

FIS 2331H: Introduction to Digital Humanities (Winter 2009)

Time: Tuesdays, 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Location: Bissell 312

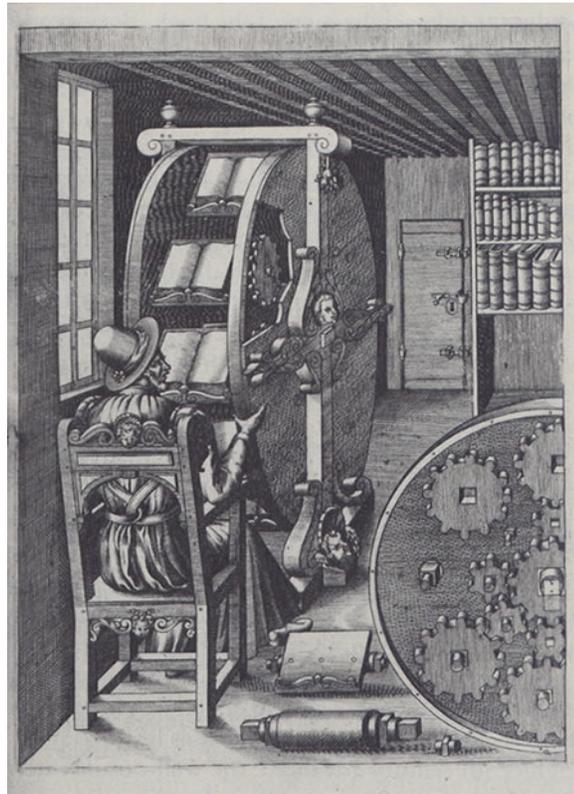
Instructor: Dr. Alan Galey, Faculty of Information

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 am to noon
or by appointment



Overview

Over the past decade, the term "digital humanities" has come to name the intersection of digital technologies and humanities scholarship, and particularly the ethos of "thinking through making" in the humanities. Digital humanists use computing technologies to produce new knowledge about traditional humanities domains like literature, art, philosophy, culture, and history; reciprocally, digital humanists also use these perspectives to think critically about new (and old) technologies in all forms. This course will introduce students to this still-emerging field, with a focus on the cultural histories and possible futures of books, libraries, and archives. Our readings will survey topics such as the ontology of born-digital artifacts, disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, theories and practices of text encoding, the gendering of texts and technologies, the politics of digital archiving, the materiality of digital texts, and the epistemology of digital tools in the humanities. Students will also receive a practical introduction to XML markup and related technologies. Prior experience with programming and text encoding is welcome, but not necessary.

Course texts

Our primary course text will be

A Companion to Digital Humanities. Ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth.
Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

An open-access version of the Companion is available here: <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/>. The campus bookstore won't be stocking copies for our class, but you can get the softcover version from most retailers for \$40-\$50.

Other readings will come from various journals, books, and other sources. See the online reading list for details and locations.

Evaluation

10% participation
20% digital edition/archive review essay
30% XML encoding project & report
40% final paper

Late papers and assignments will be penalized 3 percentage points per day (weekends count as 2 days). I will grant extensions only in advance of the assignment deadline, and only if the student provides a documented reason such as illness. All written assignments must conform to either the MLA or Chicago style guidelines.

Participation

This mark is determined by the quality of your contributions to class discussion. The course is largely structured by ongoing intellectual debates in the digital humanities, and you should come prepared to engage those debates, not just observe or report on them. This means reading all of the week's assigned materials, allowing yourself enough time to think about them (i.e. not leaving them till the night before class), and coming to class with things to say about them. Participation depends just as much on listening as speaking, so I ask that you listen carefully to everyone's input, consider the effects of your own comments, and respect all members of the class.

Digital edition/archive review essay

8-10 pages, excluding Works Cited; due Thursday, Feb. 12

In this assignment students will evaluate a digital scholarly edition or archive of their choice, and write a short paper in the genre of the review essay. Review essays are like book reviews, only longer and typically structured by an argument that extends beyond evaluation of the item under review. In other words, a review essay uses the evaluation of a given resource as an opportunity to think about broader questions. Students must consult with me in advance about their choice of digital edition or archive.

XML encoding project and report

Report: 5-7 pages, excluding Works Cited; due Thursday, March. 26

This assignment is intended to introduce students to the complexities of digitally modelling print and manuscript materials, as well as other types of artifacts that humanists study. Students will select a short text like a poem, scene from a play, prose fragment, or other example of primary source material, and then encode it in XML. This involves making choices about which aspects of the original to encode, and how to contend with the structural constraints of XML. Students may wish to use established encoding guidelines like those of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), or take advantage of TEI's customization features, or devise their own system entirely. In either case, the accompanying report must articulate a rationale for these choices, and reflect on how the process of encoding can lead to new ways to understand the material.

Research paper

12-20 pages, excluding Works Cited; due Thursday, April 16

deadline for for students **not** intending to graduate at the June convocation: Thursday, April 16

deadline for students who **do** intend to graduate at the June convocation: Monday, April 13; these students are also welcome to hand in their final papers before this deadline

This final essay should explore a topic appropriate to the course, drawing upon primary and secondary sources to advance an original argument. I encourage you to start thinking about your final paper as soon as possible, and to consult with me about it. This may require you to read ahead if you wish to write on a topic covered toward the end of our schedule. Papers must be between 12 and 20 pages in length, not including references, screenshots, or long excerpts of code.

Academic integrity

From Jens-Erik Mai, Acting Dean, Faculty of Information: "The essence of academic life revolves around respect not only for the ideas of others, but also their rights to those ideas and their promulgation. It is therefore essential that all of us engaged in the life of the mind take the utmost care that the ideas and expressions of ideas of other people always be appropriately handled, and, where necessary, cited. For writing assignments, when ideas or materials of others are used, they must be cited. [...] In any situation, if you have a question, please feel free to ask. Such attention to ideas and acknowledgement of their sources is central not only to academic life, but life in general. Please acquaint yourself with UofT's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters: <http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/behaveac.pdf>"

FIS 2331H schedule (Winter 2009)

* indicates reading not in Blackwell *Companion to Digital Humanities*; see reading list or course website for details

6 Jan. Introduction

- Readings
 - Editors' introduction to Blackwell *Companion*
 - Susan Hockey, "The History of Humanities Computing"

13 Jan. Disciplinary and method in the humanities

- Readings
 - Jerome McGann, "Information Technology and the Troubled Humanities"*
 - Julia Flanders, "Detailism, Digital Texts, and the Problem of Pedantry"*
 - *optional*: Jerome McGann, "The Rationale of Hypertext"*
- Projects
 - NINES: Nineteenth-Century Studies Online (www.nines.org)
 - The Rossetti Archive (rossettiarchive.org)

20 Jan. Philology and the history of writing

- Readings
 - Gregory Crane, David Bamman, and Alison Jones, "ePhilology: When the Books Talk to Their Readers"*
 - Roger Chartier, "Languages, Books, and Reading from the Printed Word to the Digital Text"*
 - *optional*: Jay David Bolter, "Writing as Technology"*
- Project
 - The Perseus Project (www.perseus.tufts.edu)

27 Jan. Representing artifacts

- Guest: Cheryl Meszaros, Faculty of Information
- Readings
 - Marilyn Deegan and Simon Tanner, "Conversion of Primary Sources"
 - Bill Brown, "Thing Theory"*
 - *optional*: Juliet Sutherland, "A Mass Digitization Primer"*
- Project
 - Omeka, open-source exhibiton software (omeka.org); also check out some of the sites using this software, listed in the "Showcase" section

3 Feb. Editions and archives

- Guest: Jason Boyd, Records of Early English Drama project
- Readings
 - Marta Nell Smith, "Electronic Scholarly Editing"
 - Julia Flanders, "The Body Encoded: Questions of Gender and the Electronic Text"*
- Projects
 - Records of Early English Drama: Patrons and Performances (link.library.utoronto.ca/reed/)
 - Dickinson Electronic Archives (emilydickinson.org)
 - The Women Writers Project (www.wwp.brown.edu)

10 Feb. Materiality of texts

- Readings
 - Geoffrey Nunberg, "Farewell to the Information Age"*
 - D.F. McKenzie, "The Broken Phial: Non-Book Texts"*
- Project
 - Text Encoding Initiative Consortium (tei-c.org)
- Review essay due by Thursday, Feb. 12

17 Feb. Reading week (no class)

- read the TEI's *Gentle Introduction to XML* in the TEI P5 Guidelines: <http://www.tei-c.org/Guidelines/P5/>

24 Feb. Modelling and markup theory 1

- Readings
 - Willard McCarty, "Modeling: A Study in Words and Meanings"
 - Allen Renear, "Text Encoding"
 - John Lavagnino, "When Not to Use TEI"*
- Projects
 - TextArc (textarc.org)
 - Text Encoding Initiative P5 Guidelines (tei-c.org/Guidelines/)

3 March Modelling and markup theory 2

- Readings
 - Allen Renear, "Out of Praxis: Three (Meta)Theories of Textuality"*
 - Jerome McGann, "Visible and Invisible Books: Hermetic Images in n -Dimensional Space"*
- Project
 - The Versioning Machine (v-machine.org)
 - visualizations from the Electronic New Variorum

Shakespeare

10 March Thinking through making: epistemology and design

- Guest: Matt Ratto, Faculty of Information
- Readings
 - Katharine Hayles, "Translating Media: Why We Should Rethink Textuality"*
 - Stephen Ramsay, "Databases"
- Project
 - CriticalMaking.com

17 March Text analysis and cultural informatics

- Guest: Dean Seamus Ross, Faculty of Information
- Readings
 - Stephen Ramsay, "In Praise of Pattern"*
 - Martin Mueller, "Digital Shakespeare, or Towards a Literary Informatics"*
- Project
 - Wordhoard (wordhoard.northwestern.edu)

24 March Interface and visualization

- Readings
 - Matthew Kirschenbaum, "'So the Colors Cover the Wires': Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability"
 - Martyn Jessop, "Digital Visualization as a Scholarly Activity"*
- Projects
 - The William Blake Archive (blakearchive.org)
 - MONK Project (monkproject.org)
- Encoding project & report due by Thursday, March 26

31 March Born-digital artifacts

- Readings
 - Matthew Kirschenbaum, "Editing the Interface: Textual Studies and First Generation Electronic Objects"*
 - Nick Montfort, "Riddle Machines: The History and Nature of Interactive Fiction"*
- Projects
 - Electronic Literature Organization (eliterature.org)

7 April Users, readers, audiences, and players

- Readings
 - John Unsworth, "Scholarly Primitives: what methods do humanities researchers have in common, and how might

our tools reflect this?":

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/Kings.5-00/primitives.html>

- Andrew Mctavish, "Licensed to Play: Digital Games, Player Modifications, and Authorized Production"*
- Projects
 - ApertureScience.com [viral marketing site for the PC game *Portal*]
 - at the prompt, type "LOGIN", then give any username, then give the password "portal", then type "APPLY" to begin the program
 - help for the website (and some other interesting bits of information) can be found at this thread on a Half-Life 2 forum:
<http://www.half-life2.net/forums/showthread.php?t=113318> (but try going through the website first without reading the spoilers in this post)

FIS2331H Reading List (Winter 2009)

last updated: 27 April 2009

Bolter, Jay David. *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*. 2nd ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001. 14-26.

Brown, Bill. "Thing Theory." *Critical Inquiry* 28.1 (2001): 1-21.

Darnton, Robert. "The Library in the New Age." *New York Review of Books* 55.10 (12 June 2008): <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/21514>

Deegan, Marilyn, and Simon Tanner. "Conversion of Primary Sources." In Schreibman et al.

Dillon, Andrew. "Describing the Reading Process at an Appropriate Level." *Designing Usable Electronic Text*. 2nd ed. Boca Raton: CRC P, 2004. Also available electronically as an [e-book](#).

Deegan, Marilyn, and Simon Tanner. "Conversion of Primary Sources." In Schreibman, et al.

Crane, Gregory, David Bamman, and Alison Jones, "ePhilology: When the Books Talk to Their Readers." In Siemens and Schreibman.

Chartier, Roger. "[Languages, Books, and Reading from the Printed Word to the Digital Text](#)." Trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan. *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2004): 133-52.

Flanders, Julia. "The Body Encoded: Questions of Gender and the Electronic Text." *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Ed. Kathryn Sutherland. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1997. 127-43.

---. "Detailism, Digital Texts, and the Problem of Pedantry" *TEXT Technology* 14.2 (2005): 41-70. <http://texttechnology.mcmaster.ca/archives.html>

Hayles, N. Katharine. "[Translating Media: Why We Should Rethink Textuality](#)." *Yale Journal of Criticism* 16.2 (2003): 263-90.

Hockey, Susan. "The History of Humanities Computing." In Schreibman et al.

Jessop, Martyn. "Digital Visualization as a Scholarly Activity." *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 23.3 (2008): 281-93.

Kirschenbaum, Matthew G. "Editing the Interface: Textual Studies and First Generation Electronic Objects." *TEXT* 14 (2002): 15-51.

---. "'So the Colors Cover the Wires': Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability." In Schreibman et al.

Lavagnino, John. "When Not to Use TEI." *Electronic Textual Editing*. Ed. Lou Burnard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, and John Unsworth. New York: Modern Language Association, 2006. http://www.tei-c.org/About/Archive_new/ETE/Preview/

McCarty, Willard. "Modeling: A Study in Words and Meanings." In Schreibman et al.

McGann, Jerome J. "Information Technology and the Troubled Humanities." *TEXT Technology* 14.2 (2005): 105-21. <http://texttechnology.mcmaster.ca/archives.html>

---. "Marking Texts of Many Dimensions." In Schreibman et al.

---. "The Rationale of Hypertext." *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Ed. Kathryn Sutherland. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1997. 19-46.

---. "[Visible and Invisible Books: Hermetic Images in N-Dimensional Space.](#)" *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 17.1 (2002): 61-75.

McKenzie, D.F. "The Broken Phial: Non-Book Texts." *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999. 31-53.

Mactavish, Andrew. "Licensed to Play: Digital Games, Player Modifications, and Authorized Production." In Siemens and Schreibman.

Montfort, Nick. "Riddle Machines: The History and Nature of Interactive Fiction." In Siemens and Schreibman.

Mueller, Martin. "Digital Shakespeare, or Towards a Literary Informatics." [Reinventing Digital Shakespeare](#), ed. Alan Galey and Ray Siemens. Spec. issue of *Shakespeare* 4.3 (2008): 300-17.

Nunberg, Geoffrey. "Farewell to the Information Age." *The Future of the Book*. Ed. Nunberg. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1996. 103-38.

Ramsay, Stephen. "Databases." In Schreibman, et al.

---. "In Praise of Pattern." *TEXT Technology* 14.2 (2005): 177-90. <http://texttechnology.mcmaster.ca/archives.html>

Renear, Allen. "Text Encoding." In Schreibman et al.

---. "Out of Praxis: Three (Meta)Theories of Textuality." Sutherland, Kathryn, ed. *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997. 107-26.

Schreibman, Susan, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth, ed. *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/>

Siemens, Ray, and Susan Schreibman, ed. *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008. <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companionDLS/>

Smith, Marta Nell. "Electronic Scholarly Editing." In Schreibman, et al.

Sutherland, Juliet. "A Mass Digitization Primer." *Library Trends* 57.1 (2008): 17-23.

Unsworth, John. "Scholarly Primitives: what methods do humanities researchers have in common, and how might our tools reflect this?":

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/Kings.5-00/primitives.html>