

IATL

inclusive innovative active
interdisciplinary learning
teaching international

AUTUMN 2014



DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Common definitions of the digital observe that it involves breaking everything down into the binary language of 1s and 0s. By placing all forms of historical media, all content, and many analytical procedures on this common terrain, all kinds of possibilities open up. For what might seem like a terrifyingly reductive medium, the digital turns out to be wildly generative. A side effect is that the technical definition – of 1s and 0s – gives us little sense of what the digital might mean. What does it mean to do humanities work digitally? Given that a vast majority of this work involves writing, most humanities scholars have technically been digital since the wide adoption of personal computers, beginning in the 1980s. But, as Marshal McLuhan would put it, we moved into the digital looking through the rear-view mirror, recreating the formats and aesthetics of print and broadcast.

Fortunately, this wasn't the case within computer science. Pioneers in this field ceased seeing the computer as a purely calculative tool over 50 years ago, if we take the invention of Ivan Sutherland's Sketchpad (the first program dedicated to drawing) in 1962 as one of number of

early examples. They equally recognised that the computer was not merely a tool for simulating old media, but also for augmentation and the invention of entirely new forms. What we have seen, in other words, is generations of innovation at the level of the tools used for humanities work – at the level of *techne* – but with only minimal involvement from within the humanities itself. For a cluster of disciplines that spends much of its time reading and interpreting texts, consulting archives, and writing, this lack of reflexivity is more than curious.

The Digital Humanities begins with a rediscovering of the capacities of media, not only as things carrying texts to interpret, but as the very conditions of expression, argumentation, joy, melancholy – indeed thought itself. If the computational backdrop of humanities work was a gift from the computer sciences, the current wave of datafication and big data analysis also generally come from abroad (although there are exceptions). The risk is that by incorporating digital tools which are based on methods developed, for example, in business statistics or economics, we will

unknowingly smuggle in undesirable epistemologies. The humanities cannot be a passive receiver when it comes to the digital. The rewards include new modes of reading, collaborating, interpreting, analysing, archiving and most importantly, expression. That is quite a lot of terrain for experimentation!

In May this year, researchers and educators gathered around the Monash-Warwick communication portal to 'make sense' of the digital humanities. A range of projects that are currently underway across our respective institutions were showcased, discussed and critically reflected upon. Overleaf is a taste of how Warwick and Monash are making sense of the Digital Humanities, with a particular focus on emerging pedagogies. As with previous IATL newsletters, this edition demonstrates both international and interdisciplinary collaboration between academics, practitioners, technologists and students.

Nathaniel Tkacz, Assistant Professor, Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies & Jonathan Heron, IATL Senior Teaching Fellow, University of Warwick

DIGITAL HUMANITIES: COMPUTER-ASSISTED METRICAL FINGERPRINTING

The advent of Digital Humanities has put me (to my bemusement) at a cutting edge of research in literary studies. One of the hot topics in Shakespeare research, given the new awareness and acknowledgement of covert collaboration in the production of Early Modern playtexts, is the question of authorial attribution of plays and parts of plays. For some time I have been building a set of databases that record metrical and prosodic variations in the verse of Shakespeare and his contemporaries as a form of what I call 'metrical fingerprinting': comparing the many choices, conscious and unconscious, made in each line about its metrical pattern, about the prosodic instantiation of that pattern, about transitions between one line and the next, and so on. The many attempts to gather such data between 1880 and 1930 were eventually abandoned when it became clear that writers were merely assembling elaborate records of their own subjective (and perhaps fugitive) impressions. The problem was that the early investigators not only lacked computers to process the data, but in addition had no sophisticated or systematic understanding either of English phonology and syntax or of English metre.

Once the data are in a spreadsheet they may be compared and interrogated, by the use of formulas, in any way that emerges as fruitful: my 'proof of concept' investigation into the authorship of Titus Andronicus produced a pleasing and clear corroboration of the consensus division of the play based on other forensic methods – lexical, grammatical, and dramaturgical. For any further information on my work on this project please contact me at Peter.Groves@monash.edu

Peter Groves, School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Monash University



DIGITAL HUMANITIES: SHAKESPEARE ON THE ROAD



On Independence Day, 4 July, Paul Prescott (Associate Professor, Department of English at Warwick) and Paul Edmondson (Head of Research and Knowledge, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust) embarked on an epic road trip all around North America in a unique project titled 'Shakespeare on the Road'. This project was recently showcased at the Making Sense of Digital Humanities event, in order to consider research practice that emphasises creative and digital exchanges across cultures.

The collaboration between Warwick, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Misfit Inc aims to capture a comprehensive picture of Shakespeare's place in contemporary American culture through the voices of artists and audiences across the continent, telling the story of the festivals in their own words for the first time. It was a reverse pilgrimage, celebrating the USA's astonishing range of Shakespearean performance in classic road trip / travel writing fashion online.

Over the sixty days Paul and Paul visited fourteen Shakespeare festivals across North America travelling some 10000 miles across 25 states and part of Canada. Paul Prescott is also the Associate Director for Global Shakespeare the research and teaching collaboration with Queen Mary University of London. For more details visit the Global Shakespeare website.

Paul Prescott, Associate Global Shakespeare Director, University of Warwick

DIGITAL HUMANITIES: INTERACTIONS

The Digital Humanities is most often envisioned as a set of methods or practices, coalescing around particular technologies, which can be applied to one's home discipline. In a sense this is nothing new – most humanities disciplines are flexible and regularly imbibe methods from elsewhere. But what is somewhat different is that, for most academics, the technical aspects of research are something to be outsourced rather than learnt, which has led for many Digital Humanities projects to a distributed approach to working. The researcher does the research, while an academic technologist handles the technical side of things, producing impactful visualisations, providing an online collaborative database platform and basic training, or whatever else the project requires.

However, there are two other forms of interaction with the Digital Humanities which I hope will be more prominent going forward. Firstly, there are an increasing number of projects at Warwick and elsewhere which use a model of co-creation, involving academic technologists as collaborators throughout the research process. Secondly, the Digital Humanities has the potential to impact heavily on teaching – both directly through the provision of new research-led modules, and more widely. Through the incorporation of digital literacy into our teaching and assessment practices students studying just about anything could be encouraged to produce videos, author



web-content, and explore data visualisations- taking away valuable skills, as well as engaging with the subject matter they are studying. In the next academic year I'll be leading an IATL-funded strategic project into teaching the Digital Humanities – please get in touch if you'd like to be involved.

David Beck, Academic Technologist, Arts Faculty, University of Warwick

DIGITAL HUMANITIES: DIGITAL ORAL HISTORY



a selection of our student videos at: <http://vimeo.com/groups/makinghistory/albums/8392>

The Australian Generations Oral History project (<http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/australian-generations/>) is an ARC collaboration between Monash and La Trobe universities, the National Library of Australia and ABC Radio National, and is producing 50 life history interviews with Australians born in each decade since the 1920s, totalling 1500 recorded hours. We are experimenting with a range of digital history tools. A Google site discussion forum is linking 20 interviewers spread across the continent. Text-based timed summaries linked with online digital audio enable users anywhere in the world to search a topic and find and play relevant extracts from the interviews. Using a ZOTERO database, our team of 9 researchers is sharing interview material and adding interpretative layers that will be accessible to future researchers. Geo-pin software will link each interview to places on the map of Australia (and perhaps the world) so that users can scan their cursor over a map to locate interviews and see photos of the interviewee and access the interview. The ABC is broadcasting and podcasting a series of radio programs based on the interviews, and an aural history book – in paperback and e-book formats – will allow online users to listen to interview extracts as they read them, and then to spiral off into the online archive along their own research paths. Exciting times, and fun too!

Alistair Thomson, School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies, Monash University

It's an exciting time for digital history. Historians all over the world are making new sense of the past using online digitised archives and powerful search engines and databases. In my field of oral history, digital tools are transforming the way we record, document, index, interpret and use oral history, and are generating magical ways of presenting the remembered past through voice, moving image and text, in museums, online walking tours and websites, podcasts and geo-mapping. Two recent Monash projects showcase the possibilities.

In the level two undergraduate unit Making Histories, a collaboration with Museum Victoria (MV), our students research a history topic (from their own family or locality, or from a curated set of MV online resources) and instead of writing a research essay they produce a 3 minute digital video history – and then write about what they have learnt about history by actually making history. You can view

DIGITAL HUMANITIES: THE DISCIPLINE OF LINGUISTICS

The discipline of linguistics can plausibly claim to be part of the birth of the digital humanities with techniques of text processing developed in the field of corpus linguistics being applied in other disciplines as fundamental methods of Digital Humanities. I have been involved in the development of the Australian National Corpus project (AusNC) over the last five years and I see this as an important contribution in the digital humanities. AusNC is an aggregation of data collections and the focus of my interest at the moment (in association with colleagues from Griffith University) is on improving access to collections of this type: how can one search effectively for similar types of data in collections which are presented and annotated in different ways? The approach we are taking to this problem involves the use of ontologies; this means making explicit the theoretical presuppositions underlying the different ways of presenting linguistic data. To me, this is a fascinating example of the potential of work in the Digital Humanities. By turning a fresh methodological focus on existing practices, we are able to reflect on the basis of those practices and assess them anew.



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There has also been a second wave of Digital Humanities work in linguistics, in my view. New technological possibilities around recording, storage and dissemination coincided with the concerns of linguists that many languages might disappear without any permanent record of them being made. Therefore since the turn of the century, there has been an explosion of work on documenting languages around the world and this has led to attention to issues of data management and archiving, and to consideration of how the data can best be used. I am involved in work relevant to this second concern, work which I also see as very much part of the Digital Humanities as it involves the reconceptualization of scholarly practice in the light of current technology. The grammatical description of a language has been seen as consisting of three parts (grammar proper, dictionary and texts) since at least the work of Franz Boas early in the twentieth century. Although these three parts are traditionally presented as separate objects (i.e. separate publications, or separate parts of a single work), they are in fact closely interwoven. In a project with Nick Thieberger, I am exploring the possibility of using web technologies to present grammatical description as a single digital object with the interrelationships as an integral part of the presentation. Again, this work involves the reassessment of current practice in the light of new technologies and this to me is central to the Digital Humanities project.

**Dr Simon Musgrave, School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics,
Monash University**



ICUR 2014

The International Conference of Undergraduate Research (ICUR) is an annual event that is unique in concept and design. It first emerged as an idea through the team working on the Reinvention Journal at Monash University and the University of Warwick. Funded and facilitated by the Monash-Warwick Alliance, the team sought to design a multi-disciplinary programme that would internationalise the student experience and provide a supported yet realistic experience for relatively inexperienced undergraduates in presenting their academic research.

The result was ICUR: a forum for undergraduate researchers that employs the latest in High Definition video-conferencing technology and social media to connect students across the world to a single 24-hour conference.



ICUR was held on 22-23 September 2014 and connected students in Australia, North America, Malaysia, Singapore and the UK. The conference was a lively and academically exciting event which ran for almost a full 24 hours across the globe. Around 150 people (mostly undergraduate students) were involved at Warwick alone and feedback so far shows that attendees felt that the experience added value to their experience at University and that the experience had had a positive impact on how they saw themselves as an academic researcher – a great way to start the academic year!

BECOMING IATL

This was a celebratory event for those people who had been associated with the work of the CAPITAL Centre, the Reinvention Centre and/or IATL at the University of Warwick over the last 10 years. As well as looking back and at the successes of the CETLs and IATL so far, guests were encouraged to look to the future by identifying key themes and issues in Teaching and Learning that are yet to be addressed.

The event was held on 19-20 June 2014 at the University of Warwick. The programme included active workshops with staff and students who have worked with us over the years, a 'live archive' room containing objects, films, photographs and memories of projects facilitated by the CETLs and IATL, open-space learning trails around the campus and a celebratory event on the evening of the 19 June which included dinner, drinks and performances.

We very much enjoyed welcoming back old friends and colleagues to Warwick to discuss the exciting work that has been undertaken over the last 10 years, the impact of that work and most importantly how that activity shapes the future work we undertake.



INTERDISCIPLINARY MODULES

IATL is able to offer a home for interdisciplinary modules that range across faculties, and welcomes proposals. The kind of Interdisciplinary work we seek to promote has the potential to provide our students with the essential skills, and insights that will equip them to face a world in which the problems they face will be increasingly complex and multi-faceted.

We welcome proposals from all University departments and from any individual from postgraduate tutor to professor. Module proposals will be considered by an IATL committee and, if approved, will be administered by us.

All you need to do to propose a module is:

1. Visit us to discuss your idea.
2. Submit a module proposal to IATL by the deadline of **31 December 2014**
3. Work with IATL to set up and publicise the module.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

26 & 27 November 2014

Final performances of 'A Piece of Cod', an IATL Student as Producer (Performance) project led by Samuel George

29 & 30 November 2014

Final performances of '21st Century Communities Project', an IATL Student as Producer (Performance) project led by Jack Morning-Newton

02 - 04 December 2014

Final performances of 'Breaking the Mould', an IATL Student as Producer (Performance) project led by Edward Franklin

For more information about these events and how to register your attendance please check the Forthcoming events section of the IATL website www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/activities/events

IATL FUNDING DEADLINES

FUNDING DEADLINES FOR THE AUTUMN TERM 2014-15

DEADLINE	FUNDING STREAM	AVAILABLE TO
03/12/2014	Student as Producer (Research and Collaboration) Student as Producer (Performance)	Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate students
11/03/2015	Student as Producer (Performance) & Performance Festival Bursaries	Undergraduates & Postgraduates
11/03/2015	Student as Producer (Research and Collaboration)	Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate students
11/05/2015	Academic Fellowships; Pedagogic Interventions; Strategic Projects	Academic staff

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