Building Digital Humanities at Yale University
Yale University Library

- “The Library is the Heart of the University”
- 500 employees+
- 15 million+ print & electronic volumes
- 15 libraries across campus
Early Yale DH

- 1956 Father Roberto Busa at Yale
- 1965 IBM-Sponsored Conference at Yale
Yale DHLab Origins

- 2008 Digital Humanities Working Group
  - Graduate student leadership
- 2013 Librarian for Digital Humanities Research
  - Within Humanities Librarians group
- 2015 Grant for DHLab
  - Support for STEAM at Yale (STEM + Arts & Humanities)
  - 3 FTE positions
- 2018 Newly renovated space
  - 460m² historic reading room
What is “Digital Humanities?”
What we can help with:

The analysis, visualization and engagement of humanities data in pursuit of humanistic questions.
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What we can help with:

Textual Analysis
Visual Analysis
Network Analysis
Geo-Spatial Analysis
Faculty Digital Humanities Committee

2017-2018

Amy Hungerford (Chair), Dean of Humanities, Bird White Housum Professor of English, Professor of American Studies
Marijeta Bozovic, Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Wai Chee Dimock, William Lampson Professor of American Studies, Professor of English
Jennifer Frederick, Executive Director, Yale Center for Teaching and Learning
Susan Gibbons, University Librarian and Deputy Provost for Collections & Scholarly Communication
Stephen Krewson, English and Computer Science (Graduate Student)
Peter Leonard, Director, Digital Humanities Laboratory
Mary Miller, Sterling Professor in the History of Art; Senior Director, Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage
Angel Nieves, Visiting Associate Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Anna Shechtman, English (Graduate Student)
Dragomir Radev, A. Bartlett Giamatti Professor of Computer Science
Laura Wexler, Professor of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Professor of American Studies
Anna Zayaruznaya, Assistant Professor in the Music Department
Building Support for Digital Humanities

Access to DH methods and ideas

Analysis using data science

Engagement with collections
Access to DH methods and ideas

The Digital Humanities Lab provides space, community and resources for Yale scholars, faculty, and librarians.
Digital Humanities Reference Collection

Visitors to the DHLab can refer to over one hundred volumes of both theoretical and practical expertise.
In-Person Consultations

The DHLab holds office hours two afternoons a week.

Scholars have access to a Developer, User Experience Designer, Outreach & Engagement Specialist, Research Data Specialist, and GIS Librarian.
Bringing Learning Communities Together

The DHLab taught or sponsored over thirty workshops last year.

Topics are determined by the questions that scholars bring to office hours.
Training Scholarships

US$500 for week-long, discipline-relevant training opportunities for librarians & graduate students

• Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI)
• Humanities Intensive Learning and Teaching (HILT)
• Digital Humanities @ Oxford (DHOxSS)
• DH @ Guelph
• Trier Digital Humanities Autumn School
• Leiden Summer School in Chinese Digital Humanities

Awardees commit to sharing expertise upon return
Text Encoding Initiative

Colin McCaffrey (Classics Librarian)

The Perseus Project

Jennifer Weintritt (Graduate Student, Classics)
Since 2015, the DHLab has worked with 13 graduate student DH Teaching Fellows. Each Fellow proposes a plan for bringing DH methods to an undergraduate class.
Postdoctoral Associates

Each year, the DHLab supports two Postdoctoral Associates for 12 months.

Postdocs are appointed by an academic department; their office space is in the DHLab.

2016-2017 Postdoctoral Associates

Jonathan Schroeder uses the methods of the digital humanist, conceptual historian, and literary scholar to compare how European frameworks of emotion were institutionalized in the Americas. His manuscript, Prisoners of Loss: An Atlantic History of Nostalgia, charts the first phase in the globalization of nostalgia, tracking how this medical concept was carried to the New World and used to design new health care systems for slaves and soldiers in America, Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti. By virtue of this process, he argues, nostalgia was transformed from a disease of travel suffered by European ethnics into the exemplary disease of racial captivity in the nineteenth century, one that can potentially help us make sense of present-day scenes of racial and ethnic melancholy.

His project at the DHLab, "Passages to Freedom: Worlding the North American Slave Narrative," examines the language and geography of 294 African-American slave narratives. How did African-Americans make their escapes? What does the mobility of slaves look like in slavery? In freedom? Are there distinct languages of slavery and freedom? And how do answers to these questions change after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850? After the slave narrative was affiliated with antebellum abolitionist networks?

He received his Ph.D. in English Language and Literature from the University of Chicago. His work has appeared in American Literature and is forthcoming in Arizona Quarterly.

2015-2016 Postdoctoral Associates

Carol Chiodo is a writer, scholar, and educator whose work investigates how the material and structural changes in the reproduction, storage and transmission of texts impact the ways we read, write and learn. She received a Ph.D. degree in Italian Language and Literature with a dissertation on medieval vernacular poetry and the mechanical arts.

Her current research uses social network analysis to explore the membership rolls of early scholarly societies in North America as a source for women’s history. The project re-situates the female membership of the first decades of the Dante Society of America, one of the oldest in North America, in relation to contemporary social and institutional networks associated with racial egalitarianism, religious and educational reform, and universal suffrage. While her primary interest is in how these women influenced the reception and dissemination of Dante’s work in North America, their activity also sheds light on the broader context of higher education and religious reform.
Book and microfilm scanners allow researchers to transform physical holdings into material suitable for digital investigation.
Digital Humanities support in the context of Yale Library

- Experimenting to find new avenues of research on Yale Library’s existing and emerging digital collections
- Advising on how Yale researchers might benefit from DH methods
- Keeping current on state of the field/new DH research projects and tools
- Advocating purchase of raw data for large digital collections licensed and bought with library funds
Analysis using Data Science

The Digital Humanities Lab helps librarians, students and faculty analyze digital collections in new ways.
Robots Reading *Vogue* (Lindsay King)
Exploratory Data Analysis
An Elegy wrote in a Country Churchyard.

Thomas Gray

parting Day, The lowing Herd wind slowly o'er the Lea, The Plow-man homeward plods his weary Way, And leaves the World to Darkness, and to me. Now fades the glimmering Landscape on the Sight, And all the Air a solemn Stillness holds;

Edward

of day, Th' attorney's clerk goes slowly to his tea; And mine begins to ploid his weary way, And leave my rooms to solitude and me. Now fades the glitt'ring river on my sight, And all the air a solemn stillness feels;

Thomas Gray

homeward plods his weary Way, And leaves the World to Darkness, and to me. Now fades the glimmering Landscape on the Sight, And all the Air a solemn Stillness holds; Save where the Beetle wheels his droning Flight, And drowsy Tinklings lull the distant Folds. Save that from yonder Ivy-mantled

Edward

begins to ploid his weary way, And leave my rooms to solitude and me. Now fades the glitt'ring river on my sight, And all the air a solemn stillness feels; Save when the rake wheels round his rapid flight, And drowsy watchmen follow at his heels. Save, that from yonder darkly shaded tow'r, The
Without the slightest objection on my master's part, the gentlemen left the carriage at Gordon, for Milledgeville (the capital of the State).

We arrived at Savannah early in the evening, and got into an omnibus, which stopped at the hotel for the passengers to take tea.

When we left Macon, it was our intention to take a steamer at Charleston through to Philadelphia; but on arriving there we found that the vessels did not run during the winter, and I have no doubt it was well for us they did not; for on the very last voyage the steamer made that we intended to go by, a fugitive was discovered secreted on board, and sent back to slavery.

So I ordered a fly to the door, had the luggage placed on; we got in, and drove down to the Custom-house Office, which was near the wharf where we had to obtain tickets, to take a steamer for Wilmington, North Carolina.

He thanked him kindly, and the young officer begged...
Neural Networks for Visual Similarity

The Meserve-Kunhardt Collection originated as one of the largest private collections of 19th-century photography.

Now part of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the archive of over 73,000 images is a world-renowned record of America from the Civil War to the Gilded Age.
Visual Similarity: Pugilists
Dimensionality Reduction with t-SNE
Engagement with collections

Digital Humanities in the Library promotes engagement by capturing the expertise of users, empowering researchers with new datasets, and connecting archives to learning contexts.
Ensemble: History of theater at Yale

Ensemble@Yale provides the Yale community with a new way of engaging with archival information by crowdsourcing the transcription of data in historical performance programs.
Goals of Ensemble

- Increase access to minimally-processed archives
- Generate database of Yale theater history
- Answer reference questions:
  - “How many Ibsen plays have been staged at Yale?”
  - “Which roles did Meryl Streep play while she was a student at the School of Drama?”
  - “Which actors have played Hamlet at Yale?”
Engagement with Archives

- Yale School of Drama and Yale Repertory Theatre ephemera collection has a box / folder organization
- Modified “Dean/Artistic Director” structure simplifies interface and allows browsing
Yale School of Drama Presents

THE LOWER DEPTHS
by
MAXIM GORKY

Directed by EARLE R. GISTER

Feb. 4, Feb. 9-11 at 8 p.m.
Transcribe workflow
Engaging community with collections

- Yale’s sizable theater community:
  - Current students, faculty, alumni
  - 2016-17 was 50th anniversary season for Yale Rep

- Adding new collections of programs, such as:
  - Yale Cabaret & Summer Cabaret
  - Dramat (Yale Dramatic Association)
  - Yale Drama Coalition
Looking ahead for Ensemble

- Normalization of transcribed data for ease of searching
- Other Ensemble launches working towards a multi-collection, interoperable database of theater history
- **Visualizations** of ‘big theatrical data’
Cherokee Transcription
From Archival Box to Learning Environment

The nonprofit 7000 Languages works with endangered language communities to create language learning software, including custom lessons based on parallel texts.

With the open, Creative Commons-licensed transcriptions from Transcribe@Yale, 7000 Languages is able to input text from the Kilpatrick papers into custom lessons so that learners can work with real shopping lists, letters, obituaries, and other materials that are valuable for learning.
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Space for Digital Humanities
Space for Digital Humanities
Building Digital Humanities: What’s worked at Yale?

- Build **community** of interested people
- Experiment **with** Data Science on Library & researcher collections
- Support **training** for faculty, librarians, & students
- Provide **opportunities** for sharing skills and information
Thank you & Questions