Digital Humanities

Lecture 1

February 20 2026

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https://cs.unibg.it/verdicchio/dh.html

Fridays, Rosate 2, 11:00-14:00
except for:
April 3 (Good Friday)
May 1 (Labor Day)

Lectures on Wednesday:
April 22 14-17 (room TBA)
April 29 14-17 (room TBA)

Closing lecture: May 8.

Tests

Pass/Fail

Multiple choice questionnaire

10 questions (6 correct answers = pass)

June 9

July 17

July 31

August 31

September 14

DIGITAL HUMANITIES ?

- WHAT WERE, ARE AND WILL BE THE HUMANITIES IN WESTERN, AND NOW WORLD, CULTURE?

- WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE DIGITAL WITHIN THE ACADEMY, IN SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION AND IN THE HUMANISTIC DISCIPLINES AS A WHOLE?

- ARE THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES A SERIES OF PRACTICAL APPROACHES?

- ARE THEY A DISTINCT DISCIPLINE WITH ITS OWN SET OF STANDARDS, DISTINGUISHED RESEARCHERS, HIERARCHIES AND RULES OF ENGAGEMENT?

- IS THE TERM DIGITAL HUMANITIES A REDUNDANCY?

- OR HAS THE ARRIVAL OF THE DIGITAL FOREVER CHANGED THE WAY HUMANISTS WORK?

- IS TECHNOLOGY DETERMINATIVE?

- WHAT ROLE DOES THE SOLITARY SCHOLAR HAVE IN A DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT THAT IS INCREASINGLY COLLABORATIVE?

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Digital humanities

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Digital humanities (**DH**) is an area of scholarly activity at the intersection of computing or digital technologies and the disciplines of the humanities. It includes the systematic use of digital resources in the humanities, as well as the analysis of their application.[1][2] DH can be defined as new ways of doing scholarship that involve collaborative, transdisciplinary, and computationally engaged research, teaching, and publishing. It brings digital tools and methods to the study of the humanities with the recognition that the printed word is no longer the main medium for knowledge production and distribution.[3]

By producing and using new applications and techniques, DH makes new kinds of teaching and research possible, while at the same time studying and critiquing how these impact cultural heritage and digital culture.[2] Thus, a distinctive feature of DH is its cultivation of a two-way relationship between the humanities and the digital: the field both employs technology in the p humanities research and subjects technology to humanistic questioning and interrogation, often simultaneously.

Example of a textual analysis p... being used to novel, with Jane Austen's *Pride and Preju...*

Contents [hide]

LINGUISTICS, LITERATURE, ART, ARCHAEOLOGY, MUSIC, AND CULTURAL STUDIES) AND SOCIAL SCIENCES WITH TOOLS PROVIDED BY COMPUTING (SUCH AS DATA VISUALIZATION, INFORMATION RETRIEVAL, DATA MINING, STATISTICS, TEXT MINING, DIGITAL MAPPING) AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING. BY CONTRAST ANNE BURDICK AND HER COAUTHORS PROVIDE A FAR MORE OPEN-ENDED, INCLUSIVE DEFINITION IN THEIR BOOK DIGITAL_HUMANITIES: [DIGITAL HUMANITIES] ASKS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HUMAN BEING IN THE NETWORKED INFORMATION AGE AND TO PARTICIPATE IN FLUID COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE, ASKING AND ANSWERING RESEARCH...

Eileen Gardiner, Ronald G. Musto
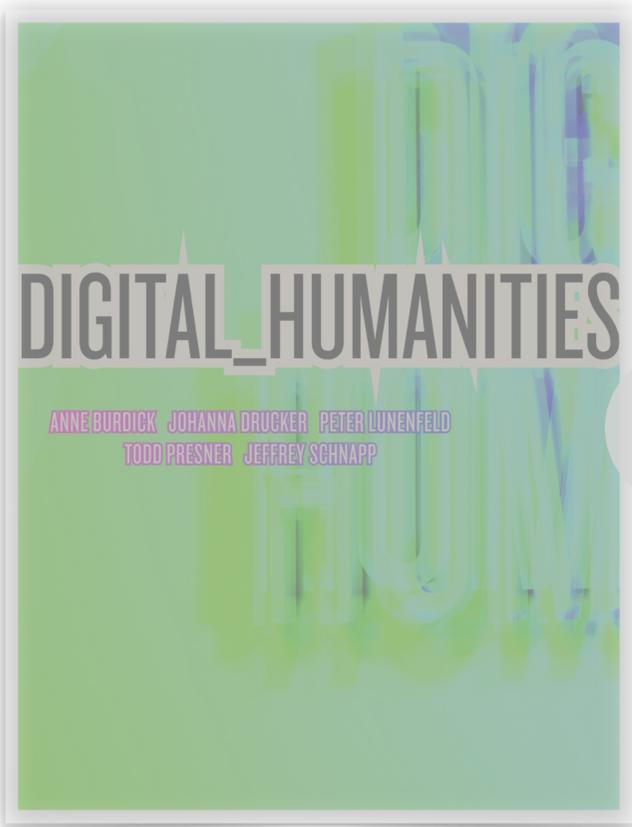*The Digital Humanities: A Primer for Students and Scholars*

DIGITAL_HUMANITIES

ANNE BURDICK   JOHANNA DRUCKER   PETER LUNENFELD
TODD PRESNER   JEFFREY SCHNAPP

DIGITAL HUMANITIES IS AN AREA OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING AT THE INTERSECTION OF COMPUTING AND THE DISCIPLINES OF THE HUMANITIES. DEVELOPING FROM THE FIELDS OF HUMANITIES COMPUTING, HUMANISTIC COMPUTING, AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES PRAXIS, DIGITAL HUMANITIES EMBRACES A VARIETY OF TOPICS, FROM CURATING ONLINE COLLECTIONS TO DATA MINING LARGE CULTURAL DATA SETS. DIGITAL HUMANITIES (OFTEN ABBREVIATED DH) CURRENTLY INCORPORATES BOTH DIGITIZED AND BORN-DIGITAL MATERIALS AND COMBINES THE METHODOLOGIES FROM TRADITIONAL HUMANITIES DISCIPLINES (SUCH AS HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, LINGUISTICS, LITERATURE, ART, ARCHAEOLOGY, MUSIC, AND CULTURAL STUDIES) AND SOCIAL SCIENCES WITH TOOLS PROVIDED BY COMPUTING (SUCH AS DATA VISUALIZATION, INFORMATION RETRIEVAL, DATA MINING, STATISTICS, TEXT MINING, DIGITAL MAPPING) AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES. (N.D.) IN WIKIPEDIA. 2015 (FROM GARDINER E., MUSTO G., 2015, P.4)

1

DIGITAL HUMANITIES ASKS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A
HUMAN BEING IN THE NETWORKED INFORMATION
AGE AND TO PARTICIPATE IN FLUID COMMUNITIES
OF PRACTICE, ASKING AND ANSWERING
RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT CANNOT BE
REDUCED TO A SINGLE GENRE, MEDIUM,
DISCIPLINE, OR INSTITUTION. . . . IT IS A GLOBAL,
TRANS-HISTORICAL, AND TRANSMEDIA APPROACH
TO KNOWLEDGE AND MEANING-MAKING

BURDICK A., DRUCKER J., LUNEFELD P. PRESNER T., SHNAPP J., 2012, P. VII

2

DIGITAL_HUMANITIES

ANNE BURDICK   JOHANNA DRUCKER   PETER LUNENFELD
TODD PRESNER   JEFFREY SCHNAPP

2

DIGITAL HUMANITIES IS BORN OF THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN TRADITIONAL HUMANITIES AND COMPUTATIONAL METHODS.

WITH THE MIGRATION OF CULTURAL MATERIALS INTO NETWORKED ENVIRONMENTS, QUESTIONS REGARDING THE PRODUCTION, AVAILABILITY, VALIDITY, AND STEWARDSHIP OF THESE MATERIALS PRESENT NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR HUMANISTS. IN CONTRAST WITH MOST TRADITIONAL FORMS OF SCHOLARSHIP, DIGITAL APPROACHES ARE CONSPICUOUSLY COLLABORATIVE AND GENERATIVE, EVEN AS THEY REMAIN GROUNDED IN THE TRADITIONS OF HUMANISTIC INQUIRY. THIS CHANGES THE CULTURE OF HUMANITIES WORK AS WELL AS THE QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED OF THE MATERIALS AND OBJECTS THAT COMPRISE THE HUMANISTIC CORPUS.
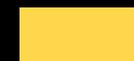
—

JEFFREY SCHNAPP

COMPUTATIONAL METHOD

Jeffrey Schnapp

HARVARD EDEX

And those are two very different sets of questions, and they have strong social and ethical and historiographical implications.

They're not going to make the same assumptions.

They're not going to ask the same questions, and they're probably not going to use the same tools.

JEFFREY SCHNAPP, COMPUTATIONAL METHOD, EDEX COURSE

WHAT IS DIGITAL HUMANITIES?

Various Authors

HARVARD EDEX

https://imperiia.omeka.fas.harvard.edu

https://dhlab.yale.edu/projects/neural-neighbors.html

https://oxfordfriars.wordpress.ncsu.edu

https://library.harvard.edu/collections/scanned-maps

http://giza.fas.harvard.edu

https://metalabharvard.github.io

LINKS TO DH PROJEXTS

- CLEAR PLEASURE
- INFORMATION DATA
- COMPUTATIONAL ANALYSIS
- INTERDISCIPLINARY
- COLLABORATIVE , CONNECTIONS , DESIGNERS ARE AT THE CENTER OF THE NETWORK
- BROADER RANGE OF MATERIAL
- PERCEIVE CHANGING
- MEDIA HISTORY IN HISTORY
- METADATA , NETWORK ANALYSIS ETC.

All these key words are very fascinating, and could constitute a sufficient reason to delve into the discipline of DH

OXFORD FRIARS PROJECT FILM
Great houses make not man holy:
Mendicant Architecture in Medieval
Oxford

J. Knowles, M.Koszycky

https://oxfordfriars.wordpress.ncsu.edu/
the-film/

digital humanities

- WE CAN USE THE METHODS OF CONTEMPORARY HUMANITIES IN STUDYING DIGITAL OBJECTS

- WE USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN STUDYING TRADITIONAL HUMANITIES OBJECTS

DIGITAL

...I WILL ARGUE AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL CHASM BETWEEN THE "ANALOG" AND THE "DIGITAL" BY SHOWING THAT NOT ONLY THE TWO TECHNOLOGIES ARE NOT IN OPPOSITION, BUT THEY COEXIST, AND THAT DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IS PREDOMINANT BECAUSE IT ALLOWS FOR EASIER STORAGE AND TRANSMISSION OF DATA, WHICH LEAD TO TWO KEY ASPECTS: MEMORY AND CONNECTIVITY...

....DIGITAL SIGNALS ARE MUCH EASIER TO STORE AND TRANSMIT OVER LONG DISTANCES THAN ANALOG SIGNALS THIS IS THE KEY DIFFERENCE THAT DETERMINED THE SUCCESS OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY OVER THE ANALOG. IT IS A MATTER OF PRACTICALITY RATHER THAN AN ACTUAL ONTOLOGICAL DISTINCTION: MOST SYSTEMS NOW RELY ON DIGITAL SIGNALS BECAUSE THEY ARE LESS AFFECTED BY DISTURBANCES AND THIS MAKES , THEM EASIER TO STORE AND TO TRANSMIT OVER LONG DISTANCES THAN ANALOG SIGNALS...

...ANOTHER SUCCESS FACTOR FOR DIGITAL MEMORIES DERIVES FROM THE VERSATILITY OF THE BINARY CODE, WHICH ENABLES COMPUTER DESIGNERS TO EASILY CREATE ENCODINGS, THAT IS, MATHEMATICAL CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN FINITE SEQUENCES OF 0S AND 1S AND ENTITIES IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD. THIS WAS THE GREAT INTUITION THAT BROUGHT DIGITAL MEMORIES TO THE CENTRE STAGE OF COMPUTER SCIENCE MID-20TH CENTURY: THE POSSIBILITY TO STORE NOT ONLY THE DATA TO ELABORATE, BUT ALSO THE INSTRUCTIONS BY WHICH SUCH DATA WERE TO BE ELABORATED...

...THUS, DIGITAL MEMORIES WITH THE STORED PROGRAM CONCEPT ALLOWED, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY, FOR THE STORAGE OF DATA AND THE OPERATIONS TO PERFORM ON THOSE DATA. THIS WAS THE BIRTH OF AUTOMATED ITERATION, THAT IS, THE POSSIBILITY TO PROGRAM A MACHINE TO PERFORM COMPLEX SEQUENCES OF DIFFERENT OPERATIONS...

THE TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENTS BETWEEN THE 1990S AND THE 2010S IN TERMS OF THE CONTENTS THAT A BROWSER CAN SHOW ARE OBVIOUS: IN LITTLE MORE THAN A DECADE WE GO FROM TEXT AND DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS TO FULLFLEDGED VIDEOS, SUPERPOSITIONS OF COMPUTER-GENERATED GRAPHICS AND PHOTOS, COMPUTER-GENERATED GRAPHICS INTERACTING WITH USER-GENERATED DRAWINGS ON THE FLY, AND SO ON. THESE ENHANCEMENTS, WHICH ARE THEORETICALLY MADE POSSIBLE BY THE DIGITISATION OF THE CONTENTS, ARE MADE PRACTICALLY FEASIBLE BY THE TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL DEVICES, COMPRISED OF CIRCUITS THAT ARE EVERY YEAR MORE MINIATURISED AND DENSER WITH TRANSISTORS, WHICH INCREASES THE NUMBER OF OPERATIONS THAT A COMPUTER IS ABLE TO PERFORM PER UNIT OF TIME...

VERDICCHIO M., 2018, P.52, P.33, P.36, P.40

HUMANITIES

EXCEPTIONS VS RULES

RE - PRESENTATION

SONO INVECE SCIENZE MORBIDE NELLE QUALI IL PERCORSO È PIÙ IMPORTANTE DEL PUNTO DI ARRIVO, CIOÈ FUOR DI METAFORA, NELLE QUALI IL CONTRIBUTO PIÙ INTERESSANTE NON È QUELLO CHE SCOPRE COSE NUOVE, BENSÌ QUELLO CHE ANCHE SENZA AGGIUNGERE NIENTE ALL'INVENTARIO DEL NOTO, APRE NUOVE PROSPETTIVE SULLE COSE, CI FA PENSARE AI PROBLEMI A CUI NON AVEVAMO MAI PENSATO O DIMOSTRA INADEGUATO UN RISULTATO CHE SI PENSAVA ACQUISITO SENZA NECESSARIAMENTE SOSTITUIRLO CON UNO NUOVO

GIUNTA, 2017, P.298

HUMANITIES
TO
DIGITAL HUMANITIES

bibliography

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▷ Verdicchio M., The digital in digital art*, Studi di estetica*, anno XLVI, IV serie, 3/2018,

webgraphy

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▷ https://www.ibm.com/ibm/history/ibm100/it/it/stories/linguistica_computazionale.html

▷ http://apps.harvardartmuseums.org/lightbox/index.html