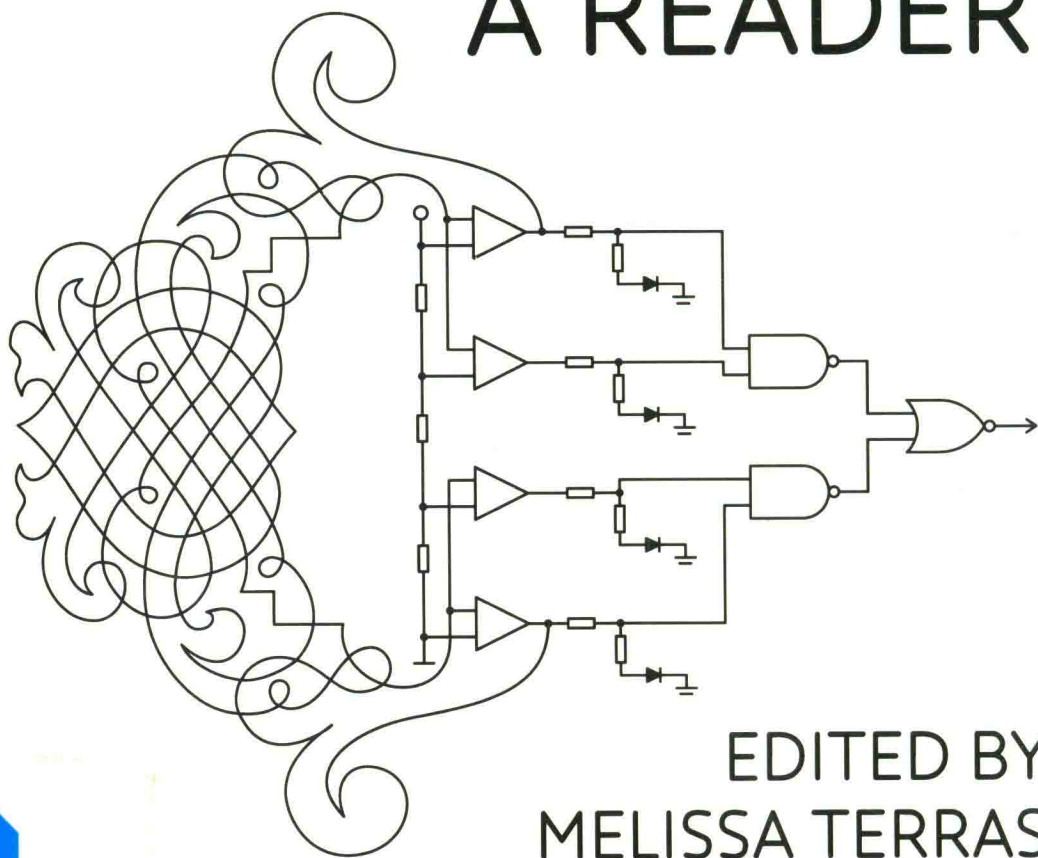


DEFINING DIGITAL HUMANITIES

A READER



EDITED BY
MELISSA TERRAS
JULIANNE NYHAN
EDWARD VANHOUTTE

Defining Digital Humanities

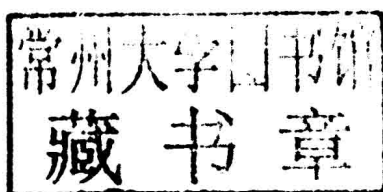
A Reader

Edited by

MELISSA TERRAS

JULIANNE NYHAN

EDWARD VANHOUTTE



ASHGATE

© Melissa Terras, Julianne Nyhan, Edward Vanhoutte and all individual authors 2013

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

Melissa Terras, Julianne Nyhan and Edward Vanhoutte have asserted their right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the editors of this work.

Published by
Ashgate Publishing Limited
Wey Court East
Union Road
Farnham
Surrey, GU9 7PT
England

Ashgate Publishing Company
110 Cherry Street
Suite 3-1
Burlington, VT 05401-3818
USA

www.ashgate.com

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:

Defining digital humanities : a reader / [edited] by Melissa Terras, Julianne Nyhan, and Edward Vanhoutte.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4094-6962-9 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-4094-6963-6 (pbk) –

ISBN 978-1-4094-6964-3 (epub) 1. Humanities–Data processing.

2. Humanities–Research–Data processing. 3. Information storage and retrieval systems–Humanities. 4. Humanities–Electronic information resources.

I. Terras, Melissa M. II. Nyhan, Julianne. III. Vanhoutte, Edward.

AZ105.D44 2013

001.30285–dc23

2013020285

ISBN 9781409469629 (hbk)

ISBN 9781409469636 (pbk)

ISBN 9781409469643 (ebk – PDF)

ISBN 9781409469650 (ebk – ePUB)



Printed in the United Kingdom by Henry Ling Limited,
at the Dorset Press, Dorchester, DT1 1HD

Defining Digital Humanities

*For
Anthony, Edward and Fergusson,
Clara and Joey,
and
Wonne and Senne*

Acknowledgements

The editors and publishers wish to thank the following for permission to use copyright and previously published material.

The Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations and the authors for the articles: Julia Flanders (2009), 'The Productive Unease of 21st-century Digital Scholarship', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 3 (3). Wendell Piez (2008), 'Something Called Digital Humanities', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 2 (1). Paul S. Rosenbloom (2012), 'Toward a Conceptual Framework for the Digital Humanities', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 6 (2). Patrick Svensson (2009), 'Humanities Computing as Digital Humanities', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 3 (3).

Chris Forster for the blog post: 'I'm Chris, Where Am I Wrong?'

Fred Gibbs for the article: 'Digital Humanities Definitions by Type'.

Mentis for the article: John Unsworth (2002), 'What is Humanities Computing and What is Not?', *Jahrbuch für Computerphilologie*, 4.

Lincoln Mullen for the blog post: 'Digital Humanities is a Spectrum, or "We're All Digital Humanists Now"'.

Bethany Nowviskie for the blog post: 'ADHO, On Love and Money'.

Oxford Journals and the authors for the articles: Willard McCarty (2006), 'Tree, Turf, Centre, Archipelago – or Wild Acre? Metaphors and Stories for Humanities Computing', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 21 (1). Melissa Terras (2006), 'Disciplined: Using Educational Studies to Analyse "Humanities Computing"', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 21 (2).

Stephen Ramsay for the blog posts: 'Who's In and Who's Out' and 'On Building'.

Geoffrey Rockwell for the article: (1999), 'Is Humanities Computing an Academic Discipline?' originally published at <http://www.iath.virginia>.

edu/hcs/rockwell.html and for the blog post 'Inclusion in the Digital Humanities'.

Mark Sample for the blog post: 'The Digital Humanities is not about Building, it's about Sharing'.

Melissa Terras for the blog post: 'Peering Inside the Big Tent'.

TEXT Technology and the author for the article: Jerome J. McGann (2005), 'Information Technology and the Troubled Humanities', *TEXT Technology*, 14 (2).

The Modern Language Association of America for the article: Matthew Kirschenbaum (2010), 'What is Digital Humanities and What's it Doing in English Departments', *ADE Bulletin*, 150.

Every effort has been made to trace all the copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the first opportunity.

Notes on Contributors

Julia Flanders is the Director of the Brown University Women Writers Project and co-founder and editor-in-chief of *Digital Humanities Quarterly*. Her research focuses on text encoding, digital scholarly editing, and the politics of digital scholarship.

Chris Forster is Assistant Professor of Twentieth-Century British Literature at Syracuse University. His current research focuses on modernist literature and the history of obscenity. He also has interests extending into digital humanities. He sometimes blogs about such matters at cforster.com.

Fred Gibbs is Director of Digital Scholarship at the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, and Assistant Professor in the History and Art History Department at George Mason University. He explores the application of new digital technologies and methodologies to historical research, and how to employ theories of new media in service of transforming scholarly publishing.

Matthew G. Kirschenbaum is Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Maryland and Associate Director of the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH). He is a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow and a member of the teaching faculty at the Rare Book School. His current book project is entitled *Track-Changes: A Literary History of Word Processing*, and is under contract to Harvard University Press. See <http://www.mkirschenbaum.net> or follow him on Twitter as @mkirschenbaum for more.

Willard McCarty is Professor of Humanities Computing, King's College London; Professor, University of Western Sydney; Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute; Editor of the on-line seminar *Humanist* and of the British Journal *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*. In 2005 he received the Canadian Award for Outstanding Achievement, Computing in the Arts and Humanities, in 2006 the Richard W. Lyman Award and in 2013 the Roberto Busa Award. His current book project, *Machines of Demanding Grace*, argues for the human as a central concern of the digital humanities. See www.mccarty.org.uk.

Jerome McGann is the John Stewart Bryan University Professor, University of Virginia. He was co-founder of IATH (Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities) and the founding director of NINES (Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-century Electronic Scholarship). His book *Radiant Textuality. Literature after the Worldwide Web* was awarded the MLA's 2002 James Russell Lowell Prize. He is the editor of the online *Complete Writings and Pictures of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. A Hypermedia Research Archive* (1992–2008) and *Online Humanities Scholarship. The Shape of Things to Come* (2010). A new book, *Memory Now. Philology in a New Key* is in press and he has begun to collaborate on a new online project, *The American World of James Fenimore Cooper*.

Lincoln Mullen is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Brandeis University, and a historian of American religion. He is writing a dissertation on converts between religion in the nineteenth-century United States. He is also the web editor of *The Journal of Southern Religion*, an open-access scholarly journal.

Bethany Nowviskie is Director of the Scholars' Lab and Department of Digital Research and Scholarship at the University of Virginia Library, where she also serves as associate director of the Scholarly Communication Institute. Nowviskie is President of the Association for Computers and the Humanities and a long-time digital humanities practitioner, focusing on textual materiality, humanities interpretation, and academic labour. Her projects include Neatline, NINES/Collex, the Rossetti Archive, #Alt-Academy, Digital Humanities Questions and Answers, Juxta, the Ivanhoe Game, and Temporal Modelling. See <http://nowviskie.org> and follow on Twitter @nowviskie.

Julianne Nyhan is lecturer in Digital Information Studies in the Department of Information Studies, University College London. Her research interests include the history of computing in the humanities and most aspects of digital humanities with special emphasis on meta-markup languages and digital lexicography. Most recently she has co-edited *Digital Humanities in Practice* (Facet 2012 <http://www.facetpublishing.co.uk/title.php?id=7661>). Among other things, she is a member of AHRC's Peer Review College, a member of the European Science Foundation's expert working group on Research Infrastructures in the Humanities and European Liaison manager in the UCL Centre for Digital Humanities. She is at work on an Oral History of Computing in the Humanities. Read her blog at <http://archelogs.hypotheses.org/> and follow her on Twitter @juliannenyhan.

Wendell Piez is a designer and builder of electronic publishing systems, a leading practitioner of XSLT, and has developed XML tag sets and applications for both documentary publishing (such as journals and conference proceedings) and for more highly structured information processing systems. Piez has a PhD in English, and has worked at the Center for Electronic Texts in the Humanities (Rutgers and Princeton Universities) and Mulberry Technologies Inc. Since 2008 he has served as adjunct faculty at the Graduate School for Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois. Piez has published widely and is co-founder and General Editor of *Digital Humanities Quarterly*. See <http://www.wendellpiez.com>.

Stephen Ramsay is Susan J. Rosowski University Associate Professor of English and a Fellow at the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is the author of *Reading Machines: Toward an Algorithmic Criticism* (University of Illinois Press, 2011).

Geoffrey Martin Rockwell is a Professor of Philosophy and Humanities Computing at the University of Alberta, Canada. He has published and presented papers in the area of philosophical dialogue, textual visualization and analysis, humanities computing, instructional technology, computer games and multimedia including a book, *Defining Dialogue: From Socrates to the Internet*. He is currently the Interim Director of the Kule Institute for Advanced Studies and a network investigator in the GRAND Network of Centres of Excellence that is studying gaming, animation and new media. He is collaborating with Stéfán Sinclair on Voyant, a suite of text analysis tools at <http://voyant-tools.org> and *Hermeneutica*, a book/website about text analysis.

Paul S. Rosenbloom is Professor of Computer Science at the University of Southern California and a project leader at USC's Institute for Creative Technologies. He was a key member of USC's Information Sciences Institute for two decades, leading new directions activities over the second decade, and finishing his time there as Deputy Director. Earlier he was on the faculty at Carnegie Mellon University (where he also received his PhD) and Stanford University (where he also received his BS). His research concentrates on cognitive architectures – models of the fixed structure underlying minds, whether natural or artificial – and on understanding the nature, structure and stature of computing as a scientific domain. He is the author of *On Computing: The Fourth Great Scientific Domain* (MIT Press, 2012).

Mark L. Sample is associate professor of English at George Mason University, where he teaches and researches contemporary literature and new media. Mark is also an affiliated faculty member with Mason's Honors College, its Cultural Studies programme, and the Center for History and New Media. Mark's most recent project is *10 PRINT CHR\$(205.5+RND(1)); : GOTO 10*, a collaboratively written book about creative computing and the Commodore 64, which was published by MIT Press in November 2012. See <http://www.samplereality.com> or follow him on Twitter as @samplereality.

Patrik Svensson is a Professor in the Humanities and Information Technology, and director of HUMlab at Umeå University, Sweden. As the director of HUMlab, Svensson is deeply engaged in facilitating cross-sectional meetings and innovation, in the future of the humanities and the university, and in the intersection of the humanities, culture and information technology. Svensson's research interests span information technology and learning, research infrastructure, screen cultures, and the digital humanities as an emerging field.

Melissa Terras is Director of University College London Centre for Digital Humanities and Professor of Digital Humanities in UCL's Department of Information Studies. With a background in Classical Art History, English Literature, and Computing Science, her doctorate (Engineering, University of Oxford) examined how to use advanced information engineering technologies to interpret and read Roman texts. Publications include *Image to Interpretation: Intelligent Systems to Aid Historians in the Reading of the Vindolanda Texts* (2006, Oxford University Press), *Digital Images for the Information Professional* (2008, Ashgate) and *Digital Humanities in Practice* (2012, Facet). She is the co-founder and General Editor of *Digital Humanities Quarterly* journal, the secretary of The European Association of Digital Humanities, and on the board of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. Her research focuses on the use of computational techniques to enable research in the Arts and Humanities that would otherwise be impossible. You can generally find her on Twitter @melissaterras.

John Unsworth is Vice-Provost for Library and Technology Services and Chief Information Officer at Brandeis University. From 2003 to 2012 he was Dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In addition to being a Professor in GSLIS, at Illinois he also held appointments in the department of English and on the Library faculty; also, from 2008 to 2011, he served as Director of the Illinois Informatics Institute. From 1993 to 2003, he

served as the first Director of the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, and a faculty member in the English Department, at the University of Virginia. For his work at IATH, he received the 2005 Richard W. Lyman Award from the National Humanities Center. His first faculty appointment was in English, at North Carolina State University, from 1989 to 1993. He attended Princeton University and Amherst College as an undergraduate, graduating from Amherst in 1981. He received a Master's degree in English from Boston University in 1982 and a PhD in English from the University of Virginia in 1988. In 1990, at NCSU, he co-founded the first peer-reviewed electronic journal in the humanities, *Postmodern Culture* (now published by Johns Hopkins University Press, as part of Project Muse). He also organised, incorporated and chaired the Text Encoding Initiative Consortium, co-chaired the Modern Language Association's Committee on Scholarly Editions, and served as President of the Association for Computers and the Humanities and later as chair of the steering committee for the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, as well as serving on many other editorial and advisory boards. More information is available at <http://www3.isrl.uiuc.edu/~unsworth>.

Edward Vanhoutte is currently Director of Research and Publications in the Royal Academy of Dutch Language and Literature – KANTL (Gent, Belgium), Editor-in-Chief of *LLC: The Journal of Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, and a Research Associate of the University College of London Centre for Digital Humanities (UCLDH). He is the editor of ten (digital) scholarly editions, the co-editor of the *DALF Guidelines for the Description and Encoding of Modern Correspondence Material*, and the co-author of *TEI by Example*, <http://www.teibyexample.org>. His research interests include textual scholarship, (digital) scholarly editing, genetic editing, text encoding and the markup of modern manuscript material next to his overall interest in the history of the field now called the Digital Humanities. He publishes, lectures and blogs widely on these subjects. See <http://www.edwardvanhoutte.org> or follow him on Twitter @evanhoutte.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	<i>xi</i>

Introduction	1
<i>Julianne Nyhan, Melissa Terras and Edward Vanhoutte</i>	

SECTION I: HUMANITIES COMPUTING

1	Is Humanities Computing an Academic Discipline? <i>Geoffrey Rockwell</i>	13
2	What is Humanities Computing and What is Not? <i>John Unsworth</i>	35
3	Information Technology and the Troubled Humanities <i>Jerome McGann</i>	49
4	Disciplined: Using Educational Studies to Analyse ‘Humanities Computing’ <i>Melissa Terras</i>	67
5	Tree, Turf, Centre, Archipelago – or Wild Acre? Metaphors and Stories for Humanities Computing <i>Willard McCarty</i>	97
6	The Gates of Hell: History and Definition of Digital Humanities Computing <i>Edward Vanhoutte</i>	119

SECTION II: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

7	Humanities Computing as Digital Humanities <i>Patrik Svensson</i>	159
---	--	-----

8	Something Called Digital Humanities <i>Wendell Piez</i>	187
9	What Is Digital Humanities and What's It Doing in English Departments? <i>Matthew G. Kirschenbaum</i>	195
10	The Productive Unease of 21st-century Digital Scholarship <i>Julia Flanders</i>	205
11	Toward a Conceptual Framework for the Digital Humanities <i>Paul Rosenbloom</i>	219

SECTION III: FROM THE BLOGOSPHERE

12	Digital Humanities is a Spectrum, or "We're All Digital Humanists Now" <i>Lincoln Mullen</i>	237
13	Who's In and Who's Out <i>Stephen Ramsay</i>	239
14	On Building <i>Stephen Ramsay</i>	243
15	Inclusion in the Digital Humanities <i>Geoffrey Rockwell</i>	247
16	The Digital Humanities is not about Building, it's about Sharing <i>Mark Sample</i>	255
17	I'm Chris, Where Am I Wrong? <i>Chris Forster</i>	259
18	Peering Inside the Big Tent <i>Melissa Terras</i>	263
19	ADHO, On Love and Money <i>Bethany Nowviskie</i>	271

SECTION IV: VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

- 20 Selected Definitions from the Day of Digital Humanities: 2009–2012 279
- 21 Digital Humanities Definitions by Type 289
Fred Gibbs

SECTION V: FURTHER MATERIALS

- 22 Selected Further Reading 301
- 23 Questions for Discussion 305
- Index* 307

Introduction

Julianne Nyhan and Melissa Terras
University College London, UK

Edward Vanhoutte
Royal Academy of Dutch Language & Literature, Belgium
University College London, UK

Searchinge out a holiday gifte for yower academic frendes? Thei maye enjoe a definicioun of the digital humanities.

(Chaucer Doth Tweet (@LeVostreGC), 8 December 2012
<https://twitter.com/LeVostreGC/status/277501777182613504>)

Much has been written about how digital humanities might be defined but, for those new to the discipline, where does one start in tackling this issue? The aim of this volume is to bring together, in one teaching-focused text, core historical and contemporary reading on the act of defining ‘digital humanities’ to demonstrate aspects of the history of the field, to indicate the range of opinions that exist and to encourage others to articulate what it is we think we do when we do digital humanities.

Why would one define an academic field? From one perspective such definitions have an obvious practical and utilitarian purpose: we must be able to define and describe what it is that we are doing not only to colleagues and students but to university management, funding agencies and the general public. Nevertheless, we should not view such work from this practical perspective alone. The ways that digital humanities are being (and have been) defined can reveal much about the implicit assumptions that we as a community hold. So too the act of defining can reveal much about the identities that we are in the process of forging for ourselves, how we view ourselves in relation to other disciplines and the internal tensions that exist within the digital humanities community as a whole. In short the ever growing literature on defining digital humanities can offer us an important insight into the dynamics of disciplinary formation. A condensed selection of this literature is presented in this volume, which features the most popular items listed as set reading within Digital Humanities courses, as ascertained from a content analysis of the syllabi of a range of courses

around the world.¹ There is core material, of course, that does not appear in this volume due to harsh editorial choices that had to be made, or copyright and licensing issues. As well as the core material presented here, we therefore give a list of suggested further reading; we hope that any student or practitioner in digital humanities who becomes conversant with this literature will understand the many facets to the question: how do you define the digital humanities?

Defining the remit and scope of our discipline seems to be a central concern to many in the field. Aspects of this literature (which could not in all cases be included in this volume) will now be presented and some pertinent themes pointed to. For convenience the term ‘digital humanities’ will be used throughout, even though, as will be made clear (particularly in Chapter 6, written for this volume), many other terms were used to refer to this field before 2005.

Nomenclature and Boundaries

Over the past years, the field that we now refer to as digital humanities has been known by many terms: humanities computing, humanist informatics, literary and linguistic computing and digital resources in the humanities, to name but a few. Most recently it has predominantly been known as digital humanities, though other variations such as eHumanities are occasionally to be found in literature emanating from continental Europe (see, for example, Neuroth et al., 2009 though agreement on the synonymy of these terms is not universal. Matthew G. Kirschenbaum has noted that ‘the rapid and remarkable rise of digital humanities as a term can be traced to a set of surprisingly specific circumstances’ (Kirschenbaum, 2010, p. 2). These he identifies as the 2005 publication of Blackwell’s *Companion to Digital Humanities*, the name that was chosen at the end of 2005 for the organisation that arose out of the amalgamation of the Association for Computers in the Humanities and the Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing (that is, the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, ADHO) and the 2006 launch of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) digital humanities programme (Kirschenbaum, 2010, p. 3). Though digital humanities has had its ‘own’ journals since *Computers and the Humanities* was first published in 1966, it is clear that one important effect of the rise of the term ‘digital humanities’ is in the practicality of enabling scholars to self-identify as digital humanities scholars. The importance of this seemingly obvious advantage is reflected

¹ Syllabi of different courses in Digital Humanities have been collected by Lisa Spiro and are available at http://www.zotero.org/groups/digital_humanities_education.