

Making Sense of Digital Humanities

Making Sense of Digital Humanities

Transformations and Interventions in Technocultures

JULIAN CHAMBLISS AND ELLEN MOLL

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ELLEN MOLL AND JULIAN CHAMBLISS

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Foreword

KATHLEEN FITZPATRICK

There's a running joke in digital humanities circles about the repeated calls to define the field, made all the more funny—or painful—by the difficulty involved in doing so. Every DH practitioner has been called upon at some point to explain to someone—a dean, a colleague, a family member—what exactly this “digital humanities” thing is. In fact, the question is so pervasive that Jason Heppler built whatisdigitalhumanities.com, a website that randomly serves up one of 817 definitions produced by participants in the “Day of DH” events between 2009 and 2014. It's worth hitting reload a few times to get a sense of the range of ideas out there.

You'll come across my own definition of “digital humanities” in this text, for what it's worth. I want to suggest, however, that the point of formulating these definitions may be less arriving at an answer than it is sketching out the contours of the possibility space that opens up when digital technologies and humanities-oriented questions are brought into contact. This is what *Making Sense of Digital Humanities* enables: a rich, multi-voiced, multi-modal dialogue about what the digital and the humanities can together become.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of *Making Sense of Digital Humanities* is its status, as Julian Chambliss and Ellen Moll note in their introduction, as a “living archive”, a text that can continue to develop as its possibility space grows. I hope that the instructors and students who engage with this text will use it not just to explore what digital humanities is today, but what it could be in the future—and that the results of their explorations will become part of this collective project of sense-making across the field.

Introduction

Introduction

JULIAN CHAMBLISS AND ELLEN MOLL

Given the complexity of defining Digital Humanities, it may seem like an ambitious project. Yet, this book is born of a particular set of conversations about what we, as faculty members interested in Digital Humanities, would like students to have in a resource to help them explore. Our experience as teacher-scholars engaged with DH in and out of the classroom affords us some sense of the importance of the many works classified as digital humanities, but also the ways discussions so central to our colleagues may be difficult for students to grasp fully. This textbook has two purposes: First, it will bring together materials necessary for undergraduates to explore ethical ramifications, equity issues, and cultural or historical contexts of digital technologies and how this knowledge can shape real world decisions. Second, this reader will serve as an essential resource for the faculty teaching courses about these questions. It will be a living archive of evolving ideas connected to technology and cultural discussion supported by teaching and research activities.

Much has been written about digital humanities and much of that literature has wrestled with definitions and methodology. Making the distinction between Humanities Computing and Digital Humanities by itself represents a crucial ideological challenge. At the same time, the history of computing in humanities offers a clear set of historical benchmarks. By contrast, what we have come to define as Digital Humanities is less clear. Is it a discipline that provides a specific set of ideas, or methodological toolkit, that offers researchers the opportunity to shape our understanding of society in unique ways? This volume reflects the diverse viewpoints linked to digital humanities inspired by [Michigan State University's Digital Humanities program](#). The following section considers areas of

interest codified by teaching and research in Digital Humanities at [MSU](#). This volume seeks to balance concerns about theory and practice. This volume brings together scholars seeking to answer humane questions tightly linked to the implication of technological change.

The idea that a single perspective can encapsulate digital humanities is a challenge. Fundamental questions linked to the definition, intention, and implementation of digital humanities have numerous possible responses. Yet, if we step back and consider the challenge of generating a better understanding for undergraduate students, the questions we must consider are simplified in some way. As Ryan Cordell explains in his essay "[How Not to Teach Digital Humanities](#)", undergraduate students do not care about digital humanities. As he rightly points out, the meta-discussions about digital humanities as an academic field and how it is or is not shaping disciplinary questions are secondary to student learning. Indeed, the broader set of theoretical questions and practical applications linked to specific projects, researchers, and methods drive student engagement. These discussions highlight the uncertainty framing professional implications about digital humanities. These discussions provide an understanding of the disciplinary debates sparked by the impact of computing on the humanities. Still, they all-too-often fail to provide the context around why the fundamental questions linked to the discipline matter and the ways digital humanities may open those questions to students in a new way.

This volume seeks to reflect the conversation about the humane and its intersection with the digital in a manner that clarifies why studying digital humanities is vital to the humanities. Inspired as we are by the undergraduate minor in digital humanities, the works in this volume consider technology and culture broadly. Like our curriculum, we rely on numerous voices to create a better understanding of the how and why linked to digital technology. A consideration of technoculture inspires this approach. Dr. Seth Giddings, Associate Professor of Digital Culture and Design at

Winchester School of Art at the University of Southampton, writes in [*The New Media and Technocultures Reader*](#), “...it is impossible to separate human culture from technology.” Thus, any consideration of digital humanities must consider the patterns of social life, economic structures, politics, art, literature, and popular culture. The collection of readings here calls attention to the complexities of digital humanities by understanding the questions of culture that shape technology are ultimately humane.

PART I
DATA, ETHICS, AND
SOCIETY

“You take the blue pill—the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill—you stay in Wonderland, and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes.”

–“Morpheus”, *The Matrix*, 1999

The question of how technology shapes contemporary society is not a simple question. We live in an age of [surveillance capitalism](#) and struggle with the impact of technology on every aspect of our lives. While the contemporary conversation is dynamic, we have wrestled with this reality in humanities since the widespread impact of technology for decades. An introduction to the digital humanities should start with considering the meaning and values inherent to the impact of new ideas as embodied by technological innovation. In this way, we hope to call attention to how concerns about the humane have often loomed over digital humanities as a field. This concern with people and how they experience technology has a history and form that supersedes any particular technology and calls our collective attention to fundamental questions about the how and why of technological tools and their impact on society.

This section offers a broad set of materials that engage with the values, vision, and communities linked to technology. A basic

history of the internet by Melih Bilgil opens this section, providing that basic information many students lack. Questions of gender and erasure of women's contributions are offered by Sharon Leon's "Getting Tenure in Digital and Public History, as a Non-Man", while the challenges and opportunity linked to Black Digital Humanities approaches are considered by Christy Hyman in "Black Scholars and Disciplinary Gatekeeping" and Ravynn K. Stringfield in "Breaking and (Re)Making". Black Digital Humanities emerged as a distinct subfield growing from the work of Dr. Kim Gallon. In her essay, "Making a Case for a Black Digital Humanities", Gallon articulated a link between digital humanities and black studies to highlight how race is constructed. Jada Similton's "A Black Data Architecture: An Exploration Data, Ethics, and Community in the Black Experience" offers a series of digital humanities projects that shed light on projects that enable "critical conversations about blackness" in the digital world. The implications of uneven experience created by racialized technological use are made clear by Safiya Umoja Noble's examination of Google in her lecture, "Just Google It: Algorithms of Oppression", Dr. Chris Gillard's "Banking on Your Data: The Role of Big Data in Financial Services", and Coded Bias, a documentary by Shalini Kantayya. The section concludes with a consideration of copyright and a list of digital data projects.

History of the Internet

History of the Internet

MELIH BILGIL

“History of the Internet” is an animated documentary explaining inventions from time-sharing to file-sharing and from Arpanet to the Internet. The clip was made by Melih Bilgil. The history is told using the PICOL icons available on picol.org. You can get news about this project on blog.picol.org.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can view them online*

here: [https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/
makingsensedh/?p=64#oembed-1](https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=64#oembed-1)

Getting Tenure in Digital and Public History, as a Non-Man

Getting Tenure in Digital and Public History, as a Non-Man

SHARON LEON

Earlier this week, the [AHA's Perspectives on History](#) site published an article from LaDale Winling entitled "Getting Tenure in Digital History: How One Scholar Made His Case". Dr. Winling presents the arc of his career in the history department at Virginia Tech, from his hiring in 2011 to his tenure case in 2017. He suggests that candidates working in digital and public history have to balance the politics of their departmental and institutional expectations and the larger expectations of one's historical field and subfield. Undoubtedly, that's true given the fact that a candidate for tenure must make a case to outside qualified readers so that an internal group of scholars in the tenure home and institution can rely upon those evaluations in their judgment on the case.

Beyond this basic reality, midway through his article, Dr. Winling makes some generalizations about the larger fields of both digital and public history that I find problematic:

There are few models for historians earning tenure based on digital or public work, especially at research universities. The classic examples of

the digital history world—the Ayerses and Cohens—mostly took on their digital work after tenure or in addition to their tenure books. There are a few more examples in the public history world, but we are still in the first generation of scholars who joined the faculty after Anthony Grafton and Jim Grossman acknowledged that it was time to think about and begin valuing public history.

The number of scholars gaining tenure with digital history and public history work grows every day, but they are already substantial cohorts. The notion that the paths taken by Dan Cohen and Ed Ayers represent “classic examples” seems odd since they are such different cases; Cohen and Ayers are from different generations.

Ed Ayers began his work on his first major projects before there was even a web on which to publish it. He belongs to the generation of digital historians including Steven Brier, Josh Brown, Susan Smulyan, Jan Reiff, Roy Rosenzweig, and others.

Dan Cohen, a dear friend and collaborator who left a full-time position in a history department in 2013, belongs to the next generation with many of the rest of us. Cohen made a case for promotion and tenure that balanced traditional publications and digital products. Because I was sitting in the room when Dan made his public case for tenure in 2007, I can distinctly recall that it included his wonderful first book, but also a host of digital history projects including ECHO, SurveyBuilder, H-Bot, the September 11 Digital Archive, and Zotero. His digital work was a coequal part of

his case and he presented it proudly as such. Significantly, since that day in 2007, many people have made their tenure cases in exactly the same way—I certainly did.

Furthermore, and strangely for the context of the article, Dr. Winling points to a Perspectives article from Anthony Grafton and James Grossman in the fall of 2011 about the profession needing to take work outside the academy seriously as a jumping-off point for making space for a generation of tenured public historians. Rather than being a launching point, Grafton and Grossman’s article came at the tail end of a period of serious collaboration between representatives of the [AHA](#), the [OAH](#), and [NCPH](#) to craft a report on the status of, and recommendations for tenure and promotion for, publicly engaged academic historians. All three organizations adopted that report in 2010 and it has proven to be a great leverage point for public historians in academic departments. But, that report was, in fact, only one step in many long years of struggle.

A perusal of the over 1,600 members of the National Council on Public History, which is approaching its 40th anniversary in 2020, will provide a substantial list of faculty at research universities who have gotten tenure as public historians and not all after 2010. One need only look at the faculty at Arizona State University, [IUPUI](#), Louisville University, Middle Tennessee State University, Oklahoma State University, the University of Illinois Chicago, the University of Massachusetts, the University of South Carolina, the University of Utah, West Virginia University, and others to find scholars and programs with deep histories and many tenured alumni. Additionally, new public historians are being tenured every year. I know this is true because I have served as an outside reviewer for numerous cases.

I point out these communities and issues not to suggest that getting tenure doing digital or public history is easy—it is not. Far too many of our colleagues in history departments across the country dismiss this work out of hand because it does not take the forms to which they are accustomed. That is a problem; one that we all need to continue to work against.

I would suggest that the way to do that is to make strong arguments for the work on its own terms as digital or public work, rather than to frame it in any way that would suggest it is ancillary or supplemental to the “real history” of monographs and articles. More importantly, there are many people who have successfully negotiated this process and who are available to serve as models and as external readers. There is an even larger cohort of people who were not tenured as digital or public historians, but who have since developed the skills and depth to evaluate those promotion cases. We can only hope that that community of scholars continues to grow.

Regardless of the issues I have with Dr. Winling’s article, I might not have even noticed it fly by in my Twitter stream if he had not tagged me in a series of tweets amplifying and framing the piece:

I want to acknowledge a weakness of this piece that is reflective of a weakness in the discipline: it is male-dominated. There are many great female digital historians, including [@sharonmleon](#) and [@SheilaABrennan](#) and [@jackiantonovich](#) and [@KeishaBlain](#) and many more...

— LaDale Winling (@lwinling) [April 8, 2019](#)

...but the most prominent models and the drivers of the discipline-wide conversation (eg the Ayers-Cohen-Grossman-Grafton types) have been men. This makes women’s paths even

harder, as they are still in the process of creating new models and paths to tenure with digital history.

– LaDale Winling (@lwinling) [April 8, 2019](#)

Here, Dr. Winling frames digital history as a male-dominated field while acknowledging that there are a number of non-male digital historians whose work he knows, including mine. This positioning set me back some. If Dr. Winling knows this work, how had he presented the field so narrowly in a piece that was intended to be a model to up-and-coming scholars? To envision the field as dominated by Ayers-Cohen-Grossman-Grafton is to miss a tremendous amount of work over the last twenty-five years, regardless of the gender of the producer.

In the past several years, I have done some work on exploring why women have been erased from the first ten years of digital history work on the web. There are lots of reasons, none of them good. There is no excuse to continue to perpetuate this erasure, which is exactly what Dr. Winling did (and, in fact, acknowledged—which I appreciate).

This perpetuation has two possible causes: 1) it suggests a problem with citation politics where scholars are systematically ignoring the work produced by people who are not (white) men or 2) it suggests a lack of research where scholars are unaware of the breadth and depth of the field. Either way, those who frame the field this narrowly are engaging with a grossly thin slice of the

historiography. It does a disservice to the scholars whose work they are overlooking and it does a disservice to the students who are learning to frame the field in these ways.

To suggest the imbalance of this framing, I asked for women who are doing digital history or digital public history work to identify themselves.¹

Take a look at the responses, the retweets, and responses to the retweets. The uptake was wide and deep, and understandably flowed outside the narrow bounds of academic rank.

As always, it's worth remembering that we are all here, doing the work, and we have been for decades.

1. I should also clearly acknowledge that I goofed in the way I framed my call: asking for women to represent and overlooking all the N.B., trans, and queer folks who don't identify that way.

Black Scholars and Disciplinary Gatekeeping

Black Scholars and Disciplinary Gatekeeping

CHRISTY HYMAN

Afrofuturism is here defined as responsible storytelling, a challenge to remember a past that instructs the present and can build a future.

—De Witt Douglas Kilgore¹

(I think of this as a kind of provocation as I imagine Black Futurities alongside the material realities of Black Scholarship within the Digital Humanities.)

1. Douglas Kilgore, “Afrofuturism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction*, ed. Rob Latham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 563.

Scholars enrolled in graduate programs go through a process where faculty supervisors decide if thesis/dissertation topics are rigorous enough for effective completion.² If a topic is compelling, but lacks the available sources to respond to the historical questions posed, then the student is advised to seek a topic that has a trail of sources from which the student can draw on for historical interpretation. The central tenet of the historical profession requires a critical engagement with records from the past. However, Black scholars engaged in recovery projects whose central questions relate to silenced legacies are forced to abandon those projects that reveal a dearth of archival sources.³ In this way, digital

2. P. Gabrielle Foreman, Twitter, January 4, 2020, <https://twitter.com/profgabrielle/status/1213268486258135041?s=20>: “Barbara Christian Was Told by Her English Dept Colleagues She Couldn’t Write a 1st Book on Black Women Writers. Don’t These Folks Get Tired of Having Us Prove Them so Dramatically Wrong over and Again. @viet_t_nguyen. #MLA2020 <https://t.co/IEK1e3uAFX>.” In this tweet Foreman points out how scholars who have gone on to do groundbreaking work were initially discouraged by their programs to pursue their research agendas because they were rooted in hidden and obscured histories of people historically marginalized.
3. Martha C. Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001). Howell and Prevenier assert that the “central paradox of the historical profession is that historians are prisoners of sources

recovery can act as a prescriptive, allowing the scholar to build projects that are based on different methods of verifying information that may not be recognized as rigorous by the discipline.

Accessing the traces of Black life in archival sources—noticing the silences—is a key method in historical recovery work. Humanist scholars “are the long-recognized monitors of cultural memory” and “exposing the richness” of the Black past is the “office” of the Black scholar engaged in recovery work.”⁴ The results from these technologies of recovery represent artifacts of digital cultural memory, creating avenues for the survival of cultural narratives for future generations to access.⁵

that are not always reliable but skilled readings of those sources can yield meaningful stories about the past and the human relationship to the past.” However, it still remains that sources documenting the Black lives in history are often very problematic—Jessica Marie Johnson reminds us of the violence of the past and that “the brutality of black codes [...] created a devastating archive.” See Jessica Marie Johnson, “Markup Bodies: Black [life] Studies and Slavery [death] Studies at the Digital Crossroads,” *Social Text* 36, no. 4 (2018): 58.

4. See Jerome McGann, *A New Republic of Letters: Memory and Scholarship in the Age of Digital Reproduction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 1, 21.
5. Gallon rightfully asserts that Black digital humanities projects represent technologies of recovery. See Kim Gallon, “Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities,” in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, eds. Matt Goland Lauren Klein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota

So the hope is to recover the stories of Black folks past and present whose experiences have been rendered invisible—but when the discipline confers legitimacy only on those stories with a trail of print sources, that puts the Black scholar in a position where they must make a fateful choice:

Abandon the compelling story that honors Black historical agents dishonored by a colonialist, hegemonic archive?

Or...

Engage in a project of subversion, disrupting the methodological traditions that the discipline holds so dear.

And when the scholar goes rogue and chooses to recover these stories that appear often as traces, an unyielding commitment to the story is essential. Every step of the way, the importance of telling the story takes precedence over everything. This sort of disruption destabilizes all those things naturalized by the discipline that recognizes only certain historical actors, events, or forms of knowledge as rigorous scholarly research agendas. These stories that Black scholars are telling are those that Christina Sharpe has recognized as having been “swept up and animated by the afterlives

Press, 2016), 42–49, <https://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/read/untitled/section/fa10e2e1-0c3d-4519-a958-d823aac989eb>. A fine example of this important digital recovery work is the Colored Conventions Project which brings to digital life the buried history of collective Black mobilization in the nineteenth century for undergraduate and graduate students, researchers across disciplines, high school teachers, and community members interested in the history of church, educational and entrepreneurial engagement. See Colored Conventions Project, <https://coloredconventions.org/>.

of slavery,” these are the stories that must be told, as they have survived despite an “insistent violence and negation.”⁶ This is the inheritance of Black scholars with a view to future-oriented diasporic histories that animate a culture of survival.

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6. See Christina Elizabeth Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 12–15.

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Breaking and (Re)Making

Breaking and (Re)Making

RAVYNN K. STRINGFIELD

The interesting thing about the digital humanities is that it is exceptionally fragile. As Christy Hyman notes in “Black Scholars and Disciplinary Gatekeeping,” digital humanists often spend their time gatekeeping and policing what “counts” as digital humanities, rather than use the digital to dream up new futures. Black DH, or digital humanities that is concerned with and uses the methodologies, praxes, and epistemologies of Black intellectual thought, uses the preoccupation of these gatekeepers to slip into the cracks of the code and break it apart.

As Andre Brock notes in *Distributed Blackness*, much of the digital humanities canon has done its best to separate Black people from the digital, as if these two things together are counterintuitive, when in fact, Brock argues, they are inherently intertwined.¹

Black digital humanists such as Brock, Jessica Marie Johnson, Catherine Knight Steele and others use their work as opportunities to showcase how Black people use the digital as extensions of Black cultural traditions. When Steele writes about the digital barbershop, she draws on the long tradition of African diasporic oral tradition that evolves and manifests online. When Johnson writes of “alter egos and infinite literacies,” she evokes the practice of developing personas, which—while we attribute it primarily to the digital age

1. André L. Brock, *Distributed Blackness: African American Cybercultures* (New York: New York University Press, 2020).

of avatars and profile pictures—can be attributed to the multiple personas which populate hip hop culture. Black people regularly find a multitude of ways to reinvent ourselves and the digital is simply the newest tool in expressing our infinite selves. Brock aptly writes that when we, Black people, go online and perform Blackness, it is for the simple fact that we enjoy being Black.

And that, in and of itself, breaks digital humanities. Like many other forms of humanities, digital humanities is no different in its desire to strip Black people of our humanity despite its very name. In the same way that Black digital humanities recodes various practices of Black culture in the digital, digital humanities as a field is also able to, and does, replicate various modes of harm. Gatekeeping is one of these practices that transcends fields, but master/slave binaries continue to exist in metadata languages and dismissing Black digital humanities theoretical work is prevalent, just to name a few.

Black DH and the scholars and artists and activists who engage in Black digital humanities practices continue to create and theorize while the gatekeepers fuss over boundaries. Boundaries that we jump over with interdisciplinary projects like those of Marisa Parham’s remixing digital essays; with communal effort, like that of the Digital Alchemists, who support each other in their (digital) intellectual pursuits; with a mass of digital content created and curated by Black graduate students with the express intention of leading more and more students of color into and through the Academy.²

2. See Marisa Parham, “.Break .Dance,” sx archipelagos, July 10, 2019, <http://smallaxe.net/sxarchipelagos/issue03/parham/parham.html>; Yomaira C. Figueroa and Jessica Marie Johnson, eds., Taller Electric Marronage, <https://www.electricmarronage.com/>; Kim Gallon, Black Press ResearchCollective,

Some digital humanists are coders, some are breakers and (re)makers, and others use the digital humanities to design new futures for us. The ethical concern I have about the digital humanities is that too often projects exist simply because they can, with no regard for the potential harm it may do. Black digital humanists' projects often center on humanity and approach digital tools with an ethos of care. My hope for the future(s) is that digital humanities will look to the practices and ethos of Black digital humanists for ways to extend their own ethos of care in their projects. My hope is that the norm will no longer be to exact boundaries, but to observe what has been done to break those parameters and why it was necessary to break them. My hope is that Black digital humanities' innovation and further breaking is not contingent upon white digital humanists ignoring, dismissing, or even stealing the labor of digital humanists of color. My hope is that our future(s) as a field is not contingent upon further erasure.

This is a vision that is informed by the Black radical tradition, which in turn informs Black digital humanists, who are often Afrofuturists. But futures, as Afrofuturists know, are not created without a firm understanding and appreciation of histories. Black cultural (and in this case, digital) innovation is, and has often been, a product of extreme duress. That does not mean it needs to be.

<http://blackpressresearchcollective.org/>; Allant. Whitmore, BLK + IN GRAD SCHOOL, <https://www.blkingradschool.com/>; and Tiffany Lee and Autumn Adia Griffin, Blackademia, <http://www.readblackademia.com/>; and on and on.

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A Black Data Architecture: An Exploration Data, Ethics, and Community in the Black Experience

A Black Data Architecture

JADA SIMILTON

To me, data ethics is the concept that data—what we consider valuable enough to label ‘data’ and the process of gathering and handling it—is not objective. Beyond this, data ethics is about the why, how, and to what purpose that people gather and process data. Data ethics and community are two separate, but interconnected, themes when it comes to the projects discussed here. Each project relates in some way to the Black experience, enabling critical conversations about blackness in their own unique ways in a digital format. When it comes to Black Digital Humanities projects, data and community ethics seem to be indispensable aspects of the work. Kim Gallon in her article “Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities” defines Black DH as “a deeply political enterprise that...troubles the very core of what we have come to know as the humanities by recovering alternate constructions of humanity that have been historically excluded from that concept.” Challenging the tendency of white DH to treat white cultural experiences as standard or universal, Black DH acknowledges dimensions of race and, therefore, practices a data ethic of recovery that “bring[s] forth the full humanity of marginalized peoples through the use of digital platforms and tools.” (Gallon)

As projects that use digital tools to recover Black people's humanity and cultural contributions, the data ethic enacted dismisses pretensions of objectivity and intentionally commits to highlighting dimensions of race, and at times, other identity markers like gender and sexuality. Such a data ethic makes room for community-oriented work that addresses the gaps in conversation that proliferate mainstream discourse in regards to Black people. Being digital tools, many of the Black DH projects here are interactive and therefore extends the opportunity for community to audience participants as well. By this, I mean community is at the center of both the creation of the work and the presentation of it. Creating the work illuminates the existence of an oft-overlooked community and restores them within larger academic and national discourses; presenting the work in an interactive format gives 'outsiders' an opportunity to be drawn into the community being built—the community of the recovered Black subjects and the community of Black digital humanists who are unified through a data ethic of recovery that challenges mainstream (i.e. white) DH values. Interactors are ultimately given an opportunity to create meaning in collaboration with the creators and potentially with other audience members.

Thus, this annotated bibliography stands as my own interaction and meaning-making with Black DH projects. In my discussion of the ten projects, I contemplate critical factors like key topics/subjects, intended audience, foundational theoretical questions to the projects, and methods used to discuss how the projects relate to the themes of data ethics and community. I will also discuss my more personal responses to the projects, like how they relate to my own interests, how they've enhanced my understandings of DH, and whether I can adopt similar methods in my own work. The entries will appear in alphabetical order by project name.

The 1619 Project

The 1619 Project is very multifaceted from a Digital Humanities perspective. The project has various iterations/dimensions. For instance, the 1619 project as presented on the Pulitzer Center website looks differently from The New York Times' expression of it. The way the project manifest digitally is interesting in just how expansive it is. In a way, the 1619 Project has become its own framework for conceptualizing the contemporary American experience. The New York Times' presentation of the project manifests as a digital anthology that opens with Nikole Hannah-Jones' essay, follows up with a photo essay by Dannielle Bowman and Anne C. Davis, then branches off into various essays written about the ongoing legacy of 1619—the year that a ship brought 20 enslaved Africans to an English colony near a coastal port in Virginia. The New York Times anthology ultimately accumulates various media—books, essays, photographs—under the project that Hannah-Jones created. The Pulitzer Center's site offers an array of teaching resources on the topic. It is an archival database in its own right, in that educators and students interested in the project now have a reliable, non-profit, website to visit to gather materials on the topic. Since the project's founder is a Black woman and the project is geared toward recovery of an important Black historical moment, I position it within the framework of the Black digital humanities. I am nevertheless confounded by the project being largely backed by a historically white progressive organization because it arouses issues of accessibility and voice when it comes to which types of audiences will be targeted for the project's viewership. Accessibility and recovery are important aspects of the Digital Humanities. I therefore find myself questioning how the 1619 Project fares when I was directed to a paywall just to read the essays that the New York Times published.

#ADPHD Project

This project originally started off as a Tumblr page before it developed into a blog. It uses basic digital functions to create a database of prominent works emerging in the field of History. Specifically, the project keeps track of works that discuss the afro-diasporic experience, especially as it relates to African enslavement and it's aftermath. The project's latest news is that it is retiring it's website/blog page. The project director, Dr. Jessica Marie Johnson, has decided that she will keep the project alive via Twitter. It's Twitter page has a little over 4,000 followers and remains heavily active. The page runners extend the data ethic of recovery beyond simply looking to the past to retrieve forgotten works. The ADPhD Project leaves a live record of the contemporary productions of Black scholars and does major legwork in offering publicity to already marginalized authors.

To me, the beauty of this project is in its simplicity. It relies on digital tools that everyday people use and, thus, bridges conversations between academia and the general public. By operating via Twitter, it is not unlikely that someone without strong ties to academia could come across the page and be introduced to a world of Black scholarly productions. The page runners encourage community dialogue by sparking conversations about social justice issues and works that solicit feedback from its followers.

In terms of my own projects, I envision something a bit more complex. I still believe that creating such a page might be useful while completing my comprehensive exams. I could use it similarly to how Dr. [insert name] proposed using social media to aid in the production of research. I would tweet about the driving questions of my work and about create a space to engage with other thinkers about certain works. It would serve as a sort of archival notepad for my thinking.

The African Burial Ground

The National Park Service offers a digital site for topics related to the African Burial Ground discovered in New York City when the General Service Administration (GSA) conducted a preliminary archaeological investigation for a company that sought to begin construction on the site. After a 6-acre burial ground with over 15,000 skeletal remains was found, the African American community became concerned with preservation of the cemetery and with the process of excavating the bodies found. As a result of this, the chairman of the House of Representatives on Buildings and Grounds informed GSA that they would no longer be allocated funds until they addressed the community's concerns. Howard University's Department of Anthropology took over the remains and overtook the skeletal analysis process from Lehman College. President George H. W. Bush eventually approved a \$3 million fund that aided in the process of turning the burial ground into a memorial.

This meta history of the burial ground is important to the construction of the digital project around the memorial. As characteristic of Black DH Projects, the African Burial Ground project is shaped around a real-life example of recovery. The online preservation of the African burial ground aligns with the data ethic of recovery as practiced in Black DH projects. The site is a hybrid project as it directs viewers to online resources like an archival library that notes important dates in the excavation process and to physical events constructed around the memorial site in NY. Due to NY being such a large city with multiple intersecting histories, I'm aware that this project might also be highly appealing to non-Black and non-academic audiences (like tourists or history buffs). Still, slavery is a topic heavily explored by Black academics and digital

creators and the African Burial Ground project is, therefore, a solid example of a Black DH ethic of recovering a lost peoplehood.

Black Beyond Data

This project is an interesting blend of old projects that will converge to form a sort of conglomerate Black DH Project. In July 2021, John Hopkins University announced that “A team of researchers...has received a \$300,000 planning grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their project Black Beyond Data: Computational Humanities and Social Sciences Laboratory for Black Digital Humanities.” Connecting digital humanities, Black studies, and computation, Black Beyond Data aims to address racial injustice in the world and in the DH world in general. Dr. Jessica Marie Johnson of John Hopkins University is the project’s principal investigator, but two other prominent scholars, Kim Gallon and Alexandre White, are also heavily involved in the project. It is Dr. Gallon’s and Dr. White’s projects that merges with Dr. Johnson’s to create the larger Black Beyond Data project.

Ultimately, Black Beyond Data is a three-way project between Dr. Johnson’s LifeCodeX project, Dr. Gallon’s the Black Press Research Collective Project, and Dr. White’s Risk and Racism Data Project. This a remarkable example of the collaborative aspects that are so central to DH projects. Each DH project requires a whole team of collaborators and Black Beyond Data is an example of what happens when three established scholars work together to publicize and secure funding for their separate projects. The expansiveness of the three projects bridges together a wide audience of people seeking digital data on racism in the U.S. Since the project is in it’s early phases, I lack solid understanding of how the three projects will come together as one unified project. Rachel Wallech, writer for the John Hopkins University hub states: “A central objective of Black

Beyond Data is to use innovative methods and technologies to visualize narratives about Black life and create communities of scholars, teachers, students, and community members who share common interests and collaborate to deepen their understanding of how data can be mined and analyzed to center on Black humanity.”

[Black Women’s Suffrage—A Digital Collection](#)

This digital collection recovers the history of Black women in the suffrage movement, which has been heavily whitewashed as a white woman’s movement. The current collection features Ida B. Wells papers, Charlotta Bass’s papers, and an exhibit on Mary Church Terrell. The papers of each political figure offers glimpses into their lives that only could be discovered through the archival material itself. This is one of the most useful parts about recovery: it fills gaps in our knowledge; it gives us access to worlds not otherwise known. Ida B. Wells’ diary has been preserved by this digital collection and this, to me, is archiving done right. The preservation of Black women’s work is necessarily a decolonial data ethic that does not buy into the Eurocentricity of the Archive.

The magnitude of this DH project is possible through the partnership the collective has with the Digital Public Library of America, the Amistad Research Center, Atlanta University Robert W. Woodruff Library, Tuskegee University, and more. These are the partnerships that help provide the public with access to information about Black women’s roles in movements beyond the Suffrage movement. For instance, the Suffrage Collection also features archived materials on other prominent movements of the 19th century and early 20th century. These historical moments include anti-lynching movements, anti-slavery movements, education reform, civil rights, and racism within the Suffrage movement itself. This is a project so well developed that it feels far out of reach at

this particular moment of my graduate career. I wouldn't even know where to begin, but in the future, it would be quite rewarding to be involved in a project of this caliber. It is a major win for Black women scholars interested in thwarting the androcentric and Eurocentric focus of 19th century history.

.break .dance Interactive Essay Project

.break .dance is an interactive essay created by Marisa Parham, a professor of English at Amherst College. Playing on the pun of dance, Parham defines her work as a “choreo-essay.” From my experience with it, parts of the essay are paced by the algorithm—meaning that the viewer is steered along in the experience and does not have the authority to speed up the process. The essay is thus experienced according to the expectations and commands of the creator. This project in particular says interesting things about community and the data ethic of recovery. It immerses us into its own digital world and constructs a communal space that is not egalitarian. The content creator knows something more than the audience member, something that she wants to share in her own engineered way. The viewer thus has to trust the creator's vision and mission for their learning experience; they have to accept and be open to the creator's leadership.

The project bridges together Black thinkers from both the present and distant past (and maybe even the future, considering the audience member's own role in creating meaning in a collaborate, digital space). At the front gate of the interactive essay, Parham introduces viewers to the Congolese concept of direction that is central to the project, and instantly my mind thinks of Sankofa as a theoretical framework.

My personal experience with the project was a beautiful one. This interactive essay is right up my alley in terms of the literary, discursive, and digital experiences I'd like to create. Parham mixes poetry and prose to create a deeply moving experience for the reader. The interactive aspect of it makes them more highly aware of their positionality as viewer and experiencer and compels us to imagine the worlds we wish to create.

[The Colored Conventions Project](#)

This project has digitized information about colored conventions that took place between the 1830s and the 1890s. The formatting of the site is simple and easy to navigate, offering viewers opportunities to search for both national and state conventions. Their latest additions to the site include the Convention of Colored Iowa Soldiers and the Convention of Colored Citizens that took place in New York in July of 1849. A quick search through the convention reveals just how varied topics and attendees of the conferences were. The conferences are, of course, unified by the fact that they were crafted for the purpose of discussing issues related to the African American experience, but are otherwise quite diverse. This makes the intended audience for this project quite wide. People interested in particular Black political figures could search them by name and discover whether they attended certain conferences. There are also conventions that are titled by the specific issues they address. So, someone interested in lynching or black code laws could see how thinkers and speakers were theorizing Black existence at that time.

My own personal response is that the project is deceptively simple on its face—especially since the website is so easy to navigate. Yet, I'd imagine that it takes a good deal of time and money to digitize

the historical documents so easily accessed on the web. This brings me to the most notable aspect of the site: the fact that it's open access. Improving accessibility is a key goal of DH projects. Open accessibility and the project's focus on a movement that has been so heavily obscured by the abolitionist movement makes the project truly one of recovery and community.

While creating such a database is not one of my DH goals, I do believe that I will find open access databases useful to my research and writing.

[Land-Grab Universities](#)

The Land Grab Universities digital project is an interactive website filled with maps, stories, and regular publications from their magazine. The project's premise seeks to recover the story of how the U.S. government dispossessed land from Indigenous nations and then sold the land to states to build Universities on it. It highlights how the very core of the American academy is colonialist and anti-Indigenous. It specifically highlights the Universities built through the Morrill Act of 1862 which sought to expand access to higher education in the U.S. and ultimately sanctioned land seizures to do so. The site tells viewers how the United States dispossessed some 250 tribal nations from their land through 162 land seizures. This was ultimately a wide scaled dispossession that undoubtedly leads to generational disenfranchisement as Universities occupy the land for hundreds of years and continues to grow their presence in the surrounding area.

While this project does not readily seem to be about Black people, many Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are land grant institutions—my alma mater of Alcorn State University

included. My current work is evaluating the way that the settler colonial project requires the complicity of American citizens to be completed. Black emancipated people became complicit in the project through the Morrill Act, and had to be so in order to create futures for themselves and their descendants. My own ability to be educated traces back to the Morrill Act that provided 3300 acres of Natchez land to Black freedmen. Therefore, this project is inadvertently a recovery of the ways Black history intersects with Indigenous history. The editor of the project, Tristan Ashtone, considers the project one of “lost and found” and “is the result of a comprehensive investigation, one that reveals how land taken from tribal nations was turned into seed money for higher education in the United States.”

Life x Code: Against Enclosure

Dr. Jessica Marie Johnson is the principal investigator for Life x Code: Against Enclosure. This project name seems to house underneath it various other DH projects like Electric Marronage, Keywords for Black Louisiana, Metropolitan United Methodist Church History Project, The Creation of a Food Apartheid in Baltimore, and Microdatas carolineses. All of these projects are led by different principal investigators at various stages of their careers. For instance, the principal investigator of Microdatas carolineses is a PhD candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The large, collaborative scope of this project enables a recovery of the expansiveness of the Black experience as each project covers blackness in different parts of the map, including North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Baltimore, and Louisiana. The project’s ‘About’ page features an explicit note on community, collaboration, and refusal. Specifically, the site states: “We know that collaboration is key to

our survival” and “We offer a grammar of refusal and a language of freedom for the humanities.”

As a scholar that shaped the criteria for Black DH projects as one of community and recovery, I am unsurprised that Dr. JMJ’s project would so openly represent these values. This is another example of a project that feels very doable to me, even as a graduate student. The project is essentially a website that leads to other visual presentations of other projects. It is a sort of mother site for other projects and gives them an elevated platform on which to show their work. I really enjoy the simplicity and depth of the project and its commitment to preserving the richness of the Black experience through cultural production such as blogs and digital archives of prose and poetry.

Taller [Electric Marronage](#)

Electric Marronage is a hybrid digital project founded by Dr. Yomaira Figueroa and Dr. Jessica Marie Johnson. It truly embodies the data ethic of recovery as it centers the stories that often go untold. It is, at its heart, a community project that keeps its collaborators and audiences always in mind. Project staff, often referred to as Electricians, are compensated for their participation. In fact, every artist in residence or guest scholar is compensated for their contributions. This is a community ethic that strives to remedy academia’s tendency to underpay BIPOC thinkers or expect free labor from them. Electric Marronage values its collaborators and spreads the wealth within the community. The Taller (which is Spanish for ‘workshop’) is truly public-facing in the ways that it offers free events to the general and academic public.

In the online space, the website is a wonderful mesh of artistic

productions related to how Afro-diasporic peoples continue the legacy of African marronage and flight from subjugation. There is an archive/library that features annotated bibliographies of prominent Black literary productions. There is a mood board that offers hyperlink pathways to various cultural productions like music albums, photography, and film. Visually, the site is quite dynamic. At times, it will feature photography from small business photographers from Puerto Rico or the mainland and it currently has a more abstract collection of photos that offer a colorful invitation into the site.

Electric Marronage is truly a model for the work I wish to do—though I believe such a Taller would come much later in my academic career. It is a hybrid space in so many forms in that it is both creative and scholarly, academic and public-facing, digital and physical. My primary goal is to have a collaborative hybrid project of this caliber.

Conclusion

Taken together, these project highlight that there are so many ways to do DH. Moreover, Black scholars are paving their own directions toward a distinct way of handling data that is uniquely Black, community-oriented, and reflects the goals and visions of Sankofa as a method of recovering what has been lost or stolen. Each project was distinct in its presentation and preservation of Black data. Yet, their efforts of recovery bridge together all of these projects. Rather than using DH to maintain the status quo or the canon, Black scholars are bringing radical and exciting material to intervene in outworn literary conversations. These projects provide other Black scholars with a space where they can explore their own projects through new lenses.

These projects represent the expansiveness of Black culture, literature, and experiences as each one brings the audience into a unique viewing experience. `.break .beat` is a wonderful example of a unique viewing experience that is critical, exciting, and dynamic while projects like `Life X Code` represent the ways that DH work can be simple and effective. All of these projects exemplify the power of collaboration: what can be done when principal investigators come together and merge projects; what graduate students can produce when given the platform to do so by senior scholars; what can be created in community with other scholars. My understanding of DH work has been heightened by this annotated bibliography, which I intended to be a resource that I return to in the future to find my own path in the Digital Humanities.

"Just Google It": Algorithms of Oppression

"Just Google It": Algorithms of Oppression

SAFIYA U. NOBLE

In this presentation, Dr. Sayifa U. Noble discusses her research into Google, a technology commonly thought of as a public resource free from commercial interest, and how it mediates public access to information in biased ways and permits problematic racial and gender misrepresentations. This talk was sponsored by the Douglas College Faculty Professional Development Committee at the University of British Columbia and hosted on Youtube.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=61#oembed-1>

Banking on Your Data: The Role of Big Data in Financial Services

Banking on Your Data

CHRISTOPHER GILLIARD

**Prepared Testimony and Statement for
the Record by Christopher Gilliard,
Ph.D. Before The House Financial
Services Committee Task Force on
Financial Technology**

My name is Dr. Chris Gilliard, and I have spent the last 6 years studying, teaching, and writing about digital privacy and surveillance. I focus on the ways that digital technologies perpetuate and amplify historical systems of discrimination. Too often, digital technology renders systems invisible and inscrutable under the guise of proprietary code, black box algorithms, or Artificial Intelligence. There are now countless documented

examples of algorithmic discrimination¹, data breaches, violation of consumer privacy², and extractive practices on the part of platforms.³ At present, the de facto ethic of “move fast and break things” operating under codewords like innovation and disruption—and in an environment where the few existing regulations are seldom enforced—companies have been able to use consumer data in whatever ways serve the financial interest of the corporation. Moving forward, the onus for addressing these problems must be shifted onto companies, so that before they move their product to market, they provide evidence that they will not bring harm to the consumer, much in the same way food and drug safety operate now.

When we think about how Big Data operates in the financial marketplace now, it may not be possible or useful to define the distinction between “financial big data” and all other data. Financial “big data” plays a role not only in Finance, Insurance, or Real Estate, but also in employment, transportation, education, retail, and medicine. Because the market does not make that distinction, we cannot either. In addition, third party data brokers accumulate all manner of data to the point that even if there are categories of data that are protected, processing massive amounts of data often creates the existence of proxies that allow for discrimination against

1. For more information, see Safiya Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression* (2018); Virginia Eubanks, *Automating Inequality* (2018)
2. See Carole Cadwalladr’s work on Facebook and Cambridge Analytica <https://www.theguardian.com/news/series/cambridge-analytica-files>
3. For more information, see Shoshana Zuboff, *Surveillance Capitalism* (2018)

protected classes within or among systems that may not appear to be “financial”. For example, Cracked Labs reports that “Oracle claims to have data on billions of purchase transactions from 1500 leading retailers.”⁴

The primary reasons that many people remain unbanked are because of historical inequality. While new forms of banking and credit may provide access to systems those people have traditionally not had access to, many of these technologies also offer these benefits in exchange for people’s privacy or create opaque systems that offer consumers little opportunity for redress. It is telling that the Apple Goldman Sachs card⁵ received so much interest, because opaque algorithms affect marginalized populations all the time, yet they do not have the reach and power to trigger massive media attention and an investigation by the state. Yet, the stakes could not be any more different. For rich folks, it may mean being denied a larger credit limit; for the poor, this may mean paying for medicine, shelter, or food.

The notion that companies like Facebook, Google, and Amazon are entering into banking in order to benefit the unbanked or people who do not have access to traditional credit markets is absurd on its face, as one recent report in Bloomberg asserted regarding Google’s proposal to partner with banks to offer checking accounts through its Google Pay app.⁶ “For Google, the bank partnerships will give the

4. https://crackedlabs.org/dl/CrackedLabs_Christl_CorporateSurveillance.pdf
5. For more information, see <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/11/11/apple-card-algorithm-sparks-gender-bias-allegations-against-goldman-sachs/>
6. Jennifer Surane <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/>

tech behemoth a better ability to show advertisers how marketing dollars spent on its system can drive purchases...”

There are two crucial frameworks for understanding these technologies and their impacts on marginalized communities: digital redlining⁷ and predatory inclusion. Digital redlining is the creation and maintenance of technology practices that further entrench discriminatory practices against already marginalized groups—one example (among many) being when journalists at ProPublica⁸ uncovered the fact that Facebook Ad targeting could be used to prevent Black people from seeing ads for housing, despite the Fair Housing Act prohibiting such conduct.

Predatory inclusion is a term coined by scholars Louise Seamster and Raphaël Charron-Chénier to refer to a phenomenon whereby members of a marginalized group are offered access to a good, service, or opportunity from which they have historically been excluded, but under conditions that jeopardize the benefits of access. “... the processes of predatory inclusion are often presented as providing marginalized individuals with opportunities for social and economic progress. In the long term, however, predatory inclusion reproduces inequality and insecurity for some, while allowing already dominant social actors to derive significant

[articles/2019-11-17/google-checking-accounts-may-give-banks-an-edge-in-deposit-wars](#)

7. Gilliard and Culik, “Digital Redlining, Access, and Privacy” <https://www.common sense.org/education/articles/digital-redlining-access-and-privacy>
8. Angwin and Parris Jr. Facebook Lets Advertisers Exclude Users by Race <https://www.propublica.org/article/facebook-lets-advertisers-exclude-users-by-race>

profits.”⁹ As an example of this, we might look at a report on the cash advance app Earnin, which offers loans and users are able to “tip” the app. As reported in the NY Post, “If the service was deemed to be a loan, the \$9 tip suggested by Earnin for a \$100, one-week loan would amount to a 469 percent APR.”¹⁰ As Princeton professor Ruha Benjamin has argued, “our starting assumption should be that automated systems will deepen inequality unless proven otherwise.”¹¹

Because of how algorithms are created and trained, historical biases make their way into systems even when computational tools don’t use identity markers as metrics for decision-making, but because of preexisting social realities and also because of the ways that so many different data points can serve as proxies for prohibited categories. Further, the notions of consent—“notice and consent” or “informed consent”, as they are currently constructed—are not sufficient for a number of reasons: privacy policies mainly serve to protect companies; credit scoring companies operate w/o the express consent of the consumers they purportedly serve. (I cannot opt out of being a “customer” of Experian, Equifax, and Transunion for instance); data is extracted,

9. Predatory Inclusion and Education Debt: Rethinking the Racial Wealth Gap, 4 Social Currents (2017)
10. Kevin Dugan Popular cash advance app Earnin operating in payday loan ‘gray area,’ critics claim
<https://nypost.com/2019/03/21/popular-cash-advance-app-earnin-operating-in-payday-loan-gray-area-critics-claim/>
11. Rework, a Podcast by Basecamp
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/bonus-breaking-the-black-box/id1264193508?i=1000456947960>

collected, combined, processed and used in ways that go beyond the stated purpose provided to consumers; there is often limited accountability for when they have been irresponsible with consumer data; companies rarely disclose, and consumers even more rarely understand, the full range of uses for their data.

We must reject the notion that regulations stifle innovation, as those harmed during innovation phases tend to be the most marginalized, and only later are policies addressed with no repairing of harms. The idea that corporate innovation, rather than the rights of historically marginalized groups, is an interest that Congress must protect turns ideas of citizenship and civil rights upside-down. The typical life cycle of a technological harm is human decision-making leads to a technical failure. That these systems are proprietary often make the harms more difficult to detect. Companies often offload the responsibility of detecting harms to researchers and journalists and the companies then only correct the harm after their discrimination or failures have been pointed out, and even then grudgingly, often not completely, and finally the entrenchment of the unregulated system is used as argument that there should be no further regulation.

While at the beginning of this document, I called for companies to provide evidence that their products first do no harm, this should not be mistaken as a call for companies to self-regulate. This model is unsafe and unsustainable. Consumers need to be empowered, as do regulators, in order to provide an environment that fully protects individuals' rights.

Coded Bias

Coded Bias

SHALINI KANTAYYA



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=67#oembed-1>

In an increasingly data-driven, automated world, the question of how to protect individuals' civil liberties in the face of artificial intelligence looms larger by the day. *Coded Bias* follows M.I.T. Media Lab computer scientist Joy Buolamwini, along with data scientists, mathematicians, and watchdog groups from all over the world, as they fight to expose the discrimination within algorithms now prevalent across all spheres of daily life. While conducting research on facial recognition technologies at the M.I.T. Media Lab, Buolamwini—a “poet of code”—made the startling discovery that some algorithms could not detect dark-skinned faces or classify women with accuracy. This led to the harrowing realization that the very machine-learning algorithms intended to avoid prejudice are only as unbiased as the humans and historical data programming them.

Coded Bias documents the dramatic journey that follows, from discovery to exposure to activism, as Buolamwini goes public with her findings and undertakes an effort to create a movement toward accountability and transparency, including testifying before Congress to push for the first-ever legislation governing facial

recognition in the United States and starting the Algorithmic Justice League. The film also includes data journalist Meredith Broussard; Silkie Carlo, director of Big Brother Watch, who is monitoring the trial use of facial recognition technology by U.K. police; Virginia Eubanks, author of *Automating Inequality*; Ravi Naik, human rights lawyer and media commentator; Dr. Safiya Umoja Noble, author and expert on algorithmic discrimination and technology bias; and Zeynep Tufekci, author of *Twitter and Teargas*.

The documentary is available to view for MSU authorized users through the [MSU Library](#).

Copyright Basics

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BRIANNA L. SCHOFIELD

Copyright Basics

Copyright law is part of a legal system that covers both creation and use. Here we will cover the copyright basics: what copyright is, what copyright protects, and how long copyright protection lasts. Additionally, copyright law is filled with exceptions and exemptions that strike a balance between the exclusive rights granted to creators and the rights of many users, including TDM researchers. It is critical that TDM researchers understand both the rights and the exceptions, with an emphasis on fair use, which in the TDM context is one of the most important rights that provides a legal justification for using the material that drives a TDM project. However, before the exceptions, which are covered in a later section, let us start with the copyright basics.

In 1710 the English parliament passed the Statute of Anne. This new law gave authors, for the first time in history, an economic incentive to create new works: Authors had control of their own works, and the copies made, via a limited economic monopoly—not unlike our modern understanding of copyright. This captured the first balance between authors' rights and the public benefit of copyright, when works drop into the public domain. This temporary economic right was enough incentive for authors to continue to create new works. And, of course, when the rights expired (after 14 years) the work would drop into the public domain, and anyone could use the work thereafter without permission. This encapsulated the cycle of copyright: creation, control, and expiration, with the hope that further works could be created using

what dropped into the public domain. And in fact, the Act starts with the language, “An Act for the Encouragement of Learning.”

This concept moved into the U.S. system in our Constitution. Certainly, the members of the United States Constitutional Convention were aware of the ideas of control and censorship as the U.S. emerged from English rule. In 1790, pursuant to their Constitutional authority under Constitutional Clause: Article 1, section 8, clause 8: “To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries,” the Congress passed, and George Washington signed, the first copyright law in the United States. It was also titled “An Act for the Encouragement of Learning” and featured the same balance that the English had revolutionized with the Statute of Anne: an incentive of a limited economic monopoly granted to authors over their works, followed by the expiration of those rights when the work then would drop into the public domain.

The current copyright law on the books is based on that initial 1790 law, but now it is in the U.S. code as the Copyright Act of 1976. It protects original works of authorship that are fixed in any tangible medium of expression.

But what is an “original work of authorship”? An original work must embody some ““minimum amount of creativity.”” Courts have held that almost any spark beyond the trivial will constitute sufficient originality. On the other hand, the Supreme Court ruled in 1991 that a garden variety alphabetical, white pages telephone book lacks the minimum creativity necessary for copyright protection. This is called the [Feist](#) case. The U.S. Supreme Court held in *Feist Publications v. Rural Telephone Service* that copying of a white pages book was not infringement because there was no existing copyright. However, although facts themselves are not copyrightable, the way the items are categorized and arranged may be original enough to satisfy the originality requirement.

Ultimately, this creativity threshold is also touched upon in another part of the Copyright Act, [section 102\(b\)](#), which states that

copyright's threshold for originality does extend to “any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery.” From this we gather an important point for authors: facts are not copyrightable.

But, beyond creativity, what is copyright, really? Is it a “bundle of rights”? A limited economic monopoly for authors? Or, in the Constitutional narrative, is it a system “to promote the progress of science and the useful arts”?

Well for copyright to work, it has to be all three. The cycle of creation, dissemination, and expiration of rights into the public domain is a critical component of copyright law. Without this balance, the system loses its value, or prevents the public from receiving the benefit of the bargain. The bargain is made by granting limited economic monopolies to incentivise creation, and then, after expiration of the monopoly, the benefit is effectively giving that material to the public for unimpeded use, thus inspiring more works to be harnessed and used.

When a work is creative and fixed, creators automatically get this exclusive bundle of rights. These are [the rights](#): to reproduce the work copies; to prepare derivative works; to distribute copies; to perform the copyrighted work publicly; and to display the copyrighted work publicly.

In 1790, when George Washington signed our country's first copyright law into existence, copyright protection was for books, maps, and charts. However, under the Copyright Act of 1976, the subject matter of copyright has been extended into these [eight extensive categories](#): (1) literary works; (2) musical works, including any accompanying words; (3) dramatic works, including any accompanying music; (4) pantomimes and choreographic works; (5) pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works; (6) motion pictures and other audiovisual works; (7) sound recordings; and (8) architectural works. As Congress indicated in the creation of these categories, there is a great deal of material that has the potential to be protected by copyright.

Occasionally we learn about copyright by understanding what's

not copyrightable. For example, there are other parts of intellectual property law that are not under the umbrella of copyright. Slogans and logos, for example, are part of trademark law. Trademark law is generally all about what the mind of the consumers think as the source of the material when they see a logo. Patent law covers new and useful ideas such as processes, methods, and systems that are separate from copyright. Secret formulas and recipes that are not disclosed to the public are generally considered trade secrets. They derive economic value by not being disclosed to the public. And then, of course, there's raw data. As we know from *Feist*, our white pages telephone book case, you can't copyright a fact. Applying that holding here, raw data then, viewed as a set of facts, is uncopyrightable.

In order to know understand copyright, you need to know these six things: that creators get copyright if the work is original, creative, and fixed in a tangible medium of expression; that no registration is required to get copyright—the work is automatically granted protection under copyright if it's creative and fixed; that the grant of rights to the author is represented by the exclusive bundle of rights in [section 106](#); that there is a wide range of protected works; and they have a long term of protection. However, as we will cover, despite all of these rights there are numerous exceptions and limitations. The focus of our inquiry for TDM will be [section 107](#) fair use.

However, before we move to the exceptions, we will cover a critical part of the copyright cycle: the public domain. When copyright was first passed by Congress in 1790, Congress set a term of protection for 14 years, with a potential of an additional 14 years if the creator renewed the copyright. In 1909, Congress doubled that timeline and copyright moved to a 28-year term of protection with a potential 28-year renewal. In 1976, in accordance with harmonizing international copyright law, as part of the Copyright Act of 1976, the term was set to life of the author plus 50 years. And in 1998, that term was expanded by Congress for an additional 20 years. And so, copyright today is measured by the life of the author plus 70 years.

But what happens after expiration? Our next segment will cover that which is in the public domain.

The public domain

The previous section of this chapter covered what copyright is, what copyright protects, and how long copyright protection lasts. This section addresses the flip side of copyright: the public domain.

In copyright, the public domain is the commons of material that is not protected by copyright. Anyone is free to use, copy, share, and remix material that is in the public domain. The public domain includes works for which the copyright has expired, works for which copyright owners failed to comply with “formalities,” and things that are just not copyrightable at all. This section discusses each of these categories in turn.

A word of caution: Some people mistakenly think that the “public domain” means anything that is publicly available. This is wrong. The public domain has nothing to do with what is readily available for public consumption. This means that just because something is on the internet, it doesn’t put it in the public domain.

Remember that under today’s copyright laws, a work of creative, original expression simply needs to be “fixed in a tangible medium” to be eligible for copyright protection. If Philippa Photographer takes a photograph and puts it online on her blog, it doesn’t mean that she is also granting you permission to reuse

it. The default is that Philippa's photo is protected by copyright and not in the public domain.

Copyright expiration

One way content enters the public domain and becomes free of copyright protection is through copyright expiration.

Copyright protects works for a limited time. After that, copyright expires and works fall into the public domain and are free to use. Under United States copyright law, in 2021 (the year this book is being released) all works first published in the US in 1925 or earlier are now in the public domain due to copyright expiration. That said, unpublished works created before 1926 could still be protected by copyright. And under today's copyright laws, works created by an individual author today won't enter the public domain until 70 years after that author's death.

When copyright does expire, the work is in the public domain and there are no copyright restrictions. For example, the book *Alice in Wonderland* is in the public domain, as are *New York Times* articles from the 1910s, because their term has expired. This means anyone may do anything they want with the works, including activities that were formerly the “exclusive right” of the copyright holder, like making copies and selling them.

Failure to comply with formalities

Another way a work may enter the public domain is through a failure to comply with formalities.

Copyright law used to require copyright owners to comply with certain requirements called “formalities” in order to secure copyright protection. These formalities included things like requiring the copyright owner to mark the work with a copyright notice and renew the initial term of copyright. These requirements existed in some form through March 1989. Because many authors failed to comply, many works from between 1926 and March 1989 may be in the public domain. But this analysis needs to be done on a case-by-case basis based on the facts surrounding a particular work. In some cases, a fair use analysis may be easier than making a conclusion about the copyright status of a work. (Fair use is discussed later in this chapter.)

If a work is in the public domain for failure to comply with formalities, as with copyright expiration, there are no copyright restrictions.

Additional Resources: For more information on how to evaluate whether a work is in the public domain due to copyright expiration or a failure to adhere to the previously required formalities, see Peter Hirtle’s [Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States](#) and the Samuelson Law, Technology & Public Policy Clinic at Berkeley Law’s [Is it in the Public Domain?](#) handbook and flowcharts.

Uncopyrightable subject matter and other exclusions

In addition to copyright expiration and a failure to comply with formalities, copyright law also sets out things that are simply not

protected by copyright, and those things are also in the public domain. This goes back to a point about the purpose of copyright: The public domain is important to the production of creativity; authors need these essential building blocks with which to work.

For example, facts are a category of things that are not copyrightable—even if those facts were difficult to collect. For instance, suppose that a historian spent several years reviewing field reports and compiling an exact, day-by-day chronology of military actions during the Vietnam War. Even though the historian expended significant time and resources to create this chronology, the facts themselves would be free for anyone to use. That said, the way that the facts are expressed—such as in an article or a book—is copyrightable.

Under United States copyright law, other types of works and subject matter do not qualify for copyright protection include: names, titles, and short phrases; typeface, fonts, and lettering; blank forms; and familiar symbols and designs. It is worth noting that other areas of intellectual property, such as patent or trademark law, could provide protection for categories that are not eligible for copyright protection.

The Copyright Act also provides that works created by the United States federal government are [never eligible for copyright protection](#), though this rule does not apply to works created by U.S. state governments or foreign governments. And under the government edicts doctrine, judicial opinions, administrative rulings, legislative enactments, public ordinances, and similar official legal documents are not copyrightable for reasons of public policy.

Additional Resource: For more information on what is not protected by copyright, see the United States Copyright Office's [Circular 33: Works Not Protected by](#)

[Copyright.](#)

A word of caution: Just because a work is in the public domain, this does not preclude consideration of other legal issues. Moreover, it is important to note that working with “low-friction” data like public domain works can [exacerbate social biases](#) that can exist in the collection. For example, pre-1926 works in the public domain are likely to be dominated by white, male authors.

Copyright, licensing, and permissions

You can learn about licenses in more detail in the Licensing chapter of this book, but copyright and licensing are so closely connected that we think it’s important to say a bit about them here, too.

A license grants permission, and may limit your rights, too

A license is a grant of authorization from a copyright holder to

exercise one of their exclusive rights—in a research library context, typically the license is to copy or display protected works on your computer. Databases, journal literature, and other electronic content is often made available under a license either directly to the user or to an institution (typically a library) on behalf of its users. The license tells you which uses have been authorized, and authorization is often conditioned on the licensee doing certain things (most importantly, for commercial entities: paying a fee!).

A license may also include promises by the institution or the user not to engage in certain uses, or only to use licensed content under certain circumstances.

What this means for researchers is that your institution may already have a license that defines what sorts of uses you can make of licensed content. You'll need to read the license, or talk to someone who understands the license terms, to learn more about what uses are possible. You may also need to negotiate a new license to enable your use, especially if you require special kinds of access to a vendor's content in order to conduct your research.

Creative Commons and other open licenses

Some works are available under open licenses that allow anyone to make specific uses of copyrighted works without the need to pay or seek additional permission from the owner. [Creative Commons \("CC"\) licenses](#) are the most well-known open licenses. Creative Commons is a nonprofit organization that offers a simple, standard way to grant copyright permissions for creative works, and a suite of license options that lets authors impose some commonly-sought limitations on would-be users. Instead of the "all rights reserved" default, copyright owners can apply a CC license that allows others to use and share their works without seeking permission. It is important to pay attention to the specific terms of the license: almost all of the CC licenses require attribution, some can require

you to “share alike” (i.e., to attach the same license to any work you create using the licensed work), and some restrict commercial uses or the creation of derivative works (like translations). For example, a work marked CC-BY-NC means that it is licensed for other people to use and share as long as the work is appropriately credited, but commercial uses are not allowed.

Creative Commons also offers a tool, [CC0](#), that allows a copyright owner to waive all copyrights (and some related rights) in works. Because it is a complete waiver of rights, CC0 doesn't require attribution.

CC licenses are especially common in the academic world, and research funders increasingly require their grantees to use them. But even non-academic works may be made available under CC licenses. For example, some museums distribute photographs of works in their collections under open licenses.

Bottom line: If works are made available under a public license, then (just like any other license) these works can be used in ways that comply with the terms of the license. If a project involves works that are made available under a license, including a public license (like a CC license), these works can certainly be used in ways that comply with the terms of the license. If your use is beyond the terms of the license, or forbidden, things get more complicated. This issue will be discussed further in the chapter on licensing.

A word of caution: Don't forget to consider other legal and ethical issues discussed in this book when using works made available under license. For example, researchers have documented a bias in machine learning resulting from the widespread use of “low-friction” data. Datasets like the Enron email corpus are widely used because they present few legal concerns, but the predominantly white, male, corporate context in

which they were created can impart a bias to analyses derived from the corpus.

Fair use: A critical copyright exception

Imagine if all creators had to wait for a copyrighted work to be in the public domain before they used that work? Or if scholars always had to seek permission to use or quote, and that permission could be denied with no recourse? Happily, copyright law gives us the flexibility to allow some uses that are made during the copyright term without permission. One of the most famous of all the copyright limitations in the Copyright Act does just that: the fair use exception.

Under fair use, a person may use certain amounts of copyrighted material without permission from the copyright owner in some circumstances. The doctrine itself was rooted in both English and U.S. case law, but was eventually codified in [section 107](#) of the U.S. Copyright Act. Fair use, as you can see in the image below, sits in the middle of the organized balance in the Copyright Act; it is squeezed right between the exclusive rights and more specific exceptions.

CHAPTER 1—SUBJECT MATTER AND SCOPE OF COPYRIGHT

Definition of rights

Fair use!

Limitations & exceptions

- Sec. 101. Definitions.
- 102. Subject matter of copyright: In general.
- 103. Subject matter of copyright: Compilations and derivative works.
- 104. Subject matter of copyright: National origin.
- 104A. Copyright in restored works.
- 105. Subject matter of copyright: United States Government works.
- 106. Exclusive rights in copyrighted works.
- 106A. Rights of certain authors to attribution and integrity.
- 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use.
- 108. Limitations on exclusive rights: Reproduction by libraries and archives.
- 109. Limitations on exclusive rights: Effect of transfer of particular copy or phonorecord.
- 110. Limitations on exclusive rights: Exemption of certain performances and displays.
- 111. Limitations on exclusive rights: Secondary transmissions of broadcast programming by cable.
- 112. Limitations on exclusive rights: Ephemeral recordings.
- 113. Scope of exclusive rights in pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works.
- 114. Scope of exclusive rights in sound recordings.
- 115. Scope of exclusive rights in nondramatic musical works: Compulsory license for making and distributing phonorecords.
- 116. Negotiated licenses for public performances by means of coin-operated phonorecord players.
- [116A. Renumbered.]
- 117. Limitations on exclusive rights: Computer programs.
- 118. Scope of exclusive rights: Use of certain works in connection with noncommercial broadcasting.
- 119. Limitations on exclusive rights: Secondary transmissions of distant television programming by satellite.
- 120. Scope of exclusive rights in architectural works.
- 121. Limitations on exclusive rights: Reproduction for blind or other people with disabilities.
- 122. Limitations on exclusive rights: Secondary transmissions of local television programming by satellite.

Chapters of U.S. copyright law.

Fair use is a user's right that allows individuals to exercise one or more of the exclusive bundle of rights of the copyright owner, without obtaining the permission from that copyright owner, and without the payment of any license fee.

To decide whether a use is fair, courts must consider at least four factors that are specifically mentioned in the Copyright Act.

17 U.S.C. §107

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright.

In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include—

1. the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
2. the nature of the copyrighted work;
3. the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
4. the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The first factor is the purpose and character of the use. Here courts

ask whether the material has been transformed by adding new meaning or expression, or whether value was added by creating new information, meaning, or understanding. When a work is used for a different purpose than the original, the factor will likely weigh in favor of fair use. If it simply acts as a substitute for the original work, the less likely it is to be fair. Courts may also look at whether the use of the material was for commercial or noncommercial purposes under this factor, but this is rarely a determinative consideration.

The second factor looks at the nature of the copyrighted work. Here courts look at whether the copyrighted work that was used is creative or factual in nature (a song or a novel vs. technical article or news item). The more factual the work, the more likely this factor will weigh in favor of fair use. On the flip side, the more creative the copyrighted work, the more likely this factor is to weigh against fair use. Courts may also consider whether the copyrighted work is published or unpublished. If the work is unpublished, this factor is less likely to weigh in favor of fair use. Note that this factor has been slightly deemphasized by the courts over the last twenty years.

The third factor is the amount and substantiality of the portion taken. Under this factor, courts look at how much of the work was taken, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, courts look at how much of the original work was used (e.g., all the pages, the entire work of art). Qualitatively, some courts look at whether the “heart” of the work was taken (e.g., the essential bit of the work that is why people want to engage and acquire the work). The more that is taken, quantitatively and qualitatively, the less likely the use is to be fair. That said, copying a full work can absolutely be a fair use depending on the circumstances.

Finally, the fourth factor is the effect of the use on the potential market. The essential question courts ask here is whether this use will undermine the market, or the potential market, for the work that was copied. In assessing this factor, courts consider whether the use would hurt the market for the original work (for example, by displacing sales of the original). There’s a lot more nuance to this factor, but let’s move ahead to transformative fair use.

Transformative fair use

In 1841, the U.S. decided its [first fair use case](#). And, as case law developed, so did new and different fair use theories. One of the more interesting developments in fair use litigation was the emergence of transformative fair use. Use of any copyrighted materials is substantially more likely to pass fair use muster if the use is transformative. A work is transformative if, in the [words of the Supreme Court](#), it “adds something new, with a further purpose or different character, altering the first with new expression, meaning or message.” Transformative fair use is still a use without permission, but it is the legal engine which drives scholarship, research, and teaching.

The last two decades has seen a shift in courts analysis of the fair use test in creative endeavors like these. In transformative fair use, we see the courts collapsing the traditional “four fair use factors” to ask the following questions:

1. Does the new use transform the material, by using it for a different purpose?
2. Was the amount taken appropriate to the new, transformative purpose?

And, importantly, it helps to identify that this new transformative use has a different purpose than the original item’s purpose. For example, the original purpose of the fictional books in the Copyright Use Case was for entertainment. The new use should be for a different purpose—and arguably, the new purpose would be to add commentary or analysis that reveals a new meaning or message, altering the original works with new commentary, expression, meaning, or message.

Fair use law is well equipped to be adaptable to various scenarios. That’s the purpose of fair use: flexibility. Fair use is not mechanically applied or even weighed equally. Courts take into account all the facts and circumstances of a specific case to decide if use of

copyrighted material is fair. And scholars, librarians, lawyers, students, staff, and faculty can also use the fair use statute and legal decisions to evaluate their own fair use risk calculus for their own scenarios.

Digital Data Projects

Digital Data

JULIAN CHAMBLISS

Erasure and Data

The challenge of the constructed nature of data knowledge is expressed through multiple historical practices. The projects listed below leverage engagement with data through a variety of ideological and methodological approaches to broaden our understanding of humane questions. This list is not exhaustive; instead, we seek to call attention to how scholars have employed digital tools to broaden our understanding.



[Advocate Recovered \(AR\)](#) is a digital recovery project designed by Dr. Julian C. Chambliss from the Department of English at Michigan State University. This project grew from a digital simulation examining the voting and civil rights history of the African-American community in Central Florida. This project aims to recover the contents of *The Winter Park Advocate*, an African-American newspaper published in Winter Park, Florida. Published by African-American supporters of the Republican Party in the 1890s, this newspaper offers the opportunity to document the evolution of black sociopolitical culture in the deep South.

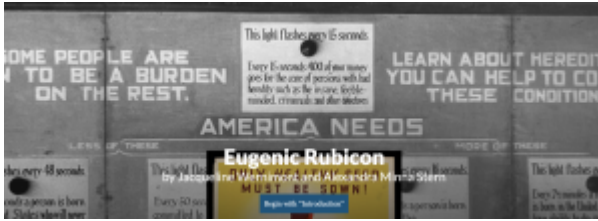


Anti-Eviction Mapping Project

[The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project](#) is a data visualization, data analysis, and storytelling collective documenting the dispossession and resistance to gentrifying landscapes. Primarily working in the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and New York City, we are all volunteers producing digital maps, oral history work, film, murals, and community events. Working with several community partners and in solidarity with numerous housing movements, we study and visualize new entanglements of global capital, real estate, technocapitalism, and political economy. The narrative oral history and video work center on the displacement of people and complex social worlds, but also modes of resistance. Maintaining antiracist and feminist analyses as well as decolonial methodology, the project creates tools and disseminates data contributing to collective resistance and movement building.



[COVID Black](#) works at the intersection of health data, information, the humanities, race, and social justice. We redefine statistics and information into living data and stories about Black Health. We are data griots. We are Black data storytellers. And we are redefining the future of Black health by marrying ancestry with data analytics & technology. Covid Black is a data organization team consisting of scholars such as Kim Gallon, Peace Ossom Williamson, Romae Morgan, and many others. A [full roster of the team](#) is available online.



[Eugenic Rubicon](#) is a developing prototype that uses mixed media and digital storytelling methods to share a history of eugenics. More than 60,000 people in the United States were sterilized in state asylums and hospitals under eugenic laws. While some histories have been written, little is known about the demographics and experiences of the countless people sterilized against their will. While eugenics laws have been struck down and removed, the legacies of these practices have shaped communities and relationships between communities throughout the U.S. This is a digital project led by Jacqueline Wernimont (Arizona State University) and Alexandra Minna Stern (University of Michigan).

Mapping Police Violence

[Mapping Police Violence](#) utilizes public data to document deaths linked to policing. The data demonstrates that Blacks are approximately three times more likely to be killed in comparison to their White counterparts. Moreover, 97% of the killings in the project database occurred while a police officer was acting in a law enforcement capacity.

PART II
GLOBAL DIGITAL
HUMANITIES

“The Future Is Already Here—It’s Just Not Very Evenly Distributed.”

— William Gibson

The reality of uneven access linked to technology is a straightforward conceit of modern conversation about digital humanities. Despite the moniker “World Wide Web,” the reality of under-resourced and underrepresented areas linked to digital humanities is undeniable. These inequalities are born from several complex issues. Built on established patterns of industrial and political power, the language of universality that championed the world wide web cannot overcome the reality of questions about the power and control inherited from previous systems. Digital Humanities scholars have raised questions and sought pathways to address these fundamental questions. The more they consider, the more concerns emerge. Either directly or indirectly, a concern about digital humanities in a global context raises a variety of ethical challenges. Ownership of information generated by virtual systems undermines individual privacy around the world. The turn toward digital systems opens the door to questions about virtual exploitation in cyberspace.

While the questions of global exploitation loom large, even the system of managing, distributing, and archiving digital data opens the door to numerous concerns. Standard around digital rights

linked to data, access to institutional and personal data, and the very real chasm between resource-rich and deprived communities increasingly dependent on data architecture offers moments of critical consideration. The DH community has increasingly asked essential questions about equity and sought theoretical and practical tools to promote accessibility. These discussions have pushed the field forward, borrowing important ideological inspiration from feminist theory, indigenous, and critical race studies. These efforts are united by a desire to broaden the conversation about how we should understand the digital in a global context.

Global Digital Humanities offers important opportunities to rethink the assumptions that frame the “digital” and, as a result, highlight the centrality of the humanities as a critical focal point for understanding the challenge of achieving social justice in a digital world. The readings in this section highlight the diverse perspectives necessary to understand the problem. Dorothy Kim’s “Media Histories, Media Archaeologies, and the Politics and Genealogies of the Digital Humanities” offers an essential reframing of the egalitarian mythologies about the digital world. A conversation with Dhanashree Thorat highlights the work of postcolonial digital humanities and the necessary intervention central to that approach. Ariana K. Costales Del Toro offers a framework to understanding the Caribbean experience through a set of digital projects. Similarly, Karina Ocanas Suarez theorizes alternative feminist epistemological to Global Digital Humanities. These works are joined by important projects highlighting indigenous worldview and language as means of broadening digital discourse.

Taken together, these reading highlight the importance of wrestling with the implication of the global as a means to decenter the assumptions that further the digital divide.

Media Histories, Media Archaeologies, and the Politics and Genealogies of the Digital Humanities

Media Histories, Media Archaeologies, and the Politics and Genealogies of the Digital Humanities

DOROTHY KIM

To begin to discuss alternative genealogies and histories of the digital humanities, we have to first discuss the genealogy of the digital as the site of settler colonialism and transatlantic chattel slavery. I am indebted to Jessie Daniels's discussion in "The Algorithmic Rise of the Alt-Right" that succinctly points to this undergirded issue.¹ Historically, the early architects of cyberspace always imagined the internet as an extension of US manifest destiny, a "frontier" for "freedom." As Jessie Daniels explains, you can see this in the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the manifesto of its founder, John Perry Barlow.² He writes:

Governments of the Industrial World, you weary giants of flesh and steel, I come from Cyberspace, the new home of Mind. On behalf of the future, I ask you of the past to

1. Jessie Daniels, "The Algorithmic Rise of the 'Alt-Right,'" *Contexts* 17, no. 1 (February 2018): 60–65.
2. *Ibid.*

leave us alone. You are not welcome among us. You have no sovereignty where we gather.

We have no elected government, nor are we likely to have one, so I address you with no greater authority than that with which liberty itself always speaks. I declare the global social space we are building to be naturally independent of the tyrannies you seek to impose on us. You have no moral right to rule us nor do you possess any methods of enforcement we have true reason to fear. [...]

We are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth. [...]

Our identities have no bodies, so, unlike you, we cannot obtain order by physical coercion. We believe that from ethics, enlightened self-interest, and the commonweal, our governance will emerge. [...]

These increasingly hostile and colonial measures place us in the same position as those previous lovers of freedom and self-determination who had to reject the authorities of distant, uninformed powers. We must declare our virtual selves immune to your sovereignty, even as we continue to consent to your rule over our bodies. We will spread ourselves across the Planet so that no one can arrest our thoughts.

We will create a civilization of the Mind in Cyberspace. May it be more humane and fair than the world your governments have made before.

Davos,
Switzerland
February
8, 1996³

3. John Perry Barlow, "A Declaration of the Independence

This idea of a colorblind, bodiless digital frontier of freedom is the frame-out of the digital worlds we deal with now. Daniels, Lisa Nakamura, and other scholars have debunked this myth that the internet is free of racism, colorblind, and/or free of actually gendered, raced bodies.⁴ Daniels explains that Silicon Valley CEOs and engineers have mined this ethos while developing the third-party platforms on which we move through our daily social, commercial, and academic transactions.⁵ They are invested in this “raceless” and disembodied internet that is imagined as a frontier utopia. As the internet is based on the centrality of coding in a monolingual English and American framework, it thus participates in the narrative of American exceptionalism, the digital jeremiad on the hill.⁶ The digital then is based on settler colonialism viewed as a version of the American West. Yet from

of Cyberspace,” Electronic Frontier Foundation,
<https://www.eff.org/cyberspace-independence>.

4. See Jesse Daniels, *Cyber Racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights, Perspectives on a Multiracial America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009) and Lisa Nakamura, “Cyberrace,” *PMLA* 123, no. 5 (2008): 1673–82.
5. Daniels, “The Algorithmic Rise of the ‘Alt-Right.’”
6. See Michelle Moravec, “Exceptionalism in Digital Humanities: Community, Collaboration, and Consensus,” in *Disrupting the Digital Humanities*, eds. Dorothy Kim and Jesse Stommel (Earth: punctum books, 2018), 169–96 and Gretchen McCulloch, “Coding Is for Everyone – As Long as You Speak English,” *Wired*, April 8, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/coding-is-for-everyone-as-long-as-you-speak-english/>

these terms, we know it only spells out further settler-colonial genocide, stolen land turned into white property, and unending epistemic and devastating erasure of Indigenous people and culture.

What further compounds this is the fact that digital structures are deeply raced: embedded in these digital structures lies the architecture of US chattel slavery. Daniels points to Anna Everett's work.⁷ In her 2001 monograph, *The Revolution Will Be Digitized: Afrocentricity and the Digital Public Sphere*, and in her reprinted 2002 article, "The Revolution Will Be Digitized: Afrocentricity and the Digital Public Sphere,"⁸ she describes the embedded North American chattel slavery manifest in turning on her personal computer. She writes:

In powering up my PC, I am confronted with DOS-based text that gives me pause. Before access to the MMX technology powering my system is granted, I am alerted to this opening textual encoding: "Pri. Master Disk, Pri. Slave Disk, Sec. Master, Sec. Slave." Programmed here is a virtual hierarchy organizing my computer's software operations. Given the nature of my subject matter, it might not be surprising that I am perpetually taken aback by the programmed boot-up language informing me that my access to the cyber frontier indeed is predicated upon a digitally configured "master/ slave" relationship. As the on-screen text runs through its remaining string of required boot-up

7. Daniels, "Rise of the 'Alt-Right.'"

8. Anna Everett, "The Revolution Will Be Digitized: Afrocentricity and the Digital Public Sphere," *Social Text* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 125. See also Anna Everett, *The Revolution Will Be Digitized: Afrocentricity and the Digital Public Sphere* (Utrecht: Uitgave Faculteit der Letteren, 2001).

language and codes, I often wonder why programmers chose such signifiers that hark back to our nation's ignominious past.⁹

This structural, violent, anti-Black naming continued into the controversies surrounding the language of standard computer programs, including Python.¹⁰ It was only in the last two years that Python finally removed the Master/Slave language from its computing language.¹¹ Github only began discussing this removal in the aftermath of the #GeorgeFloyd protests in Minnesota.¹² The digital world, the internet, is an extension of US settler colonialism, the digital arm of US manifest destiny that already structures through its system the frames of US chattel slavery. Thus, we cannot begin a discussion of the alternative genealogies and historiographies of the digital humanities without discussing this genealogy of the digital.

9. Everett, "The Revolution Will Be Digitized," 125.
10. "Master Slave Communication," Python Testing Infrastructure, <https://pyti.readthedocs.io/en/latest/master-slave.html>
11. Daniel Oberhaus, "'Master/Slave' Terminology Was Removed from Python Programming Language," Motherboard: Tech by Vice, September 13, 2018, https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/8x7akv/masterslave-terminology-was-removed-from-python-programming-language
12. Elizabeth Landau, "Tech Confronts Its Use of the Labels 'Master' and 'Slave,'" Wired, July 6, 2020, <https://www.wired.com/story/tech-confronts-use-labels-master-slave/>

At DHSI 2019, Arun Jacob, one of the writers included in this volume, presented a talk that examined digital platforms and tools through the lens of a critical media archaeology that is politicized, raced, gendered, and considers the issues currently related to surveillance, security, and the complex interconnection between digital media development and the military-industrial complex. Jacob defines media archaeology vis-à-vis Jussi Parikka's *What Is Media Archaeology* (2012)¹³ as "a field that attempts to understand new and emerging media through close examination of the past, and especially through critical scrutiny of dominant progressivist narratives of popular commercial media."¹⁴ Jacob's presentation included an analysis of several different digital tools and their histories.

One of these tools is the ubiquitous ArcGIS. By examining its history, its genealogy, along with a media archaeology methodology that also references Parikka's *A Geology of Media*,¹⁵ we can rethink the digital humanities through an examination of the history of the media tool or platform or practice as well as an examination of its structures. In this way, Jacob follows the origin genealogy of ArcGIS and ESRI to Laura and Jack Dan-germound, who established the ESRI in 1969 for

13. Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012).
14. Arun Jacob's Digital Humanities Summer Institute 2019 presentation is available here: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1OhTECuxOJDVE09jyydjTA2FBrPCD72pa8iam7blK1ns/edit#slide=id.g5b4675e386_0_53. See also Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_archaeology.
15. Jussi Parikka, *A Geology of Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

“digital mapping and analysis services.”¹⁶ Jacob excavates the history of ESRI in relation to its military-industrial complex history and even its current capabilities to transform into “Military Tools for ArcGIS” as a straightforward “extension” of the ArcGIS desktop.¹⁷

This is juxtaposed with the favorable press that the Dangermounds have gotten for their environmental conservation work – in particular, the Conservation land, the Coastal Ranch at Point Conception, as well as the Dangermound Endowed Chair in Conservation Studies at UCSB.¹⁸ Gender is an interesting point

16. Jacob cites Miguel Helft, “The Godfather of Digital Maps,” *Forbes*, February 10, 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/miguelhelft/2016/02/10/the-godfather-of-digital-maps/#4b55009e4da9>.
17. Jacob’s discussion of the ArcGIS desktop: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1OhTECuxOJDVE09jyydjTA2FBrPCD72pa8iam7blK1ns/edit#slide=id.g5b4675e386_0_118
18. *Ibid.* Jacob points to the following press releases: “The Nature Conservancy Preserves 24,000-acre Coastal Ranch at Point Conception with \$165 Million Gift from Esri Founders,” The Nature Conservancy, December 21, 2017, <https://www.nature.org/en-us/explore/newsroom/the-nature-conservancy-preserves-24000-acre-coastal-ranch-at-point-conceptio/> and “Preserving Nature: UC Santa Barbara announces Dangermond Endowed Chair in Conservation Studies,” *The Current*, 2017,

of analysis with this genealogy of the digital humanities because, as a husband and wife team, this includes the participation of a white woman in the formation, building, and work to create a digital geospatial system primarily used to find war targets. Jacob charts a historical genealogy of ESRI, which has a huge share of the GIS business, that also intersects with a philanthropic, “conservation,” and environmental profile that ESRI and its founders project. Thus, one of the main areas of digital humanities – digital mapping – often built on the ESRI platform, has and continues to have a history that is intertwined with the military-industrial complex, war, and ongoing violent settler colonialism. It is through media archaeology, microhistory, and a wider net in addressing community praxis – the ways in which the internet’s most toxic elements can enter into the research and pedagogical experience – that many of the essays in this collection resituate the genealogies and historiographies of the digital humanities. Thus, these essays address whiteness, fascism, race, decoloniality, feminist materiality, toxic masculine gamer cultures, queer digital histories, multilingualism, the military-industrial complex and the history of area studies and environmental studies, Indigenous futures, Black futurities, Black diasporic protest, Black digital social media, Black feminist archival praxis, cultural studies, digital archives of the global south, and the spectre of IBM as the origin myth of DH.

Within these essays, a main focus is on the question of power in thinking about genealogies, history, praxis, pedagogy, and futures of the digital humanities. However, this book engages with three main historical methodologies – media archaeology, the discussion of historiography in relation to “big data” and big humanities/digital humanities; and the discussion of silence and history making. Media archaeology as a methodology is

<https://www.news.ucsb.edu/2017/018606/preserving-nature>.

characterized as “a sobering conceptual friction in the way that certain theorists identified with the field, such as Geert Lovink, use it to undertake ‘a hermeneutic reading of the ‘new’ against the grain of the past, rather than telling of the histories of technologies from past to present.”¹⁹ This volume is an instantiation of media archaeology and particularly its tendencies to go “against the grain” and push back against “progress model” narratives. Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka explain that: “Media archaeologists have challenged the rejection of history by modern media culture and theory alike by pointing out hitherto unnoticed continuities and ruptures... On the basis of their discoveries, media archaeologists have begun to construct alternate histories of suppressed, neglected, and forgotten media that do not point teleologically to the present media-cultural condition as their “perfection.”²⁰ This volume rethinks media archaeology in relation to “alternate histories” as well as potential “futures” particularly in regards to how power, different marginal groups, have been embedded in these “suppressed, neglected, and forgotten media” histories.”

The second historical methodological discussion is in relation to longer considerations of history and big data. In particular, the debates in historiography about different models of historical

19. Lori Emerson, *Reading Writing Interfaces* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), xii. See also Geert Lovink, *My First Recession: Critical Internet Cultures in Transition* (Rotterdam: Nai Publishers, 2004), 11.
20. Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, “Introduction: An Archaeology of Media Archaeology,” in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, eds. Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 3.

inquiry predicated on a genealogy based on 19th-century German models of *Wissenschaft*. This discussion reconsiders the conflict between the methodologies championed by Theodor Mommsen's vision of a Big Humanities in his systematic collection and collaborative "industrial" model vs. Friedrich Nietzsche's critique of *Wissenschaft* in which he supported a vision that "philology was a way of life and the philologist was an ethical persona."²¹ This discourse about the longer histories of "big data" projects and their methodological priorities in contrast to the individual scholar and his/her interpretive interaction with the past leaves out precisely the history of the workers, what Mommsen termed *Arbeiter* in what was ostensibly his large-scale Big Humanities "database" project of classical epigraphs.²² However, this examination rarely addresses the issue of how "the history of the workers" or even the "individual scholar and his/her/ their) interpretive interaction with the past" can in fact also be a history of fascism and white supremacist actors. What do you do when we know that Nietzsche was a primary source for Germany's 20th-century fascism and the current far right?²³ How do these questions about different kinds of knowledge production also then intersect with the work of Black queer feminists in the Combahee River Collective and how intersectionality, identity politics, and autoethnography especially of BIWOC create

21. Chad Wellmon, "Loyal Workers and Distinguished Scholars: Big Humanities and the Ethics of Knowledge," *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 1 (2019): 116.

22. *Ibid.*, 97, 108.

23. *Ibid.*, 108–13. Sean Illing, "The Alt-Right Is Drunk on Bad Readings of Nietzsche. The Nazis Were Too," *Vox*, December 30, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/2017/8/17/16140846/alt-right-nietzsche-richard-spencer-nazism>.

friction with Nietzsche's idea of the "ethical philologist" and whose imagined lived experiences gets to interpret the past.²⁴

In fact, in reassessing the work philology, scholars have discussed the raciolinguistic bent of the "Romance of Philology" and especially the romance of Germanic philology (English national and German national)²⁵ in relation to racialized white nationalism. The ethical Germanic philologist can be a white supremacist, if not potentially a fascist. The field of philology is ripe with a raciolinguistic focus on genealogical origins as a form of raciolinguistic white supremacy. Big Humanities, in either *Wissenschaft* vision, cannot escape its entanglement with white supremacy and with nineteenth and twentieth-century fascism.

Finally, in Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, he writes that by examining the process of history we can "discover the differential exercise of power that makes some narratives possible and silences others."²⁶ This volume on *Alternative Historiographies of the Digital Humanities* examines the process of history in the narrative of the digital humanities. This volume's *raison-d'être*

24. Keeanga Yamahtta Taylor, ed., *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017).
25. See Shyama Rajendran, "Undoing 'the Vernacular': Dismantling Structures of Raciolinguistic Supremacy," *Literature Compass* 16 (2019): e12544 and Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).
26. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 25.

in considering DH's historical narrative is to dissect power. In essence, as Trouillot explains: "Power is constitutive of the story. Tracking power through various 'moments' simply helps emphasize the fundamentally processual character of historical production"²⁷ Trouillot's discussion of the four-stage system of silences – from "the making of sources," "the making of archives," "the making of narratives," "the making of history" – highlights the locations where silences enter the process of history.²⁸ He explains that "any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to de-construct these silences will vary accordingly."²⁹

It is the silences in these alternative media histories that many of these essays highlight and these are not just silences of the past and present, but also silences about the digital future.

Alternative Historiographies of the Digital Humanities resists a linear history of the digital humanities – a straight line from the beginnings of humanities computing. By discussing alternatives histories of the digital humanities that address queer gaming; feminist game studies praxis; Cold War military-industrial complex computation; the creation of the environmental humanities; monolingual discontent in DH; the hidden history of DH in English studies; radical media praxis; cultural studies and DH; indigenous futurities; Pacific Rim postcolonial DH; the issue of scale and DH; Black feminist praxis; Global African feminist protest; Black feminist archives; and the racialized silences in topic modeling; the radical, indigenous, feminist histories of the digital database; and the possibilities for an antifascist DH, this collection hopes to re-set discussions of the DH and its attending straight, white origin myths. Thus, this collection hopes to

27. Ibid., 28.

28. Ibid., 26.

29. Ibid., 27.

reexamine the silences in such a straight and white masculinist history and show how power comes into play to shape this straight, white DH narrative.

The collection includes work from Edmond Y. Chang, David Golumbia, Alenda Y. Chang, Domenico Fiormonte, Alexandra Juhasz, Carly A. Kocurek, Viola Lasmana, Siobhan Senior, Anastasia Salter, Bridget Blodgett, Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, Arun Jacob, Jordan Clapper, Ravynn K. Stringfield, Nalubega Ross, Jamal Russell, Christy Hyman. The volume is organized into six sections: Presents; Histories; Praxis; Method; Indigenous Futures; and Black Futurities. In Presents, I interview David Golumbia about Digital Humanities and/with White Supremacy to think about the histories of fascism and white supremacy in relation to the digital and what it means to reckon with digital humanities' fascist politics and historiographies. Carly Kocurek's "Towards a Digital Cultural Studies: The Legacy of Cultural Studies and the Future of Digital Humanities," thinks about the potential for remixing methods in which "the framework proposed here is a call to action for digital humanities, like cultural studies, is aware of the degree to which it is always already engaged in the work of cultural politics."³⁰ A number of the pieces, including Arun Jacob's "Punching Holes in the International Busa Machine Narrative," Cathy J. Schlund-Vials "Cold War Computations and Imitation Games: Recalibrating the Origins of Asian American Studies," and Dorothy Kim's "Embodying the Database: Race, Gender, and Social Justice," reexamine the origin myth of the digital humanities to reassess Father Busa's hagiography and work in relation to media archaeology, politics, Cold War maneuvers, mechanized genocide, the Third Reich, and the

30. Carly A. Kocurek, "Towards a Digital Cultural Studies: The Legacy of Cultural Studies and the Future of Digital Humanities" (this volume).

military-industrial complex as it has organized fields including Asian studies. This is a reassessment of comparative genealogies – vis-à-vis Foucault – as well as ways to tell an alternative history of the Jesuit hagiography we have so far been unwilling to reexamine for its narrative use in embellishing an origin hagiography/historiography for digital humanities.

Cathy Schlund-Vials and Edmond Y. Chang also rethink the military-industrial complex and the legacies of the queer father of 20th-century computer science, Alan Turing. Chang's essay is also a form of new alternative praxis in which a critical essay is also a text game. His chapter is a transition into the section on Praxis. A number of pieces considers alternative praxis in rethinking these histories – whether it is an essay that is a game or a reevaluation of feminist media praxis. Alexandra Juhasz's "The Self-Reflexive Praxis at the Heart of DH," becomes a form of autoethnography about teaching YouTube in prison pedagogy while simultaneously rethinking the digital humanities genealogy back to BIWOC feminist critical theory. Bridget Blodgett and Anastasia Salter's, "Training Design 2: Ideological Conflicts in Feminist Games+Digital Humanities," considers the problems of audience and designer as those toxic cultural worlds come into the world of digital games pedagogy. They advocate for a "counter-canon" in order to push back against toxic masculinity, white supremacy, and racism in video games.

In "An Indigenist Internet for Indigenous Futures: DH Beyond the Academy and 'Preservation,'" Siobhan Senier gives a larger view of Indigenous digital humanities that addresses Indigenous futurities and moves away from the touchstone of Indigenous "preservation." Senier thinks of the Indigeneity+digital as a method that requires co-creators are reciprocal, respectful, and thinks through how digital media can create communities and futurity. Jordan Clapper's "The Ancestors in the Machine: Indigenous Futurity and Games," examines how different kinds of games can be "indigenized" and what the future may hold for Indigenous games and gaming.

Other pieces intertwine the digital humanities with other fields and a reevaluation of methods – distance reading, archives, area studies, Asian studies, cultural studies, literary studies, and environmental studies – in order to reexamine how the intersections and juxtapositions reveal silences in these histories. In *Methods*, Viola Lasmana’s “Towards a Diligent Humanities: Digital Cultures and Archives of Post-1965 Indonesia,” rethinks digital humanities as a methodology that allows alternative trajectories, and in this case, beyond academic digital humanities, for a “diligent humanities, practiced and theorized with care, with a hermeneutics that is attentive to the frictions between multiple scales of analyses, scales of production, as well as scales of tensions between the global and the local.”³¹ Domenico Fiormonte’s “Taxation Against Overrepresentation: The Consequences of Monolingualism for Digital Humanities” begins with a self-reflexive discussion of the author’s situatedness, begins to unpack the work of Walter D. Mignolo and Linda Tuhiwai Smith to discuss decoloniality, translation, language, and how “the technical is always political.”³² And finally, in Alenda Y. Chang’s article, “Pitching the ‘Big Tent’ Outside: An Argument for the Digital Environmental Humanities,” she discusses the emergence of two different fields – digital humanities and environmental humanities, and also their intersections.

The volume finishes with a meditation on Break (Up, Down, Out, In) DH and Black Futurities. It opens with Ravynn K.

31. Viola Lasmana, “Toward a Diligent Humanities: Digital Cultural Productions in Post-1965 Indonesia” (this volume).

32. Domenico Fiormonte, “Taxation against Overrepresentation? The Consequences of Monolingualism for Digital Humanities” (this volume).

Stringfield's essay "Breaking and (Re)Making" in which she states in the first sentence: "The interesting thing about the digital humanities is that it is exceptionally fragile."³³ Christy Hyman's piece, "Black Scholars and Disciplinary Gatekeeping," invokes Afrofuturism to discuss the archive of Black life and the constant disciplinary gates that will not allow Black scholars to use Black methodology to recover and bear witnesses to these archival narratives and their silences. Nalubega Ross's chapter, "Dr. Nyanzi's Protests: Silences, Futures, and the Present," considers the African feminist Dr. Stella Nyanzi's poem, "Feminist in High Heels" as a counter-poem and a form of feminist digital protest that broke out of its prison environment onto viral digital networks. And finally, Jamal Russell asks about Black futurities in topic modeling if there is no given to context of how the model is created and no context on the data itself. What he wonders is the future of Black DH in topic modeling?

DH must reckon with its past to reevaluate its methods, praxis, vision, politics now in order to create a different antiracist, decolonial, and just future. However, we cannot create this without reckoning with the digital humanities complex, often violent, fascist, and difficult genealogies and histories. We are not the only field in the midst of a reckoning. I take inspiration from Zoe Todd's discussion of anthropology's reckoning in her piece, "The Decolonial Turn 2.0: The Reckoning."³⁴ Todd channels the

33. Ravynn K. Stringfield, "Breaking and (Re)Making" (this volume).

34. Zoe Todd, "The Decolonial Turn 2.0: The Reckoning," *anthrodendum*, June 15, 2018, <https://anthrodendum.org/2018/06/15/the-decolonial-turn-2-0-the-reckoning/>.

work of Rinaldo Walcott's *Queer Returns: Essays on Multiculturalism, Diaspora, and Black Studies*.³⁵ She writes:

Anthropology continues to be a colonial and exclusionary discipline, and that in order to reckon with its structural violences we need – in a nod to the work of Dr. Rinaldo Walcott (2016) in his text “Queer Returns” – a decolonial (re)turn in anthropology. I am inspired here by Walcott (2016:1), who notes, in engaging with his previous thinking and writing, the value in a “return to scenes of previous engagements in ways that demonstrate growth, change, and doubt.” In imagining a Decolonial Turn 2.0 or Decolonial (re)turn for Anthropology, I envision an engagement that forces us to return to the ‘scenes of apprehension’ (Simpson 2014) through which Anthropology imagines, reproduces, and promulgates itself as largely, still, a white, male, and colonial discipline.³⁶

My hope is that this volume begins that work of digital humanities reckoning with its past, its historiographies, as a way to confront its historical and current structural violences. I believe this is the only way to imagine a just digital humanities future.

In addition, I hope this book is a way to subvert the very forms of power it critiques by being published by an open-access press supported by university libraries. So much of the digital humanities and its genealogical histories have involved large amounts of funding tied to the military-industrial complex and the academic-industrial complex that have often been about devastating violence and harm. In addition, the six areas that

35. Rinaldo Walcott, *Queer Returns: Essays on Multiculturalism, Diaspora, and Black Studies* (London, Ontario, Canada: Insomniac Press, 2016).

36. Todd, “The Decolonial Turn 2.0.”

this book has organized its essays — Presents; Histories; Praxis; Methods; Indigenous Futures; and Black Futurities — should make clear another way to discuss the digital humanities. So moving beyond definitions or debates, what I lay out here is an alternative path to examine the present, the future, and the past through a situated politics as well as a way forward in thinking about how to address digital humanities' long genealogy in its complicity to military power, fascism, settler colonialism, chattel slavery, violence against LGBTQIA+ people, toxic masculine digital cultures, the Anthropocene and environmental disaster, archives of violence, the price of American monolingualism, Indigenous games and archives, Black digital methods and futurities, etc. The way to move forward is to precisely examine our praxis and our methods in order to think about the digital humanities as a process of scholarly, critical, discursive ways to always examine power.

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Dhanashree Thorat on a Postcolonial Digital Humanities

*Dhanashree Thorat and a Postcolonial Digital
Humanities*

JULIAN CHAMBLISS

This conversation was originally published in [Reframing Digital Humanities: Conversations with Digital Humanists](#) (2021). The conversation is between Dr. Julian Chambliss and Dr. Dhanashree Thorat.

The Conversation

Chambliss: The first question I ask everyone is: how do you define Digital Humanities?

Thorat: Okay, the tricky question right off the bat. I guess a couple of different ways. I mean, when I taught my DH class last time, students didn't know what DH was. I like to start with, I think it's Kathleen Fitzpatrick who talks about the age of using digital tools to do humanities research, but also applying humanities frameworks to think about digital cultures, data, and so on. I find that to be a fairly capacious definition. It gives people some idea of what we are doing, especially if you give people examples, right? So, [in cases

where, say, you] are studying Twitter data, you're collecting Twitter data, [and] you've got your big data analytics, but then you're asking humanities questions of Twitter data.

But in the other kinds of contexts—I work in India, or in Asian American studies, and postcolonial studies—I think we need a different kind of specificity because that's a really broad definition. And what exactly does it mean in these other contexts, right? In India, for example, I'm thinking about issues of language. In what language do we do Digital Humanities when India has so many languages? How do we reckon with our history of colonialism, which really permeates everything we do with academia, with humanistic inquiry, with digital humanities? And how do we grapple with things like cost and class and gender in the context of this new field in a place like India? I think what's really important for me is to not just think about that kind of broad definition, but to also think about the challenges or specific contexts, and what those contexts add to [what] we do. I will say right off the bat that I do define DH as very much [part] of the political field, very much of an activist field. And that this is not just about studying digital culture [and] doing humanities, but really about taking a stance and trying to transform some of the systems we see around us.

Chambliss: Right. I think [that's] a really interesting answer because I think, and I will of course post links to your website and things, when people encounter your work, they often encounter it in a sort of intersectional narrative in the sense that a lot of your work is sort of dealing with postcolonial studies [and] really concerned with Asian American experience. And you're thinking about infrastructure, right? You make an argument that you're really thinking about how a kind of codification of hegemonic narratives happens. How does the world [and] what we think of as normal, how is that made? You're really using digital humanities as a way to talk about that. And I think a lot of your work is really interesting in the sense that you get us to push beyond the surface right down to the core. How did you find your way to that kind of practice in the context of Digital Humanities? Because I think it makes a lot of

sense if you recognize that your background is sort of like English. How did you get there?

Thorat: It feels a little bit like that Wikipedia rabbit hole, right? If you click on a Wikipedia article and then you see one [of] those links [and] you click on that, and then, you know, 10 clicks later, somehow you found yourself in a very random place. I do worry about this because I don't quite know how I got here, but I think for me, the most important thing has always been to study race and to think about colonialism and race and capitalism as very interlinked systems, and how they have shaped the world that we have around us. And I think what was really exciting for me [was] to realize that the kind of training I had as an English Ph.D., whether that was, you know, close reading analyses [or] working with archives; to some extent, all of those skills transferred really well to thinking about digital. And so, I can in fact think about very different things. I can think about Twitter data, but I can also think about internet infrastructure using those same kinds analytical frameworks with that kind of attention to race and thinking about systemic oppression in these very different contexts.

Chambliss: This is a really important question because I think one of the things about digital humanities in the popular imagination and, at some level, as I mentioned to you, I think these conversations we're having, that I'm having in the context of *Reframing History* aren't necessarily going to be revelations for people who are practitioners, right? Like, there's a whole cadre of people who do Digital Humanities, but my standard answer to people [is] why are you having these conversations? Like, you don't have to go very far, you are involved in this group, right? But when you go a little bit away from the group, it becomes very not clear what is happening in terms of Digital Humanities. This is my argument. And you can experience this [on] differing levels.

I mean, you start thinking about the institutional support around these activities at different educational institutions, right? This idea that race and power and identity are wrapped up in the Digital Humanities at some level. I think [that's] one of the things that's

emerged as the field has evolved and matured in a contemporary context. If you go back and look at early writing about Digital Humanities, [it] is not necessarily explicitly talking about how race is inflected. Although race is often at the center of it, right?

Like, one of the first digital humanity projects I ever saw was the Valley of the Shadows Project, right? The granddaddy was all about the Civil War and Ed Ayers and all these other things. And a lot of Ed Ayers' work, I think, is being shaped by these questions of race that are sort of buried in the question of the American South. But you, in particular, your work is very much talking about how those racialized geographies are being recreated, I would argue, within this digital world. Like, you're really sort of thinking about this relationship. And I think that's really interesting because that is part of like a very ardent subset of DH practitioners that have increasingly talked about the dangers of inequality. And I'd really like you to talk a little bit about...some of the concerns you have in the context of this question around power and DH.

Thorat: I mean, this is really interesting because I will say I also came to this intersection of postcolonialism and DH through a project, which was very critical—the Postcolonial Digital Humanities Initiative that Roopika Risam and Adeline Koh started. I was a grad student at that time and encountering it really changed the way I was doing my work because I began to see there was a space to do this kind of intersection[al work]. But it's really interesting because I do think there have been more people taking up this kind of work we've had #transformDH and some really amazing people working in ethnic studies and DH. I'm thinking about Jessica Marie Johnson's work and really interesting provocative stuff.

But you know what was funny? I was looking at the Wikipedia page for Digital Humanities, the place that so many people go to, right? So, when you go to the references and bibliography on that page, most of the people cited on that page are white. And how do we get to that kind of situation despite all these conversations we've been having? I mean, every year, the DH conference continues to have a lot of recurring issues around power and about whether it

(DH) is inclusive, and whether it is welcoming; whether people of color are getting into this conference. We still have a lot of these recurring questions, I think, around DH centers, DH initiatives, and I don't think they've gone away.

Chambliss: Right, yeah. And I think it's one of the things that's interesting... It's funny, you should mention Wikipedia because one of the projects I always talk to students about when I teach things that are digitally inflected [is] about the Rewrite Wikipedia project. And [I] talk about some of the issues that are structurally hidden. [I] talk about [how] the average editor of Wikipedia is a white male, age 30, who lives in the West. And then there's all this activism by groups to Rewrite Wikipedia, be it wiki edit-a-thon around women or [a] wiki edit-a-thon around the global south or African Americans, things like this. So much so it's almost I think like a canonical cottage industry around rewriting Wikipedia, right? I don't mean that in a bad way, but you know, if you normalize the fact that it's kinda racist and so this is a way for you to fix it, did you really? Yeah, it's good that you're fixing it, but...

Thorat: Can it be fixed? I think that's the question. Can you actually fix it?

Chambliss: It is growing every day, right? It's not like it's frozen in time and you come through and [fixing] it. And no one's ever going to make a change. It is literally growing every day. Are there enough people there? Are there enough hands concerned with this liberatory narrative to balance out the hands that don't care about the liberatory narrative? I'm not saying you should not have wiki edit-a-thon, but it goes to this question; especially since you do have a choice about what you consume. And you've not ever confronted these questions [even though] we are in academia every day? There are some things that only happen in academia. And I say that to my colleagues all the time. They ask me what do you mean by that?

I'm like, "I guarantee you no one ever is concerned about the number of X that are hired in a given day in 95% of all organizational structures." They never talk about it. It doesn't work. They talk about

[it], but their goal is to make money nine times out of 10. And if that is happening, they will ignore any number of things, whereas we won't stop and go wait a minute, right? And so, this is a really important question. But I want to think about this and then [the] context [of] some of your other work, because I think one of the other ways you define yourself is [by], at least in my mind, the effort you made in terms of actively organizing structures linked to teaching and learning in DH.

And what does that mean in terms of the future digital humanities? Like, how has that process been for you as a very young academic, right? Like, an early career academic. This is another one of these hidden questions around academia, especially, again, you get a little inside baseball, but there's a difference between your role as a teacher and a scholar at the kind of R1 institutions that we're at versus my old institution, which was literally characterized as a teaching institution. So, how has that whole pathway mattered in terms of your approach to DH and [how has] that been beneficial to you as a practitioner, as a theorist, as a scholar?

Thorat: I would say it has been very beneficial, that it has been very productive to be involved in what would probably be called “service work,” organizing events, leading workshops. And it is tricky because I feel like I still look at my CV and I have a much longer list of service work than I do publications. Then that's a challenge as I move into a tenure track position, but I do need to check off those traditional boxes of work. But, for me, it's been really important to be involved with a DH center in India. In Pune, they're doing a DH winter school every other year. And do we also be involved in the US with THATCamp Florida, which we did for quite some time together and THATCamp Gainesville, as well.

I think what was really important for me, especially in India, was to think with people there and to see the kind of DH emerging and [how] people there were defining [it] for themselves. I didn't want this to be a kind of less important “cool new thing” that's happening in the West, but really [more about] how people are interested in shaping that field in India. Given the kind of work I do, which is

postcolonial [and therefore] does have a connection to India. I do think having that connection is really important. For me, that was also about ethical collaboration, about giving back to a community that has sustained me. And it ended up being very enriching for my work because I had new ideas talking to people, sharing ideas with people, brainstorming specificities of work. I think, on the one hand, those kinds of events were really useful and productive and enriching.

But the teaching, I think, is the other piece that I've really enjoyed; [like] bringing digital methods into the classroom, and we do actually do Wikipedia edit-a-thon in my class. [In] my class last term, [we] edited Edwidge Danticat's Wikipedia page. We added sections of her novel and added themes from her novel to one of the pages. And it's been really fun to do that with students because students begin to think about these technologies that surround them. And how can you actually change these technologies? How can you change these platforms so you're not just consuming them?

Having that kind of opportunity to transform systems is really important for students, and to connect that to local community [by] thinking locally about what's going on around that. For example, this term, I'll be teaching in Mississippi and we are going to be working with Fannie Lou Hamer speeches. And she was a Mississippian, a local civil rights activist. Thinking about somebody like that, and then thinking about that in the context of DH [for] students who are very local, I think is very, very important. I'm not sure all of this work will count for tenure at the end of the day, but I think this is something I value. I intend to keep doing it.

Chambliss: It's funny you should say that. I mean, I had a conversation like that in my job. They asked me [if I] was I still going to keep doing the digital stuff? I said "Yes, and it's always going to be about Black people, too!" It's really interesting to think a little bit about this question of does it count, right? Because this is also one of these classic DH questions: is the thing you're doing counting? But it's interesting because we usually couch that in terms of, "is the project you created gonna count towards something," right? As

opposed to [when] you're actually teaching about the infrastructure of the universe that we live in, does that count?

Thorat: Yeah. The question of impact is so interesting, right, because how do we measure impact? Like, *who* is it impacting? If this is really about educators, if we are teaching our students to think through certain systems, that is an impact, right? If you are reaching community members who were enabled to do their own work, that is its own impact.

Chambliss: That should be enough, right? Like that should be good, right? And this gets me to another question, because I think one of the things that's really interesting about talking to you is that your work is less defined by tools and more defined, at some level, by trying to understand the nature of technoculture. And that question really becomes a question of, at least I want to ask you: are we asking the right questions when we're talking about DH, right? From your perspective, as someone who's thinking about this, you're stepping back and going like, "This is the nature of the world that we live in," are we having the right set of conversations? Are we asking the right questions when we think about DH?

Thorat: I mean, I'm probably going to be totally biased when I say this, but I foreground identity and power when we talk about DH and, for me, that is the most important thing. All questions begin there. And I think a lot of people will probably disagree with that. And I think that's fine. Some people may have other things they want to do, but I do think thinking about how power and how gender and other systems of power intersect with our work is really crucial for me. Questions either begin there, or in some ways those become important analogies [and] questions, regardless of the kind of work we do.

Chambliss: And I think that that's not an unreasonable answer.

Thorat: We might both be biased here.

Chambliss: Well, I think it's definitely a question [of] how do we approach the question of what DH is. Obviously, I always tell students [that it] doesn't matter what tool you use, which is a horrible thing to say if you're a certain kind of practitioner, right?

Like, I don't care, tools are not the most important thing here. The most important thing is the idea, right? The simplest tool is the best is my first answer, right? So, these questions about power, I think, are increasingly becoming definitional; not because of anything that you and I might think, but because [it's] one of the things that happens as a field matures. And I think we're getting to a place where we're in these questions of what are we doing when we do DH, I'm being more and more inflected by the goal of the kind of work that's being produced in this field.

I often talk about the stuff I do as a project of recovery, [like, that] very particular way of thinking about it because, you know, it's not that we don't know what happened. We're trying to recover a fuller picture of what's happening to African Americans. And I think the same could be said for a lot of people who are dealing with minority groups or marginalized groups and doing digital projects or trying to recover some sort of sense of depth and nuance and complexity to their experience. Other people may not necessarily be [doing] so, but I do think that's one of the things that may unify some of this work—that's much more inflected by questions of ethnic studies or Black studies or social history questions, and things like that. But that does mean that there are questions about the path forward, right? And so, for you, as a practitioner and as a person thinking about these things from a structural standpoint, what do you see as big obstacles for you and what are a big opportunities as you project forward in terms of your work?

Thorat: I mean, I think in terms of challenges, funding is always a question. Getting funded for the kind of work we want to do, which is often very critical. And [it] can seem threatening to white institutions or to white supremacy. How do you get funding for that kind of work without compromising the kind of work you want [to do]? I think that is always an issue for me. But I think a lot of the really interesting opportunities that I see—and I think it's okay if I'm not part of this because I think sometimes you do kind of have to step back and let other people do the work they want to do—but seeing the way DH is developing in other contexts, for

example, in India, where I am involved. But again, I have to kind of step back because I am located in the US and seeing those kinds of developments in India and even seeing questions adjacent to DH being asked outside of academic institutions.

NGOs, for example, [are] doing work around feminism or issues of sexuality in digital culture. We have a number of these kinds of activist NGOs in India that are doing very interesting work but obviously don't claim DH as their operating field. So, I think there's a lot of fascinating, important work that's also happening adjacent to academia that we may not be involved in. But I think that is totally fine. Seeing those kinds of conversations has been very exciting and I do think we will be seeing more of those in the future.

And then, just personally speaking, what's exciting is to see where students take this work. As a postdoc at KU (University of Kansas) I've worked with HASTAC scholars and seen folks come into DH in their first year of their masters. Then, two years later, they are doing this amazing work in very different areas. And that to me is really important. How do we enable that new generation of scholars and really bring in that vein of critical DH very early on? They are thinking in that kind of approach going forward. For me, [it] is really important to see where students will take that [and make] more [of what] you want to see out there.

Chambliss: Yeah. You know, I think it will be interesting because the next generation of students are going to be much more tech savvy. I think one of the things that's interesting is the question about tools, especially for people in graduate school. Maybe one of the limitations—if they're in a good program—they're going to pick up some technical skills and be able to do something. Cause I don't think necessarily that you're going to be able to continue to be in DH, projecting forward and just simply doing something using a digital tool. There is going to be a question about you [did] that was different. What did you do that was paradigm shifting? And so, there's going to be a push, I think, for people that have the skills to do something in terms of explanatory or interpreting a new space that is clearly pushing the boundaries. That has its dangers because

you're going to have to be at a place that has resources to provide you the tools.

Thorat: You can't do it without resources.

Chambliss: You can't do it. You know, I always talk about the Death Star Problem. When you build the Death Star, you blow up planets, but you got to get the Death Star to blow up planets and that costs money. It's always about money, the dirty little secret [of] DH.

Thorat: You're right. And, I mean, I'm not sure, but I do look around and I wonder. I mean, are PhD programs training grad students in digital methodology? Then, I'm not sure of the answer is "yes." I think there's a lot more of us who are interested in training grad students, but I'm not sure it is common.

Chambliss: I think that's true. I mean, I think that's actually been one of the things we're really interested in about my new position, right? Like, MSU has a really robust digital community and finding the pathway as a graduate student, I think, [is] complicated. You can do it, but I don't think it's as simple as you might think it might be from the outside looking in. I think that's a good place to stop. "It's more complicated than you might think" is the answer.

Thorat: It's always the answer, right?

Chambliss: Yeah. It's always [the] answer. I want to thank you again for taking the time to talk to me. If people want to find you online, they can find you at...

Thorat: They [can] find my website, *dhanashreethorat.com*. They can find me on Twitter. They can find me at a lot of places. I guess that's what it means to be a DH person.

Chambliss: That's true. You gotta [have] a fierce DH profile. This will be a highly downloaded episode.

Thorat: I will keep my fingers crossed. I will look for my emails in my mailbox.

Chambliss: All right. Well, thank you.

Dr. [Dhanashree Thorat](#) is an Assistant Professor of English at Mississippi State University. She received her Ph.D. in English from

the University of Florida in 2017. While at the University of Florida (UF), she served as co-convenor of the [Digital Humanities Working Group](#) and was lead coordinator for the first THATCamp Gainesville. She was also part of the committee that developed the Digital Humanities Graduate Certificate at UF. She has organized and led DH workshops on various topics including digital archiving, feminist digital humanities, and digital pedagogies. Thorat is a founding Executive Council member of the Center for Digital Humanities in Pune, India. She serves as the lead organizer for a biennial winter school on Digital Humanities and advises the center on digital archival projects and DH curriculum development. She has written about her experiences with building DH networks in the Global South as a [HASTAC](#) Scholar (2015-2016) and as a postdoctoral researcher in Digital Humanities at the Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities, at the University of Kansas from 2017-2019. In our conversation, we discussed her vision for postcolonial digital humanities praxis.

Keywords

Postcolonial Digital Humanities, Critical Race, Gender, and Pedagogy

Uncovering the Digital in the Caribbean

Uncovering the Digital in the Caribbean

ARIANA K. COSTALES DEL TORO

When thinking about the Caribbean, those who are unfamiliar with it might picture beautiful beaches and resorts, a tropical paradise, away from the cold winds of the northern hemisphere. However, when actual Caribbeans think about it, they might reflect on poverty, years of colonization, culture that is threatened everyday and the struggle for survival. The Caribbean reality is anything but Paradise, despite its rich history, customs, cultures, and music. Because of this, studying it through a decolonized lens is essential. It is also important to note that although we often talk about the Caribbean as a group of countries which might imply a close needed relationship through historical relationships and connectors, the countries that compose the Caribbean are rarely in contact with each other on a basic population level in contrast to for example, scholars. As an effect, studying the relationship of the Caribbean countries is important when dealing with topics of decolonization because this distance was indoctrinated into Caribbean by its different colonizers including France, United Kingdom, the Dutch, and the United States. countries were indoctrinated to accept. To create connections and bridges within the Caribbean can then be considered a decolonizing practice, one that already happens on an academic level.

Taking these ideas into consideration while being immersed in the digital humanities field, one can wonder how is it that this practice of bridging is being aided by the help of the digital. Viewing the lack of focus of Digital Humanities within academia, and also considering Puerto Rico and its University's, lack of Digital Humanities, this

anthology aims to explore the digital Caribbean and how their decolonizing efforts can be traced to DH as a medium through which knowledge can reach more people, both inside and outside the countries. Similarly, this anthology hopes to expand the understanding of what “digital humanities” means and what digital projects might look like outside of its basic forms and notions. Considering a DH project does not have to categorize itself as a DH project for it to be a significant digital project for the humanities, what would these works that don’t claim the title “DH projects” look like? Due to DH’s lack of clarity and understanding, this exercise could aid those that solely relate DH projects with archives or digital publishing to understand that a digital project can be anything and can cover a diverse array of topics.

By taking the Caribbean as a focus and exploring its bridging practice through Digital Humanities, the reader and/or audience is not just expanding their knowledge of the Caribbean through a decolonized lens they are also decentralizing the accustomed ways of learning, making the process of research one that is more interactive, multi-media, multi-platform, and multi-genre. In doing this, the annotated bibliography also works to promote these Caribbean digital projects as well as encourage the readers’ contributions to their efforts.



[“La Brega.” WNYC Studios](#)

La Brega, first released last February 2021, is a seven-episode podcast that aims to share stories of the Puerto Rican experience, from quotidian things such as the significance of the word “brega” within Puerto Rican slang language which roughly translates to a constant state of survival, to significant political moments that have defined and established the near future of the island’s economical state. The podcast brings forth what it is to be Puerto Rican both culturally and politically, as it states Puerto Rico as a US colony. The podcast takes as focus US involvement on Puerto Rico and how as an effect, the island has become a tax heaven and play ground for the US while the Puerto Rican people suffer the worst consequences. Because of this, the podcast also dwells within the topics of diaspora as it explores how Puerto Ricans have been forced to leave the country. La Brega not only shares Puerto Rico’s history, but it also contextualizes it to the present, analyzing how Puerto Rico’s daily life, which is considered to be a struggle as per stated in

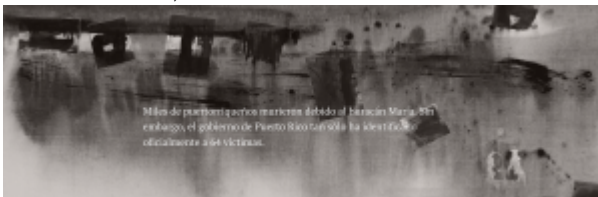
the word “brega”, can be traced back to a systematic metaphorical killing that revolves around Puerto Rico’s past and present as a colony, firstly as a Spanish one and then as a US one regardless of its “commonwealth” title. When it was first aired, the podcast caused a lot of commotion both inside and outside the island, stirring emotion in its listeners not only because it used nostalgia while talking about Puerto Rico’s past but because it also dwells with the idea that hope is hard to come by when it comes to the island’s future which is a truth all Puerto Ricans fight with constantly. La Brega became the first Puerto Rican podcast to directly address the political history and present of the island with a researching journalism approach which was at the same time simultaneously translated for maximum outreach. Similarly, the stories the podcast shares are generally contextualized so that people without previous knowledge of Puerto Rico can follow the analysis. Because of this, it not only serves the Puerto Rican people to better understand themselves and their present conditions, but it is also a tool to spread information about the actual political status of the island, severing its false image as a tourism paradise to those who listen.



[Puerto Rico Syllabus](#)

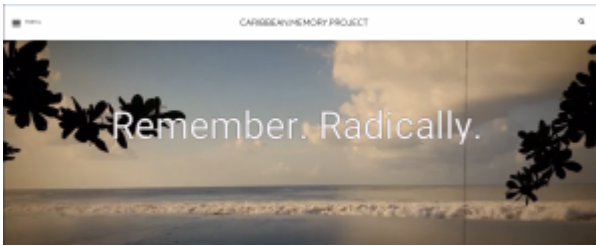
The #PuertoRicoSyllabus is a collective project created by academics exercising their pedagogical skills to help others understand the Puerto Rican debt crisis as well as the island’s “territory” or “commonwealth” status. It also aims to explore and complicate how these topics impact the lives of Puerto Rican people as well as its diaspora. They also explore Puerto Rican social activism. Since its creation the project has birthed eight “syllabi”

that structurally discuss topics like Puerto Rico's history, political structures, debt, migration, and activism, all which have directly or indirectly transformed the way Puerto Ricans exercise democracy. These syllabi are divided into units that compartmentalize the complexities of the topic at hand. Having its primary motive to educate people on the Puerto Rican political atmosphere, #PuertoRicoSyllabus shares accessible information to its readers including but not limited to articles, photos, and videos. Just as a suggested readings section in a syllabus might work, this project works as a list of sources that guides and encourages its audience to research. Aside from this, the project also includes citations of recommended books, not necessarily available for all but still relevant information that could help expand the topic discussed. With its structure and features, the project makes higher-level education more accessible both by providing direct sources of open access materials but by also including summarizes and brief explanations about the material's relevancy. Aside from this, their website is also bilingual, having both English and Spanish options, increasing its accessibility. Taking into consideration the focus topics of the project, it is important to note how the project tries to decentralize the US imperial debate regarding Puerto Rico's state status that, as an effect, provides a decolonized lens through which to analyze the proposed materials. Being the first syllabus type project solely about Puerto Rico, #PuertoRicoSyllabus works as a tool for instructors interested in teaching these topics. Because of this, the project aids in the transformation of a better educational system both in the states and in Puerto Rico (in the states, by providing material that is not US centric in its perspective and in Puerto Rico by helping teachers navigate the possibilities of a decolonized class).



[los muertos de maria](#)

Los Muertos de maria bring attention to the terrible way in which the Puerto Rican government managed the effects of the Hurricane Maria within its population. In essence, the website is a data base that recorded the numerous casualties of the hurricane, which at the time, highlighted the mortality rate of Maria being far worse than what the Government was sharing. The project revealed that a year after the hurricane, a more accurate number of deaths were about 487 when the government's official statement numbered the casualties to 64. The website works as a place of remembrance and protest both of the victims and the governments irresponsibility, respectively. Similarly, the project pointed towards both the local and federal governments downplay of the casualties relating to the hurricane. Sometime after the project was completed and released to the public, the total victims attached to the hurricane were estimated to 1, 427. This extensive registry, regardless of its incompleteness, proved the government statistics wrong. Being a data base, the project contains a list of names that include some of the hurricane casualties, but also their age at the time of death, the place of death and the cause. Additionally, the website also contains infographics, diagrams, graphs, and tables which shared some of the victims' stories as told by their relatives. All within a timeline that records important moments after the hurricane. These records showed how the majority of the hurricane victims died of manageable causes if it weren't for the lack of action from the governments part. The project directly denounced the local government for its inaction and lies while also denouncing the US government's lack of interest, also bringing to attention the status question. This project further questioned Puerto Rico's treatment as territory being a colonized Caribbean island.



[The Caribbean Memory Project](#)

Launched in 2014, The Caribbean Memory Project works as an archive that compiles archival materials from all countries of the Caribbean. The project aims to promote archives to the public while encouraging their participation, effectively engaging people in the preservation of national and cultural knowledge. It is meant to be both an archive and an educational tool through which Caribbean people can learn more about their heritage. The collections are composed of different documents donated, submitted, or uploaded by the project's public. In other words, the website is made up of family archives, found/discarded materials, and public databases. Being a community-dependent project, the materials digitalized include everything within the limits of image and video files. Some of the documents uploaded include photos of people and architecture as well as letters with old "sent" and "received" stamps. Being a project that depends on the public's contributions, people are also encouraged to share written and oral stories. Taking this into consideration, it is possible to see how the project not only pretends to include the community into archival work, but it also intends to save and preserve Caribbean history and culture. Besides that, the attention to the preservation of oral histories is important to note knowing that oral stories are the first to get lost between generations. The website's archive is divided into five categories: country, documents, people, media, and written/oral stories. The category of country is very interesting because it lets the public explore the available archives from the different Caribbean countries, which facilitates analysis of pan-Caribbean connections

and patterns. Although some countries have a more extensive archive including pictures of landscapes, important figures, and architecture, it still serves as a starting point when starting to piece the similarities within the Caribbean experience as lived by the people.



[El Proyecto de La Literatura Puertorriqueña/ The Puerto Rican Literature Project](#)

The Puerto Rican Literature Project entails an archive of Puerto Rican writers. As a self-proclaimed accessible project, its website utilizes Spanglish to reach both English and Spanish speakers. Serving as a digital database, the project's goal is to include 750 Puerto Rican writers (inside or outside the island) within its archive. Being a newly founded project, it estimates it will eventually contain around 50,000 assets, all from the initial 750 writers already stated and varying in genre. Taking into consideration Puerto Rico's fragile educational system, this project aims to preserve the written works of writers who are not taught in Puerto Rican schools. Because of this, the project essentially works to save the documents the island will one day need if an educational reform is implemented, one that will decolonize the school and include ideas and thoughts from non-white male writers and thinkers. The very existence of this project also enables the possibility of decolonized classes, since it provides a list of resources which could be implemented in the classroom. Besides its ties with education, #PLPR also directs its

efforts to the literary community in an effort to preserve the accomplished work that often times goes unnoticed. In addition to this, the project also aims to expand the reading community's library and knowledge. Although digital projects are commonly understood as ongoing projects, the newness of this one, speaks to the possibilities the future might hold in regard to Digital Humanities in Puerto Rico. Being the only literature archive present in this annotated bibliography, it is important to note how this archive not only preserves written work of the past but also of the present, giving attention to contemporary writers who, in the context of Puerto Rico, have incorporated topics of race, gender and class within their works, making writing a decolonizing exercise. One that the archive supports and reiterates while "immortalizing" them.



[The Caribbean Diaspora Project](#)

With its base in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean Diaspora Project aims to "revitalize, reuse and recover" sources and artifacts related to carnival practices and mobility across the Caribbean. Similar to other digital projects, this one is divided into sections or phases which detail the processes through which the project firstly emerged, was conceived and progressed to its current state. Within these stages, the topics addressed included the origin of carnival, carnival events across the Caribbean, and politics with its relevance to carnival. One of the interesting aspects of the website includes the mapping of the Caribbean and the specific countries the project focuses on (it does not include the entirety of the Caribbean). Besides mapping, the website also contains summaries and portions of analysis which often times makes the project read like an essay.

Both of these approaches combined help the reader understand how the project connects its topics to the Caribbean, the topics including not only carnival practices but also migration and how it contributed to similar carnival practices across the Caribbean. In general, the Diaspora Project serves as a representation of research progress since it detailed every step toward the analysis and creation of the project while taking into consideration the reader's knowledge or lack thereof. Knowing the project incorporates and compares Caribbean countries in its core, it becomes another work through which the reader can explore the pan-Caribbean relationship, especially as it relates to migration patterns across the islands. As a result, the reader might become more interested in reading topics of migration more specifically and how in the beginning of the Caribbean islands colonized history, the first migrations were of black people during and after enslavement (the slave trade being another connection between Caribbean countries).



[Archivos Del Caribe](#)

Based in Puerto Rico, the Archivos Del Caribe project or the Archives of the Caribbean (as is translated), preserves and collects materials that represent Caribbean history, art and culture. After receiving a grant of 100,000 the community-lead archive and literature collective has dedicated its focus to compiling and digitizing rural parts of Puerto Rico, specifically one of its municipalities, Cayey. Being a mainly digital photography archive of history, art and culture, the website's contents are mainly donated contributions or materials received from other collections or open access resources. Aside from its digital archive, Archives also

engages their community by organizing exhibitions where locals can interact with the physical archive. In its core, the project recovers quotidian familial histories that form part of Puerto Rican culture and history effectively preserving the experiences of past generations. Aside from its efforts in preserving Puerto Rican knowledge, the project also includes a Caribbean gallery with focus on Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Guadalupe as well as an archive on Caribbean architecture. The Archives gallery, although limited, offers a look at different points in Caribbean history that encourages reflection on what it means to have a Caribbean experience or to live a Caribbean life without romanticizing. Similarly, the archive on Caribbean architecture, begs its audience to reflect on the colonization effects on civil structures since it clearly demonstrates the remnant of a once violent (and in many cases, still ongoing) relationship. These sub-projects breach the distance between the Caribbean islands and put them in conversation. With these collections of photos, it is possible to see the similarities between the Caribbean islands as well as noting their individuality. It is then possible to see how very specific parts of Puerto Rico like Cayey, can similarly portray Caribbean life that, for example, Cuba could represent.



[Small Axe Project](#)

Small Axe Project is a digital project on Caribbean knowledge that aims to amplify Caribbean critical thought, life, and culture. In hopes of creating or aiding transformations of the Caribbean imaginary, both inside and outside as it relates to the perception of said islands. Some of the topics discussed and amplified within this project are class, gender, nation, culture and race, sovereignty, development, and democracy. Small axe Project is divided into three sub-projects or categories: small axe, sx salon, and sx visualities. Small axe functions as a critical Caribbean journal, sx salon as a cross genre literary platform, and sx visualities as a space dedicated to Caribbean visual practice including but not limited to photography, moving image, performance, architecture, soundscapes, painting, and sculpture. Small axe project also has a small division for digital practices called sx archipelagos. Small Axe Project's multigenre and multiplatform uniqueness make this a very complex project which contains many of its contributions in digital form. Small Axe Project as a whole, is both a producer and reproducer of Caribbean knowledge that is, at the same time, digitalized to assure maximum accessibility when possible. This project is important not only because of its multi-genre approach but because, once again, it puts the Caribbean in conversation with itself in order to expand the knowledge already established and ensure conversation continue advancing and complicating themselves as the critical world undoes itself continuously. Both as an educational tool, from where scholars can find scholarly works of critical thought, Small Axe also works as a publisher that enhances the outreach of Caribbean thinkers otherwise forgotten (lack of publishing opportunities)



[Carisealand](#)

Carisealand is a digital research project of the first digital humanities center in the Caribbean, Create Caribbean Research Institute. In its essence, Carisealand explores the possibilities of living in the Caribbean amidst a climate change crisis where climate disasters increase the vulnerability of the islands. Being a multi-disciplinary project, it aims to engage topics of social, environmental, and economic impacts as they relate to climate disaster in hopes of arguing, aiding, and establishing how sustainability can help the futurities and survival of the Caribbean. The project is directed to scholars, artists, students, and citizens as it strives to create general awareness of climate change and its impact in the Caribbean. Because of its informational nature, the project serves as a tool for educating the population. Similarly to others, the project is divided into three sections: a mapping section that lists and connects all the environmentally conscious organizations that work within the islands to protect natural resources and wild life, a syllabus portion that directly addresses scholars and students as it functions as a tool for learning about the environment in the Caribbean context, and finally, “ the lab” section which works with the community in order to imagine what a sustainable Caribbean might look like. The lab takes Mahaut, Dominica, and its community, as focus. This project is not only important because it explores how the Caribbean can work towards a more sustainable future but also because the climate change’s impact on the islands is even more noticeable now than it was years before. In recent years climate disasters keep threatening the Caribbean future. Just as we saw in 2017 with Hurricane Maria, storms continue to be a big threat as well as other related nature events like volcanic activity, higher sea levels and erosion, etc. all directly related to climate change. Thus, Carisealand works to ensure the possibility of an actual Caribbean years to come.



[Early Caribbean Digital Archive](#)

The early Caribbean digital archive is a publicly accessible archive that enables accessing, researching and contributing pre-twentieth-century Caribbean materials. The project's first goal is digitalization of literary history pertaining to the topics of enslaved, Creole, indigenous and colonized peoples. It encourages its users to use the archive as an educational tool to explore further into the colonized education we receive. The project's website is divided into three sections: archive, classroom, and exhibits. The archive includes but is not limited to materials relating to Obeah narratives and early Caribbean slave narratives, etc. The Classroom section of the webpage, dedicates its efforts to aid students, teachers and researchers into finding early Caribbean materials and it even includes sample syllabi, assignment/projects and research guides. Similar to other projects, this work aids the evolution of an educational transformation that parts ways from coloniality and ensures a decolonial state of mind that could ensure social and economic development. Finally, the project utilizes an exhibition format with various collections exploring the topics of natural history, Obeah, and music. This project is important because it aims to decolonize the archive relevant to the Caribbean in all its forms. Precisely by taking into focus the narratives and experiences of black Caribbean people, the projects shift its focus to those who have been forgotten and marginalized since the beginnings of colonization through enslavement. As a result, the project puts the black Caribbean in the front of the archive, complete decentralizing

which communities get attention and which communities are immortalized through their preservation in digital form.

Conclusion

Throughout the annotated bibliography we have explore Puerto Rico and the Caribbean as well as their relationship, similarities, and ties through the use of digital projects as research holders and actual examples. Knowing Digital Humanities is not yet a standardized field that is wildly accepted and engaged with within academia, this project aimed to incorporate DH works in hopes of answering questions regarding what a digital project is, what it could look like, and how to correctly identify one while addressing topics of coloniality, history and culture within the Caribbean context. In collaboration with these digital works, the bibliography was able to put some projects in conversation with each other, effectively demonstrating the Caribbean works within and for itself in an attempt to expand its knowledge inwards and outwards as well as preserve that which is being forgotten as new forms of knowledge take its place. In various occasions throughout the bibliography, the digital projects listed mentioned or referenced each other and stated their importance in developing other initiatives like for example Carisealand's syllabus sub-project coming from inspiration derived from #PuertoRicoSyllabus and their efforts to educate their communities as well as others outside of it.

Taking into consideration how these projects often inspire others to collaborate or initiate a project of their own, most of the works listed in this bibliography also encouraged its readers to add to their collections with their own materials, objects passed through generations that are seen with national value, enough to be included in an archive for other folk to see and take as part of their own

heritage. In a similar way, these projects also encouraged their audience to suggest or submit ideas to their collections actually engaging their publics to start creating digital work and, in the case, people contribute, the project's aims to expand the Caribbean knowledge are achieved while also expanding the interest for digital knowledge.

All of these projects served to change the Caribbean imaginary that proposes the islands as paradises made for vacationing and escaping the cold. In other words, the projects elaborated the complexities of living a Caribbean life and being a Caribbean person. The different galleries as well as the various archives showcased how similar and unique the Caribbean countries are by representing their cultures, clothing, architecture, and quotidian aspects of life that often reflect and encourage conversations of race and class. In general, the archives gave way to reflection around the Caribbean economic state and its impoverishment after years of coloniality.

Thanks to these digital projects we were able to see how people are discussing and conversing about topics of politics, history, decolonization, education, environmental challenges, relationships, and culture and how they all converge when talking about the Caribbean experience and its people.

(Re)Constructing Coyolxauhqui: Alternative Epistemologies and Decolonial Feminist Praxis in Global Digital Humanities

*(Re)Constructing Coyolxauhqui: Alternative
Epistemologies and Decolonial Feminist Praxis in
Global Digital Humanities*

KARINA OCAÑAS SUAREZ

“Coyolxauhqui, although typically described as female, is actually dually sexed and represents both male and female powers. She is killed by her warrior brother for attempting to usurp their mother’s power. After he dismembers her he throws her body parts up into the sky, and she becomes the moon. The reassembled and reconstructed body of Coyolxauhqui is reconstituted and reimagined beyond the gender binary as the quintessential post-borderlands subject.”

–T. Jackie Cuevas, Post-Borderlandia:

Chicana Literature and Gender Variant Critique

The figure of Coyolxauhqui has long been a conduit for theorizing the Chicana subject in the borderlands. Coyolxauhqui—Aztec moon deity, child of the Earth goddess/mother Coatlicue, and sibling of the god of war Huitzilopochtli—provides an understanding of the self as a set of (re)constructed and (re)configured parts that are not legible through Western paradigms of knowledge. In this way, the image of a reassembled Coyolxauhqui (and, indeed, the labor of putting her back together) is analogous to decolonial feminist methodologies that take up marginalized epistemologies and knowledge bases as valid forms of knowing, being, and becoming in the world. As part of a queer Chicana theoretical framework, Coyolxauhqui offers an alternative to Western constructions of the gender binary. I argue, then, that the act of (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui—as a continual process of learning and unlearning—is useful to an overarching liberatory project in its attention to the multiplicity of the lived experiences (or configurations) of peoples on the margins of modernity/coloniality.

This annotated bibliography aims to illuminate the ever-shifting matrix of alternative feminist epistemologies that challenge systems of power in unique ways. The digital projects that I have gathered here address varying questions of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and other intersecting vectors of identity (or, alternatively, oppression) for equally varying liberatory pursuits. I have intentionally chosen projects that span a wide range of geo-historical foci, not to put forth a complete image but to trace various and inherently incomplete works along three ideological nodes: decoloniality, feminism, and intersectionality. In bringing these

projects together—theoretically and physically on the page—I aim to locate Coyolxauhqui in the digital. Further, I offer (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui as decolonial feminist praxis that both acknowledges marginalized epistemologies as valid forms of knowledge and facilitates epistemological hybridity for the purpose of liberation. Additionally, (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui along the three ideological nodes requires that we take up questions of place, space, and power to challenge, ultimately, the construction of ‘the human.’ As such, the praxis that I put forth here is useful only if it is always fundamentally committed to resisting all iterations of colonization and the violence that modernity/coloniality enacts against Black women and femmes.

(Re)constructing Coyolxauhqui, then, is intended to be a multivalent decolonizing tool that foregrounds legacies of resistance by validating and recentering marginalized voices and ways of knowing as they resist Western epistemologies. In the entries that follow, I trace plural paths of resistance to reveal where these paths converge, diverge, and/or transform—changes that are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive, though the latter would suggest that change is all the more necessary. I view the ten digital projects in this annotated bibliography as different, sometimes overlapping, parts of Coyolxauhqui that can be assembled in a variety of ways.

Broadly, the list of projects compiled here offers an entry point for visualizing the goals of the Global Digital Humanities theme/track within MSU’s Digital Humanities minor. As such, each project is included based on its engagement with globally diverse materials to “[e]xplain how power, positionality, access, oppression, or equity influence digital technologies, and are influenced by digital technologies, in global contexts” (Michigan State University). My hope is that, in bringing these projects together, we can generate new epistemologies and solidarities across difference. Each new configuration offers different insights, unveils previously unseen paths, and requests that all peoples resisting systems of oppression

be in conversation and community with each other. It is time to (re)construct.



Local Contexts

Local Contexts is a digital hub that focuses on recentering Indigenous data sovereignty and governance practices in relation to Indigenous data, cultural materials, and knowledge production. Of particular importance are the Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Biocultural (BC) labels and notices that illustrate a commitment to digital practices that foreground local epistemologies and community decision-making. Through their development of TK/BC labels and notices, the Indigenous Data Sovereignty Agreement, and involvement in various efforts to “develop an alternative model of cultural curatorial workflows” that center the voices and rights of local communities, Local Contexts is addressing the concerns of access, power, positionality, and ethical distribution/use of Indigenous data (“Reciprocal Curation Workflow”).

In this way, the goals of the Local Contexts project are aligned with that of the Global Digital Humanities theme, especially as they develop new digital technologies to aid Indigenous communities in reestablishing local cultural authority over their respective archival materials and data. The TK/BC labels and notices were created in collaboration with Indigenous communities in order to standardize the implementation and recognition of Indigenous data and

knowledge sovereignty. This is accomplished by using the labels and notices to “identify and clarify community-specific rules and responsibilities regarding access and future use of traditional knowledge” (“TK Labels”). In combination with the labor of reconfiguring the digital infrastructures of archives so as to reflect Indigenous epistemologies and governance practices, the TK/BC labels and notices reveal how digital technologies replicate and reify systems of oppression.

Thus, the project emphasizes how local knowledge (regardless of an Indigenous community’s geographical location) is inextricable from the data and cultural materials produced by that community. Moreover, Local Contexts stresses the importance of a multiplicity of epistemologies and community-based governance practices, an approach that is vital to dismantling the matrix of oppressive systems that stem from Western epistemologies. In asking us to align ourselves with this multiplicity of knowledge bases—and, indeed, in the process of bringing these epistemologies together on the project website—the project directors of Local Contexts are engaging in a (re)construction of archival narratives and notions of data ownership to accurately reflect Indigenous rights and lived experiences. As a multilingual open-access educational resource and collaborative space, Local Contexts emphasizes individual communities’ agency to adapt digital technologies for their needs.



Chicana Por Mi Raza

Chicana por mi Raza is a collective of “researchers and teachers who are committed to unearthing the lessons of Chicana feminist praxis.” The project is further defined as a “Digital Memory Collective,” or a digital repository with “grassroots” ideologies—which reveal themselves most readily in the collective’s dedication to honoring the rights of the local communities that they work with (“About”). The CMPR website offers multiple ways to interact with the archival materials that they have digitized; of particular importance are the visualizations of archival metadata that were created by members of the collective. The visualizations concretize a small sample of the multiplicity of lives and histories experienced by Chicaxs in order to locate them within broader geographical and/or historical contexts.

As such, this project is actively shifting away from dominant historical narratives that marginalize Chicaxs and mirror broader networks of oppression. In addition, the visualizations constitute a (re)construction (and, perhaps, deconstruction) of the institutionalized historical record as a means of recentring and reestablishing the validity of Chicax voices. *Chicana por mi Raza*, then, is a recovery project that addresses the questions of access, power, positionality, and equity posed by the Global Digital Humanities theme.

Another example of this (re)construction is in the project’s renaming from “Digital Memory Project and Archive” to better reflect the desires of the community. “Digital Memory Collective” not only carries the connotation of individual rights over materials presented on the website; it also emphasizes the overall importance of collective labor and care toward these materials to serve the communities from which they originated. As a specific instance of global digital humanities in context, *Chicana por mi Raza* provides a framework for engaging and digitizing physical archival materials while simultaneously foregrounding agency and the legitimacy of

Chicanxs' lived experiences—the multiplicity of knowledge bases which hint at my own path to (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui.



[Data Against Femicide](#)

The Data Against Femicide project is a digital resource created in collaboration between the Data + Feminism Lab out of MIT, Iniciativa Latinoamericana por los Datos Abiertos (ILDA), and Femicidio Uruguay. D'Ignazio, Fumega, and Suárez Val define their main objectives for this project as threefold: standardization of femicide data, development of digital tools to collect said data, and facilitation of international community and dialogue to combat femicide (“About”). The website offers an eight-week course (in Spanish, English, and Portuguese) on femicide data collection with an intersectional feminist theoretical framework. Though this course is not free, the project organizers recognize the reality of economic barriers and offer alternative means for accessing the course. In addition, users can access materials from previous Data Against Femicide events.

D'Ignazio et al. foreground the project as actively collecting, standardizing, and utilizing femicide data in pursuit of eliminating gender-based violence in a global context. As such, the approach of this digital project mirrors that of the Global Digital Humanities theme—the project organizers and those participating in the project's events are developing digital technologies informed by intersecting vectors of oppression that affect women in various geopolitical contexts. In using multiple languages and numerous avenues for users to interact with resources, Data Against Femicide anticipates (and thus acknowledges) the multiplicity of

epistemologies of its publics. In this way, the project is (re)constructing traditional data collection methods and technologies to honor the lived experiences of women and support activist efforts to dismantle the systems that perpetuate gender-based violence globally.

This digital project centers the lived experiences of BIWOC, who are systematically pushed to the margins of modernity/coloniality, thus engaging in what I have called (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui. The intersectional feminist perspective of Data Against Femicide is one that I would like to bring into my own digital project, particularly in its relation to a decolonial liberatory effort.



[Gender in Haiti: Unpacking the Masculinist Narrative of Power](#)

Crystal Felima et al.'s *Gender in Haiti* uses intersectional feminism to validate the lived experiences of Haitian women in the face of “political, social, structural, state, and hegemonic violence as well as its accompanying discriminations” (“Home”). The project engages with the *poto mitan*, or ‘center pillar,’ archetype that is forced upon Haitian women which subjugates them to marginality in national and global contexts. The website also offers critical approaches to Haitian women’s agency through analyses of the women’s rights movement, migration, and socioeconomic conditions in the country. To foreground Haitian women’s acts of resistance, this project is attuned to the multiplicity of vectors of oppression affecting women in Haiti.

As such, *Gender in Haiti* is an example of the Global Digital Humanities theme placed into a specific local context. Moreover,

the project also attends to the ways that globalization, in connection to modernity/coloniality, continues to adversely affect rural Haitian women's ability to access resources and take part in global discourse. In examining gender relations in Haiti, Felima et al. use digital technologies to address questions of positionality, access, power, and struggles for equity in a way that continuously centers the lived experiences of Haitian women.

Like Garcia Merchant's work in *Chicana Diasporic*, I identify Felima et al.'s work as global digital humanities in context. Gender in Haiti functions as a project of both recovery and interpretation underscored by the unique vulnerability of rural Haitian women in community, national, and global contexts. This act of (re)centering aligns the pursuits of the Gender in Haiti project with that of my own digital project, particularly in the shared attention to the multiplicity of experiences under modernity/coloniality and its hegemonic iterations.

Taller Electric Marronage

Taller Electric Marronage

Rooted in radical feminist ideologies, Electric Marronage focuses on locating “points across [the] escape matrix” in order to “abscond + reveal” as well as create futures that tether the collective to a decolonial ideology (“About”). The electricians of this digital project—the collective of curators, editors, and contributors to Electric Marronage—emphasize four rules of fugitivity as the crux of their work. The rules are escaping, stealing, feeling, and “whatever,” the last of which is connected to futurity in its emphasis on creating and acting in abundance (“rule 4: *whatever”).

Electric Marronage offers various spaces for its audiences to think through the rules of fugitivity, interact with others to engage our

decolonial potential, and act as witnesses to the varied work and lived experiences of people of color across equally varied contexts. Witnessing, in this configuration, is the decolonial feminist concept of recognizing acts of resistance and standing with oppressed peoples against the violence of colonization that demands (among other forms of violence) the dehumanization of all peoples of color, especially Black women and femmes.

This project emphasizes the importance of recentering alternative/othered epistemologies to the collective challenging of Western constructions of humanity, scholarship, and knowledge. The electricians of this project are actively asking their publics to acknowledge and take up new modes of fugitivity that continuously evolve alongside decolonial efforts. Electric Marronage also foregrounds the value of creative works as subversive endeavors; indeed, by encouraging community engagement in a global context, this project aligns itself with the Global Digital Humanities theme. Further, the applied rules of fugitivity act as digital technologies that reveal the power dynamics and oppressive systems affecting peoples on the margins of modernity/coloniality. As a collaborative, instructional, critical, and creative project, Electric Marronage is in a state of constant motion-change that reflects the pursuits of my own digital project.

Chicana Diasporic: A Nomadic Journey of the Activist Exiled

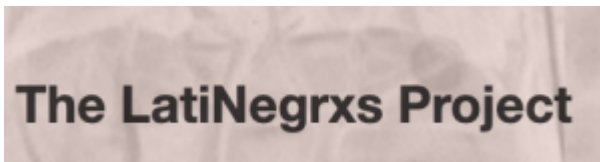
[Chicana Diasporic: A Nomadic Journey of the Activist Exiled](#)

Garcia Merchant's *Chicana Diasporic* is a Scalar research project that tracks the legacies of resistance of Chicana feminists in the 1970s as they converge/diverge with the Chicano Movement and

second-wave feminism. The project offers an interdisciplinary approach to the archival materials that it presents. Additionally, Garcia Merchant emphasizes the creation of the Chicana Caucus within the National Women's Political Caucus as "a need to create a cultural and political space to work, forced upon [Chicanas] as a result of their expulsion from two ideological communities because of gender (Chicano movement) and race (White Feminist movement)" ("Chicana Diasporic: An Introduction"). Through this expulsion, Garcia Merchant views the members of the Chicana Caucus as an ideological diasporic community, which is not to be conflated with the nonabstract processes of dispossession and diaspora of Black and Indigenous peoples.

The suggested navigation of the site parallels the movement of the Chicanas in this project—users are encouraged to embrace the nonlinear, random, and concurrent nature of Scalar visualizations. The goal of these layered journeys is to reflect "how a Chicana thinks—connecting everything to everything and everywhere else" ("On Navigating Chicana Style"). In this way, Garcia Merchant asks their publics to take up an alternative knowledge base that does not hinge on the linearity of a journey to acknowledge Chicana movement (physically and ideologically) as an act of resistance.

Chicana Diasporic, then, is an engagement with the Global Digital Humanities theme as a single plot point—to use Figueroa Vásquez et al.'s language—in the global escape matrix. Within this single point, however, there are multiple paths to coalition and liberation that are equally valid. It is here that I locate my own digital project, as well. The vision for (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui is one that acknowledges the extreme variability in our respective journeys.



The LatiNegrxs Project

The LatiNegrxs Project is a Tumblr-hosted blog that is dedicated to “promot[ing] the narratives and perspectives of LatiNegrxs worldwide.” The collective emphasizes their position as an “anti-oppression project” in pursuit of equity and liberation that foregrounds access, accountability, representation, and identity formation of Afro-Latinx peoples, LatiNegrxs, or “people who identify as racially Black and ethnically Latinx” (“Mission & Goals”). With the ability to reblog posts, respond to submissions, and answer ‘asks’ (i.e., questions submitted non/anonymously) from other Tumblr users, *The LatiNegrxs Project* is uniquely situated as a multilingual and multicultural digital archive and global memory collective that encourages a multiplicity of voices in community discussion.

It is through a continued emphasis on hybridity and multiplicity that allows *The LatiNegrxs Project* to embrace the extremely varied lived experiences of the African diasporas. Further, such an emphasis (in combination with the project’s goals and lines of questioning) mirrors the Global Digital Humanities theme by using digital technologies to draw attention to the multifaceted violence and oppressions that LatiNegrxs continue to resist and challenge today. Thus, this project offers a space to interact with individual histories, contemporary news and history-in-the-making, movement histories, opinion pieces, and more—all while centering traditionally marginalized voices and encouraging the development/creation/(re)construction of individual and collective epistemologies.

This (re)construction can be seen most readily in the project’s use of LatiNegrxs and LatiNegr@s as a racial-ethnic identity. The arroba/at sign, @, was originally implemented as an inclusive form of the binary gendered grammar system in Spanish. In recent years, however, the -x has risen in popularity as a gender-neutral ending. The incorporation of ‘LatiNegrxs’ into the project’s vocabulary is an

example of the project's ongoing (re)construction of knowledge in response to the individual and collective lived experiences of queer Afro-Latinx folks both in the US and in a global context.



[American Empire](#)

In *American Empire*, Andrea Ledesma traces the timeline of American imperialism through the lived experiences of the peoples of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Ledesma emphasizes that the personal histories featured in the project “represent[] the lives of the privileged few” but still “reveal how native peoples fashioned themselves as American citizens” (“American Subjects or Citizens?”). This digital archival exhibition offers a general historical contextualization of American imperialism and colonization, particularly in relation to “contemporary conversations on heritage, citizenship, racism, and globalization” (“American Empire”). The conversations that Ledesma cites in the quote above are reflected in the Global Digital Humanities theme, thus making *American Empire* an acceptable path for thinking through these questions/conversations.

Ledesma’s project situates Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines as the primary sites of investigation for the exhibition. This approach, as opposed to a US-centric point of departure, illuminates the various realities of those under American imperialist control as they (re)construct epistemologies and reclaim agency

in different ways. A collection of digitized archival photos and documents, *American Empire* reveals the multiplicity of lived experiences under American control. Ledesma’s attention to the roles of White saviorism and White supremacy in relation to imperialist policies is especially important as it unveils the need to acknowledge the role of race within the American imperialist project. Further, by citing the anti-imperialist work of Black activists, Ledesma also emphasizes the (re)construction of coalitions and communities against the multiple visages of racism.

In relation to my own project, I view *American Empire* as one of multiple points of departure for addressing the alternative epistemologies of peoples on the underside of modernity/coloniality. Additionally, Ledesma’s digital exhibition lays the groundwork for uncovering connections between American imperialist policies and the construction of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines as ‘exotic’ places in the American psyche.



[History of Survivance](#)

History of Survivance is a digital archival exhibition that focuses on the legacies of Indigenous communities in the Upper Midwest. This project asks its publics to sit with narratives that offer an alternative to the US-centric historical perspective that inaccurately “starts and ends with the colonization of the Upper Midwest by Europeans” (“Ancient Legacies”). As such, the project recenters the historically

marginalized voices of the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples in order to properly contextualize their relations with the US government. *History of Survivance* reestablishes the extremely long legacies of Native resistance, survivance (as opposed to the reactionary state of ‘survival’), and transformation in the face of land dispossession, genocide, forced assimilation, and other forms of American aggression.

In a local context, *History of Survivance* reveals the ways that the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples “negotiated the indigenous and Western worlds with grace” (“Colonization”). Negotiation, in this case, encompasses a wide array of actions taken by Indigenous communities to reclaim agency and reify their continued presence on their own land as the imposing hegemon insists on a narrative of near-extinction, racial inferiority, and unwarranted aggression against “defenseless White settlers” (“Colonial Narratives”). The project thus contextualizes these colonial narratives as incomplete, if not outright false. I locate *History of Survivance* as another exercise of global digital humanities in context—it uses digital technologies to discuss questions of positionality, access, race, religion, power, and oppression while simultaneously highlighting the alternative epistemologies and technologies developed by these Indigenous communities to address how these questions present themselves in a local context.

As the project traces narratives of survivance in the Upper Midwest, it exists within the larger matrix of resistance that I have tracked throughout this annotated bibliography as (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui. *History of Survivance* thus validates the lived experiences of the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples, particularly as individuals and communities continuously (re)construct their paths of resistance against concurrently evolving Euro-American (or, ‘Western’) domination.

Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise
(WKO)

Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise (WKO)

WKO is a digital open-access dossier that takes a global approach to “social transformation” that is not hindered by language, geographical, or historical boundaries because “the future can no longer be imagined from one single and overarching perspective and its internal diversity.” As such, WKO acts as a site of convergence of multiple epistemologies that exist as alternatives to Western configurations of knowledge. This project recognizes the importance of global discussions of positionality, access, power, and social and academic legitimacy to creating the titular world and knowledges otherwise. The Global Digital Humanities theme thus appears throughout the entirety of the WKO project, though it is extremely evident in the three-part third volume of Dossier 1: “Decolonizing the Digital/Digital Decolonization.”

This three-part volume is particularly conducive to understanding the overlapping networks of colonization and its subsequent structures as they affect new digital technologies. The volume also addresses the possibilities for alternative futures that are unearthed when traditionally marginalized epistemologies influence digital technologies and their implementations. The Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise project, as a whole, considers these alternative epistemologies as inextricable from their geohistorical locations—thus concretizing the dual significance of local and global contexts to envisioning worlds otherwise.

In their attunement to a multilingual global public, the coordinators of this web dossier acknowledge that futurity and liberation cannot be completely identified within Western epistemologies. Indeed, the project coordinators emphasize their dedication to giving a platform to arguments from “different local histories and therefore inserted in different traditions.” As it repeatedly emphasizes a multiplicity of worlds and knowledges otherwise, the WKO project is aligned to my own pursuits for (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui.

Conclusion

As I have outlined in this annotated bibliography, the threads of decoloniality, feminism, and intersectionality can be weaved into different configurations for different liberatory pursuits. (Re)constructing Coyolxauhqui, then, is the continual process of weaving and unweaving our collective decolonial feminist epistemologies to acknowledge the validity and multivalence of traditionally marginalized peoples' lived experiences. The multiplicity and hybridity of epistemologies that is afforded to us through (re)construction is extremely important to maintaining a multiplicity of voices as these epistemologies inevitably continue to converge/diverge/transform in unpredictable ways.

By foregrounding the varying legacies of resistance that can be tracked within communities from different local contexts, the ten projects above engage the concept of (re)constructing Coyolxauhqui. Further, each project also engages the Global Digital Humanities theme—as outlined by MSU's learning goals for the Digital Humanities Minor optional track—in that they each attend to questions of power, positionality, access, and other theoretical and physical sites of oppression as related to digital technologies. Though each project approaches these questions differently, locating them as global digital humanities projects in context unveils the similarities (and differences) in their respective goals and points of departure.

I have intentionally gathered projects that utilize a multiplicity of digital technologies to similarly unveil the benefits/drawbacks of individual methodologies in combination with their respective technologies. My hope, ultimately, is to highlight the opportunity for new sites of possibility that exists when we bring these projects and their methodologies, technologies, and epistemologies into contact with one another. I emphasize, as well, the importance of vetting new epistemological configurations against their theoretical lineages to ensure that we do not lose sight of collective liberation

from colonization in its various forms. Pinpointing the interstices of various digital projects that recover, interpret, or otherwise interact with global legacies of resistance is only the first step towards this goal.

(Re)constructing Coyolxauhqui is a tool with which we can begin to create bridges, coalitions, and community across these interstices. In fact, the possibility for an ever-changing network of recentered epistemologies that challenge Western paradigms has always already existed—it is up to us to shift our own understandings of knowledge to lift the veil and locate Coyolxauhqui. Such an endeavor, of course, begins with acknowledging and validating the multiplicity of epistemologies and narratives of being in the world. By assembling and reassembling Coyolxauhqui—in the context of this annotated bibliography, this involves engaging with the ten digital projects and attending to the intertextualities between any number of them—we are effectively engaging in an act of knowledge remixing to uncover alternative liberatory paths and futures.

Lessons from Global, Pre-Modern, Jewish Digital Humanities

*Lessons from Global, Pre-Modern, Jewish Digital
Humanities*

DOROTHY KIM



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here: [https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/
makingsensedh/?p=154#oembed-1](https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=154#oembed-1)

Presentation at Michigan State University's Global Digital Humanities Symposium, April 2016 (<http://msudh.github.io/globaldh2016>). Abstract/Description for presentation: In Antoinette Burton's collection *Archive Stories: Facts, Fiction, and the Writing of History*, she writes that "all archives are figured" and that the underlying issue at stake in the volume is that "objectivity associated with the traditional archive pose a challenge which must be met in part by telling stories about its provenance, its histories, its effect on its users, and above all, its power to shape all the narratives which are to be 'found' there." My talk today will consider how archive stories work within a global, pre-modern Jewish digital humanities ecosystem. In particular, if the pre-modern, global Jewish diaspora functions as a minority culture globally, what are the stakes and the lessons that can be gleaned with fixed

documentary archives in creating a global historical past? How do minority histories get figured and how does working in a pre-modern global past help show both the affordances and pitfalls of “figuring” a polyvocal, multicultural global past? How does the Anglo-centric bent of contemporary digital humanities help and/or hinder the multicultural, multicultural, multi-directional, and multilingual qualities of these archives? In particular, I will discuss what the Cairo Genizah project has done to open up issues related to pre-modern global African histories—in conjunction with the manuscript archives of Mali and the deep manuscript histories and continuous Ge’ez archives of Ethiopia.

Multilingualism, Translation, Directionality in Global Medieval Digital Humanities

*Multilingualism, Translation, Directionality in
Global Medieval Digital Humanities*

LYNN RAMSEY



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from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: [https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/
makingsensedh/?p=156#oembed-1](https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=156#oembed-1)

This panel explores multinational digital humanities projects and the questions posed by language and translation. The panelist includes Zrinka Stahuljak ([UCLA](#) Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies), Roger Martinez-Davila (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs), David Michelson (Vanderbilt University) and Solomon Gebreyes Beyene (University of Hamburg), and David Joseph Wrisley (New York University, Abu Dhabi).

Global Digital Projects

Global Digital Projects

JULIAN CHAMBLISS


Global + Digital

Digital Humanities continues to be a space where the challenge of understanding the constructed nature of our global reality is made clear. Digital projects offer an opportunity to investigate, record, and recontextualize the forces that shape global culture. The pathways to accomplish these goals vary, and the methodological toolkit offered by digital humanities both stimulates conversations and challenges comprehension for students, faculty, and the public. The projects on display here offers a way to understand the diverse perspective that can manifest critical digital humanities approach concerned with the global, broadly defined.



[Apartheid Heritage](#)

Apartheid Heritages: A Spatial History of South Africa's Township's website is part of a larger analogue and digital book project currently under development by Dr. Angel David Nieves. This "book" is in the very early phases of discussion and development with a university press.

The logo features the text "KIINAWIN KAWINDOMOWIN" on the top line and "STORY NATIONS" on the bottom line, both in a white, serif, all-caps font. The text is centered against a dark green background that has a subtle gradient from top to bottom.

KIINAWIN KAWINDOMOWIN STORY NATIONS

[Kiinawin Kawindomowin Story Nations](#)

The stories of Canada's founding and future have often drowned out those of Indigenous nations; through our presentation of a missionary's diary, we hope to make visible and audible the stories of people that he met on Ojibwe land in 1898, with the help of people we met when visiting there in the twenty-first century.

Kiinawin Kawindomowin Story Nations is a digital storytelling collaboration based in Toronto, on the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. This land has long been governed by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. The website remediates the diary of a Toronto missionary-journalist named Frederick H. Du Vernet, who visited the Rainy River Ojibwe of Treaty 3 territory in the summer of 1898. Professor Pamela Klassen and a team of students from the University of Toronto work in consultation with staff, Elders, and community members of the Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre of the Rainy River First Nations, located in Northwestern Ontario. Together, we have developed a digital edition of Du Vernet's diary that you can read and listen to. The diary, and now the website, documents Ojibwe responses to Christianity through multimedia storytelling that spans the early Canadian colonial expansion of Treaty 3 territory into the present.

Mapping Islamophobia

[Mapping Islamophobia](#)

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hostility are present in American public life as never before. It may be difficult for those outside of Muslim communities to appreciate how, over time, experience of Islamophobia affects the way that American Muslims participate—or not—in public life in ways that others may take for granted. From September 2001 through today, American Muslims have faced incredible pressure to prove “Americanness,” making it more and more difficult to participate in public debates about the public good in free and voluntary terms. Many of us have read or heard about Islamophobic incidents. One central aim of this project is to present in visual terms how these incidents accumulate over time to create certain conditions of public life for American Muslims.

A key premise guiding our work is that every event or incident growing out of Islamophobic attitudes—including seemingly innocuous incidents of anti-Muslim graffiti and offhand comments, vandalism, verbal and physical assault, employment and other forms of discrimination, anti-Muslim protests and public campaigns, local ordinances and state-level legislation targeting Muslim communities in some way, and political rhetoric at the local, state, and national level—creates conditions inimical to free and voluntary participation in public life. For this reason we include a significant range of incidents and events.

Crucially, our site also includes data on American Muslim participation in public life. We have gathered information about a wide range of activities, covering a variety of community outreach activities, interfaith work, political outreach, and political activities. When setting data on Islamophobia and the nature of American Muslim participation in public life side by side, as this site does, it is easy to see the significant connection between the two. Providing

such an opportunity to meditate on the relationship between hate and public participation is another central aim of this project. It is here that we offer a small measure of analysis.

PART III

COMMUNITY AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES

“That’s it, man! Game over, man! Game over!”

— Hicks

The meaning of community in the context of digital humanities is not without complication. Not surprisingly, the dynamic range of disciplinary conversations that inform the formation of digital humanities means a clear focal point has not developed. As manifestations of community, digital can mean bringing together humanities scholars interested in technology. These activities have been a central edifice that allows the public to know that “Digital Humanities” exists and understand some of its implications. Yet, the debates around defining digital humanities have given rise to several narratives, some critical of the term, some dubious about the field, and others concerned that an emphasis on “digital humanities” all too easily pushes the humanities to the boundaries of critical discussions. The early discussions about methodology linked to digital humanities mean the landscape around “community” can be challenging to navigate. In truth, as a field, Digital Humanities is old enough at this point that differing narrative born from theoretical frameworks rooted in particular areas of inquiry provides a kind of coherence that is clear to participants in those siloed conversations, but difficult for scholars outside to understand. Still, a consideration of community in digital humanities opens the door to a way of grouping practice and understanding aims that is worth considering. Indeed, digital humanities as a public practice has always provided an enticing possibility for greater engagement. Are we using digital tools to

understand better how communities came to be? Are we using a digital tool better to define the scope and relationship within particular communities? Are we concerned with communities of practice or communities created by particular cultural or political forces?

This section exploring community and digital humanities offers an important set of readings that calls attention to the different ways community can manifest in the context of digital humanities. This section opens with a conversation with Dr. Kathleen Fitzpatrick exploring the question of community in digital humanities. Continuing to think about community in digital spaces, Nicole Huff's "Frankenstein's Digital Monster: An Exploration of Community-Centered Digital Humanities Projects in Horror, Black Studies, and Gender Studies" and Melanie N. Rodriguez Vazquez's "Exploring Race, Culture and Identity in Caribbean and African Diaspora" offer examinations of digital projects that shed light on communities of practice. In contrast, Barry Jason Mauer & John Vanecek's "Making Repulsive Monuments" highlights the ways collective action are memorialized. John Monberg's "Building Urban Publics" calls attention to communities of practice shaping our understanding of urbanization. This section ends with a consideration of the SpeakOut! Project by Ronald Dumavor. His case study approach highlights how "community-engaged projects –which are based on criminal justice and literacy" can be understood within a digital humanities framework.

Kathleen Fitzpatrick on Public Digital Humanities

JULIAN CHAMBLISS

This conversation was originally published in [Reframing Digital Humanities: Conversations with Digital Humanists](#) (2021). The conversation is between Dr. Julian Chambliss and Dr. Kathleen Fitzpatrick.

One of my earliest conversations was with [Dr. Kathleen Fitzpatrick](#). Dr. Fitzpatrick is the Director of Digital Humanities and Professor of English at Michigan State University. Prior to assuming this role in 2017, she served as Associate Executive Director and Director of Scholarly Communication of the Modern Language Association. In addition, she was Managing Editor of PMLA and other MLA publications. During that time, she also held an appointment as a Visiting Research Professor of English at NYU. She is the author of *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy* (NYU Press, 2011), *The Anxiety of Obsolescence: The American Novel in the Age of Television* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2006) and *Generous Think: The University and Public Good* (John Hopkinson University Press, 2019). She is project director of [Humanities Commons](#), an open-access, open-source network serving more than 10,000 scholars and practitioners in the humanities. In our discussion, Dr. Fitzpatrick outlined why public humanities practice matters and we discuss how digital praxis can help academics engage with the public.

Keywords

The Conversation

Chambliss: Yeah. This season of Reframing History is all about Digital History. And one of the standard questions I'm planning to ask everybody, regardless of who they are, is how do you define digital humanities?

Fitzpatrick: I define digital humanities as that work that gets done in the overlap of the Venn diagram between humanities and technology. And that happens in a lot of different ways. On one hand, it can be using technological tools to do work of the kind that gets done in the humanities, asking the kinds of questions, whether they're historical or literary, or about art history, or what have you. But using computational tools that do the processing of the data and that assist the researcher in the findings that come out of that work. Or, on the other hand, it can be asking more traditional humanities-oriented questions about the computing technologies that we're working with. So it can include digital media studies and questions about the ways that social media are changing how we interact and communicate with one another and so forth. My sense of digital humanities is that it's super broad and that it's a constantly shifting and changing field as both the tools shift and the questions shift, and we start to think about new ways of approaching the kinds of interests that the humanities has always had.

Chambliss: Right. Well, that's a great answer, and that gets me to do what I should have done which is start out by being like, you are Director of digital humanities at Michigan State University.

Fitzpatrick: Yeah. I've got that definition ready to go when I need it.

Chambliss: You have that definition ready to go, and I'm really impressed. But that actually also touches on my second question for you. I know that when we talk about you, when we look you up on

the Internet and you're one of the... You reach a certain status where you have a Wikipedia entry. Did you know that?

Fitzpatrick: I did know that. I knew it because ... how did this come up? Maybe I googled myself or something like this and it came up as one of those funky little cards, and it had my full birth date on there, and that really kind of freaked me out a little bit.

Chambliss: Yeah. I have a Wikipedia entry, too, so it's not ... It's a thing. I feel like you reached a certain level getting a Wikipedia entry, like, wow, I have a Wikipedia entry. But your work in the humanities has a really long history, really going back to that earliest period of the work. And one of the things that I think that characterizes a lot of the work that you do is around this idea of community.

Chambliss: What do you think is at stake when academics create online communities?

Fitzpatrick: That is a really interesting question. And I came to this business of thinking about community and community spaces online in a kind of backward way. My original plan was to revolutionize scholarly publishing and to really think about new ways of disseminating articles and monographs online and full open access distribution and discussion around that work. And it really quickly became apparent to me that the thing that we were missing was not the tools to make that work or to disseminate that work. The things that we were missing were the people who needed to be present and willing to work in that way in order for work to get transformed that way.

It became really clear that what we needed to focus on was building a community that wanted to work together online, that had some stake in the kinds of conversations that they were able to have in that kind of space. As opposed to the kinds of things that they were able to do in print through journals, in books and so forth. I think part of what's at stake for scholars in participating in and developing these kinds of online communities is the potential to open their work up in ways that make it more visible to people outside their immediate community of practice. And that can make

it more approachable and accessible to people who might not necessarily recognize right off the bat. They might not assume that they're really interested in this particular kind of project, but might come to it through some roundabout way that leads them into really serious discussions of the kinds of work that we do as scholars.

I think part of what's at stake is making scholarly work more focal in mainstream conversations about really serious issues that we're facing. Yeah.

Chambliss: That is interesting because your new book is called *Generous Thinking, The University and the Public Good*. And like your previous book, this one has been open for a while for public review. Which means you have a manuscript out there, it's gone off to the publisher now and it's coming out. You just had a reading tour talk on campus here. But in that book, and I read the, there's an online version, you talk a lot about this idea of public intellectualism. What I would describe as public intellectualism, and the difficulties that academics have with that whole process. And I actually find this really interesting because I thought about this a lot in my own context. And I was really interested in that whole chapter, but I really love you talk about how maybe, and I think about this in my own context. I think that maybe one of the things that's helpful for the new humanities. One thing that's helpful about the new humanities for academics is that it creates these structures where the academic part is still there, but it's also still, it gets to be public. Which is a really complicated thing, and it runs into these really big problems with open access, which I know you also talk a lot about. Can you walk people through your vision that you kind of talk about in terms of that public fear, that digital humanities fear and the synergy that's possible there?

Fitzpatrick: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I will do my best in walking through this. One of the things that we've seen in recent years, and this goes back really to the '80s and the beginning of the Reagan Revolution in the United States is a real divide in public sentiment around higher education and what its purposes are, how it should be delivered, how it should be paid for and so forth. And we're

now at a real crisis point, in which public universities are receiving minuscule support from the public for providing education. Public universities are required to do increasing sorts of philanthropic fundraising in order to maintain the services that they provide. And a lot of that happens because the public doesn't recognize the publicness of public education, right?

There is this sense in which education has become a private good, right? Rather than a public service. And part of my argument in *Generous Thinking* is that if we're going to turn that around, if we're going to turn to the public and say, in fact these institutions are here for you and we are building strong communities and we are working toward a larger sense of public good, than what is just happening amongst us on campus, we really have to start making the work that we're doing on campus, publicly visible, publicly accessible. It has to be out there and it has to find purchase within, purchase being a bad metaphor, but it has to find...

Chambliss: Purchase in the third definition.

Fitzpatrick: Yeah, right. Exactly, a toe-hold, or some kind of grasp within the...

Chambliss: Traction.

Fitzpatrick: Traction, that's a much better word. Thank you. Traction within the public who can look at the work that we're doing and say that, I understand, that is worth supporting. Right?

I make the argument in *Generous Thinking* that there are some really key aspects to the ways that scholars work now that have to be made more public in order for this to come about. Open access as part of this, right? Nobody can care about your work if they can't get ahold of it, right? If it's in a journal that's only in top tier research libraries, nobody's going to find it. I mean nobody who doesn't have access to those kinds of institutions already.

Chambliss: Right. Just as a way of definition or clarification for people who might not be aware. When we say open access, we mean a scholarship that is available in a free and open digital repository.

Fitzpatrick: Absolutely.

Chambliss: And they can look at several different ways, but

probably the one that was most easily findable on the web is Academic Commons associated with either university or learning institution or some kind of professional organization.

Fitzpatrick: Absolutely.

Chambliss: Many colleges have Academic Commons and it's sometimes really complicated what can go in there. But what it is it's basically the work that has been published by the people who are on faculty. Whatever status it could be, talk about tenured faculty, whatever. Staff, that they are put there deliberately so it can be findable.

Fitzpatrick: Absolutely.

Chambliss: Many of these Commons are either through some sort of third party, or they're through some sort of like specially created apparatus. It depends on the institution. My previous institution paid something called BP press, they created our Academic Commons. But other larger institutions, state institutions tend to use, they throw out of the box or open source meaning they're free to use to create their own content.

Fitzpatrick: Yeah, so there are institutional repositories like that that are usually hosted by libraries, right? Where the faculty and staff, and sometimes students as well, at the institution can deposit their work and have it preserved and have it findable on the web and have it freely accessible to anyone who wants to download and read it. There were also other routes to open access. Publications that are freely available and open on the web that are the official publication, right? Rather than, the version that gets deposited in the institutional repository. Like Open Library of the Humanities has a whole series of open access journals that are pretty fantastic. But again, the whole key to that is just making the stuff findable and accessible and free out there so that people can read it and care about it. That's one I think of this business of getting academic work visible and usable and cared about by broader publics than just those people who are already on campus.

But another part is really thinking about, about the register in which that work gets done. Right now, scholars write for each other

and they write it in a particular kind of language that often closes other people out of a conversation, right? The more densely theoretical or critically rigorous, sometimes it becomes impossible for anyone who's not already indoctrinated into this particular kind of investigation to participate. It becomes really important, especially today, for scholars to think about publishing in a range of different forms.

We want to have these insider conversations amongst ourselves. I think it's still really important, this is how fields get advanced. But at the same time, we need to be able to give that elevator pitch or, right? Write the op-ed that tells people why this kind of research in a university is important. Why it's not just insiders kind of talking about things that don't really matter in the real world. Because all of the work that we're doing does have real world consequences. We've just got to make the translation in a way to make clear what that importance is some of the time.

Chambliss: Yeah. One of the things that's really interesting, you talked about mainstreaming academic information and the complexities associated with that, and I have a lot of experience with this particular question in part because I do comics, right? Until people actually know what they are, right? My dissertation is on the gilded age of progressive era planning. No one cares about that. They care about the implications of it if I explain it a certain way. But if I just say, well yeah I wrote about the gilded age of progressive era planning, they're like okay. And so what I once explained to a student is that a lot of my work is either complicating what people think is simple or simplifying what people think is complicated.

Fitzpatrick: Exactly. Right.

Chambliss: Whenever I talk about comic books, they're always like isn't it a little bit more complicated than that? But I also know that when I was reading your, but talking about mainstream complaints that I heard, and I'm sure you've heard it too. If I talk to them for an hour, they shorten to 30 seconds and totally miss my point. Which I

think lends itself towards this question. Like that's why you need to get out there and say yourself.

Fitzpatrick: Yes. Exactly, exactly. Rather than having the reporter between you and the public, right? Being able to make that point yourself.

Chambliss: Right. But I think the question, I think this will be an important question for a lot of academics, is how do you position this process, and it is a process.

Fitzpatrick: No. Totally, totally.

Chambliss: If you look at some of the things that happened over the last few years, I'm thinking particular African-American intellectual history society, they have a really strong, the people involved they have a really strong narrative about why would they do is important and how it fits within the broader process of being an academic. And they make a very particular argument, that the thing that you do here are a step on to this other thing that you're going to do as an academic. But that's primarily historians who I will often argue have a really long history of being in public square.

Fitzpatrick: Yeah, absolutely.

Chambliss: For other people doing things that are not necessarily quite so accessible, despite how you might talk about it, history is still something they know what it is. How do the other people who are involved in works of the humanities... Is this something that humanities has a special ability to do? Or is this like a broader process that every discipline can be involved in? Like this is I think a really important question.

Fitzpatrick: I think that at least certain fields within the humanities have a special facility with this kind of movement between different forms of discussion. As you say, sort of making things that seem simple, more complex. But also making things that seem really complex, clear, right? It's part of the work we do in the classroom all the time is making that shift in different registers of the ways that we're approaching something. But I think this happens in a lot of different places. Scientists who are doing really complex, high-end theoretical work have to be able to translate that work

into something comprehensible for grant applications, for instance. In order to make clear the importance of the work they're doing and its implications.

And there are also a host of scientific publications that are public facing, right? Scientists I think are getting more and more practice in this process of taking work that would be otherwise impenetrable and making it yet clear for the public. I think humanists in certain ways assume that everybody ought to understand what it is that we're doing. And I think we at times, even though it seems like we ought to have a particular facility with speaking to a broad culture, we need more practice at this. It's not something we're trained to do in grad school for instance.

You know, and so I'm thinking about, I mean you were talking about how historians have a long history in the public square, right? Public history has been a thing for a long time.

And there have been battles around it, right? Like trying to get it taken seriously. And is this really history or is this advocacy or you know, something else entirely. I think there is a perception that something like public literary criticism doesn't exist, right? That this is that scholars don't write for the public when they're in literature fields. And in fact, I think first of all, it's not true. But secondly, it grows out of a, there's a fascinating argument by Gerald Graff about this and the history of the profession that he wrote that looks at this early 20th century moment of divide between sort of full logically oriented scholars in literature departments and critics. And critics were public facing and they were really thinking about ways of helping the public read and to figure out what to read and interpret the things that they were reading.

And that was seen at that time in the early 20th century as not being sufficiently serious. Right? For the field to have a place on campus. If it was going to have a place on campus, it had to become scientific. And so there's been a sort of pushing away of that public facing mode for a very long time. It's something that we really desperately need to recuperate and I think we're finding really interesting projects that are doing that recuperation right now. If

you look at some of the journals like the Los Angeles Review of Books, like Public Books, there are lots of academic projects right now that are really attempting to enter the public sphere and thinking about criticism of the kind that might once have been rejected.

Chambliss: Yeah, that's a really important point. And it brings me to like my last question for you because as a faculty member here at MSU, you actually have a title and you're Director of Digital Humanities at MSU, which I want to just say that we're in the Matrix lab here at MSU which personally to me is very exciting. It was awesome but it's also a place that I think is in a unique position in terms of both a burden and blessing associated with that. What does the DH look like here? It becomes a sort of like a benchmark around how we'll look everywhere.

Fitzpatrick: Absolutely.

Chambliss: So as Director, what's it look like here?

Fitzpatrick: That's a really interesting question you should ask me. You know, it looks complex. Matrix is one of many DH related centers and labs and programs and units and initiatives on campus and DH at MSU, the thing that I am director of is a sort of federation of all of those different things that are happening on campus. Trying to get them to share resources, work together, think about collaborations and really make the full breadth of what's happening here on campus, which is really quite extraordinary, known. Matrix is perhaps, the most nationally and internationally visible face of DH at MSU, but there's also the digital humanities and literary cognition lab in the English department. There's WIDE, which is in the writing rhetoric and American culture department.

Fitzpatrick: And I always forget the new acronym for WIDE. I was writing in digital environments originally, and now it's writing interaction and digital experience is what it is now.

There is, as you know, Cedar the Consortium for-

Chambliss: Critical diversity in a digital age.

Fitzpatrick: Thank you.

Chambliss: I'm actually in that one.

Fitzpatrick: Yes, you are. And there are more things happening besides, and so we really want to be able to make the full spectrum of everything that's happening here on campus known to make it much more visible and to really think about where we might build some bridges across these various entities to think about how we can we can work together on what DH might become here. One of the key things that I think MSU has going for it within this world of DH is that it is so publicly focused, right? That being the prototype for the Land Grant College in the United States, MSU has had this long standing, very public focused mission.

And so we're able to take DH research and think about how it can serve communities. Think about how it can build better connections across areas within Michigan and beyond. And that I think is really quite extraordinary. We're also thinking globally. A lot of the work that's happening here at Matrix and then of course our annual global digital humanities symposium are really attempting to think about how the work that we're doing with these new technologies is connecting areas that are able to work in collaboration and learn from one another far better than in the past.

Chambliss: Yeah. Well it's really exciting. I'm always thinking about all the things that are happening here at MSU. I always, like I can say, I always try to keep these conversations short, but as a way of exiting, is there something that you think people should know that they don't know that you want them to know?

Fitzpatrick: I think the one thing that we didn't really touch on today that I would like to put in a plug for, if that's all right is humanities commons, which is now since I'm project director on humanities commons. It's affiliated with MSU and we're really thinking about the next phases of the project's development, right? Humanities commons is one of these sort of multi-institutional, multidisciplinary repositories and social networks that brings together scholars, students, practitioners from all across the humanities to share their work and communicate with one another. It's fully not for profit. It's directed by scholars and it's growing quite rapidly. We've got 15,000 members now and are really looking

at ways that the network can develop in order to facilitate better engagement within our fields.

Chambliss: Awesome. That's great. Well, thank you for taking the time to talk with me.

Fitzpatrick: Thank you.

Frankenstein's Digital Monster: An Exploration of Community-Centered Digital Humanities Projects in Horror, Black Studies, and Gender Studies

*An Exploration of Community-Centered Digital
Humanities Projects in Horror, Black Studies, and
Gender Studies*

NICOLE HUFF

With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God!

– Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818)

As someone invested in horror personally and academically, it seems fitting to use a Frankenstein analogy to the approach of this annotated bibliography and its contribution to both my project goals as well as to the understanding of community engagement in Digital Humanities. Like Victor Frankenstein, I have carefully chosen the features (projects) included in this annotated bibliography to create a unified body. Now, I seek to give life to this body. To animate my monster, I have included appendages that address the learning goals of the Digital Humanities minor with a focus on the theme/track of Community and Digital Humanities.

The major learning goals of the Community and Digital Humanities track at Michigan State University (MSU) is that a digital project must engage in culturally and socially responsible practices in community engagement and that the project must use Digital Humanities methods and practices to make a positive difference in a community (“Undergraduate Minor”). Thus, each project included in this bibliography utilizes Digital Humanities tools such as digitizing archives, blogging, and podcasting to ethically engage with particular communities and to make a positive impact on those communities. Further, the projects chosen all aim to create a space for marginalized people to come together and share thoughts and ideas as well as to provide open access to materials that may

traditionally be blocked by paywalls or institutional access requirements. These projects each work to pull marginalized groups of people out of erasure using a digital platform, which also allows the creators to engage directly with the community they have created their projects for. While these projects all fit within the theme of Community and Digital Humanities, they also provide further exploration on how the stitching together of the digital and the humanities provides room for cross disciplinary and transdisciplinary work to be done.

The specific projects chosen for this bibliography are centered on a few topics that allow them to fit the Community and Digital Humanities theme and address its learning goals. The disciplinary topics engaged with in these projects include Black studies, horror studies, horror fandom, queer studies, film studies, and women's studies. These disciplines serve as the appendages to my own monster: a bibliographic website showcasing Black women and Black queer folks in horror. Each of these projects contains a particular method, style, or user interface that I find conducive to the creation of my project. By exploring these projects and focusing on how they engage with communities, I have picked out methods and approaches that I think are particularly helpful for assuring that my own future project also fits the theme of Community and Digital Humanities through community-driven digital practices and methods. While the first iteration of my project will be mostly archival in nature, I aim to develop it into a transdisciplinary space for discourse between those within and outside of academia as well as to emphasize open access to materials as many of the projects I have included in this list have done. Thus, the many appendages I have selected from queer, horror, Black history, and feminist digital bodies are sewn together to breathe life into my future monster by providing a blueprint for community-engaged Digital Humanities work.

BLACK PERSPECTIVES

Black Perspectives

This project serves as a medium for scholars who wish to share research on Black culture, history, and thought. When this project began it only had about twenty regular contributors but has grown to include fifty regular contributors plus guest authors. I chose this project as it has very specific requirements for submitting blog posts and roundtable ideas that emphasize the medium being for a general audience. In other words, it requires that its contributors use “plain language” or to provide definitions for concepts and ideas that a general audience may not be familiar with. For the purposes of my own project, I find this requirement for “plain language” a very useful model as I’d like to make my project suitable for a more general audience that would include Black fans and enthusiasts of horror as well as horror studies, queer studies, and feminist studies scholars.

Another reason I chose to include this project is because it has an established system and process for managing contributions. Specifically, the established and consistent contributors that are listed as “regulars” create a systematic way to keep contributions flowing and to create a peer editing system that can engage the contributors and editors. While this project’s goals of disseminating Black thought in a digestible way for a wide array of people mirrors my own similar goals, it should be noted that all of the listed regular contributors are scholars associated with an institution, which seems somewhat counter-productive for a medium targeting general audiences. Although this model for regular contributors seems like a significant model for maintaining constant content, I would like to expand to include those from the public I am targeting that do this work outside of the academy to contribute blog posts to my own project. Overall, I find this digital project helpful in its system for maintaining content and for its specific requirements for that content to be more public-facing

writing. Further, this project befits the Community and Digital Humanities principles and goals by using a digital platform to disseminate Black thought in “plain language,” which makes a positive impact on the Black community by providing access to thoughts and ideas that are normally shared within the walls of institutions.



[Graveyard Shift Sisters: Purging the Black Female Horror Fan from the Margins](#)

Blackwell states in a more recent update to their site that it now, “[O]perates as more of an archive of written work/scholarship on Black women in the horror (and sometimes science fiction) genre” (Blackwell). However, the site began as a blog to create space for Black women in horror including fans, scholars, and creators. Currently, this site doesn’t have any stated regular contributors other than Blackwell, but it appears that these blog posts engage with other scholars and fans from the field in interviews as well as guest postings. The premise of this project echoes my own as I would like to create a space for scholars and enthusiasts to discuss Black women and Black queer folks in the horror genre. Thus, one part of this project that I’d like to emulate would be the content of the blog posts by directly engaging both scholars and enthusiasts in interviews and in guest-spot postings. However, I’d like this to be a peer reviewed process which would involve having more than just me as the sole contributor to the site’s content. Further, I’d like to take up the blog postings as a secondary or even tertiary step in the building of my site as it would build off some of the bibliographic material that will be foundational to the project.

Another aspect of this project that contributes to the understanding of how I will frame my own project is the evolution of it. The evolution from a blog for discussion on Black women in horror to an archive of scholarly work on Black women in horror seems similar to my own plan in building out my website. However, I believe my website will start as more of an archive before it begins engaging with direct scholarship as a means for keeping the project accessible to those outside of academia who are simply interested in the creative works out there by and about Black women in horror. Overall, this site is very conducive to the understanding of my project but there are a few formatting things I'd do differently. Specifically, I'd like to assure that my site is easy to navigate, and that pages do not seem hidden. This site also engages with the theme of Community and Digital Humanities as it uses digital humanities tools, mainly blogging, to create a discourse community that will create a positive impact on the audience by allowing people to both engage with this discourse and take part in it.

#LOVECRAFTCOUNTRY

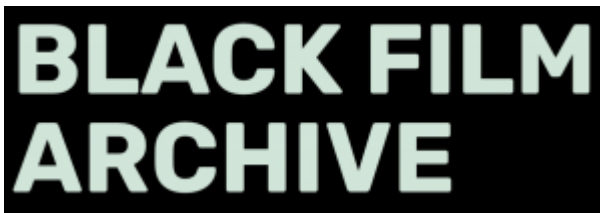
[#LOVECRAFTCOUNTRY: Primary Sources and Published materials at Penn State](#)

This project provides access to and description of primary sources used or mentioned in each episode of the HBO series Lovecraft Country. For instance, under the “Episode 1: Sundown” page, there is an explanation of the history of the Green Book with direct links to scans of it as well as other texts and sources mentioned in the episode from Penn State’s special collections. While this is an academic-based project, it also has the possibility of reaching those outside of the academy such as people who watch the show and may have further questions about references made in each episode. This project provides open access to the mentioned sources by linking users to items in Penn State’s special collections, which also makes the show more accessible to viewers who will

be able to understand the references made by being able to access them through this project. Thus, the project digitizes a physical collection and makes it accessible to a public who might not normally have access to it which creates a positive impact on those publics and communities thus putting the project in line with the Community and Digital Humanities minor track at MSU as well.

I've included this project due to its specificity because it focuses on a particular horror work that I am interested in including in my own future project. Further, the use of direct links to copies of the material mentioned is also something I'd like to take up in my project. The direct link to the materials mentioned helps make special collections and other works often kept behind a paywall or confined to the academy more open access, which is an overall goal of my project.

One thing about this exhibition that may not be as conducive to the goals I have for my project is its sustainability plan. Specifically, this project appears to begin and end with Lovecraft Country and while this creative work has proved important in thinking about America's racialized history and attention-grabbing for viewers, the project does not go further than the confines of the show. While this was most likely a goal of the creators of the exhibit, my own project will be something a bit more on-going in that it will have many creative works included. Further, I am a bit concerned about links to resources being kept up with and I would have to assure a system myself to make sure that links do not expire, and so everything is housed somewhere that they are always accessible.



[Black Film Archive](#)

This project serves as an archive for Black films from 1915 to 1979

that are available for streaming and is updated at the beginning of each month to assure that the films are actively available. Cade explains that the purpose of this project is to make Black cinema more accessible and to showcase the variants in Black cinema. According to Cade, the collection stops at 1979 because, “After the commercial failure of *The Wiz* (1978), Hollywood studios used it as a reason to stop investing in Black cinema. The 80s ushered in an era of Black independent filmmaking that makes 1979 feel like a natural stopping point” (Cade). Overall, this project aims to provide access to Black films that are often overlooked, misrepresented, or simply not represented at all. Thus, the project engages a community that often does not receive credit for their innovations in film which positively impacts the community it serves by re-casting these works into the spotlight.

Further, Cade allows those engaging with the project to play a part in the content it holds by allowing people to reach out about new or missing films that could be added to the archive. The direct engagement with the community the project is aimed toward is one of the parts of this project I strive to emulate in my own as I would also like the audience my project reaches to have input in what they have access to. Another aspect of this project that inspires my own is the format and accessibility of the project/site itself. For instance, films are organized by both genre and year so that those interacting with it can easily navigate it. The site is also very mobile-friendly. Easy navigation of a project such as this one makes it all the more impactful on the community it engages. Overall, I find this project both beneficial as a model for creating my own archival-esque site and in its community-centered nature.



Crunk Feminist Collective

According to the project's mission statement, "The CFC aims to articulate a crunk feminist consciousness for women and men of color, who came of age in the Hip Hop Generation, by creating a community of scholars-activists from varied professions..." (Cooper and Morris). Thus, the project has specific aims to better the community it is reaching— to create awareness of feminist consciousnesses for hip-hop fans, scholars, and those who are growing up in the hip-hop generation. Further, this project aims to create a discourse between the people of these various perspectives as well as support other Black feminist ideas through blog posts and by establishing a rhetorical community. By harboring a space for the hip-hop and Black feminist communities to come together, this project creates a positive impact on the community that it serves and reaches by encouraging coalition as well as it provides access to intellectual Black and hip-hop feminist think-pieces and reviews through its open-access format.

The accessibility to scholarly commentary on pop culture works is something that inspires my project as I hope that later iterations of my project contain intellectual and scholarly commentary from a Black feminist lens on Black horror. The desire to provide open access to intellectual work both in my own project and in the aims of the Crunk Feminist Collective's project produces a couple of results: 1) it disseminates knowledge that those outside of the academy may not have access to, 2) it encourages community-building in showing a bridge between two overlapping modes of thought (Crunk and feminist and Black women and horror). Overall, the Crunk Feminist Collective's project serves its target audiences (the Black

community, the feminist community, and the hip-hop community) by encouraging exchanges of ideas by those inside and outside of the academy. Further, this project provides a blueprint for the rhetorical model I'd like to take up in my own work that creates discourse between these communities through blog posts and online discussion. More importantly, this project fits the theme of community engagement in the digital humanities in its attempts to create positive change in the communities it targets.



[Horror Homeroom](#)

The Horror Homeroom project houses blog posts, podcasts, reviews, and special issues on all forms of horror works. The editors are also the regular contributors to the project as they have three podcast series, multiple blog posts, and written reviews of current and older horror works. In these various modes, the creators aim to discuss what they find important and interesting in horror and to allow other fans and scholars to participate as well. They allow guest postings with specific criteria for that process. Specifically, hopeful contributors must submit their pitch or draft with embedded links and photos so that readers can easily navigate the references made as well as the posts are shorter (between 600-1100 words), which appeals to a wider audience.

Like the other projects on this list, Horror Homeroom takes on both scholarly and enthusiast-based work to target both horror scholars and horror fans. One of the most community engaged parts of this project is the “When the Woman Screams” podcast series in which they spend each episode looking at a specific woman’s scream from a horror film or show and discuss what this scream “suggests about the social and political context in which it was created” (Erwin). This work within this project fits the theme of Community Engagement in the Digital Humanities as it sheds light on social and political issues that both shape the horror works and

are being questioned by these same works of horror. Thus, the horror community (scholars and non-academics) are benefited by this project as they are asked to think deeper about the roles of women in horror and what things horror has to offer for women as possible forms of resistance. Moreover, this project demonstrates a desire to build community between academics and non-academics by creating a discourse around both new and old horror works of all kinds. As it relates to my own project, Horror Homeroom serves as a solid reference for how to open the floor for those interested in the topics to participate in discussion of them in an easy-to-access way. Further, the user interface of this project is very straight forward with an easy-to-navigate tool bar and hyperlinks to references, which is another format I will engage in my future project.



LGBT Studies in Video

[LGBTQ Studies in Video \[MSU Authorized Users\]](#)

This project serves as both a survey and an archive of films documenting the lives of LGBTQ people, the evolution of LGBTQ politics, and LGBTQ history. The project contains documentary footage, interviews, and feature films and is primarily partnered with Frameline, a nonprofit that created the San Francisco

International LGBT Film Festival. This project is available for free to those with an academic institution library proxy as well as it's available to the public through a one-time fee for the purchase of the rights to the collection.

By pulling together LGBTQ films into this single archive, this project creates a positive impact on queer and gender studies, film studies, and on the LGBTQ community outside of the academy by bringing these often erased works out of the margins. While there is a paywall for those without institutional access, the fact that they offer a 30-day free trial still provides people with the opportunity to utilize it. By allowing these films to be accessed by anyone within or outside of the academy opens these films to wider dissemination and thus creates a positive impact on the multiple communities it serves and targets by providing access to knowledge on the LGBTQ community, their history, and their political evolution.

As a digital humanities project, the LGBTQ Studies in Video project is also easy to use for those who are not computationally savvy as it does not require any additional software downloads and only requires someone to have their internet browser open. Thus, this project engages in culturally and socially responsible practices that consider what technology people may or may not have access to as well as it strives to make a positive impact on the community it engages with. Overall, this project's commitment to community engagement is something I strive to replicate in my own project by bringing together a collection of works centered on and created by Black women that is often looked over or pushed aside as well as I hope to make my future site as easy to access and use as the LGBTQ Studies in Video project.

BLACK LESBIAN ARCHIVES

[Black Lesbian Archives](#)

Another archival project, The Black Lesbian Archives serves to fill the gap in the digital representation of the Black lesbian community by creating a space to house Black lesbian stories. The project includes photos, articles, posters, videos, and more documenting Black lesbians' lives, work, and history. Maekdo explains that the project is meant to serve "Black Lesbians, allies and the LGBTQIA+ community to submit Black Lesbian Archives..." (Maekdo). Therefore, the project not only aims to represent Black lesbians, but it is also informed and directly impacted by the contributions of Black lesbians and other members of the LGBTQIA+ community as well as allies of those communities. Thus, this project undertakes an ethical approach to community engagement by allowing the community for which it wants to represent and provide knowledge about to submit archival materials as well as to engage with the materials already on the site.

Maekdo's site also includes a few mini-projects such as the "Digital Archival Project," in which they are actively working on digitizing physical archival material to make it more accessible. To do so, they are encouraging their publics to collaborate with them in any way they can. This fits with their overall mission/website tagline "[T]o build Community," and to "[E]ducate and preserve our Culture" (Maekdo). In these mini-projects within the larger project of the archival site, Maekdo fosters positive change in the community by encouraging coalition between communities and by showcasing underrepresented stories and lives making the project befitting of the Community and Digital Humanities ideals of both engaging in socially and culturally ethical practices of community engagement as well as in the project's ability to make a positive change within the community it serves. This open-access archive also mirrors the work I'd like to do in my project by encouraging communal exchange of information through direct community engagement (encouraging submissions). The user interface is also particularly easy to use with a tool bar for easy navigation as well as it is engaging by using a continual slideshow of some archival materials included in the project at the heading of the "home" page.

Thus, the user interface of this project as well as its overall community-driven content approach are methods that I could use to sustain my project and to encourage more engagement with it.



[The Future is Afrofemme](#)

Lawson’s in-progress project serves as a digital archive for “[D]ocumenting what black women, femmes, GNCs, nonbinary, and feminine-adjacent people think about the future” (Immersive Realities Labs). This project’s current iteration focuses on collecting the perspectives of black women, femmes, GNCs, nonbinary, and feminine-adjacent people about the future and what they think Afrofuturism is. To enter the site, one must provide information about themselves and answer what they think Afrofuturism is in a text box. After answering the question, you must input your email address which demonstrates your agreement to being committed to an afrofemme future. After this, you are subscribed to a newsletter to receive updates on next stages of the project. This first stage serves to make the voices of participants heard by sharing their perspectives of what Afrofuturism means as well as showing their commitment toward the afrofemme future they have agreed to.

While there aren’t current updates on what the next stage of the project will be, the goal of creating a digital archive of the afrofemme future by considering the perspectives of those who have supported and engaged with the project on what the future may look like makes the project community centered. In other words, the project wants to both inform the community through future archival materials as well as be informed and shaped by that same community. By creating this discursive relationship between the community and the project, The Future is Afrofemme project participates in culturally and socially ethical community engagement.

As an interface, the first stage of the project is very easy to use as clicking almost anywhere on the first page takes you directly to the forms that need to be filled out and those forms are easy to follow as well. While I think that the interface is fairly simple to use, it seems important to include some information about the future of the project somewhere on the site. Therefore, in my project, I will be sure to clearly outline the stages of the project so that it does not seem like information is missing or that the site is incomplete so that my audience will know how to engage with it. The Future is Afrofemme project demonstrates some of the goals of my project in that it is informed by the perspectives of the community it serves.



[The Queering Slavery Working Group](#)

This Tumblr page and digital project serves as a space to “[D]iscuss issues related to reading, researching, and writing histories of intimacy, sex, and sexuality during the period of Atlantic slavery” (The Queering Slavery Working Group). Further, the project both serves as an archive and discussion space for those engaging in Black and queer studies as well as anyone who wishes to learn

more about this history. However, contribution to the page is geared toward scholars. To garner these contributions from other scholars, namely queer and trans scholars, the creators have linked a Google Form to their “About” page that allows scholars to express their interest in working on the project in a number of ways (sharing work, discussing materials, leading workshops, contribute to an ongoing bibliography, etc.). Thus, this project takes on a community-centered approach that allows the scholars interested in the material to shape the project itself. Further, by encouraging collaboration with queer and trans scholars of color, the project aims to be socially and culturally ethical in what it includes and how it includes materials and discussions.

While the community-centered nature of this project is something I strive for in my own work, I am not sure I will restrict this to scholars only since my project’s focus also targets fans of the material as well as scholars studying it. However, the Tumblr interface is very easy to navigate and offers the ability to easily find older archived work, which is something I want to consider in later iterations of my project where blog posts and larger discussion will be included. Overall, the focus on a community-centered and community-accountable approach that this project takes harbors a space for discussion across disciplines and perspectives which can generate new ideas which creates a positive impact on the community it engages with.



Women in Science: Changing the World One Idea at a Time

Although the topic of this project does not necessarily align with my own or the others included on this list, I think its impact on the community it serves is important to note and provides insights to inform my future project. This project aims to provide access to texts by women scientists and biographies about those scientists. By providing direct access to these texts written by women in science, the creators are providing multiple communities with open access

to texts that may normally be hard to find or kept behind a paywall; likewise, disseminating these texts highlights a demographic of people often not discussed in the history of science as a field. These efforts to re-cast works by women in science as well as to provide detailed biographies on them creates a positive impact on the communities the project serves by highlighting important works and innovations made by a marginalized group of people in science. Further, the open-access nature of the site allows those outside of academia to educate themselves on women's impacts in science creating an impact that reaches outside of the academy.

The user interface of this project is easy to navigate, and each text is linked as either a .pdf or .jpg making the texts accessible on both mobile and desktop internet browsers. By making the texts easy to access on multiple devices, the project can reach those who may not have the same access to technology as those with institutional connections may. However, the encouragement for contributions to this site is limited to MSU faculty and faculty from other universities. While this makes sense given the need for this material to be historically accurate, which often requires university ties and access to information, I'd like to avoid limiting contributions to my own project to only academics and those with institutional ties. Despite the contribution limitations, this project exemplifies a community engaged project in that it seeks to better multiple communities' understandings of the impact women have had in science and brings women in science out from erasure.

Conclusion

It's alive!

—Colin Clive as Henry Frankenstein in the film
Frankenstein (1931)

Now that the electrodes are in place, the appendages stitched together, the monster can be animated. Although I look to create a monster, I hope that my monster differs from the one Shelley thought up in their novel. My monster will be nurtured, sustained, and treated with love so that it can continue to make a positive impact in the community (namely, the community of Black horror fans and scholars). By exploring the projects included in this bibliography, I have found methods for maintaining my monster, its happiness, and the happiness of those who encounter it. The blueprint these projects have created constitute a community engaged monster as opposed to one that is unloved and murders people like Shelley's did. Specifically, the way each project takes up contribution, open-access materials, and the archive serve as the many beautiful limbs I've collected and sewn together for my monster's body.

Special attention to how each of these projects approaches contributions and content management of their projects has provided valuable insights into how the Digital Humanities can be engaged with the community. For instance, the Horror Homeroom project welcomes contributions from anyone looking to explore works of horror and who wish to put their perspective into the world. This encouragement also includes those outside of academic institutions. The coming together of academics and non-academics creates a generative space that allows new ideas and approaches to the topic to emerge. Similarly, projects like Black Perspectives ask that contributors use plain language and avoid jargon so that they can maintain a wide readership. These very careful choices and guidelines for contributions to these projects assures that they will have an impact somewhere other than the academy as well as within the academy.

Another key takeaway from these projects is the emphasis on the open access of materials. For example, the #LovecraftCountry project provides direct links to texts and materials from Penn State's

special collections for references made in the television show *Lovecraft Country*. By providing easy-access to these materials, not only does the project encourage people to watch the show, but it encourages those who have already watched the show to dive deeper into the history it tells, thus, emphasizing the power of creative works on our society as well as educating people on an often-erased history.

Building on the emphasis of open access to materials, many of these projects engage in digitization of archival work. For instance, The Black Lesbian Archive was created to house various materials showcasing the erased stories of Black lesbians. To do so, the project creator encourages Black lesbians, allies, and other members of the LGBTQIA+ communities to assist in the digitizing of physical archival materials or to submit archival materials to the project that they come across. Thus, the project's focus on making the archive digital becomes important community-impacting work.

These projects are all community-centered and community-driven in their focus on content contribution, open access to materials, and showcasing of archival material. Each project has a discursive relationship with their targeted publics and communities that help them sustain their projects while caring for their engaged communities. Based on their community-centered efforts, these projects reflect the minor track of Community and Digital Humanities at MSU as they each use Digital Humanities tools and methods to ethically engage with their communities while making impacts on those same communities. Overall, each of these projects exploring horror studies, queer and gender studies, and Black studies provides various parts and appendages I need to put together my body. Further, each of these projects has helped me begin to shock life into my own work by showing me approaches that will allow me to care for both my project and the community it engages.

Additional Works Cited

“Undergraduate Minor.” Michigan State University Digital Humanities. digitalhumanities.msu.edu/undergraduate-minor/.

Rethinking Black and Brown Space: Digital Humanities Exploration of Caribbean and African Diasporic Experience

MELANIE N. RODRÍGUEZ VÁZQUEZ

Introduction

For this annotated bibliography, I chose an array of projects that focus on Community and Digital Humanities within a Caribbean and African diasporic context. These projects mainly center on Black and Brown experiences as a way to highlight the importance of Black Digital Humanities. Latin America and the Caribbean have a colonial history that has consisted in its exploitation first by European countries, and then by the United States. The consequences of these events, such as the expropriation of resources, sexual violence, and anti-Blackness (to mention a few), entails a substantial disadvantage that provokes poverty within these countries. In search of better conditions, Latinx families have migrated to the United States.

The following projects have various aspects in common: (1) the key conversation around Blackness within Latinidad. Black people have been denied Latinidad due to Latin American and Caribbean countries' aspiring whiteness. Meaning that departments created such as Latin American Studies, Puerto Rican Studies, or Chicano Studies, inherently exclude Black presence from their curriculum which translated to what the Black Latina Know Collective state in their website: Black women scholars have been deemed as incapable

of producing knowledge. (2) These projects are combatting anti-Blackness by rescuing Black ancestors' stories and biographies by proposing them as mentors from whom current scholars and the general public can learn and cherish, and also recognize the significance of writing our stories for posterity. (3)

All ten of the digital projects were created, co-founded, or curated by Black Latinx or African American women scholars. As featured in *Africana Memoirs'* project, "Black women are human beings". That is why I found it important to feature projects that centered Black women's voices as a way to showcase the versatility of Black women in academic spaces, be it physical or digital. Additionally, the key of working with the intersectionality of race and gender inside digital spaces serves to counteract the narrative created that perpetuates Black people as technophobes. These ten projects clearly demonstrate that race is not inherent to technical literacy, but more so a direct result of the aforementioned white supremacy that has ensured the lack of inclusion of Black scholars in the digital by providing funds to white scholars.

Within these projects I want to highlight the collaborations between these Black women and how this is a tool to support and promote one another. For example, *Negras* podcast has featured scholars such as Dr. Yomaira C. Figueroa, who is the co-creator of *Electric Marronage*. Figueroa is also a member of *Black Latinas Know Collective*. Another example is *Colectivo Ilé's* partnership with *VidaAfrolatina*: both work on ensuring better conditions for women in Black communities, *Colectivo Ilé* based in Puerto Rico, and *VidaAfrolatina* in the United States. Which brings me to another aspect that must be taken into consideration. Although I primarily wanted to feature Caribbean and Latin America, it is important to recognize the migrations to the United States, which explains why some of these projects, although founded and created by Black Latinx women, are still based in the United States where they have had access to resources as scholars. This to me makes it relatable to the reality of poor families who migrate from their countries and the fact that these women work to bring back resources to their home

countries, makes these projects exceptional. A goal that I recognize throughout the list I chose is the constant mention of healing to imagine and create futurities for the Caribbean and the African diaspora. I share the following list of digital projects to present the current and ongoing conversation around Black Feminist Digital Humanities.



[Proyecto Cortijo \[Spanish\]](#) / [Proyecto Cortijo \[English\]](#)

De Coco y Anís is a digital project recently created by Black Puerto Rican scholar and afrofeminist Marissel Hernández Romero (she/her/they/them) and co-edited by journalist and ethnomusicologist César Colón Montijo (he/him). Together, they collaborate with ten (10) Afro- Puerto Ricans with the mission to recover Rafael Cortijo's legacy to Puerto Rican music. These collaborators, such as queer writer Yolanda Arroyo Pizarro, visual artists Las Nietas de Nonó, and ethnologist Ivette Chiclana Miranda (to mention a few), are all part of the contemporary cultural and intellectual production in Puerto Rico and the US diaspora. Their project consists of a website that welcomes readers to their mission, and as you scroll down you're met with the faces and biographies of the people involved. Also, they offer a pre-sale for an upcoming book that will be published by EDP University. The book answers the question "What does Cortijo mean to you, further than Maelo?". The contributors answer the ways in which Cortijo's legacy influenced Puerto Ricans in general, but even deeper the Black community. The question's specificity to "further

than Maelo” is due to their image being always presented as one, and although their impact together is unparalleled, the project’s focus is on Cortijo as a way to remind folks that there may not have been a Maelo without Cortijo. Additionally, the project shares two music playlists, “Composiciones de Cortijo” (found on Spotify) and “Acortijarse” (found on Amazon Music) curated by Hernández Romero to feature Rafael Cortijo’s songs. With this project, Hernández Romero and her team create dialogues around successful yet forgotten biographies such as Cortijo’s case. By centering their work on Cortijo, they are calling out scholars who have not found an importance in studying our Black heritage. De coco y anís questions Puerto Ricans’ comfortability around anti-Blackness while creating a space for young Black children to learn about Black Puerto Rican history.



Negras

A group of Black/ afro-descendants from Colectivo Ilé—a community organization that offers anti-racist workshops and trainings—and professors from the University of Puerto Rico, upload weekly episodes with topics related to Blackness in Puerto Rico. Their name specifies how their main guests on the podcast are Black women, as a way for their audience either on the radio, Spotify, or Apple Podcasts to listen to Black women. Negras has been active since 2020 with a total of 111 episodes. The topics discussed vary from anti-racist and gender perspective curriculum, to beauty standards, mental health, and colorism. The dynamic on their

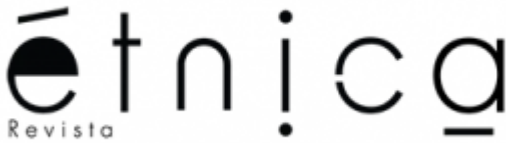
episode is to have one to two moderators accompanied by a guest or guests who are academic scholars and/ or community leaders. They share brief biographies and normally answer the question of how they came to notice they were Black, or when was the first time they encountered racism in Puerto Rico or the guest's country of origin. Certain episodes, such as "Repasando la puertorriqueñidad" reflects on our history as a colonized archipelago and how intersectionalities of race and gender play a role in how our experiences will vary. They also invite Black scholars from other countries in Latin America, for example, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, and Colombia to create a conversation where various women and femmes explain and share their experiences as Black women in countries that want to assimilate to whiteness rather than Blackness. These conversations prove how important dialogue is to pinpoint how anti-Blackness is present in Latin America. Other themes discussed in the podcast are fat-phobia and its connection to anti-Blackness. Additionally, toxic masculinities, which meant a couple of Black men were invited to discuss and reflect on Blackness and alternative masculinities.

Although these are themes that may be starting to happen in Puerto Rico, they are still happening in small, academic spaces. Having both a radio station and podcast, makes it accessible for a more general public, who may have not been exposed to such topics, while also being an open resource that you can listen to when you have the time as entertainment, or as a scholarly assignment.



[Africana Memoirs: Database of Black Women's Autobiography](#)

Analysis: “Black women are human beings” states the website in their homepage. This project is an open access database that focuses on narrative research to center women of African descent. Curated by Dr. Stephanie Evans, professor and director of the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at George State University. She educates through the hashtag #HistoricalWellness. Dr. Evans states that the project follows the Sesheta tradition, who was an ancient goddess known as a scribe and record keeper. Dr. Evans looks to inspire the next generation of writers to learn of the importance of Black women ancestor’s knowledge. She visualizes memoirs as mentors from whom readers learn and can feel empowered by to write their own life stories. The database includes the autobiographies of 500 African descent women. It is divided and categorized in alphabetical order for easier access and it also includes specific categories of interests: travel, food, meditation and yoga, and mental health. Within these categories there is an array of recommended books accompanied by a link where you can buy them. The database also has a section to recommend further book references and a link for those interested in professional assistance to write their life stories. Dr. Evans’ project recognizes the value of Black women’s experiences around the globe. It validates that Black women must be read and listened to when society ignores or silences them. There is a lot to be learned from their experiences in an anti-Black world. With the database one is able to trace both the simplicity and hardships that these 500 women lived. Knowledge that is available to present and future Black girls and women. Dr. Evans proposes it as a bridge of humanity’s past with our future. If there are 500 women featured in the database, one must think of what other stories are out there waiting to be rescued and shared.



Revista Étnica

Analysis: The first magazine and platform created to support and amplify Black communities in Puerto Rico. The creator, Glorian Sacha Antonetty Lebrón is a writer, communication strategist, and a professor. She founded the magazine in 2018 to highlight Blackness and Black stories in Puerto Rico. Each volume has a specific audience: the first volume was aimed towards the general Black Puerto Rican adults, the second volume was designed for Black youth and their parents, and the third volume centered more on Black activism by featuring current Black activists (ex: anti-racists, feminists, left-wing politicians). The magazine is both print and digital and can be accessed through their website. Additionally, Revista Étnica has a blog that documents different cultural activities made by and for Black folks. For example, Afrojuventudes, which consisted on a virtual workshop that lasted several months directed towards Afro-Puerto Ricans raging from ages 16-30 where they were able to learn about racial schemes from a personal, cultural, and institutional perspective and in relation to other oppressions ; how to write anti-racist journalism, and storytelling. To celebrate the culmination of the virtual project, they made Afrojuventudes Fest, where all the people who participated were able to meet in person as well as the general Black community who was invited. Antonetty Lebrón and the collaborators in the magazine have created this multimedia platform that is focused on documenting, writing, communicating in order to reach as much Black latinx folks

as possible, but also white audiences to question their privileges. They use their social media to celebrate Blackness, but also to call for action when the government or local tv shows make racist or sexist remarks. Revista Étnica has collaborated with other groups to call for action on femicides in Puerto Rico. They were also an important role in influencing Black Puerto Ricans to identify as Black in the 2020 Census, which resulted in an increase of Puerto Ricans who marked Black or wrote down Afrodescendant. Revista Étnica's involvement in the community has helped create many safe spaces for Black children, youth, and adult population.

Taller Electric Marronage

Taller Electric Marronage

Analysis: Inspired on Black ancestor's marronage, this workshop has escaped to the digital space to imagine and build new futures. Co-created and co-curated by Black scholars Dr. Yomaira C. Figueroa Vásquez and Dr. Jessica Marie Johnson, their group, called "Electricians" is comprised of Black and Brown queer writers and artists. Some of them current graduate students from Michigan State University and John Hopkins University. Some of the features in their digital platform include the Afro-Latinx Lab. This section has various texts and panels related to Puerto Rican and Latino Studies. Current conversations on what this field has come to be in the last 50 years and the need to center Blackness both in the archipelago and the Diaspora. It also includes interviews with Black Latinx Scholars and how they are incorporating Blackness in their fields. Additionally, the website features a podcast that is available on Youtube that discusses Abolition as Black Feminist Method. The project has a section titled "Fugitive's Library" where the reader can find a list of recommended texts under categories identified

as “rules”: (1) How do you escape, (2) How do you steal?, (3) What does it feel like?, and (4) Whatever. Furthermore, there is also a list of recommendation for those interested in Digital Black Studies and Decoloniality. With these lists, divided and organized, Electric Marronage presents and share to their audiences an archive that encourages them to incorporate Blackness in a vast array of disciplines in both physical or digital spaces. Lastly, the platform has a blog that has published articles related to postporn (which could be defined as feminist/queer porn), or chronicles of activities organized by Electric Marronage: solidarity across differences which included Black, Indigenous, Pacific, Caribbean, Asian contexts. This ongoing project serves an audience of young scholars that are interested in learning Black Feminist Digital Humanities and how to balance the physical and digital spaces of academia.



[Con el Verbo en la Piel](#)

Con el Verbo en la Piel is both a blog and a podcast about sex education for [BIPOC](#) founded by journalist and sexual coach Ana Castillo Muñoz. Daughter of Dominican parents and raised in Puerto Rico, she created a digital platform that would connect her through her website and her Instagram page with Puerto Ricans and Dominicans who have migrated. Having gained thousands of followers, her audience has expanded beyond the archipelago. Through her social media she shares infographics about healthy sexual encounters, pleasure, and the hyper-sexualization of Black bodies, to mention a few. On her blog, she writes about these topics

in a more expansive way for those interested in a deeper read. With this digital space, she engages with her followers through Instagram Lives and polls which opens new questions and debates around sexualities. She also manages an event called SEXPO which is an exhibition dedicated to sex and pleasure in Puerto Rico. This event includes various workshops, panels, speed dating, art, and games that center Black, queer, fat, disabled bodies as a direct message that all bodies are worthy of love and pleasure. Although her general audience are adults, she does also educate about how to teach or talk to children about their bodies and how to foster a healthy sexual development for children. Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic are known for having a significant religious conservative sector that is against gender perspective education. Therefore, Verbo en la Piel's initiatives serve to decrease the misinformation around sex in schools and the general public. This platform's involvement with both academic and community help educate folks—poor Black Puerto Ricans and Dominican specifically—who may not have the resources to attend a higher education institution. With this in mind, her digital space is also a safe space for those whose identity is discriminated.



Black Latinas Know Collective

A collective of sixteen Black Latina scholars producing knowledge around race in conversation with Latinidad and Blackness and the intersections of gender, class, sexuality, ability, citizenship, and language. Their website is met by quotes from known Black knowledge producers such as Jamaica Kincaid, Patricia Hill Collins, and Zora Neale Hurston as a way to set a tone to what to expect on

their digital space. The collective presents as parts of their beliefs, the importance to centralize Black Latinas voices who have been historically ignored. As scholars, they critique academia's tendency to make invisible and deem Black women scholars as incapable of being professors or intellectuals. This space represents their way of conversing among their collective as Black women scholars, but also knowledge producers who are read by anyone interested on race in the Latin American context. Their aim is to dismantle systems of oppression by being active on social media. The website has a section where you can read the members' biographies and learn more about scholars like Jessica Marie Johnson, Yomaira Figueroa Vásquez, Bárbara Idalisse Abadía Rexach, and Omaris Zamora. They have a blog that shares topics such as mental health in academia when met with the intersections of race and gender. They talk of white-euro-american women who are now "passing" as Latinas and the implications it has on actual Black Latinas who are regularly denied Latinidad. Furthermore, they have a reading list with recommended texts that touch the topics aforementioned. Overall, they speak from their experiences in a way that helps connect with their public because these are situations that repeat themselves throughout the Caribbean, Latin American and diasporic people in the US. With this said, their project is an excellent instrument for early career Black Latina scholars, or Black students who are starting their journey in higher education.



Create Caribbean

Create Caribbean Research Institute is a platform that offers knowledge that is accessible and free to share among all Caribbean people. It promotes Caribbean culture and heritage while building and sharing digital tools for academic use. This digital center was created by Dr. Schuyler K. Esprit, who is a scholar of Caribbean Literature and Culture Studies. Create is also the first digital humanities project in the English-speaking Caribbean. The center's emphasis relies on supporting projects that apply technological innovation to achieve social and economical development. Currently, Create is partnered with Dominica State University for higher education. Esprit is the curator of digital research projects that focus on Caribbean heritage and history but also include the involvement of environmental sciences and agriculture. Among the projects they work with there is Carsealand, founded by writer Oonya Kempadoo to develop a larger network of Caribbean writers and scientists to create an alternative Caribbean. It is user-friendly for students, activists, and the general public. Secondly, *Dominica History/ The Road to Independence*. As the name suggests, it is about highlighting and tracing the historical events dated from 1950 to 1980 that led to Dominica's Independence. This project includes images, legal documents, and audiovisual recordings to tell their

history. Third, Maroon Country which centers the history of maroons in Dominica and the Eastern Caribbean and French West Indies. It is described as archival material for teachers and students at a high school and college level. Their fourth project is titled Imagined Homeland, and it uses close and distant reading to provide both geographical and historical locations that appear in Dominica's literature. It promotes interest in Dominica's history and the literature produced. Additionally, Create has internship opportunities for IT, humanities, and social sciences students. Finally, their Create and Code Program is offered to students that range from ages 5 to 16 to introduce them to digital literacy such as coding, gaming and app development. This array of projects and initiatives involve academia and the general public to combat digital illiteracy in a way that is accessible to a broad audience in Dominica.



Taller Salud

Taller Salud is a community-based, feminist organization that has been active for 42 years. With their slogan “A country’s health starts with women’s health”, their main focus has been dedicated to the management for better access to health for women and reducing gender violence. They primarily serve women in Loíza, which is a historically Black town in Puerto Rico. The project is a direct result of a group of feminists who came to Puerto Rico after working in

New York against the forced sterilization of predominantly poor Latin-American women. One of Taller Salud's first members, Margaret Wochinger Figueroa also participated in redacting Ley 54, the domestic violence prevention and intervention law. Their work with women has been constant in providing resources the government has lacked to ensure a healthy life for women in Puerto Rico. Their digital presence includes the use of hashtags such as #TUMBAELACOSO (stop harassment), it was created as a campaign against the normalized street harassment, which puts women and femmes in uncomfortable and dangerous situations in public spaces. Another hashtag they have is #TUPAZCUENTA (your piece counts) which is their campaign against domestic and sexual violence and to promote their 24/7 orientation and service line. Both hashtags are used on Twitter as well as Instagram. Taller Salud also produced a mini docu-series titled "The First: The History of the Struggle for Women's Health and Rights. It features activists who've been crucial in Puerto Rico's fight for women's rights. Additionally, they have available on their website as well as SoundCloud a list of audio feminist stories for children and a protocol guide for dealing with emergencies from a community perspective, that can be downloaded for free. All these materials are now made possible due to their long trajectory and experience in community work, which is now available as a digital space.



VidaAfrolatina

VidaAfrolatina is an international women's fund that focuses on mobilizing funds and resources and connecting them with Black and Afrodescendant women's groups that work with sexual violence in Latin America. Founded by Lori Robinson, an African American journalist who reported on sexual violence and on Black communities in Latin American countries. Based in the United States, VidaAfrolatina was born because Robinson herself is a sexual violence survivor who had access to resources that helped her heal. As a 2018 Echoing Green Fellow she was able to develop VidaAfrolatina. Now, she is accompanied by a board of Black women from the United States, Suriname, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Honduras, and México. The project is equipped with public health workers, educators, translators, and anthropologists. Their project mainly offers healing experiences and their mission is to reduce to ultimately eradicate sexual violence. Their main audience is therefore sexual violence survivors. As their website informs, 1 in 3 women in the world experience physical or sexual violence and historically, women of African descent have been the most vulnerable since the transatlantic slave trade, while also having the least access to healing resources. They also explain how before the #MeToo movement, Latin America had their own hashtags such as #Cuéntalo, #NiUnaMenos #PrimeiroAssédio used to report rape and other forms of violence against women in Latin America. Another important aspect of their platform, is that they critique philanthropic sectors' response to this type of violence. Stating that sexual violence is a social justice issue and a racial justice issue, they are committed to the importance of educating about women's sexual right to healthy, consented sex. Their work is centered in participatory grant making. They claim it as a feminist approach in which the communities that are impacted by funding decisions are precisely the ones that should be involved in the decision-making to ensure equality and representation. Their grantee partners include

Afropoderosas, based in Costa Rica and México, Colectivo Ilé, based in Puerto Rico, La Compadre de Afrodes, based in Colombia, and finally, Revista Affirmative, based in Brasil. Through this initiative they have been able to ensure resources are redistributed to Black communities in Latin America and hope for more connections to be made in order to expand resources to other Afro Latinas.

Conclusion

Throughout these projects one can identify how much Black people value rescuing the biographies of historical Black influence. This responds to us as a Black community trying to maintain our history alive. These Black scholars have done so in various ways: through reading lists that recommends texts by specific topics, videos, or podcasts, they are all made in a way that is accessible and thought for academics and the community. There are a couple of firsts in these projects. Revista Étnica, the first magazine created by an Afro-Puerto Rican for Black communities in Puerto Rico, and Create Caribbean, that is the first digital humanities project created in the English-Speaking Caribbean. Moreover, these projects care about healing the body and the land. There is a specific relationship with racial and environmental justice, there can't be one without the other. These conversations go beyond their websites with the presence of hashtags in social media which have become viral between Latinx Twitter and Instagram. I see these Black scholars as women who are paving the way for young scholars and demonstrating the importance of not staying in the conventional academic space and having a digital presence where there is opportunity to expand your audience. These projects bring hope to how Diasporic Blackness is looking to connect and further question the heteropatriarchal, white supremacist system to create an inclusive environment for BIPOC, disabled, fat, poor, queer folks. To think beyond educating, the influence these projects have on

academic and general public is a constant fight for equality saves lives. Centering Black women is key inspiration to the type of work I aspire to do in academia and the community. My choice of having these Black women be Caribbean and Latinx is to visualize what may be obvious to some but ignorant to others: that Blackness is not only American and that Latinidad is not only white. VidaAfrolatina working directly with sexual violence survivors and their goal to eradicate it is necessary to ensure Black women's rights. Con el Verbo en la Piel's approach to normalize all types of bodies encourages self-love and dismantles beauty standards. Black Latinas Know Collective work hard in demonstrating that academia can exploit us and it is necessary to put ourselves first and take care of our physical and mental health. Revista Étnica exemplifies that content/entertainment can be published to cater specifically to Black folks that can both entertain (give hair or fashion tips) and highlight current Black folks in different disciplines for Black youth to learn that Black people are capable of anything. Black communities continue the maroons' determination to escape and create their own spaces. Although, I must establish the exploitation that these scholars go through to ensure resources for the community. It is crucial to keep interrogating academic spaces as to what is expected from BIPOC scholars for tenure and to guarantee realistic expectations for their academic development. I'd like to conclude by thanking the work of Black scholars before me, from whom I learn. I hope to also be a part of these efforts and help fortify ideal conditions for future scholars.

Case Study: The SpeakOut! Project

ROLAND DUMAVOR

Introduction

As scholars of Digital Humanities (DH) are still engaged in conversations around what DH is or is not, the “boundaries and demarcations” of DH keeps shifting (Gallon). For Kim Gallon, these conversations are complex but necessary for the field. The necessity of these conversations, which are situated around the “intersection of technology and with humanistic fields,” is based on the impacts of emerging technologies on the humanities. Ryan Cordell, in his piece, admonishes DH scholars and educators to be mindful of how they define the field so that students’ curiosity and interests in DH are not stifled. It is instructive for me to note that the discourses surrounding digital humanities, more especially about what DH includes and excludes, can be detrimental to the field as students whose interests and “who are adept and thoughtful about the tools, platforms, and media of our day” need to be catered for with utmost tactfulness, thoughtfulness, and creativity (Cordell). I intend to bring this point up because there have been some exclusionary definitions and arguments made by some scholars in the field, probably, with the intention of restricting the field to a high-level technological know-how or use paradigm. My point here is that the DH project that I intend to review in this study may fall below the scope of digital humanities based on the arguments of some scholars who are keener on the definitions that are more exclusionary. This is the concern that I see being at the forefront of Cordell’s piece and that runs through the definitions or

understandings of Kathleen Fitzpatrick and Rob Nelson in Julian Chambliss' podcast series. For instance, this is what Fitzpatrick says:

I define digital humanities as that work that gets done in the overlap of the Venn diagram between humanities and technology. And that happens in a lot of different ways ... My sense of digital humanities is that it's super broad and that it's a constantly shifting and changing field as both the tools shift and the questions shift, and we start to think about new ways of approaching the kinds of interests that the humanities has always had.

It is refreshing to hear Fitzpatrick acknowledge that the "... constantly shifting and changing ..." nature of DH is influenced by emerging technologies –the affordances they offer. This means that the field should not be stifled from expansion as some scholars seem to desire it to be put into disciplinary shackles.

I want to emphasize Cordell's contention that the field's or some DH scholars' fixation on definitions and professionalization of DH "... can interfere with innovative but necessarily local thinking about digital skills, curriculum, and research" Hence, there is the need for DH scholars to adopt and apply a more inclusionary and non-limiting scope to the field. As Rob Nelson talks about the complexities that surrounds the definition of DH, he says something that I find useful to this study:

Obviously, it's humanistic research that involves computation in some way, shape or form, either as a product using mostly the Web or, I guess, apps as a way of publishing and sharing humanistic content and research. Then increasingly, and particularly for Digital History, I'd say, and literary studies, using computation as an aid to doing research, to grapple with big data sets.

From Nelson's position, I contend that though community engagement programs that employ digital technologies –digital tools, platforms, and media– may not involve the use of high-level computation, they are DH projects as they publish and share humanistic contents and research. Basically, they engage in the “using of technological tools to do [their] work,” as Fitzpatrick puts it.

As the conversation about what is and what is not digital humanities continues, I want to contribute to it by making a case for community engaged projects –which are based on criminal justice and literacy– as projects that operate in DH frameworks. For me, I see this project being at the crossroads of DH and community or community engagement and contributing to social change just as some DH scholars address issues of racial inequities and injustice in their projects. For instance, Kim Gallon, in her article, raises some serious concerns about the definition of DH in relation to race (more specifically Blackness).

Understood as the union of digital technology and the academic disciplines that study human culture, what do we do with forms of humanity excluded from or marginalized in how we study the humanities and practice the digital humanities? What are the implications of using computational approaches to theorize and draw deeper insight into a modern humanity that is prima facie arranged and constructed along racial lines?

Though Gallon's focus is on the relationship between DH and racialization (Blackness), I think her quote is relevant to this study because there is a somewhat positive correlation between criminal justice issues and racialization (Stewart et al. 120; Race 1). However, my intention here is to adapt Gallon's concerns to align more closely with the relationship between DH and Community-engaged work, with focus on criminal justice. Since issues of incarcerated people or criminal injustice fall within the scope of the humanities, I contend that it is worthwhile adopting DH frameworks to explore the work of community engagement related to incarcerated populations who are underserved and vulnerable. By this, the questions that DH scholars interested in criminal justice might consider will be: What do we do with incarcerated people who are excluded from humanity or are underserved, marginalized, and underrepresented in how we study digital humanities? What are the implications of adopting DH frameworks and approaches to theorize and draw deeper insight

into a modern humanity that is arranged and constructed on problematic ideologies and ontologies?

In this study, I seek to set a conversation in motion about community engagement, with focus on criminal justice, by drawing attention to DH frameworks and approaches adopted by the project under consideration in this study. Some scholars in the field of DH argue that DH has robust elements and principled focus on community building (Fitzpatrick see *Building Community through Digital Humanities*). Though I agree with this contention, I want to argue that community-engaged projects that focus on criminal justice have not received much attention in the field of DH. Hence my interest in making a case for criminal justice-related community projects through the DH lens or frameworks. In other words, my goal in this study is to articulate the relationship between DH and criminal justice related community engagement. Although work related to injustice or social justice and ethnic, racial, and national issues is emerging in the field of DH (Gallon), concerted efforts and interest to bring criminal justice related issues are low, even seem non-existent, in DH.

Another point that I want to emphasize is that Kath Burton and Daniel Fisher's article reminds scholars, who are interested in community work through the frameworks of digital humanities, to be conscious of the differences between public humanities and publicly engaged humanities. Based on Kath Burton and Daniel Fisher's definition of publicly engaged humanities as "encompass[ing] humanities research, teaching, preservation and programming, conducting with and for diverse individuals and communities" (1-2), I argue that "SpeakOut! Online" –the project under consideration in this study– is doing "public and publicly engaged [digital] humanities" work.

Case Study: SpeakOut! Project –At the Crossroads of Digital Humanities

SpeakOut! Online is a subset of the SpeakOut! Program which is run by the Community Literacy Center of Colorado State University. SpeakOut! Online is a digital space created for people (mainly people in places of confinement) who are interested in writing. The website's "About page" has a brief description of the goals and the focus of the project. The project provides space for participants to engage in writing of any kind, receive feedback on their writing, and get their work published. The same has featured writing from a writer from the Larimer County jail. This featured piece is advice to children, which suggests that the project is not limited to only adult writers/participants. The project's mission statement reveals that the focus of the project is on peoples in places of confinement, experiencing "current and historical oppression" –racial inequity and violence–, as the project provides the needed space for them to share their stories through writing. The "About page" expresses the driving philosophy that underlies the project, which is that everyone has a story to tell and that they are the ones who can tell their stories best. Thus, this platform is provided for them to participate in the conversations about justice, freedom, equity, and social change through writing and artwork, while they use storytelling as a methodology. This space is aimed at enacting change through writing and publication via the internet and making the published materials openly accessible. The audience for this project ranges from the general public to scholars and students interested in community engagement, criminal justice work, and writing and literacy beyond the school.

How The SpeakOut! Online Operates

This project is a combination of about three genres –archive, website, and journal/blog/publication. Thus, my review will be based on each of the genres of the project. The SpeakOut! Online is an open-access digital project that has ten menu items. These items are Home, Submit Your Work, Permission to Publish, About SpeakOut!, SpeakOut! Journals, CSU's Community Literacy Center, Writing Resources, Donate, Contact Us, and Featured Artwork. The menu items are easy to navigate because they are boldly written and fixed at the top of any open page. This means that they do not move when a user is navigating the menu.

Clicking on the “HOME” menu takes the user/reader to short descriptions about the latest and the immediate past publications by the project. For instance, the latest publication is a collective piece that highlights the pieces of writing from participants/writers since 2006. Thus, this publication is a piece that celebrates the fifteenth anniversary of the SpeakOut! Project. This means that the project has been running for fifteen years now and still counting. Users who come across the milestones achieved by the project would be convinced about its sustainability and how well it has been managed by the project creators/administrators. The second menu item, which is “SUBMIT YOUR WORK,” calls for open-sourcing and its participants, who are “out,” are encouraged to turn in their work to be published. This page does not only provide space for participants turning in their work but also provides clear guidelines for how participants' work can get published or otherwise. The next menu item is where participants can access a form, “Permission to Publish,” to give their consent for their work to get published in the journal. The “About SpeakOut!” menu-item directs readers/users to what the project is about and its mission statement and goal. The next item of the menu is SpeakOut! Journal. This is where the published work can be accessed in pdf format. These pieces are downloadable which makes it easy for readers to access and

read. The next item on the menu provides information about the project being connected to Colorado State University, particularly its Community Literacy Center. This reveals that the project has affiliation with the University. The item that follows on the menu is “Writing Resources,” which provides a list of resources that are deemed useful to the project. The next item on the menu leads to where people can donate to support the project. This reveals that the project is not funded by the University though it is affiliated to the University, rather it depends on donations and grants. Because the creators of the project anticipate that some people might want to reach out to them, they have created an item on the menu that allows the administrators of the project to be contacted. The tenth and final item on the menu is where featured artwork is published though much artwork is published as any user would expect taking into consideration the fifteen-year existence of the project. All the sections of the project function effectively as expected by any user. This project’s site is responsive because its content can be accessed by mobile devices and tablets.

The online site which hosts the project is developed by the creators and powered by WordPress. In other words, the site is a blog hosted by wordpress.com. This means that not much programming or coding choices are needed or used in producing, maintaining, and running this project. The page of featured artwork provides space for artwork (which are done by hand) converted into digital formats to be published or exhibited on the site. Though digital conversion is done to the artwork, they do not lose their original form as they remain and look like pencil work. The interface of some of the pages has social media-enabled links —Facebook, Twitter, and Like— that users can use to circulate and distribute the content of this project to the public. In addition to that, some pages have a comment box enabled, which allows and encourages interaction between the project administrators and the audience. One thing that seems missing from the interface of the pages is links to the social media platforms or accounts of the projects. If it happens that there is no such social media for the projects, I

am of the opinion that it be created to enhance the interaction between the audience and the projects to promote circulation and distribution of the published work to reach a larger audience base. Throughout all the pages of the website, users are invited to subscribe to blogs to receive notifications anytime a blog is posted. Since the subscription is hosted on a website, not by an application, the subscribers are required to provide their emails in the notifications. Though this feature is a good idea, it seems people who do not have email addresses may not be able to subscribe for the blog.

The SpeakOut! Online As a Journal/Publication

SpeakOut! Online project serves as a publishing space for participants interested in getting their work published. Even in the academy, issues of publishing are major concerns that many people who want to get published always navigate. As the issues of publishing are worse among people outside academia, anyone would imagine how it might be for people who find themselves in places of confinement. It is this gap that SpeakOut! Online fills, as it provides space for the voices of the marginalized and underrepresented to be heard and to participate in conversations on justice, confinement, and social change. The journal section of this project publishes both artwork and written work of participants. The published journals seem very important to the project such that another section is programmed or designed in a way that makes the journals accessible on any page. Though artwork is published together with written work in the biannual journals in the pdf formats, there is a page solely dedicated to artwork. However, it seems that the publication of artwork on this page has been put on hold since the last time any artwork got published on this page was in 2014. For this confusion to be addressed, the creators of this project would want to take down the artwork page,

as they publish them in the journal. Alternatively, the creators can update the artwork page if they want it to do what it is designed to do.

The journal did its first publication in 2005 and has since been publishing contributions from its participants who are people in places of confinement –specifically, Larimer County Jail, Larimer County Work Release and Community Corrections, Alternative Homes for Youth and Turning Point. The SpeakOut! Project does its journal publication twice a year –Fall and Spring– since 2008, except in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2021. The years 2005, 2006, and 2007 mark the inception of the project, hence the project could publish a journal in each of those years. However, the single publication in 2021 can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. The consistent publication of journals by the project over a decade speaks a lot about the management and administrative strategies adopted by the project creators/administrators, and about the project’s significance to its intended audience and donors. The publications are made openly accessible and are formatted in pdf –which is easily downloadable. As the creators imagine that the over a hundred-page journal may be slow to download, they leave the reader/user a note about the possible delay that may happen in downloading the journals.

The SpeakOut! Online As an Archive

This project does not only publish participants’ work but also engages in the process of preserving the published work through web archiving. This process serves as the memory building for and with the participants regarding their work overtime, and for community consumption and referral in relation to issues of justice, incarceration, and social change, among other things. This project serves as an archive for writing resources that writers and the audience can use for their writing activities. The over-fifty sampled

writing prompts archived by this project serve a place for any writing facilitator to look toward for writing prompts for community literacy work. Furthermore, these writing prompts can be explored by scholars to examine how and why some contributions are produced. In other words, this could be an opportunity for a researcher to examine how these writing prompts impact the kind of contributions produced by participants in the project.

In addition, the project serves as an archive for published work. The page of “SpeakOut! Journals” is where published journals, since the inception of the project, are archived. Each published journal has its book cover as the image representing it, while the label of the published journal is enabled to lead to the downloadable content of the publication. The images are selected from the artwork of the participants and are designed nicely to attract the target audience. However, there seems to be a little work done to make them more suitable and compatible with the design of the journal. Another thing that is worth noting is that the stories that the images/visuals tell match with the central themes of their assigned published journal. The purpose of archiving these publications goes beyond just disseminating information about the amount of work done by the project facilitators and sharing the writing or artwork of the participants. It, most importantly, serves as the memory space for the work of people who, had it not been the SpeakOut! Online project, might not have their work published and/or their voices heard by the public. All the thirty-one journals published and archived in this project are easily accessible and easy to find since they are all found on the same page. This makes navigation between the journals easy and simple. SpeakOut! Online as an archive provides rich resources and materials for scholars who are interested in doing research for and with people in places of confinement. Many of the topical areas covered by the contributions in these publications include family and parenting, racial injustice, relationships and emotions, crime and justice, freedom and happiness, and systemic and institutional inequities.

Maintenance and Sustainability of The SpeakOut! Online

The sustainability of the project does not seem to be a problem for two reasons:

1. The length of the project and its consistency in publishing journals biannually, and
2. The hosting of the project on free WordPress. Since the project is hosted on free WordPress, there is not much technical work needed for the project's sustainability.

In case WordPress decides to go fee-paying, this project can easily be migrated onto a fee-paying platform without losing anything. Moreover, new materials can be added to the project from time to time, just as the creators do in terms of publishing new journals. Though the publications are updated frequently, some aspects of the projects seem to receive less attention from the creators/administrators. For instance, the last time that the Featured Artwork page was updated was in 2014, while the writing prompts were last updated in 2019. The SpeakOut! Online project will continue to have great impact on several fields such as, digital humanities, community engagement, criminal justice, and writing and rhetoric. The published work of the participants –people in places of confinement– and the archival materials, which are freely available on the internet, will remain valuable resources for scholarly work and pedagogy beyond the walls of the academy. Therefore, so long as the creators get donations and grants coming in, the SpeakOut! Online's long-term future is secure.

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Making Repulsive Monuments

BARRY JASON MAUER AND JOHN VENECEK

I. Introduction

The repulsive monument, a genre created by Gregory Ulmer, samples heterogenous materials from archives and curates these materials in provocative ways. Such monuments are repulsive because they memorialize the abject: losses resulting from the collective's behaviors but disowned by the collective. Repulsive monuments provide a platform for ordinary people to become "citizen curators" who investigate personal and collective memory in order to reveal the relationships between our values, behaviors, and losses. Repulsive monuments recognize as sacred those abject losses that result from our behaviors. By accepting and honoring such losses, we make possible the re-configuration of our identity and our values

Repulsive monuments treat abject losses as sacrifices made on behalf of collective well-being. Thus they re-situate our behaviors and losses from the mundane to the sacred realm. Georges Bataille explains that the sacred realm, which is at the core of identity, is governed by affective forces rather than by reasoned calculation. The sacred is the point "where repulsion becomes attraction" (Bataille & Hollier 103):

What constitutes the individual nucleus of every conglomerate of human society . . . is a set of objects, places, beliefs, persons, and practices that have a sacred character . . . Early humans beings were brought together by disgust and by common terror, by an insurmountable horror

focused primarily on what originally was the central attraction of their union (106).

Monuments have the power to transform repulsive materials into their opposite: “the transformation of a depressive content into an object of exaltation” (111). Repulsive monuments propose to transform abject losses into sacrifices that are recognized as essential for maintaining official values and conventional behaviors. Ulmer, for example, points to the abject losses caused by automobile collisions, which result from our collective investment in a transportation system primarily based on the use of personal vehicles (Ulmer “Abject monumentality” 9-15). Though some state governments have created roadside monuments dedicated to individual traffic deaths, the nation does not recognize those losses as a collective sacrifice necessary to sustain its values and behaviors. A repulsive monument to auto fatalities would declare that we are willing to die for the right to own a car and to drive virtually anywhere and at any time. Such a monument is repulsive because it points to our responsibility for these losses and to our own deaths. But this reaction—repulsion—also drives the affective forces of the monument.

The repulsive monument differs from official reports and demonstrations, though it may contain either of these forms. A repulsive monument relates problems in the real world to personal and collective identity. Unlike these other forms, the repulsive monument recognizes that human beings are rarely persuaded by facts and enlightenment reason. Instead, we are persuaded by our identifications, which exist within a psychic field of attractions and repulsions. The maker of a repulsive monument thus undergoes an ordeal by identifying the collective problem in herself by mapping it onto her psychic field of attractions and repulsions and then reporting on the experience.

2. Monuments as Cultural Archives

In addition to their identity-shaping functions, repulsive monuments, like many kinds of monuments, also serve as cultural archives. Monuments “direct us not simply to remember, but to remember in a certain light. They interpret the subjects they honor” and, in so doing, they create a kind of “civic mythology”(Upton 20). Because monuments identify specific deaths or losses as sacrifices on behalf of collective values, they “say more about the people, times, and places of their creation than they do about the people, times, and places they honor” (20). For example, 19th century French historians Michelet and Renan memorialized those murdered in the anti-Huguenot pogrom of 1572 as fratricidal sacrifices necessary for the emergence of the French nation, though this nation would not exist until centuries later and those involved had no understanding of themselves as either “Frenchmen” or “brothers.” Monumentalists like Michelet and Renan turn the victims of history into sacrifices for “the Nation ... even when these sacrifices were not understood as such by the victims” (Anderson 41). Monuments structure collective identity with appeals to identity; reason, when it appears, serves the interests of identification.

Repulsive monuments are unofficial; they are created by ordinary citizens rather than by state agents. These monuments take the form of exhibits that draw connections between heterogenous sacrifices, beliefs, and behaviors of their makers as well as of the collective in which the makers live. They are created using material from a variety of sources including digital archives, fair use photos, pop culture, and materials from personal collections such as scrapbooks and photo albums. We encourage our curators to experiment with their exhibits, to sample and recombine materials about our abject losses with specific information about ourselves. By experimenting with juxtapositions, we hope to create the conditions for our own epiphanies, to find unexpected ways of understanding our problems and of opening possible solutions.

The exhibits in repulsive monuments cross the conventional topoi of archival genres. We base our cross-topic method on Gregory Ulmer's theory of chora, which he defines as "a holistic ordering of topics into an electrated image system of categories" (2005, xx), "a space or region in which being and becoming interacted" (6), and "the crossing of chance and necessity whose nature may only be discerned indirectly in the names generated by a puncept¹ rather than as a concept (or paradigm), including the qualities associated with 'core' terms: chorus, choreography, chord, corral, coral" (39). Topics that might otherwise be considered extraneous are here treated as critically necessary to the project. Using Ulmer's choral method, we look for associations based upon puns and other forms of resemblance. From the choral method of gathering and arrangement, we make emblems of knowledge that become the basis for possible arguments.

Archival materials, the materials of daily life, and the materials of personal memory exist within a network of discourses Ulmer calls the "Popcycle":

"Popcycle" refers to the ensemble of discourses into which members of a society are "interpellated" . . . "Interpellation," nicknamed "hailing" or "appellation," refers to the social and psychological processes by which our identity is constructed . . .

The theory of "ideology" . . . classifies our identity into such categories as race, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, sexuality, nationality. We enter into or learn the beliefs and behaviors named by these terms in an interrelated set of institutions. The core or dominant institutions include: Family, Community (History), Entertainment (Ulmer "Internet invention" 24-5).

1. A "puncept" is Ulmer's term for a word that crosses discourses and produces a network of associations.

To these core institutions, Ulmer adds Discipline, which is the discourse that students struggle to accept as their own as they move into Career. These four areas—Family, Community, Entertainment, and Discipline—make up the popcycle, and the repulsive monument is a composition that traces a route through the popcycle. This tracing is aesthetic; it follows the route of the signifier, gathering materials from the four quadrants of the popcycle using puns, homonyms, figures, atmosphere (mood), and analogy. The popcycle tracing that makes up the repulsive monument has the power of epiphany, a surprise similar to the effect of getting a joke, though epiphany is not necessarily funny.

To make our repulsive monument, we draw lessons from remix culture, which commenced with cubist and Dadaist collages. We further sample and recombine materials about our abject losses with specific information about ourselves—called “scenes of instruction” and the “personal sacred”—and with the materials of our popcycle. By experimenting with juxtapositions, we hope to create the conditions for our own epiphanies, to find unexpected ways of understanding our problems and of opening possible solutions.

3. Appropriating an Official Monument

The first step in this process is to appropriate an existing monument, which represents an “official” loss recognized by a state or an established civic entity. We then juxtapose the official loss with an abject loss that serves as the basis for the repulsive monument. For our prototype, we selected the General Jubal A. Early SCV Camp #556 of Tampa, Florida. Billed as the “Home of the Unreconstructed Confederates,” their physical monument is located in “The Confederate Memorial Park,” directly below the I-75 / I-4 interchange. While the site looks unassuming from the ground, the location is clever because the 30' x 60' flag towers over one of the

busiest interchanges in the state of Florida. Every day, thousands of commuters circle the imposing flag as they head south on I-75.

The site is named after General Jubal A. Early, who served under Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee. Early is also credited with coining the term “Lost Cause” in an effort to justify the mission of the Confederacy. His goal was to shift the focus from the South’s defiant defense of slavery to a more heroic fight for state’s rights against the supposed tyranny of the north. While Early wrote about the Lost Cause in a series of articles for the Southern Historical Society, Jefferson Davis fleshed out the idea more fully in his influential, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*. The concept is now firmly enshrined in southern culture, and its rhetoric has been adopted by commemorative societies, such as the Unreconstructed Confederates, and is commonplace in their monuments and ceremonies.

While the Confederacy lost militarily, its ideology and politics have survived as evinced by the Republican Party’s use of the “southern strategy” and in the thousands of monuments inhabiting the physical and cultural landscape. To this point, Chuck Thompson notes that “The Civil War is the only conflict in history after which the losers were allowed to write the history” (Thompson). This has been accomplished, in part, by the proliferation of monuments that litter the landscape. The specific monument Thompson points to is located in the Abbeville, South Carolina, town square, which features an inscription that reads: “The world shall yet decide, in truth’s clear far-off light, that the soldiers who wore the gray and died with Lee were right” (Thompson). Similar declarations can be found on countless other Civil War sites, including the Jubal A. Early memorial, which proudly proclaims:

While the politically correct crowd tries to extinguish all symbols of the Confederacy, we proudly embrace the fact that our ancestors defiantly repelled the invading Yankee armies and honourably endured the tyranny of reconstruction (Jubal Early Camp).

The Confederacy's power over the American imagination represents an aporia, "which literally means 'without passage' or 'without resource,' but which in Plato commonly designates a state of confusion, puzzlement, an almost helpless feeling of bewilderment" (Anderson & Osborn 85).² The United States casts itself as an open and democratic society, yet within it, a significant neo-Confederate faction threatens that democracy. It is also difficult to excise this faction without risking the destruction of the nation's ethos, since Southern exceptionalism is a *mise-en-abyme* of American exceptionalism. We seek to understand how neo-Confederate apologists transformed the Confederacy's military loss into an ideological "win" by means of monuments. A century and a half after the defeat of the Confederacy, we ask why new Confederate monuments have continually emerged across the U.S. and why there is so much resistance to accepting the South's defeat.³

2. After the massacre in Charleston by white supremacist Dylann Roof, who adopted the flag of the Confederacy as his symbol, CNN conducted a poll. "About 57% of Americans see the Confederate flag more as a symbol of Southern pride than as a symbol of racism, the poll says. Opinions of the flag are sharply divided by race, and among whites, views are split by education" Jennifer Agiesta, CNN Polling Director July 2, 2015 "Poll: Majority sees Confederate flag as Southern pride symbol, not racist." Since the massacre, a few flags have come down from statehouses, but a neo-Confederate backlash is under way.
3. See Louwen's *Lies across America* for an overview of the

It is worth noting that, as we were writing this article, a horrific event occurred that thrust the Confederacy into the national spotlight. On June 17 2015, self-proclaimed white supremacist Dylann Roof entered the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina and killed nine African Americans during a Bible study session. Following this event, intense media scrutiny and public outrage led corporations such as Walmart, Amazon, and Ebay to stop selling merchandise with the Confederate logo. Likewise, NASCAR prohibited fans from displaying the flag at their races and TV Land pulled the Dukes of Hazard from their lineup after Warner Brothers announced they would no longer manufacture merchandise related to the show.

Additionally, the backlash led to the removal of the Confederate flag from the grounds of the South Carolina State House. While many people viewed this result as a victory, Michael Daly notes that the removal ceremony was not carried off as a source of shame. Rather, the flag was treated with the same reverence one would reserve for a fallen hero, with the South Carolina Honor Guard presiding over the event:

Two of the officers took the lowered banner in their white gloved hands. And for a moment, it seemed as if they might fold it as they would an American flag that had covered the coffin of a fellow cop or a U.S. soldier who had made the supreme sacrifice. Instead, they rolled it, presumably an echo of the way Confederate regiments furled their battle flags in surrender at the end of the Civil War (Daly 2015). Daly adds that, “For a second, truly terrible moment, the ritual was too much like that performed when the flag from a hero’s coffin is presented to a grieving loved one along with the words, ‘On behalf of a grateful nation ...’” (Daly).

pseudo-historical revisionism promoted by the neo-Confederate movement.

The flag was then transported to the South Carolina Relic Room and Military Museum where its future is still to be determined. Not insignificantly, they did not remove the Confederate Soldier's Monument that was adjacent to the flag. The Monument includes an inscription that can only be described as an ode to the Lost Cause (see appendix).

Those who defend the flag and related monuments often invoke the heritage preservation narrative in their defense. This narrative attempts to recast the racist origins of the Confederacy into more palatable terms of cultural heritage. Confederate soldiers did not die in an effort to preserve the institution of slavery, the revised narrative claims; rather, they died defending the south against the tyranny of the north. In fact, the bill that afforded legal protection to the Confederate flag on the grounds of the South Carolina State House was called the "South Carolina Heritage Act." The concept of heritage is not exclusive to the Confederate movement. Sommer and Forley state that

History-making begins by opening the past to scrutiny. Heritage ... makes the past familiar and consumable. The monument is the medium, and monument-making is the process through which not only to measure the vagaries that exist between history and heritage but also to understand the consequences of substituting one for the other (Sommer & Forley 150). Histories, they say, "are constantly being amended and are part of the critical process by which democracy is renewed" (155). Further, "these histories illuminate the nation's unfinished and hard-fought movement toward a more expansive definition of human rights and social emancipation" (155). The shift from history to heritage is an attempt to frame history in more congenial terms and to create a less expansive definition. However, such definitions fail to account for the complexities of historical events, including the racism at the heart of the Confederacy. Instead, the cultural heritage narrative

attempts to re-frame a contentious historical debate in more friendly terms of a mythic past that exists primarily in the imaginations of contemporary southerners. As Sommer and Forley conclude, “The function of commemorative forms such as a monument or a trail is not primarily retrospective or regenerative, but prospective and contingent, causing us to be mindful of the myriad ways in which history can actually be made” (156). Monuments, then, create an air of fixity and authority to a group’s interpretation of a past, which can be viewed as a form of modern myth-making.

This point recalls one made by Dell Upton, who states that monuments say more about their creators than they do about those they seek to commemorate. Monuments are constructed during times of conflict and transformation and can be understood “as reassertions of values that monument builders believed needed to be reinforced amid turmoil” (Upton 20). Historically marginalized groups have put pressure on white supremacists to yield to demands for social and economic justice. Feeling threatened, white supremacists have sought to reinforce their values and their dominance through their “Lost Cause religion.”

Lost Causers unite around the sacred: rituals that include the display of Confederate flags, uniforms, guns, and songs such as “Dixie,” “Sweet Home Alabama,” and “Free Bird.” The quality of sacredness puts any object, person, place, symbol, or ritual beyond the reach of reason. By declaring their values and rituals sacred, neo-Confederates render themselves virtually immune from argument. Thus our repulsive monument, like Confederate monuments, competes in the realm of the sacred.⁴

4. Repulsive monuments may contain arguments, but these arguments are parts of the overall puzzle and not the whole picture.

4. The Relationship of Abject Loss to Scenes of Instruction and the Personal Sacred⁵

Once we have chosen an official monument to incorporate in our repulsive monument, we choose both an abject loss and a set made up of the creator's personal sacred. Michel Leiris's concept of the personal sacred brings seemingly incommensurable places, objects, rituals, legends, spectacles, and events into relation. As I work on the repulsive monument, aspects of my personal sacred that were once trivial now make the Confederacy (officially mourned) and climate change (abject loss) more intelligible as parts of an emblem of knowledge. A poetic understanding, rather than a strictly deductive or inductive logic, governs the process of creating the repulsive monument from these components: the appropriated official monument, the abject loss, and my personal sacred.

Michel Leiris describes how the sacred, which includes both the collective and the personal sacred, awakens a mixture of fear and attachment and that it appears only in bits and pieces made up of particular places, objects, rituals, legends, spectacles, and events of language (Leiris "The Sacred" 24-31). For Leiris, the sacred often resides in places where the meaning of language slips; in other words, the child, believing he has gotten control of language, uses language only to be corrected. The sacred belongs to the material world but also to a mythological world. We usually identify the sacred with official culture, but Leiris distinguishes this official sacred from a personal sacred, held by individuals or by small groups, that creates a private understanding of the world. Childhood is the best place to look for it, Leiris argues; once we mature, we typically lose our connection to the personal sacred in order to conform to the greater society. Within both the personal and the official sacred are the right hand pole, identified with

5. In this section, Mauer takes over in first person voice.

authority, and the left hand pole, identified with the illicit. Leiris identifies the right hand pole with the drawer where his father kept a gun and the left hand pole with the toilet, the site where he and his brother invented secret myths about the underworld.

Leiris' work implies that if we maintain our grasp on the personal sacred into life beyond childhood, we will be less vulnerable to the pull of the narratives fueling fascism. As Reverend Davidson Loehr wrote, "Fascism is a kind of colonization. A simple definition of 'colonization' is that it takes people's stories away, and assigns them supportive roles in stories that empower others at their expense"(Loehr 88).

My goal is to understand the origins and leverage points in my beliefs. Robert Cialdini, author of *Influence: Science and Practice*, explains that beliefs "grow legs"(Cialdini 83). We adopt a new belief or behavior for an initial reason, but new reasons can emerge, providing greater resolve. The story of my evolving diet fits Cialdini's model. Though I grew up eating meat, I have been an ovo-lacto pescetarian (meaning I eat plants, dairy and seafood) since I was 18 years old. I began this diet for one reason: my roommate decided to change his diet and asked me to join him.

Comradeship was the only "leg" supporting my belief. In time, I came to see meat as repulsive; I realized it was a piece of animal corpse. As my diet persisted, I justified it in new ways: it was healthier; it addressed the ethical problems I had about killing animals; and it was less resource intensive and thus better for the environment. Once my roommate moved out, the first belief leg supporting my commitment fell away, but the others had established themselves. New belief legs, such as my recent awareness of the link between ruminant livestock and methane-generated climate change, continue to appear and grow.

Despite my liberal politics, I encountered two texts when I was young that make the Confederacy strangely appealing to me: The Band's song "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" and Buster Keaton's film *The General*. I heard "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" when I was five years old. I had no idea who "Dixie" was

(I thought it was a woman) or why they “drove her down.” Later I learned that the song was written by a Canadian, Robbie Robertson, and sung by his band mate, Levon Helm, who was Arkansan. In the song, a Confederate soldier named Virgil Kane, who says nothing of the Confederacy’s causes, laments its defeat and the death of his brother. But for Kane, the South will not rise again: “You can’t raise a Kane back up when he’s in defeat.” The song manages to be both mythic and personal at the same time with its narrator’s pledge of loyalty to “the mud beneath my feat.” The feeling of the song—a mixture of grief, anger, and pride—is undeniably powerful, regardless of the politics involved in the historical situation.

Buster Keaton’s film *The General* promotes heroism, but does little to promote Confederate ideology. The protagonist tries to enlist in the Confederate army because his girlfriend will not speak to him until he is in uniform. I saw the film while in my teens and was enthralled with its daring action sequences, but decades later I could not recall if the hero fought for the North or South; I was confused because the ideology of national history tells us that the South was heroic but the North was good and a protagonist has to be both.

Growing up in suburban Minnesota, I was exposed to racism in a peculiar way. Everyone in my school was “white” except for one Asian kid and one black kid, both adopted by white parents. The white kids in first grade started using the word “nigger.” I had never heard it before and had no idea it historically applied to black people. I thought it was an innocuous insult, like “doofus.” I didn’t realize it was a part of a history, going back hundreds of years, of dehumanizing black people and justifying their abuse and elimination. In that first grade moment, the racist character of the nation was both revealed to me and concealed from me. I was introduced to its terminology, but lacked appreciation of its toxicity. When I used the term “nigger” at home, my parents corrected me about its meaning and forbade me from using it.

Before I moved from Minnesota to Northern Florida in 1992, I knew that many southerners identified with the Confederacy, but

I later learned that they claimed to connect with the supposed “romance” of the Confederacy rather than to its politics. Northerners, by contrast, failed to create a romantic myth for their cause, seeing nothing heroic about having to kill their former (former) countrymen. As Keaton said, explaining why his hero in *The General* is a Confederate, “it’s awful hard to a motion picture audience, for some reason, to make heroes out of Northerners” (Feinstein). Movies taught me to love heroism⁶, but not enough to make me want to die for a cause. Like Keaton’s protagonist, I wanted to survive and to be respected and war puts both desires into stark relief.

As a child, I learned about war through a game. My family lived in Roseville, Minnesota, a suburb north of St. Paul. We were one of the only Jewish families there. (I saw a map, made by an Israeli official who was there to recruit Jews to do Aliyah; travel to Israel. There were two dots in Roseville. One was our family.) The neighborhood kids and I played a modified game of hide and seek called Gestapo, a word I had never heard before but that fascinated me. I knew nothing of the Holocaust, but I had vaguely understood that Nazis were bad, not understanding until much later that their war in Europe was a pretext for carrying out genocide. My brother and I

6. “In . . . [Ur-Fascism] everybody is educated to become a hero. In every mythology the hero is an exceptional being, but in Ur-Fascist ideology heroism is the norm. . . . In nonfascist societies, the lay public is told that death is unpleasant but must be faced with dignity; believers are told that it is the painful way to reach a supernatural happiness. By contrast, the Ur-Fascist hero craves heroic death, advertised as the best reward for a heroic life. The Ur-Fascist hero is impatient to die. In his impatience, he more frequently sends other people to death” (Eco, 58).

played Gestapo with the other kids. Of course, playing the Gestapo, or seeker, part of the game felt more powerful. Only when we told our parents what we were playing did I learn about the real Gestapo and our family's escape from them in Europe. Because of their traumatic associations, my parents insisted we stop playing the game or else change its name. Our friends will reject us, my brother and I protested, but we told our friends about our parents' demand and they agreed to change the name to "Capture the Flag." In sixth grade, my teacher showed our class Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog*. The film haunts me to this day, but one more sense impression would have made it totally real: the smell of putrid bodies.

Putrid bodies belong to the realm of the illicit. As a child, I found nothing so fascinating or so funny as farts and burps. Among adults or in company, they were forbidden, but these taboos made farting and burping that much more sacred. My father's medical colleague, a gastroenterologist, collected and analyzed farts. His patients farted into plastic bags and then mailed them to the doctor, who analyzed them to determine the maladies each patient suffered. My brother and I found every part of the scenario hilarious to imagine, including the scene at the post office ("anything hazardous or perishable?"), opening the package ("what is this?"), and the lab analysis ("does this smell bad to you?").

The idea of wind in a bag has been with us for thousands of years. In *The Odyssey*, Book X, Odysseus receives a bag of wind from Aeolis who lives on the island of Aeoli, to help blow Odysseus back home. But his men betray him.

*"They loosed the sack, whereupon the wind flew
howling forth and raised a storm that carried us weeping
out to sea and away from our own country."*

The wind is also something we sow and reap, as in Hosea 8:7:

“For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.”

Now we must rethink “wind in a bag” again. My personal sacred—the illicit attraction/repulsion with flatulence—connects me to the abject loss caused by greenhouse gases. The meat industry, it turns out, is killing the planet:

According to a report last year by two former World Bank experts, more than half of all carbon emissions come from the livestock industry that supports the meat economy. Those emissions are related to everything from transportation to land use to excretion to petroleum-based fertilizers that generate animal feed. The more meat our society consumes, the more these carbon emissions continue, the more we intensify climate change, and the more we imperil human survival on the planet (Sirota).

Newly compiled information reveals that the flatulence of ruminant livestock, cows in particular, is a major source of greenhouse gas (Ripple et al). The Earth’s atmosphere can be compared to a bag, and we are filling it with cow flatulence. The methane released in ruminant flatulence—human bodies emit little methane—is vastly

more potent as a greenhouse gas⁷ than carbon dioxide. There is a direct link between human behavior (i.e. meat eating) and its consequence: catastrophic climate change. But meat eating entails the repression of disgust and thus the repression of consequences.

“To put it crudely, the current memory stinks just as an actual object may stink; and just as we turn away our sense organ (the head and nose) in disgust, so do the preconscious and our conscious apprehension turn away from the memory. This is repression” (Ulmer “Applied Grammatology” 53).

My awareness of the link between meat eating and climate change is the most recent “leg” supporting my commitment to a non-meat diet. From here, I make a detour to another scene (or scent) of odor, this one taken from the writing of a Confederate prisoner on burial duty:

“The sights and smells that assailed us were simply indescribable—corpses swollen to twice their original size, some of them actually burst asunder with the pressure of foul gases and vapors . . . The odors were nauseating and so deadly that in a short time we all sickened . . . most of us vomiting profusely” (Williams 228).

7. As a greenhouse gas, methane is approximately 80 times more potent than carbon over 20 years.

What has my repulsive monument process revealed? An epiphany in the form of a bad pun: human ex-stink-shun. Without smelling the “stink,” will we accept that our own extinction is at hand? Unfortunately, methane is an odorless gas, which makes it even more deadly. Gas companies add an ingredient to commercial methane to alert people to a leak. Unless we smell it, we will not ask, “Did he who smelt it dealt it?”

5. Building the Repulsive Monument

Our Lost Cause monument incorporates “whole” the Jubal A. Early monument as its “official” sacred. Because of copyright laws, we are limited to the use of fragments of the online site in our own work, but the link to the website within our project stands for the entirety of the Jubal A. Early monument, both online and onsite. We juxtapose the Jubal A. Early monument with a “peripheral”—bags of methane, accompanied by the odor of cow farts and rotting corpses.⁸ These bags will sit by an electronic gas meter that represents the tonnage of methane being released into the atmosphere. Finally, we provide an exhibit of our own archival materials about the Confederacy, meat, climate change, and our personal sacred.

In designing our repulsive monument, we drew lessons from remix culture, which commenced with cubist and Dadaist collages.

8. The “peripheral” need not be at the Jubal A. Early monument itself, but can be located online and in any physical location. We need only declare that our peripheral is to be understood in relationship to the Jubal A. Early monument.

We sampled and recombined materials about our abject losses with specific information about ourselves—called “scenes of instruction” and the “personal sacred”—and with the materials of our popcycle. By experimenting with juxtapositions, we hoped to create the conditions for our own epiphanies, to find unexpected ways of understanding our problems, and of opening possible solutions.

The repulsive monument project requires space to play with the components of national identity by working with archival material. An Open Source platform or one of many social media outlets will work. Many archives are already using these outlets in innovative ways⁹ to allow users to link institutional collections to personal domains and provide members of the community the opportunity to curate their own exhibits. The potential also exists for citizen curators to combine archival materials with artifacts from their personal collections (photo albums, scrap books, etc.) to further link institutional archives to the community.

After experimenting with several options, including WordPress and Omeka, we settled on a platform called Comic Life. Unlike the other options we tried, this program allows any image(s) to be combined with any text(s), but it has the advantage of allowing us to put words in people’s mouths, making the subjects of our work come alive and creating dialogues across subjects. We can also include a narratorial voice that comments on and connects the elements remixed from the archives and from personal experience.

The process of making repulsive monuments creates a liminal space that can transform identity. We usually mark personal transformations with rituals such as marriages, graduations, and retirement parties (Turner), but these types of transformations often have a pre-defined outcome. Designers of repulsive

9. See, for example, U.S. National Archives on Tumblr, the Library of Congress on Flickr, and the New York Historical Society on Pinterest.

monuments, however, take a more poetic approach without knowing how their components of identity will coalesce. Repulsive monuments provide a metaphorical, or poetic, means to understand a series of relationships linking private responsibility, public memory, and the external costs of personal and collective behaviors.¹⁰

One of the benefits to this kind of project is that it can be expanded indefinitely. As we expand the archival content in the monument, we will have the opportunity to work with collections at our home institution. The University of Central Florida Special Collections has processed African American Legacy: the Carol Mundy Collection. The collection consists of books, manuscripts, sheet music, pamphlets, journals, newspapers, broadsides, posters, photographs and ephemera, which all speak to the black experience in America. The Mundy collection also provides a natural link to the Confederate monument we have appropriated, not only because of its focus on African American memorabilia, but also because it includes an array of racist ephemera, including Confederate money, slave papers, Civil War documents, and several items related to the KKK. These artifacts contrast with the revisionist narrative promoted by the Jubal A. Early monument, which strives to reframe the racist roots of the Confederate party in terms of cultural heritage¹¹. The Mundy collection, then, serves the dual purpose of

10. Dr. Mauer has been teaching students to make abject memorials since 1993. For a recent example of student work, please see “Teaching the Repulsive Memorial.”
11. The final episode of Joss Whedon’s television series, *Firefly*, introduces a sadistic black bounty hunter named Jubal Early. Ulmer’s theory explains the ways in which cultural materials change purpose and meaning as they circulate through the Popcycle.

allowing us to undermine the false narrative purported by modern Confederates and to connect these materials to our personal sacred stories. Just as Dr. Mauer made the unlikely connection between the Confederacy, meat consumption, and climate change, so too will others have the opportunity to curate their own repulsive monuments by selecting an abject loss and elements from their personal sacred narratives. The process accomplishes one of the primary goals of this project: to encourage curatorial pioneers to radically rethink how to remix archival materials in novel ways.

6. Read the Repulsive Monument Comic

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Appendix

Inscription on the Confederate monument that stands on the grounds of the South Carolina State House:

This monument perpetuates the memory of those who true to the instincts of their birth, faithful to the teachings of their fathers, constant in the love for their state, died in the performance of their duty; who have glorified a fallen cause by the simple manhood of their lives, the patient endurance of suffering, and the heroism of death; and who in the dark hours of imprisonment, in the

hopelessness of the hospital, in the short, sharp agony of the field found support and consolation in the belief that at home they would not be forgotten.

Let the stranger, who may in future times read this inscription, recognize that these were men whom power could not corrupt, whom death could not terrify, whom defeat could not dishonor; and let their virtues plead for just judgment of the cause in which they perished. Let the South Carolinian of another generation remember that the state taught them

how to live and how to die, and that from her broken fortunes she has reserved for her children the priceless treasure of their memories, teaching all who may claim the same birthright that truth, courage, and patriotism endure forever.

May 13, 1879

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Building Urban Publics

JOHN MONBERG

The Our Michigan Ave website is a timely space for deliberation as hundreds of millions of dollars of development projects are underway in Greater Lansing. Our connections to planners, developers, government officials, and community organizations positioned the Our Michigan Ave site to be a rich space for public deliberation.

Students in my Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities “Power, Culture, and Identity in the Global City” course identified more than 100 ways to improve major urban projects in Greater Lansing and crafted dozens of principles that should shape the future direction of Greater Lansing.

This project situates Greater Lansing within the challenges of a post-industrial economy in an era of globalization. There is a perception that Greater Lansing has been left behind in the move toward creative cities. Over the course of more than five years, I’ve worked with students to identify the profound cultural differences in how various groups in Greater Lansing define the value of a good community, imagine the future, and express collective political voice. We have produced a website that connects the kind of creative class initiatives—authentic sense of place, dense and diverse zoning, green transportation and energy policies—to Greater Lansing’s distinctive experience. We found that profound cultural differences, lack of trust, economic challenges and political differences have resulted in very few creative class initiatives being implemented over the past decade.

Because of our cultural and technical work, my students and I created an opportunity to produce the kind of rhetorical resource vital for a community to successfully adapt to a new economic reality. To fulfill this opportunity, I managed a series of projects to create the Our Michigan Ave website. This new media space

supports community conversations, initiatives, and visions for regional cooperation.

Every organization and corporation cares about its relationships with audiences, stakeholders and users. We can build these relationships better only by working across and integrating five important steps: 1) powerful theories of power, culture and identity; 2) sophisticated methods of user research; 3) topical disciplinary knowledge; 4) technical skills for making things; and 5) the ability to circulate things, collect feedback from audience engagement, and iterate across all these steps to reflexively inform theories of power, culture and identity. I've worked with students, colleagues, and community stakeholders to craft spaces for community participation in the urban design process to integrate all five of these steps.

This blog post is broken into the following sections:

- Humanities Tools to Understand and Represent Community
- Contemporary Urban Design Methods
- Civic Software Development
- Greater Lansing Community Stakeholders
- MSU Infrastructure + Expertise
- Theories of Agency, Deliberation, and Democracy

The role of the humanities in driving the design process of urban life has taken on increasing importance by developing a common vision across values, representing interest groups, mediating technical knowledge, and mediating the ethical frameworks vital to good city life.

True to the spirit of collaboration across networks of expertise, this blog post aims at making connections so that humanities methods for understanding community can connect with urban planning visions for postindustrial cities.

The broader mission of the Our Michigan Ave website is:

- An awareness of ideas and case studies that have worked in other cities for a broader future vision

Silo-breaking: connecting ideas across experts in transportation, zoning, environmental impact, economic development, urban design

An opportunity to connect individuals with shared interests into a group

A space for a political voice to improve regional decision making

Humanities Tools to Understand and Represent Community

I've looked for ways that photographers and filmmakers represent how communities are transformed by larger economic forces, to give students models that they can use to craft visual representations of Greater Lansing. Cultural methods developed by the following artists were integrated into the Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities "Power, Culture, and Identity in the Global City" course:

LaToya Ruby Frazier has spent decades refining her sensibility to represent the policies that defined the racial divisions in the industrial community of Braddock, Pennsylvania. Her work was profiled in an essay in the *New Yorker* and a TED talk:



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-1>

Camilo Vergara is a photographer who has worked for decades

to document the lived experience of residents of Detroit, Chicago, Gary, Newark, and Harlem: “For more than four decades I have devoted myself to photographing and documenting the poorest and most segregated communities in urban America. I feel that a people’s past, including their accomplishments, aspirations and failures, are reflected less in the faces of those who live in these neighborhoods than in the material, built environment in which they move and modify over time. Photography for me is a tool for continuously asking questions, for understanding the spirit of a place, and, as I have discovered over time, for loving and appreciating cities. My focus is on established East Coast cities such as New York, Newark and Camden; rust belt cities of the Midwest such as Detroit and Chicago; and Los Angeles and Richmond, California. I have photographed urban America systematically, frequently returning to re-photograph these cities over time. Along the way I became a historically conscious documentarian, an archivist of decline, a photographer of walls, buildings, and city blocks. Bricks, signs, trees, and sidewalks have spoken to me the most truthfully and eloquently about urban reality.”



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-2>

Frederick Wiseman has spent decades crafting a methodology for portraying social institutions. Asked how his films serve as a window on American culture, Wiseman replies, “My films are subjective, impressionistic accounts of some aspect of American culture...My movies are more novelistic than journalistic or

ideological in their approach. I always try to reflect the complexity and ambiguity of the place that is the subject of the film, rather than have ideological blinders on and try to present a particular political or social point of view. I've never found any ideology that adequately explains the complex events I've come across while making these films. It would be phony for me to offer solutions or explanations when I haven't found any I believe in. I instead try to supply the audience with enough material to help them make up their own minds by placing them in the events and asking them to think through their own relationship to what they're seeing and hearing."



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-3>

Grace Lee Boggs was one of the nation's oldest human rights activists, who waged a war of inspiration for civil rights, labor, feminism, the environment and other causes for seven decades with an unflagging faith that revolutionary justice was just around the corner, died on Monday at her home in Detroit. She was 100. Born to Chinese immigrants, Ms. Boggs was an author and philosopher who planted gardens on vacant lots, founded community organizations and political movements, marched against racism, lectured widely on human rights and wrote books on her evolving vision of a revolution in America.



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from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

[https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/
makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-4](https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-4)

Dawoud Bey is a photographer and educator whose portraits of people, many from marginalized communities, compel viewers to consider the reality of the subjects' own social presence and histories. Through his expansive approach to photography—which includes deep engagement with his subjects and museum-based projects—Bey is making institutional spaces more accessible to the communities in which they are situated. Bey embarked on what would become an ongoing series of portraits of high school students. He made his artistic practice more public and accessible, involving the students in shaping their own representations and working in a semi-public studio. The resultant large-scale, multiple-image works are powerful expressions of the youthful subjects' respective individualities, still in the throes of being formed and negotiated. Bey expanded on this project in [Class Pictures](#) (2002–2006), a body of work produced in collaboration with young people and institutions throughout the United States. In addition to playing a role in the construction of their psychologically rich portraits, the students provided written texts about themselves to accompany Bey's photographs of them, creating another layer of evocative self-definition. The exhibitions, public programming, and educational outreach Bey conceived as components of *Class Pictures* turned the museum into a vehicle for creating a closer relationship between institutions, youth, and the communities they inhabit.



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-5>

Contemporary Urban Design Methods

I wanted students to couple a cultural understanding of a community with a toolkit of sophisticated urban design concepts that enhance a communities sustainability, creativity, environmental qualities, and economic innovation.

I incorporated a number of important urbanists.

Majora Carter wove personal family experience, a history of public policy decision making, and building a capacity for community voices into the most compelling TED talk I've encountered. She is a visionary voice in city planning who views urban renewal through an environmental lens. The South Bronx native draws a direct connection between ecological, economic and social degradation. Hence her motto: "Green the ghetto!" With her inspired ideas and fierce persistence, Carter managed to bring the South Bronx its first open-waterfront park in 60 years, Hunts Point Riverside Park. Then she scored \$1.25 million in federal funds for a greenway along the South Bronx waterfront, bringing the neighborhood open space, pedestrian and bike paths, and space for mixed-use economic development:



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-6>

Jan Gehl has worked for decades in Copenhagen to develop an iterative, community-led design process that has transformed Copenhagen from a car-clogged city to a dense, creative, vibrant city whose public spaces contribute to economic development:



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-7>

Jeanne Gang

I've worked to draw on similar ideas from Chicago. I've talked with Gia Biagi who develops methods for community design and I'm using Studio Gang's methodology for activating urban spaces in my GSAH 230 Power, Culture, and Identity in the Global City Course. Studio Gang has developed a number of community project, especially the Memphis Riverfront Concept community histories project and the dorm at the University of Chicago Campus North Residential Commons designed to support informal interactions for both students and Hyde Park community

members. Studio Gang is central to the US Pavilion Biennale Architettura 2018 in Venice; Dimensions of Citizenship:



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here: <https://openbooks.lib.msu.edu/makingsensedh/?p=206#oembed-8>

Many urban design ideas were presented in 2018 at Detroit's Public X Design conference.

Civic Software Development

The network of community connections and critical mass of urban improvement ideas form the foundation of the Our Michigan Ave website. Student in my Advanced Web Authoring class will improve their coding skills by conducting user interviews, developing users stories, implementing test-driven development, and crafting interactive features to meet community member needs. My students' work has been informed by several important methods for civic software development, including Experimental Modes of Civic Engagement in Civic Tech, Understanding Civil Society Portals and the Art Loop Experience project. There is a rich set of specialized expertise, shared values and vision, but also a distinctive skill set, space, technology, network of people, and institutional formed to support a sophisticated technical software development capacity using Ruby on Rails. Ruby on Rails has a fairly

extensive learning curve. Each element has its own syntax, its own tools, its own software environment and its own support community. Here is a list of some relevant skills that I've gained: Ruby object-oriented programming language; [HTML](#), [CSS](#) and Javascript; Unix operating system of files, permissions, commands, tools; Capistrano to deploy a rails site to a live server; versioning systems for maintainability, security, collaboration; SQL database management; user authorization, configuration, testing; agile processes to connect user needs through iterative development. I've assembled a large number of [MSU](#) resources to create a rich software development capacity.

Greater Lansing Community Stakeholders

I've drawn on these community design methods to create a network of community stakeholders in Greater Lansing and I've worked to build a technical infrastructure to support iterative web development. Over the next semester, we will refine a space for community members of Greater Lansing to do the hard work of moving from an industrial urban form to the kind of spaces needed for a city to successfully meet the challenges of globalization. Here are some of the community partners I've worked with, including short descriptions of their missions.

Lansing Economic Area Partnership

The Lansing Economic Area Partnership ([LEAP](#)) is a coalition of area leaders committed to building a prosperous and vibrant region where businesses can thrive. To do this, we help entrepreneurs start new businesses, help existing businesses grow, and attract new businesses to the region.

Michigan Department of Transportation

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for Michigan's 9,669-mile state highway system, comprised of all M, I, and US routes. MDOT also administers other state and federal transportation programs for aviation, intercity passenger services, rail freight, local public transit services, the Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDEF), and others.

Tricounty Regional Planning Commission

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is a public planning agency established in 1956, serving Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties in Mid-Michigan. Tri-County makes our region a more prosperous community by planning for a strong economy, reliable transportation, and sustainable infrastructure and natural resources. We are dedicated leaders and innovators, connecting local organizations and governments to funding, technical assistance, data resources, and opportunities to discuss trends and challenges affecting the Greater Lansing area.

East Lansing Info

East Lansing Info, known as ELi, is a non-profit citizen-run local news cooperative of the people, by the people, and for the people of East Lansing, Michigan. We are recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit by the IRS, so financial donations are tax-deductible. ELi provides free, local, non-partisan, accurate news and information about East Lansing, including reports on our local public schools, clubs,

businesses, economic and governmental activities, arts events, and so forth.

Lansing Creative Placemaking Summit

Perhaps best defined by Artscape, Toronto, “Creative Placemaking is an evolving field of practice that intentionally leverages the power of the arts, culture and creativity to serve a community’s interest while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation in a way that also builds character and quality of place.”

Lansing Department of Neighborhoods and Civic Engagement

Neighborhoods are the heartbeat of our city. Mayor Schor’s first executive order was to make neighborhoods a top priority by creating a Department of Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement (DNCE). This new Department places neighborhoods front and center in the administration. He appointed Director Andi Crawford to lead the DNCE and the Executive Order was unanimously passed by City Council. Director Crawford and her team are in the community working directly with citizens. The DNCE’s role in the city is to support neighborhoods by convening community dialogues, delivering capacity building trainings, and connecting civic organizations to resources. The DNCE also facilitates the creation of organizations and helps them build capacity so that they can advocate for the changes and developments they wish to see in their neighborhoods.

Arts Council of Greater Lansing

The Arts Council of Greater Lansing exists to support, strengthen and promote arts, culture and creativity in the Capital Region. Transforming communities and lives through the power of creative expression.

East Lansing Neighborhoods

East Lansing is home to 25 close-knit neighborhoods. A charming mix of historic and modern neighborhoods are nestled among tree-lined streets, pocket parks, exceptional schools and public amenities. The City of East Lansing actively supports neighborhood associations through the East Lansing Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative. The program provides opportunities to help enhance a neighborhood's character and quality of life through active community engagement. The goal is to support citizenship, foster two-way communication and build community by taking a new approach to neighborhood support and outreach.

Allen Neighborhood Center

Allen Neighborhood Center is a place-based organization that serves as a hub for neighborhood revitalization and for activities that promote the health and well-being of Lansing's Eastside community and other stakeholders.

East Lansing Technology Innovation Center

Entrepreneurs fuel our passion. We proudly provide our members with collaborative workspace, programmatic support, and vital resources that grow their technology-based startups and early-stage companies. Today, we continue to be home to technology startup companies, offering them support and space to grow their ideas. Our members have direct access to resources within the MSU Innovation Center, as well as Michigan State University's campus. Our focus: your success. We connect our members with a vast network of area professionals, community resources, and venture capitalists. We offer the space to explore your ideas, take creative risks, and grow your network.

Lansing Makers Network

The Lansing Makers Network exists to bring diverse people, experiences, and ideas together in a safe environment; to meld technology, art, and culture in new and exciting ways; to share skills, tools, and inspiration; and to marvel at what we make together.

MSU Infrastructure + Expertise

The culture of MSU is shaped by its size, its research focus, and its history as the pioneer land-grant university. This scale allows for many specialized kinds of expertise. Here is a list of some of the wide range of programs I've worked with:

Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures

Provides the first year writing experience for most MSU students. We also have a successful major in Professional Writing and share the Experience Architecture major with Art, Art History and Design preparing excellent communicators in the culturally, technologically, and economically dynamic environments of the early 21st Century. Our researchers are national leaders in digital writing, cultural rhetoric, literacy studies, composition, and professional writing. Our faculty lead research groups such as the Writing, Information and Digital Experience (WIDE) Research Center, the Digital Publishing Lab, and Matrix, the Center for Humane Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences Online.

Experience Architecture

Students studying Experience Architecture are forward-thinkers and are interested in gaining advanced skills in architecting or designing experiences for people in digital and physical environments. The Experience Architecture program gives students exposure to aspects of maneuvering and creating web sites or apps such as designing, coding, writing and digital rhetoric. Due to this ‘well-rounded’ nature of the major, XA students are prepared for careers in user experience, interaction design, usability, information architecture, design research, content management, project management, and application development.

Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities

is a program offering an undergraduate major and minor, as well as a graduate certificate, in Michigan State University's College of Arts and Letters. It is a faculty-driven collaborative committed to achieving a broad, rich, and inclusive engagement with global issues and to fruitfully exploring and expanding cooperative interdisciplinary teaching and research opportunities within and beyond the College of Arts and Letters. Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities makes an important intervention into conceptualizations of 'the global' – conceptualizations that often focus solely on economic and political conditions. Recognizing the complexities of cultural interaction and exchange, [GSAH](#) foregrounds the role of the Arts and Humanities in recognizing and understanding how global conditions and concerns affect our experiential and intellectual existence.

CAL Technology Office

collaborates with faculty in the College of Arts and Letters to provide support for technology and innovation projects and initiatives with a focus on teaching, learning and research.\

The Hub

The Hub is not a resource center, not a technology incubator, not an internal grants agency, and not (precisely) a center for teaching and learning. We are set up to be a design group working in partnership with our colleagues in programs, departments, and colleges. In this way, the Hub was imagined as a change agent.

Center for Community and Economic Development

The Center for Community and Economic Development is committed to creating, applying, and disseminating valued knowledge through responsive engagement, strategic partnerships, and collaborative learning. We are dedicated to empowering communities to create sustainable prosperity and an equitable economy.

Digital Scholarship Lab

A partnership between the Michigan State University Libraries and the College of Arts & Letters, the Digital Scholarship Lab is an 8,000-square-foot space in the Main Library, featuring a 360-degree immersive visualization room that accommodates up to 20 students along with a Virtual Reality room for experimentation with [VR](#) headsets. The lab includes dedicated lab space and informal gathering areas to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration. Students in every major may use the advanced and graphics-intensive computing software and interactive visualization for research projects and scholarly exploration.

MSU Broad Art Lab

The MSU Broad Art Lab pilot project welcomes the MSU and greater Lansing community to experiment with us as we break outside the confines of the museum walls. Offering unprecedented access to our growing collection of nearly 8,000 objects, this laboratory houses exhibitions, workshops, events, and social gatherings

designed for individual and collective interactions with art and culture.

A testing ground by design, the Art Lab is a space where looking, learning, and socializing become tools for the community to generate innovative responses to the shared needs of our time. Through an ongoing series of open calls, the Art Lab offers an experimental platform to propose ideas, events, and collaborations that are inspired by our collective interests.

Film Studies

Our curriculum engages students in the history, theory, and production of world cinema. Classes examine the moving image globally across a range of industrial and artisanal contexts, and encourage students to understand cinema as an art, business, and technology. Learning the craft of filmmaking as well as criticism, students develop the creative and critical skills necessary today in all areas of media art.

Theories of Agency, Deliberation, Equity, Representation, and Democracy

Humanities disciplines have developed sophisticated frameworks for thinking about the communication infrastructures which support public life in a postindustrial economic order. The Our Michigan Ave project is an opportunity to translate sophisticated humanities frameworks into usable knowledge that meets the needs of community residents, stakeholders, and government officials. A long tradition of humanities research about place, community, and deliberation has informed my perspective.

Recent scholarship along these lines include Meg McLagan and

Yates McKee's *Sensible Politics*, Bruno Latour's *Making Things Public*. Recent syllabi informing this theme include Alan Liu's critical infrastructure studies and Jentery Sayers syllabus "Before You Make a Thing." A map of the intellectual work in this area has been assembled in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing graduate student Jessica Gibbons' Theory Toolbox.

There are many examples of design thinking activities used within classrooms in 90 minutes. These valuable exercises provide students with an methodology for design that takes the social worlds of those impacted by design into account.

This project is an example of design thinking in ten years. Only by assembling a network of intellectual frameworks, the full range of citizens in a community, and a sophisticated technical infrastructure is it possible to create an iterative design thinking methodology which will allow us to both refine our theories of agency deliberation and rationality and craft the kind of collective public capacity for voices in the process of design that John Dewey envisioned.

Digital Community Projects

Building Community

The ability to bring together people around shared interests remains a central impact of digital humanities. The communities of practice facilitated by digital tools are varied and cannot be easily cataloged. However, we seek to highlight how this practice remains a central part of the digital landscape.

Black Perspectives: The Blog of the African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS)

BLACK PERSPECTIVES

[Black Perspectives](#)

Black Perspectives (BP) is the award-winning blog of the African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS). BP was an outgrowth of the AAIHS blog founded by Christopher Cameron in 2014 and like that original project, BP aims to provide scholars from a wide range of fields space to discuss contemporary scholarship. BP produces a wide range of content designed to bring the most current research about people of African descent to the public in the most accessible manner possible.

Get Free Hip Hop Civics ED



[Get Free Hip Hop Civics Ed](#)

GET FREE is a multimedia Hip Hop civics curriculum for youth and young adults. Its goal is to introduce students to a national network of young community leaders, artists, and activists who advocate for social change and democratic inclusion driven by grassroots organizing. GET FREE is inspired by the exuberance, ingenuity, political energy, resistance, love, and DIY model of underground Hip Hop. Its aim is to push and extend ideas of democracy, citizenship, freedom, community, civic engagement, and intersectional justice.

H-Net (Humanities and Social Sciences Online)



[H-Net](#)

H-Net is an international interdisciplinary organization of scholars and teachers dedicated to developing the enormous educational potential of the Internet and the World Wide Web. Our edited networks publish peer-reviewed essays, multimedia materials, and discussions for colleagues and the interested public.

The computing heart and main office of H-Net resides in the History Department at Michigan State University, but H-Net officers, editors, and subscribers come from all over the globe.

Humanities Commons



[Humanities Commons](#)

HC is an open-source online platform hosted and sustained by Michigan State University and used by thousands of humanities scholars and practitioners worldwide. HC facilitates communication and collaboration among humanities scholars and practitioners.

Zora! Festival 2020-2024 Afrofuturism Conference Cycle



[Zora! Festival 2020-2024 Afrofuturism Conference Cycle](#)

Hosted by the University of Central Florida Showcase of Text, Archives, Research, and Scholarship ([STARS](#)), this sites provides a collection of open educational resources and an open-access syllabus inspired by the Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts & Humanities Afrofuturism Conference Cycle.

PART IV
TEACHING AND
LEARNING

“The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy.” -bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*.

Innovations in teaching and learning mirror key conversations in digital humanities in fascinating ways. Moves to decenter and deconstruct intellectual authority, critical questioning of what materials and methods are valued and why, examination of how technological use and modes of transmission are imbricated in broader ethical, socioeconomic, and cultural tensions: these questions characterize leading scholar-practitioners in both digital humanities and pedagogy/curriculum. In this section, contributors work at the intersections of these interdisciplines, charting specific strategies and materials to enhance teaching and learning. These contributions foster learning about the digital humanities per se, but also may shed light on how engagement with DH enhances teaching and learning more broadly.

A lesson plan provides instructors with a general outline for possible pathways in the classroom. A lesson plan often supports the development of teaching goals and learning outcomes, and provides a means to accomplish them in the context of the course. While lesson plans are not exhaustive and one size does not fit all, for instructors seeking a viable intervention in the classroom, it can be helpful to see examples. What follows are tested lesson plans crafted by instructors seeking a way to incorporate digital humanities tools into their classes. As any instructor knows, in an adaptable and responsive classroom environment, everything does

not go exactly as planned, but ideally, instructors and students learn together in the active making of shared knowledge. The plans that follow offer points of departure, remix, and inspiration that can be useful for teaching efforts.

Pedagogical Anthology

EMILY MCGINN AND LAUREN COATS

Digital Texts and Textual Data: A Pedagogical Anthology

Introduction

Lauren Coats, LSU & Emily McGinn, University of Georgia

““Keep it small.””

– Institute Participant

The following pedagogical artifacts were created by the participants of the 2018-2019 [NEH](#) Institute for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities, “Textual Data and Digital Texts in the Undergraduate Classroom.” Hosted by the University of Georgia, Louisiana State University, and Mississippi State University, this year-long institute focused on the humanities classroom as a site for teachers and students to learn DH methods. The classroom brings many people to the table. Recognizing the many ways that teaching and learning take place on college campuses, the institute embraced a broad definition of classroom, from a credit-bearing course to a library-based workshop for teachers or students to a guest-led single class session or other learning experience. In turn, the institute participants included many kinds of teachers: graduate students, librarians, and departmental faculty of all levels from a variety of humanities disciplines.

The institute was structured to give participants the time and space to experiment with and learn new digital approaches and to integrate these approaches into their teaching. Throughout the institute, participants explored methods for digitally examining texts, the primary object of study for many in the humanities.

Through a week-long in-person institute in July 2018, and a series of virtual sessions over the 2018–2019 academic year, we learned quantitative, visual, and computational means to analyze texts, approaches that require thinking about texts as digital objects and data. We also addressed issues of how to teach (with) DH. Coupling learning new skills with reflection on pedagogical praxis, the institute focused on participants developing their DH teaching in ways that fit their particular professional, disciplinary, and institutional needs.

The pedagogical artifacts included in this anthology are the result of this institute. Each artifact was developed by a participant to implement at their home institution. These examples represent what we call born-pedagogical DH, aligning DH methods with a classroom’s learning objectives as a way to build new skills and gain new perspectives. These projects show that born-pedagogical DH is small in the best of ways: they represent initial forays into DH that allow novices to experiment and learn without huge investments of time and resources. We hope these artifacts, each of which is shared under a Creative Commons license to encourage reuse and remixing, will encourage others in learning and teaching DH.

How to use this collection

The artifacts are grouped thematically in four sections: digital exhibits and narratives, textual analysis, distant reading and data visualization, and data-driven research. Each artifact begins with an overview that has a uniform header in which the creator summarizes the artifact type, the intended audience, the time required, and the DH method and tool used, and provides a brief description of the artifact. This header was included to help readers browse and find artifacts relevant to their interests. In the overview, readers will also find the list of what items (“supporting materials”) the creators have provided as part of their artifact, which might

include a syllabus, rubric, workshop plan, assignment sheet, sample student work, and more.

Acknowledgments

The institute directors, Lauren Coats and Emily McGinn, would like to thank the participants for a fantastic year of conversation and community. Stephen Cunetto, Associate Dean of University Libraries at Mississippi State University, was a key partner in this endeavor; he and his [MSU](#) colleagues ensured that the institute started smoothly when they hosted us on [MSU's](#) campus. We'd also like to thank the guest instructors for generously sharing their expertise (Rachel Sagner Buurma, Brandon Locke, Michelle Moravec, Thomas Padilla, Miriam Posner, Alicia Peaker, Jentery Sayers, and Jesse Stommel). Thanks as well to Leah Powell for her excellent work as graduate assistant for the institute, and to Emma Gist for her meticulous help preparing this anthology for publication.

I. Digital Exhibits & Narratives

About this section: *These artifacts focus on using digital exhibits as a way for students to develop an argument in digital space. Each asks their students to develop or choose their items carefully, and to define the threads that hold them together. In so doing the students create rich narratives for experiencing and understanding the exhibit items.*

[Symbolism in Art & Literature](#) | Corinne Kennedy, Mississippi State University

[Place-Based Storytelling with Curatescape](#) | Lindsey Wieck, St. Mary's University

[African American Literature Syllabus](#) | Jewon Woo, Lorain County Community College

II. Textual Analysis

About this section: *These assignments are small steps into the potentially complex world of computational means of analyzing texts, such as extracting information about word frequencies or concordances. Great for those instructors or students who are new to text analysis, these artifacts use web-based tools that analyze text without coding and let learners focus on finding patterns and asking new questions of text.*^A

[Visualizing Testimony in Text](#) | Ian Beamish, University of Louisiana-Lafayette

[Comparative Textual Analysis Using Juxta Commons](#) | Melinda A. Cro, Kansas State University

[Digital/Material Reflection](#) | Sarah Noonan, St. Mary's College

[Reading at Scale: Teaching with Voyant](#) | Taylor Orgeron, Southwestern Oklahoma State University

[Introduction to Text Mining and Analysis](#) | Jane Marie Pinzino, Tulane University

[Voyant Analysis Essay](#) | Elizabeth Ricketts, University of South Florida

III. Distant Reading & Data Visualization

About this section: *These items, like the previous section, introduce students to computationally derived ways to analyze text, whether by providing information about a large set of texts (distant reading) or visualizing patterns in texts. The artifacts gathered here ask students*

to work through the process of what they can discover about texts using these methods in terms of both evidence and argument.**A**

[Communication Networks in Richard Marsh's *The Beetle*](#) | Shalyn Claggett, Mississippi State University

[Modeling the Sentimental Novel](#) | Carrie Johnston, Wake Forest University

[Nineteenth-Century Slave Narratives:](#)

[Building a Digital Story Map](#) | Amy Lewis, St. Norbert College

[Distant Reading: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*](#) | Ann McClellan, Plymouth State University

[Digital Text Analysis for Students](#) | Javier Sampedro, University of Florida / Loyola University of Maryland

[Visualizing What We Learned \(A.K.A. The "In My Feelings" Challenge\)](#) | Lena Suk, University of Texas-Austin

IV. Data-Driven Research

About this section: *These artifacts explore what data and coding means in humanities contexts, asking students to turn their attention to creating humanities data, crafting arguments from it, and considering how to create a sustainable, ethical future for DH work.***A**

[Encoding Feminist Poetry with Processing](#) | Kristin Allukian, University of South Florida

[Project Charter for Collaborative Student Digital Projects](#) | Crystal Felima, University of Florida

[Collecting and Using Data to Generate a Research Question: *Death in the Iliad* as a Case Study](#) | Robyn Le Blanc, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

[Making Caribbean History](#) | Pamela McVay, Ursuline College

[Preparing "Letters as Data"](#) | Hillary A. H. Richardson, Mississippi University for Women

[Extracting Data: Text from Photos](#) | Emily Una Weirich, University of Arizona

The institute resulted in an open-access publication of pedagogical materials created by the participants. You can access the publication in full, *Digital Texts and Textual Data: A Pedagogical Anthology* using this [link](#), or on Humanities Commons. Or, you can peruse the materials below. All materials in the collection are published under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#); we invite you to read and adapt, reuse and remix.

Twine as a Digital Community Engagement Tool

JUSTIN WIGARD

Introduction

This is a pedagogical plan for teaching using Twine, which is an open-access digital tool for creating nonlinear and interactive texts. I particularly like using Twine as it gives users a lot of freedom to create simple or powerful digital artifacts, whatever their focus. The program is community-driven and community-supported and can be worked on collaboratively or individually. It can support text-only creations (as my example illustrates) or images, sounds, and even videos. Lastly, it requires no coding knowledge, so the barrier for entry is low, while the output reward is high.

Context: How Should Instructors Use the Material?

The first reading is my brief introduction to Twine that I implemented at the 2019 Teaching Toolkit Tailgate. I used hard copies of this handout to teach non-DH instructors how to integrate Twine in their classrooms. I intended this handout to have everything one would need to understand what Twine is, how to implement it, what kind of coding/programming knowledge is necessary (none), and what can be done with it; in essence, I wrote it for the public with undergraduate students in mind.

The second reading is Twine's site itself, which features an online/web version of Twine along with a downloadable version. The first reading can be used in conjunction with Twine's built-in instructions.

The third reading is my own example of a Twine text. I created this for a 2017 graduate seminar on American popular culture (ENG 802), where our class worked with the Williamston, MI Theatre to create public exhibits for their production of 1984. For my contribution, I created this Twine activity to critically emulate the classic interrogation scene of 1984 to illustrate elements of agency, power, and panopticism in the play. While I don't have specific numbers on how many times the product was activated, it was engaged with frequently during the play's run. My intention in including it is to offer DH students an example of a Twine product that has been deployed specifically with community engagement in mind.

The fourth reading is a new open access book by Anastasia Salter and Stuart Moulthrop on Twine, particularly different approaches to using the program within pedagogical settings. The introduction is particularly helpful, but the entire book blends critical study with practical guides, alternating between chapters in such a way that instructors could choose only 1 or 2 chapters for a project OR teach the entire book.

The fifth and final reading is an example of a digital article that blends Twine with a very simple arcade platformer. It demonstrates Twine's breadth, and should inspire both students and educators as to the possibilities of Twine, as well as prompt discussion about Digital Humanities' potential within the academic/public realm.

Resources

1. My Teaching Toolkit Tailgate entry on [Twine for iTechMSU](#).

2. Learn more about [TWINE](#).
3. My own pedagogical community Twine emulating [1984's interrogation scene](#).
4. [Twining: Critical and Creative Approaches to Hypertext Narratives](#) by Anastasia Salter and Stuart Moulthrop.Salter,
5. Anastasia and John Murray. ["Blocked In." Hyperrhiz: New Media Cultures, no. 21, 2019](#)

Digital Literacy and Collaborative Learning Lesson Plans

In the Spring of 2017, Rollins College received funding from the [Associated Colleges of the South](#) for a two-day Digital Literacy and Collaborative Learning (DLCL) workshop. The workshop was designed by Julian C. Chambliss, formerly Department of History at Rollins College, currently Michigan State University Department of English, and Scot French, Department of History, University of Central Florida, to develop a cross-institutional framework for promoting broadly collaborative, community-based undergraduate and graduate student research employing the tools and methods linked to digital humanities. The workshop would serve as a foundation to expand faculty dialogues and initiatives at each institution connected to community engagement and digital humanities. Rollins College has received national recognition for its ongoing commitment to community engagement, and the University of Central Florida (UCF) has a public history program and a wider institutional mandate to engage with the Central Florida community. The workshop allowed faculty cohorts from Rollins College and the University of Central Florida to explore digital humanities methods and tools and then create lesson plans that would be used in the classroom. The format of a two-day workshop to immerse faculty in digital humanities methods was conceived by Drs. Chambliss and French based on their experience from the unconference model used by The Humanities and Technology (THAT) Camp. This approach sought to create a smaller cohort experience that emphasized digital intervention in established teaching practice as a means to encourage faculty participation.

The lesson plans on display highlight the participant's ability to incorporate digital methods into their classroom plans.



Caroline Cheong
**Department of History University of Central
Florida**

Caroline Cheong's research focuses on the relationship between urban heritage conservation and economic development, values-based conservation management, conservation economics and poverty reduction. She has presented her work at numerous conferences, including the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Conference, UN-Habitat's World Urban Forum, and the ICOMOS General Assembly.

Timeline Project

The project is based on a Latin American History course Dr. Cheong teaches. This is intended to be a final project.

For your final project, create a timeline using

the [Timeline JS](https://timeline.knightlab.com/) tool at <https://timeline.knightlab.com/> (Links to an external site.)

You'll focus on a specific theme from the list below. If you would like to focus on a theme that is not listed below, I must approve it beforehand to ensure you have access to enough sources and material to successfully complete the assignment.

You can pull from material across the entire semester, though you should emphasize the latter half the semester.

****Your timeline MUST tell a story - make sure you emphasize the specific arc of your story in each entry, so it threads together.**

Requirements

- Must involve at least 3 countries
- Minimum of 7 entries
- Each entry must have at least 1 photo (you can have multiple entries for 1 event/date, but that still counts as 1 entry).
- Introduce your timeline, explaining your timeline and choices, in a separate word document that you will upload on Webcourses of at least 500 words.
- Must include citations via footnotes and an attached bibliography (which you should include in the same document as the introduction).
- Include a link to your timeline in your Word document.

Themes

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Cuban Revolution and
the creation of modern
Latin America Drugs and
nation-building
Neoliberalism



**Dan S. Myers,
Department of Math and
Computer Science
Rollins College**

Dan Myers received his Ph.D. in Computer Sciences from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with research interests in computer performance modeling and queueing theory. Prior to attending UW-Madison, he worked as a Senior Member of Technical Staff at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, applying computer vision and image processing to national security problems.

Virtual Tours in Twine Overview

Students will create a ground-level virtual presentation of a building, neighborhood, or other place using Twine, a web-based framework for creating digital narratives. Twine programs can incorporate text, hyperlinks, images, and interactive elements to give their users an immersive, content-rich experience. To complete the project, students must research the history of their location, including its notable sites and elements, collect historical and contemporary images, and then develop the text-based presentation using the Twine engine.

Learning Objectives

- Conduct archival or other research into the history of a building, place, or other location, including, where appropriate, primary sources.
- Embody the results of that research in an interactive presentation written in the Twine engine.

Digital Tool

[Twine](#)

The Twine engine allows users to create interactive stories and other narratives through a web-based programming interface.

Twine narratives are structured as a directed graph, where each node in the graph is a “chapter” in the story, representing a discrete text page. Each page contains links to other pages, allowing the user to make choices or move through the story, often in nonlinear ways. Stories can incorporate images and links to external sites. Twine programs are web pages, so any element that can be part of a normal web page can generally appear in a Twine chapter.

The engine also includes support for a number of programming features, including the ability to track state variables throughout the story and incorporate interactive elements. Twine stories can be downloaded and shared through a text-based file format.

Project Stages

- Students identify a location of interest based on the theme or

topic of the class.

- Students conduct research to identify 3-6 locations of interest in their place, along with their geography. The scope of the research can be based on the goals of the class (for example, archival research focusing on primary sources) as well as student proximity to the site.
- Students construct the Twine story giving a ground-level walkthrough of their location. Each page in the story corresponds to a location, with features like streets and stairs possible appearing as intermediate pages between featured locations. Links give the user the ability to move between locations. Nonlinearity and creative organization is encouraged.

Activity

Prior to beginning the assignment, students are introduced to the Twine system through a few lectures and guided examples. Twine is not difficult and requires no programming background (though more advanced features operate like programming elements). A full explanation of all the basic features can be given in 3-4 class sessions, with one of those reserved for a guided lab where students create their own short story. The minimum Twine features required to

create a presentation can be explained in less than half a class period and summarized on a one-page handout.

The style of the project can be adapted based on the needs of the class and the instructor's preference. It could be straightforward and factual or incorporate fiction and narrative elements. It could be written in a detached style, like a guide book, or more personalized, like a journal of a visit. The range of required features can also vary. A moderately complex set of project features could include:

- Descriptive text and links between pages
- Links to external sites
- Images
- Text and images that dynamically appear and disappear as the user clicks on links
- A set of variables that track the locations the user has visited
- A conditional statement that notifies the user and ends the tour when every location has been visited



Amanda Snyder
Department of History
University of Central Florida

Amanda Snyder's research focuses on sixteenth and seventeenth-century international maritime law and Caribbean settlement, specifically surrounding the experience of Atlantic piracy. Her work explores the changing definitions of criminality and the influence and development of rover, "extranational" communities in creating the new Atlantic World. She has worked in several international archives and been a part of several international symposiums on Atlantic History. She recently published "Reassessing Jamayca Espanola" in the *The Torrid Zone: Caribbean Colonization and Cultural Interaction in the Long Seventeenth Century*.

History of the Caribbean timeline Overview

This assignment is a primary source analysis. Students of History must understand what a primary source is, how to find those sources by identifying databases and archives, and must learn how to effectively analyze those sources within the larger historical framework. Students practice both formal and casual presentations of these analyses through longer papers, discussions, and condensed analysis. The final part of this assignment requires students to package their analysis for public dissemination as a larger timeline.

Learning Objectives

To learn about and practice archival research.

To become more proficient and comfortable with digital archive research.

To practice analysis of primary source material as part of professionalization within History field.

To practice both formal and casual presentation of historical analysis. To become more comfortable and proficient in online tools.

Digital Tool

KnightLab Timeline JS

Project Stages

Students conduct research to find a primary source relating to the course time period and geography. This is the second primary source assignment that students conduct over the course of the semester.

Students are expected to analyze and contextualize that source within the larger course themes, using the assigned readings.

One part of the assignment requires the students to submit a two-page formal analysis. Accompanying this paper, students submit a condensed analysis to the timeline tool (spreadsheet).

Activity

My goal in this assignment, aside from the student learning outcomes, was to test the limits of the tool. I teach at a particularly large state university where even upper-level courses have 48 students in them. I have found that most digital tools can only support up to 12, perhaps 15, collaborators. My goal was also to learn more about the tool myself—where information needs to be placed, how many characters can be each cell, and how to export the material for public dissemination. In an increasingly digital and competitive world, I hope that these sorts of exercises will also provide the students with an end product that they can also refer back to and use in portfolios to showcase their own skills and experience with digital tools and digital publishing, aside from being an interactive teaching tool for me to speak to different student learning styles.

Students are provided with an array of online databases to begin doing their research. They are also provided with

instructions about how to evaluate websites for academic integrity.

Students are then tasked to choose their own source that relates to the course themes, period, and geography.

For this assignment, they then produce a condensed (200-word) analysis of the source. That analysis, along with an image of the source, is entered into the timeline spreadsheet.

Once all students submit, I, the professor, am responsible for preparing it (figuring out the glitches and order) for web publication. [This final part has proven unsuccessful.]

Instructions to students (First, general primary source instructions followed by second primary source and timeline instructions):

There are two parts to your assignment: a primary source analysis and the Discussion Facilitation.

At this point in your History careers, you should know what a primary source is. Please see the link about how to read (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. and identify primary sources if you have questions about how to identify and verify a primary source. Examples can also be found here. **You will not be doing a powerpoint**

The 2-page analysis will describe in more detail the context, but MOST SIGNIFICANTLY the significance of this source to the course themes and readings from the semester. Your response papers have condensed 200+ page books into two pages, and this assignment will ask you to really dig into one document.

You see the short writeup and questions that I have posed to you the last two weeks, and that the first group will be posing to you today to kick off this week's discussion. This is what your

group will be crafting. You will ask questions about the sources/ material to your classmates to facilitate discussion.

Remember that the discussion is due to me ideally by the Friday prior. It must be posted by Monday of the week of it is due for your classmates to be able to answer and comment. For example, if you are crafting discussion for next week, due 9 June, I need your writeup no later than [date].

Within that writeup, you will also individually post your primary source. You will not post the entire 2-page writeup that you submit to me, but you will post the source itself with a few questions for your classmates to analyze it (as we did with de Bry, for example).

Primary Source Instructions

At this point in your History careers, you should know what a primary source is. Please see the link about how to read (this link has broken this in the last six months) and identify primary sources if you have questions about how to identify and verify a primary source.

Consider the following: What was going on at the time the source was written? Who was the author? Why was the author significant—or at least what was their situation that contributed to their writing on the source, their particular insight? Where was this source written and/or published? Who was the intended audience?

The 2-page analysis will describe in more detail the context, but MOST SIGNIFICANTLY the significance of this source to the course themes and readings from the semester. Your response papers have condensed 200+ page books into two pages, and this assignment will ask you to really dig into one document.

For your first primary sources, you did an accompanying

discussion facilitation. For this second assignment, you will be adding to the KnightLab timeline (linked in the assignment dropbox and Resources pages). You will enter your source's information in the spreadsheet provided, and include a paragraph summary description of the source's context and significance. This paragraph will be approximately 150-200 words, like the length of your weekly discussion posts. Remember, concision and editing is just as important in the writing process as getting those initial words on paper!



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Dr. Parz's teaching and research interests include 20th/21st century multi-ethnic American literature; film, visual, and cultural studies; women's and gender studies; and the representation of trauma, disaster, and diaspora.

Reenvision Writing

Overview

As part of a writing course designed for non-traditional students at Rollins College's Hamilton Holt School, students were tasked with (re)envisioning their traditional term papers into another form of media.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).
- Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.
- Makes critically aware decisions about how best to achieve their purposes in communication at the university and beyond.

Digital Tool

- [Adobe Spark](#)
- Tools of their choosing

Project Stages

- Online educational profiles, early in the semester.
- Apply an understanding of rhetorical situation and rhetorical strategies, mid-semester.
- After turning in a traditional term paper on research topic, reimagine that same argument into a new form/medium for their target audience by end of semester.

Activity

The course opens with Adobe Spark because it is a intuitive and straight forward tool that creates professional quality products. After several light touches into multimodal communication at the start of the semester, students learn more specifically about multimodal communication while they contemplate how to best reach their target audience for their final portfolio. This final assignment consists of a final project (in the medium the student believes will best reach their specific audience), a presentation, and an analysis paper (in which the student must detail their process and choices as well as critique their final product.

Students have turned their research into brochures, websites, Facebook groups, blogs, vlogs, conceptual art, public service announcements, even performance art. Depending upon the course topic, I have also required students to reach out to their

target audience and ask for feedback on their final product to include in their analysis papers. This, along with the presentations (which can be public or in-house), creates added responsibility and risk for the students, and for many students, this simulates their work life more closely than a traditional term paper assignment.

While their final products and presentations are vital to this project, I find the analysis papers to be the component that assists me the most in the evaluation of the portfolio. Adding the students' thought processes, struggles, and successes to this assignment, along with feedback received from their target audience, add to the nuance and understanding for its assessment.

I have used versions of this lesson plan in writing classes with both traditional and nontraditional undergraduates at both small liberal arts colleges and large, land-grant universities, and the results illustrate a level of rhetorical awareness that often was not discernible in their researched term papers. Currently, I use the textbook *The Academic Writer*, by Lisa Ede in its 4th edition (Bedford/St Martin's).

Schedule Excerpts:

Week 1: Read Syllabus and selected Educational Biographies. Write your Educational Biography and bring a copy to class to discuss. Read Chapters 1-2 (Reading and Writing Rhetorically).

Week 2: Take the reading process and writing process "quizzes." Revise and combine your educational biography and quiz answers to create a profile of yourself as a reader and writer using Adobe Spark. Post your profile to our discussion forum by {insert date before class meeting}.

(In-Class Week 2: Reintroduce yourself using Adobe Spark profile as a jumping off point.)

Week 12: Bring all of your research and work on your term paper in class. Prep for the Final Project: Read chapter 11 “Multimodal Composition” and complete exploration on listing possible types of multimodal texts & your comfort level with them. (In-class: Review final project portfolio assignment and brainstorm possible media, tools, and strategies.)

Week 13: Term Paper Draft due. Due for Final Project: Review chapter 11 (and others as needed). Complete exploration analyzing a multimodal text from the reader’s perspective, and plan your final project using the guidelines on 330-1. (In-class: Present final project plans and receive feedback.)

Week 14: Term Paper Draft #2 due. Due for Final Project: Come with your ideas for your final project. Be ready to conference 1:1 during class with faculty and instructional technologist.

Week 15: Term Paper due. Due for Final Project: Bring your final portfolio drafts. Come ready to troubleshoot and discuss all components of final. Instructional Technologist in class for assistance.

Week 16: Final Project Portfolio due. Present your final project. Turn in final project and analysis essay.



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F l o r i d a

Tiffany Earley-Spadoni's research explores the construction of fortress landscapes in the ancient Near East, and her digitally-engaged scholarship employs remote sensing, GIS and digital storytelling. She directs the Vayots Dzor Fortress Landscapes Project, a field archaeological project in southern Armenia.

Communicating Place with Digital Storytelling (WeVideo)

Overview

Students will use the web-based digital storytelling tool WeVideo to produce digital shorts that communicate a strong sense of place.

Learning Objectives

- Students will appreciate the variety of ways that a sense of place can be communicated using a multimedia presentation—by images, videos, sounds, music and describing unique experiences.

- Students will create a digital short using WeVideo that communicates a strong sense of place.
- Students will develop digital literacy by beginning to appreciate the implications of copyright law in creating public domain content and understand privacy settings when using a video hosting service.

Digital Tools

- [WeVideo](#)
- External microphone
- [Creative Commons](#)
- Video hosting: Vimeo or Youtube

Project Stages

- Students will brainstorm place by making a creative cluster.
- Students will use the insights derived from their creative cluster to free write several paragraphs about a place that is “home” to them. They will be encouraged to approach the topic both analytically and emotionally.
- I will introduce the concept of “[six word stories](#)” and show two [examples](#).
- Students will write a six-word story about their “place” and share them with class.
- Students will now write ten sentences that start with, “I Come

From a Place” and complete them with details from their freewriting exercises.

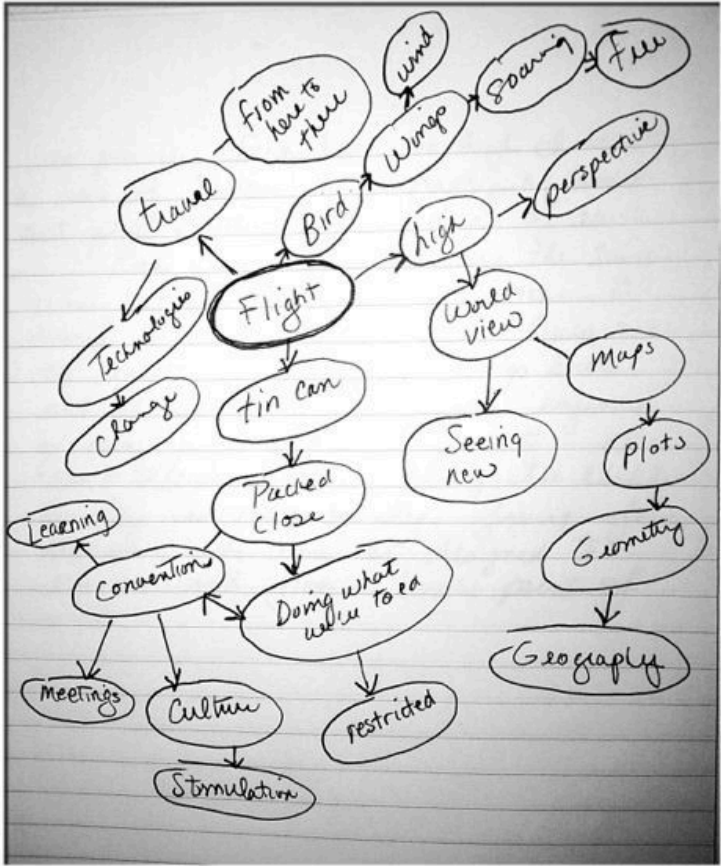
- Students will work in pairs to pick their “best six.”
- I will show three example short films and students will analyze how the filmmakers communicate a sense of place.
- Students will go on a “digital scavenger hunt” and find six images or video clips in [Creative Commons](#) that express the ideas communicated in their six “I Come from A Place” sentences.
- I will demonstrate to class how to import images into WeVideo and how to create voiceovers.
- Students will bring the “finds” from their scavenger hunt into WeVideo and then make voiceovers with their external mics for their images using their six “I Come from a Place” sentences.

Activity

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Begin by having each student make a Creative Cluster with the word place:



(h/t: [Writing Through Life](#))

Write a few paragraphs that describe the/a place that you come from—the place that is home. List as many physical, emotional, and social details as possible.

Students will write ten sentences that start with, “I Come From a Place” and complete them using their brainstorming from the previous activities.

Students will work in pairs to pick their “best six.” I will explain that eliminating some content is an important part of editing—a principle that can be applied to all creative endeavors.

Show Some Examples of Digital Stories—Analytical Exercise

Stardust

<https://iamucf.cah.ucf.edu/2017/04/26/tori-i-am-ucf/>

Discuss what worked and what didn't work.

Some specific questions:

- Where is this story set?
- Does the filmmaker do a good job of communicating place?

My Favorite Murder Date

<https://iamucf.cah.ucf.edu/2017/04/27/i-am-ucf-my-favorite-murder-date/> Discuss what worked and what didn't work.

- Where is this story set?
- Does the filmmaker do a good job of communicating place? What are her challenges and how does she overcome them?

Digital Scavenger Hunt

Students will go on a “digital scavenger hunt” and find six

images or video clips in [Creative Commons](#) that express the ideas communicated in their six “I Come from A Place” sentences.

I will demonstrate to the class how to import images into WeVideo and how to create voiceovers.

Students will bring the “finds” from their scavenger hunt into WeVideo and then make voiceovers with their external mics for their images using their six “I Come from a Place” sentences. Students will finish their projects at home and bring them in to show at the next class.

Video Sharing

Students will upload their videos to a video hosting service such as Vimeo or Youtube and we will discuss privacy settings on these platforms.



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Rachel is the Digital Archivist at Rollins College. In that role, she works to acquire and preserve critical digital resources and historical artifacts. She also teaches information literacy and archival research classes to undergraduates. Rachel's research interests include open access publishing, data management and visualization, and website usability.

Created in conjunction with
Dr. Kristin Winet (Rollins
College) Foodies in the Promised
Land: Writing about Israeli
Culture & Cuisine A 10 Day Field
Study in Israel

Learning Outcomes

Written Communication

Students will practice their research and digital writing skills by investigating topics of interest, developing research questions, gathering notes and engaging in field work, and transforming their experiences into multimodal essays.

Metaliteracy

The four goals for metaliterate learners can be succinctly defined thusly:

(a) Evaluate traditional and online content critically; (b) Understand information ethics and what it means to be a creator and consumer of information in an online environment; (c) Share information in a conscientious and meaningful way and be aware of/open to other perspectives; (d) Demonstrate a connection between discrete research and writing practices, and personal or professional lifelong learning goals.

Course Goals

- Discover and appreciate the unique history and geography of Israeli cuisine
- Recognize the complexities involved in food research and writing
- Understand the stylistic techniques professional food writers use in their stories
- Develop skills in reporting, researching, and writing about food and food-related topics
- Use new digital technologies to create meaningful stories based on experiences
- Reflect and translate experiences for a public audience

Assignment/ Project

Guided food blog writing assignments aimed at improving student's skills with rhetoric and writing as well as technology projects using digital media technologies like StoryMaps and WordPress will allow students to articulate the value of their travel experience upon arrival back home and explain its impact in their lives.

Pre-travel Research

- Meet with Rachel (your librarian) to select an aspect of Israeli food culture or foodways that interests you. Be prepared to research this chosen topic in depth.
- Using quality information resources online and from the Olin Library, write a brief (3-4 page single spaced) “white paper”/report informing your fellow travel writers about your chosen topic, so that they will be better prepared for their upcoming trip to Israel. Be sure to include proper MLA citations (with links) that show where you got your information in the form of a works cited list at the end of the paper.
- Meet with Dr. Winet to determine which day of the trip you will be serving as a field study expert on your chosen topic, to the benefit of your entire travel writer group. Be prepared to answer questions and even give demonstrations; we’re all relying on your expertise to help us learn about Israeli food!

On-site Travel Journal

During travel days, you will keep a written journal of foods you eat, impressions you have, thoughts and feelings you experience, and questions that come up. You will use this space to think about your final project, reflect on your eating, interviewing, and sightseeing experiences, and prepare for the next day’s events. Because travel writers take lots of notes, we expect you will write at least 750 words (3 pages) each day. Journals will be graded on quality of writing and depth of insight.

Personal StoryMap

- As you are taking on the role of a true “foodie” and professional travel writer during your time in Israel, you will keep an on-site travel journal (described above).
- You will also develop a collection of digital artifacts that serve to document and capture your many experiences across Israel, similar to a digital scrapbook. These can take the form of photos, recordings, video, GIFs, etc. Feel free to be creative (but remember, you’re a professional and these will be made available to the public!).
- After returning from your trip, take the time to interrogate how your digital artifacts and your travel journal notes align or diverge to form a larger story about your experiences in Israel. Look for themes, high points, low points, and other critical “takeaways” that could communicate the essence of your experiences.
- Using the StoryMap tool (Rachel will provide training and examples in advance of the project due date), meaningfully map your themes and “take-aways” by combining elements from your travel journal with select digital artifacts, and distribute them according to the geographic points you visited in Israel. Be sure to collage these pieces of your trip together in a way that tells your unique travel story.
- Be prepared to present your final “StoryMap” to the class and post the final product on the class blog alongside some commentary about your overall approach.

Blog Essay

- After returning from Israel, you will transform your research into a compelling feature-length digital essay

incorporating text, image, video, and your StoryMap. This essay will be posted on our class website so that others can learn about your unique perspective on the topic you chose at the beginning of the field study.

- You will meet with Dr. Winet to discuss your project draft.
- At the end of our course, we will meet to present our final projects and debrief on what we learned about how to write “in the field.”

Participation

As professional food writers and guests of a foreign country, we expect that you will be present in mind and body each day of the field study. All students will sign a behavior contract at the beginning of the trip and be expected to maintain professionalism and collegiality throughout the entire experience.



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Dr. Walters is a Research Associate with the Institute for Simulation and Training and the Department of History. Her research interest within the lab is Virtual Heritage – a multi-disciplinary approach to examining the past utilizing the latest digital technology to disseminate information. Shadows of Canaveral, a virtual return to the launch complexes that lined the shores of Cape Canaveral in the 1950s/1960s, began the Virtual Heritage effort.

Laser Scanning: Historic Structures, Sites & Artifacts Overview

A structure's 'life history' encompasses its design, and its cultural significance to its surrounding community. Students will record a structure's life history through the capture of digital data and then contextualize it through contemporaneous photographs, documents, and oral histories of individuals associated with an aspect of the building.

If a historic site or larger artifact (automobile, aircraft, or statue) is of interest, it can be substituted for a building.

This a semester long group project.

Objectives:

- The documentation of a structure using wide-ranging and encompassing methods to

preserve the history, culture and memories of the communities where the building resides.

- Students will learn how to operate a terrestrial laser

scanner and register scan data.

- Students will incorporate oral history to contextualize an aspect of the structure.
- Students will present their research in a WordPress website.

Digital Tools:

- Terrestrial Laser Scanner – provided by course
- Digital Camera (smartphone or dedicated)
- Digital audio/video recorder (smartphone or dedicated)
- 64GB thumb drive – each student will need to provide their own

Software:

- Autodesk ReCap 360
- WordPress (free themes that groups can choose from)

Assignment Review:

Prior to the beginning of the semester, four structures will be selected that represent various architectural styles found in Central Florida. Owner consent will have been obtained prior to the semester. Students can select whichever building is of greatest interest to them.

Students will accompany the UCF ChronoPoints team (www.chronopoints.com) to their selected site to conduct a laser scan. In the event a student is unable to attend the

scanning of their selected structure, they can attend the scanning of any building as the goal is to familiarize students with how to prepare a site, scanner/target placement and scanner operation. Scanner point cloud data gathered for their selected structure will be provided to the student.

A class period will provide an overview of how to register the point cloud data using Autodesk ReCap 360, which is provided to all UCF students free of charge. A class session will demonstrate how to register the scans. Data registration will be conducted outside class time.

Videos will be available for assistance.

While at the site during the laser scan and during secondary visits, students will conduct a photographic capture of the structure. This includes capturing the overall building and structural details. These images provide a secondary documentation of the structure as it exists at the time of laser scanning and details pertaining to original details. For example, each terrazzo floor has a distinct pattern.

This assignment strengthens traditional research skills. Students will locate historic photographs, blueprints, official documents, articles and ephemera. Every building has a story to tell, it could have been the cornerstone of a community for 50 years, designed by a noted architect, or simply where individuals lived or worked. However, in every instance, there is more to a building than brick and mortar and it is deeper than a simple timeline of events.

Oral history is a critical tool in preserving the recent past. Interviews of individuals associated with the structure will be captured. Depending on the age of the building, this could be the architect, structural engineer, member of the construction crew, someone who worked in the building or had some association with the structure. Collectively, the group will locate interviewees, develop potential questions and determine who will conduct each interview. The

interviews will be transcribed and audio segments will be incorporated into the final project site.

Final Submission

The final product is a website that will tell the story of the group's structure. Collectively, the students determine the site's design and which specific items from those gathered that will be made available. The site will be developed in WordPress from free theme templates. While specific individual items are to be determined by the group, the following items are required to be available on their website:

- Images of the registered building – In gallery 1
- Selected Site photographs taken during scanning – In gallery 2
- Selected Historic Images – In gallery 3
- Digitized Blueprint if available
- Building Timeline
- Brief oral history clips
- History of Building – 2 pages

The following items must be submitted on thumb drive by each student:

- Raw scans (all students in the group will have the same raw scans)
- Registered scan of building (each student will register their selected building)
- All site photographs (taken by each student)
- All historic images gathered
- All blueprints if acquired
- The oral history conducted by the student – digital copy of actual interview and transcription.

- Each student will write a 2500 word paper addressing history of building

This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.