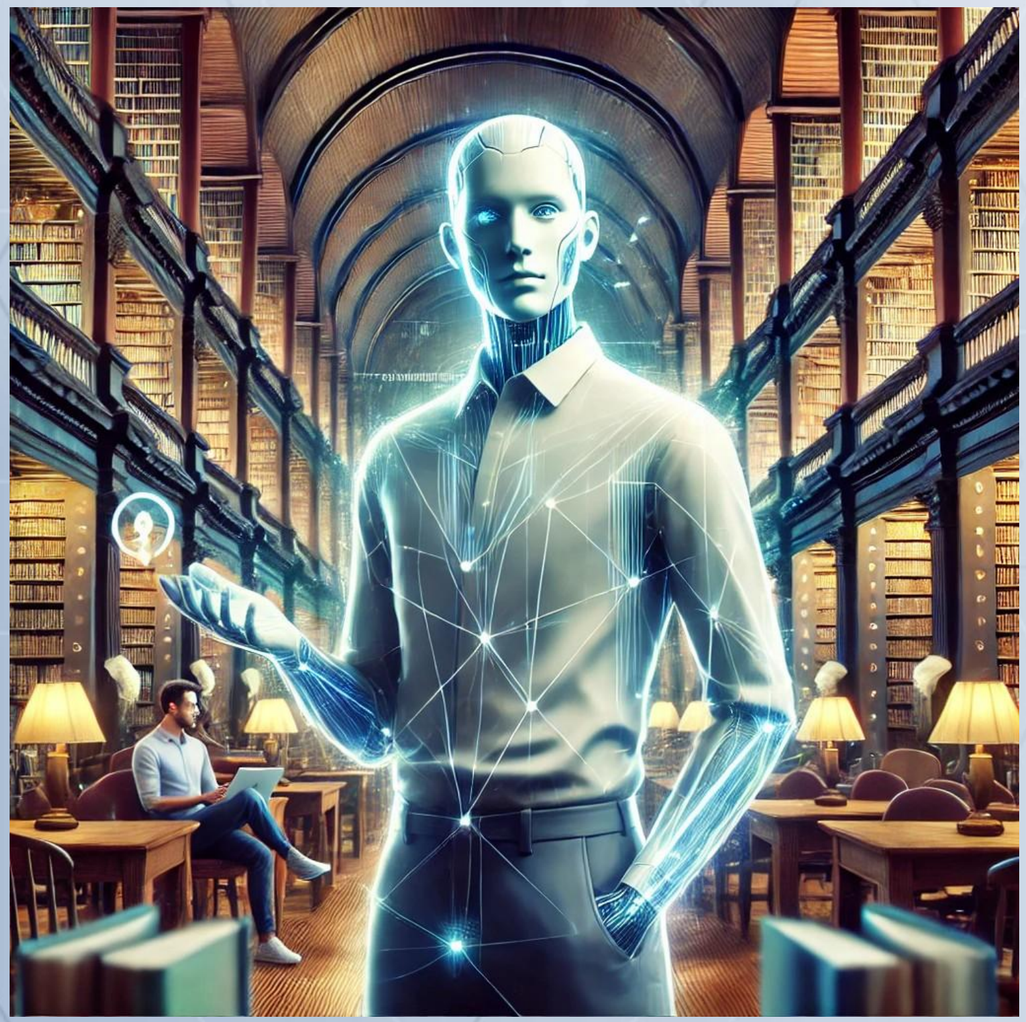
- Generative AI refers to artificial intelligence capable of producing new content based on patterns in existing data. It can generate text, images, audio, and even videos.
- Widely in the news at the moment.
- Designed to be intuitive and can make mistakes.
- Popular tools include ChatGPT for text, DALL-E for images, and Whisper for transcription
- Text Generation is usually based on what is known as a Large Language Model

Large Language Model



- A large language model is like an AI-robot librarian in a vast knowledge library.
- It summarizes, crafts narratives, and suggests genealogy research ideas.
- Useful for translating records or exploring family history connections.
- Inspires research but requires careful evaluation for accuracy.

But Gen-AI Has Drawbacks



He'll make up an answer if he doesn't know.

She gives different answers to the same question.

Gen-AI Improves Genealogy Skills

Accessibility: Makes tasks that were previously time-intensive or required specialized skills more manageable.

Efficiency: Automates mundane tasks, allowing genealogists to focus on meaningful analysis.

Benefits of Gen-AI

Key Benefits

Research Tips and Suggestions

Suggest burial records or resources for the *DuBois* family in rural 18th-century France.

What are the best strategies to locate Civil War pension records for an ancestor from Georgia?

Suggests strategies for finding records in specific time periods or regions.

Identifies lesser-known resources or archives based on search criteria.

Proposes alternative spellings for surnames to widen search results.

Highlights gaps in existing research and recommends next steps

Key Benefits

Translation and Transcription

Translate this German baptismal record from 1805 into English: [Insert text or image].

Transcribe this handwritten letter from my Civil War ancestor into digital text: [Insert text or image]

Translates handwritten or typed foreign-language documents into English.

Transcribes difficult-to-read handwriting into clear, digital text.

Converts old legal or church records into modern formats for easier analysis.

Identifies key terms or phrases in foreign documents to streamline understanding.

Key Benefits

Data Analysis and Pattern Recognition

Analyze these census records to identify migration patterns for the Smith family from 1850 to 1900.

Identify recurring middle names in my family tree to suggest naming conventions.

Tracks migration paths by analyzing birth, marriage, and death records.

Identifies repeated naming patterns across generations in a family tree.

Groups records based on shared details, such as locations or occupations.

Spots inconsistencies, such as incorrect dates or duplicated entries.

Key Benefits

Storytelling and Narrative Building

Turn this list of facts, dates, and locations into a cohesive family story suitable for sharing.

Add historical context to my ancestor’s immigration journey to the U.S. in the 1880s

Combines raw genealogical data into a timeline or structured narrative.

Adds historical context to events, such as wars, migration waves, or economic changes.

Acts as an editor and proofreader of your draft narratives and checks for ambiguity.

Suggests creative ways to present family history, like video scripts or visual timelines.

Key Benefits

Image Analysis

Enhance this family portrait from the 1900s to improve clarity.

Identify the military insignia and historical context of this uniform in this photo.

Restores faded or damaged photographs to reveal hidden details.

Identifies historical features in images, such as clothing styles or architecture.

Analyzes group photos to recognize individuals or establish timelines.

Detects geographic or environmental markers in photographs.

Key Benefits

DNA Analysis

Please explain how this second-cousin DNA match fits into my family tree.

Summarize the migration paths suggested by my DNA ethnicity breakdown

Summarizes genetic matches to identify relationships within a family tree.

Provides migration patterns based on shared DNA ethnicities.

Suggests which relatives to contact for further collaboration.

Detects potential errors in your family tree based on DNA inconsistencies.

Key Benefits

Reviews and Error Checking

Review my family narrative and identify any inconsistencies or missing information.

Identify gaps in my ancestor's timeline, such as missing marriage or birth records for the 1800s

Identifies gaps in family tree research, such as missing birth or marriage records.

Flags possible conflicts in dates, such as overlapping birth and death years.

Review sources to ensure they align with known family details.

Suggests corrections to entries that need to be more consistent or supported.

Gen-AI Best Practices

Accuracy and Security

Establishing trust in AI-generated content and safeguarding privacy

Always Review: Validate AI outputs by cross-checking with primary and secondary sources.

Prioritize Privacy and Security: Avoid sharing sensitive family information; use anonymized labels.

Know the Limitations of AI: Understand AI may "hallucinate" or produce incorrect information.

Set Clear Goals: Provide detailed, specific prompts to improve output quality.

Effective Research and Collaboration

Maximizing AI's usefulness for genealogists.

Write Prompts with Skill and Care: Detailed prompts produce better results.

Save and Organize Your Prompts: Keep a record of effective prompts for reuse and refinement.

Collaborate with Family Using AI: Use AI outputs (timelines or narratives) to engage relatives in research. Some tools allow "teaming."

Diversify Your Tools: Combine AI with platforms like FamilySearch or Ancestry.com. Try different AI tools for different tasks.

Staying Innovative and Updated

Leveraging advancements and creative approaches in genealogy.

Stay Informed on AI Updates: Learn about new features, like handwriting recognition or DNA analysis tools.

Embrace Creativity: Transform raw genealogical data into engaging formats.

Experiment with Advanced Features: Explore advanced prompt features or data visualization capabilities.

Ask for Multiple Solutions: Don’t settle for the first output; try multiple iterations of the same question for different solutions

Key Prompt Techniques for Genealogists

Developing and applying effective prompts to optimize AI outputs.

Write Specific and Detailed Prompts: Include context, uploaded documents, time periods, locations, and desired formats.

Use the Persona Pattern: Assign roles to AI (e.g., genealogist, historian) for context-specific responses.

Ask for Step-by-Step Explanations: Encourage AI to break down complex tasks or explain the reasoning behind its answers**.**

Take a Gen-AI or Prompt-Engineering Class: Enhance your skills by learning structured methods for crafting effective prompts**.**

Challenges and Controversies

Challenges and Controversies

Accuracy Issues: AI may produce false information (hallucinations) that seem plausible but are entirely fabricated.

Data Privacy Risks: Sensitive family data shared with AI tools could be stored or misused without user knowledge.

Bias in Training Data: AI can reflect biases inherent in its training data, skewing historical interpretations.

Loss of Traditional Skills: Over-reliance on AI might erode essential genealogical research skills.

Assumed Fiction in Storytelling: AI often “pads out” narratives with assumed storylines.

Ownership of AI-Generated Content: Questions arise about who owns AI-generated genealogical narratives or visuals.

Overconfidence in AI: Some users may accept AI outputs uncritically, treating them as definitive answers.

Accessibility Disparities: Advanced AI tools may be financially or technically inaccessible to many researchers.

Lack of Source Attribution: AI often provides insights without clear references, making verification difficult.

Potential for Misuse: AI tools could be misused to fabricate genealogical data or create misleading narratives.

Inconsistent Results: AI tends to give different results to the same question.

Skill Disparities: Excellence in Gen-AI prompt design is a skill that has not been introduced for genealogists.

Future of Genealogy and Gen-AI

The Future of Genealogy and Gen-AI

Automated Family Tree Construction: AI could automatically generate comprehensive family trees from uploaded data.

Enhanced DNA Insights: AI might predict relationships or migration paths more accurately than current tools.

Virtual Family Reunions: AI simulates virtual interactions with ancestors and descendants.

Interactive Storytelling: Dynamic multimedia narratives combining text, images, and video could become mainstream.

Real-Time Translation and Analysis: Instant translation of foreign records paired with contextual historical analysis.

Global Collaborative Platforms: AI could match genealogists researching shared ancestors worldwide.

AI-Powered Historical Reconstruction: Recreate ancestor historical environments using historical data and AI.

Accessible Preservation Tools: Affordable AI tools for restoring and digitizing documents and photos for all users.

Ethical Genealogy Frameworks: Gen-AI skills and ethics will become required certification standards.

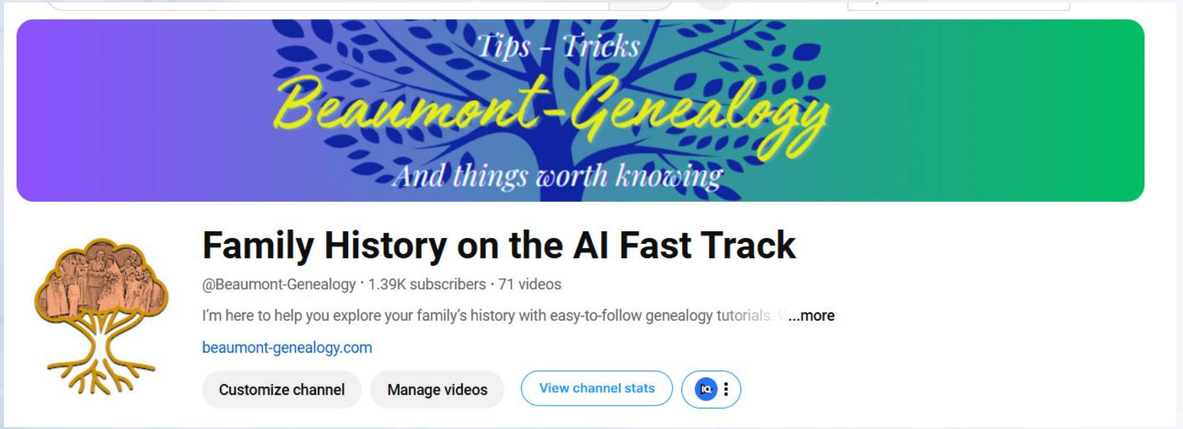
Integrating Generative AI with Augmented Reality: Virtually explore family trees and ancestor stories in 3D.

Blockchain for Secure Genealogical Records: Ensures data accuracy and privacy and preserves genealogical records.

AI-Assisted Lost Record Reconstruction: AI can hypothesize missing records, simulate lost family branches, and rebuild data from remnants.

Live Demo

Thank you for Attending



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