

# DIGIT 100, Introduction to Digital Humanities: Critical Making

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Section 001/

MWF, 2:30 - 3:20/

Luerssen 120

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Office Hours: MWF, 11:15 - 12:05, or by appointment

Location: Franco 143

Office Policy:

Office hours are designated time to meet with students outside of class. Please drop in to discuss any class related concerns, questions, or clarification. If these times do not work, please email with some dates and times to set a meeting time that will work.

## Course Description

The “digital humanities” (DH) describes a vast array of disciplines, practices, and methodologies as varied as those found in the non-digital “humanities.” This course defines DH research, according to criteria specified by Lauren Klein, as that which falls into one (or more) of the following three categories:

1. research that applies a digital or computational method to a traditional humanities object;
2. research that applies traditional humanities methods to a digital or computational object; and
3. research that merges digital methodologies with humanities concerns to create new objects

Using Klein’s framework, this course will introduce students to the field of digital humanities, its concerns, (some of) its methodologies, and (some of) its objects of study, through a hands-on focus upon **critical making**. Students will encounter objects such as electronic literature, generative poetry, and digital archives; they will take a humanistic lens to contemporary digital platforms like Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Netflix; and they will engage in practices like hypertextual writing, interaction design, and coding to create their own objects that blend the digital with the humanities and critically *make* DH what it is/they are.

## Required Materials

You will need to purchase the following digital games which we will be discussing at length.

Gaynor, Steve. *Gone Home*. Fullbright Company, 2013.

Pope, Lucas. *Papers, Please*. 3909 LLC, 2013.

You will also need to arrange availability to Netflix in order to access various viewing material. If this presents a particular problem, **please** contact me **prior** to relevant class periods.

All required textbook readings for this course can be found in open-access Manifold Project editions from the Debates in the Digital Humanities series.

**\*All other texts will be made available via Canvas\***

Students are **required** to have access to a working computer with a reliable internet connection. All of the software and programs we will run will be freely available.

## Assignments

**(1000 total points possible)**

### 150 Panel Presentation

You will participate in a class panel with other students, in which you will each compose a **500** word statement about the assigned topic of the day, including one source assigned for class and one source discovered through your own research. You and your fellow panelists will read your statements, followed by you asking each other questions. The panel will then open to the class for questions and comments. Your presentation should be publicly engaging and include visual accompaniment. You do not need to get together with fellow panelists prior to class but are welcome to do so.

### 100 Video Essay

You will compose a video essay in Adobe Spark applying a humanities lens to a popular digital platform, close reading and analyzing it as you would a text. Your video essay should incorporate at least one source assigned for class and one source discovered through your own research. Its argument should be expressed through both compelling content and visually innovative presentation. Your video should be **five** to **seven** minutes long and turned in alongside its script.

### 100 Distant Reading Report

You will use Voyant to quantitatively “distant read” a large set of text and see what patterns emerge at that scale. You should look for significant patterns in the language yielded and produce a report of what that distant reading reveals.

### 100 Pixelated Game

You will respond to objects of study discussed in our mini-unit on electronic literature by designing a pixelated game created in Bitsy. Your game should present an original narrative inspired by the course content we have covered so far. It should be accompanied by a brief **500** word artist's statement citing creative and scholarly work assigned in class as well as discovered through your own research.

### **100 Twitterbot**

You will respond to objects of study discussed in our mini-unit on electronic literature by building a Twitterbot created in Tracery. The inspiration for your Twitterbot should be a print-based text you already know and will remediate for a digital context, according to provided criteria.

### **300 Webtext**

You will work in groups of three to create an interactive webtext in Twine reflecting back on and responding to any aspect of the semester and the critical conversations raised throughout. Your webtext should present an original argument expressed through hybrid multimodal appeals incorporating text, image, sound, and procedural rhetoric and supported by creative and scholarly work assigned in class as well as discovered through your own research.

### **150 Participation**

You must be an active and engaged part of the course to not only receive participation credit but to ensure that our course will be an academically fruitful experience. This grade will be gauged by not only your attendance, but your contribution to in class group activities and larger discussions. To guarantee receipt of a full grade, you must contribute within class regularly throughout each week.

## **Course Schedule (Subject to Change):**

### **UNIT 0: INTRODUCTION TO INTRODUCTION TO...**

#### **Week 1:**

**1/13** Course Introduction

**1/15** What Is/Are Digital Humanities?

**1/17** ["Digital Humanities: First, Second and Third Wave,"](#) David M. Berry

### **UNIT 1: HUMANISTIC METHODS APPLIED TO DIGITAL OBJECTS**

#### **Week 2:**

1/20 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

1/22 "[Technically Wrong: Sexist Apps, Biased Algorithms, and Other Threats of Toxic Tech](#)," Sara Wachter-Boettcher

1/24 Adobe Spark Tutorial

### Week 3:

1/27 "[Google Has a Striking History of Bias Against Black Girls](#)," Safiya Noble

1/29 "[The Gods Wish More of Me': Infrastructural Violence Between Ethics and Doxa](#)," Caddie Alford and Damien Smith Pfister

- **Panel Presentation**

1/31 "[Building Dark Patterns into Platforms: How GamerGate Perturbed Twitter's User Experience](#)," Michael Trice and Liza Potts

### Week 4:

2/3 [The Social Dilemma](#) (2020), Jeff Orlowski, et al.

2/5 "Does Information Really Want to Be Free? Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Question of Openness," Kimberly Christen

- **Panel Presentation**

2/7 "[The Digital Humanities from Father Busa to Edward Snowden](#)," Domenico Fiormonte

## UNIT 2: DIGITAL METHODS APPLIED TO HUMANISTIC OBJECTS

### Week 5:

2/10 B(ook) H(istory) & DH

- **Video Essay DUE**

2/12 "[My Old Sweethearts: On Digitization and the Future of the Print Record](#)," Andrew Stauffer

- **Panel Presentation**

2/14 Archiving and Processes of Digitization

**Week 6:**

2/17 "[Canons, Close Reading, and the Evolution of Method](#)," Matthew Wilkens

2/19 "Macroanalysis," Matthew L. Jockers

2/21 "[Humane Computation](#)," Stephen Ramsay

- **Panel Presentation**

**Week 7:**

2/24 "[Alien Reading: Text Mining, Language Standardization, and the Humanities](#)," Jeffrey M. Binder

2/26 "[More Scale. More Questions: Observations from Sociology](#)," Tressie McMillan Cottom

- **Panel Presentation**

2/28 Big Data Research

**Week 8:**

3/2 Distant Reading with Voyant

3/4 Distant Reading with Voyant

3/6 Voyant Findings Presentations

**Week 9:**

3/9 (Spring Break)

3/11 (Spring Break)

3/13 (Spring Break)

**UNIT 3: NEW OBJECTS COMBINING DIGITAL + HUMANITIES**

**Week 10:**

**3/16** "[A \[S\]creed for Digital Fiction](#)," Astrid Ensslin, et al.

- **Distant Reading Report DUE**

**3/18** [Depression Quest](#) (2013), Zoe Quinn; "Playing at Empathy: Representing and Experiencing Emotional Growth through Twine Games," Anastasia Salter

- **Panel Presentation**

**3/20** Bitsy Game Jam

**Week 11:**

**3/23** [Bandersnatch](#) (2018), Charlie Brooker & David Slade

**3/25** *Gone Home* (2013), Steve Gaynor

**3/27** *Papers, Please* (2013), Lucas Pope; "From Codex to Ludex: Paper Machines, Digital Games, and Haptic Subjectivities," Chloe Anna Milligan

- **Panel Presentation**

**Week 12:**

**3/30** "[Can Video Games Be Humanities Scholarship?](#)", James Coltrain and Ramsay

- **Panel Presentation**

**4/1** "[Playing the Humanities: Feminist Game Studies and Public Discourse](#)," Salter and Bridget Blodgett

**4/3** Bitsy Game Crunch

**Week 13:**

**4/6** "Less is More," Tony Veale and Mike Cook

- **Pixelated Game DUE**

**4/8** "[Genre: Bot](#)," Leonardo Flores

**4/10** Cheap Bots, Done Quick! with Tracery

**Week 14:**

**4/13** Bots and Politics on Twitter

**4/15** “Cultivating Metanoia in Twitter Publics: Analyzing and Producing Bots of Protest in the #GamerGate Controversy,” Steve Holmes and Rachel Graham Lussos

**Panel Presentation**

**4/17** Cheap Bots, Done Quick! With Tracery

**UNIT 4: NEW METHODS FOR MAKING HUMANITIES DIGITAL**

**Week 15:**

**4/20** Digital Rhetoric and the Webtext

**- Twitterbot DUE**

**4/22** “Composing for Digital Publication: Rhetoric, Design, Code,” Douglas Eyman and Cheryl E. Ball

**• Panel Presentation**

**4/24** Twine Practicum

**Week 16:**

**4/27** “[Creation Under Capitalism and the Twine Revolution](#),” Porpentine Charity Heartscape

**4/29** Twine Troubleshooting

**5/1** Course Conclusion

**\* Webtext DUE 5/4, 11:59PM\***