From Shelley Jackson's *my body—a Wunderkammer: I have found every drawer to be both bottomless and intricately connected to every other drawer, such that there can be no final unpacking. But you don't approach a cabinet of wonders with an inventory in hand. You open drawers at random. You smudge the glass jar in which the two-headed piglet sleeps. You filch one of Tom Thumb's calling cards. You read page two of a letter; one and three are missing, and you leave off in the middle of a sentence.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Make the distinction between information and knowledge and articulate how a given medium will influence that distinction.
- Historicize contemporary trends in the digital humanities through the Wunderkammer and consider some conceptual relations between the two.
- Through a hands-on example, unpack the differences between "top-down" approaches to media and emergent media.

About the Wunderkammer (or Cabinet of Curiosity, or Wonder-Room)

- European phenomenon, beginning in the mid-16th century
- First mention: Vienna in 1553
- Natural science *before* the 18th century, *prior* to the modern notion of science as a system of ordering and separating objects
- An inhabitable, miniature world that allows people to engage the world as a macrocosm
- Included natural objects (preserved animals, skeletons), man-made artifacts (works of art, scientific instruments) and myths (the Scythian Lamb, the debunking of the Unicorn)
- Example: *Museum Wormianum* (1655) by Ole Worm (University of Copenhagen) (image above)

Related to the digital humanities, the Wunderkammer suggests that knowledge

- Does not exist in objects themselves, but rather in relationships, which are often contrivances (that is, they don't have their intended effects).
- Can emerge from random (rather than strictly ordered) and situational (rather than universal) relationships between objects, subjects, and places, where objects are ripped from their original contexts (e.g., place of invention) and re-contextualized (e.g, in a museum) in novel juxtapositions.
- Is a negotiation between a macrocosm (e.g., the world) and a microcosm (e.g., the Wunderkammer).
- Implies both what is perceivable (the found object) and what is possible (the uncharted territory, the surprise, the unexplored).
- Not always top-down (the application of a universal concept in the particular instance), but also emergent (what comes about, what is the potential of given relationship, what is the exception to the rule).
- Consists of abstract reason ("the mind") without opposition to sensation (touch) and matter (the body).
- Cannot be simply downloaded and acquired (*The Matrix*) as information. (Sorry! It's just true!)

Anna Munster, from *Materializing New Media*, on the Wunderkammer: "knowing about an object required a knowledge that involved getting to know: a familiarity with its location, the stories one could elicit from and about it, and its own association with a wide range of other objects in the world." (76)

What Now?: Applications

- Visit Day Life (http://www.daylife.com/) and search for "Seattle."
- Visit Doodlebuzz (http://www.doodlebuzz.com/), search for "Seattle", draw some link branches, and occasionally press the spacebar to view your map.
- What did you learn, and how did you learn it differently from these two interfaces?
- How did your perception of how you controlled and navigated information change?
- What does something like Doodlebuzz afford? And how does it differ from more common websites?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Thinking in Association Blocks, Collecting Idea Pockets

What to Consider during Future Modules

- How does composing digitally affect our perceptions of physical (e.g., print) objects?
- How can something "digital" also be "material"?
- How can something as strict as binary code, computation, or organization enable curiosity?
- How can we do more than simply "use" digital technologies and media for information?

William S. Burroughs, in *The Third Mind: The scrapbooks and time travel are exercises to expand consciousness, to teach me to think in association blocks rather than words.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Distinguish between "paradigm" and "syntagm" and articulate their roles in reading print and new media.
- Practice some basics in XHTML and CSS.

Gertrude Stein (1874 – 1946) wrote in boxes. But, for the purposes of this module, what are boxes?

- Words (nested in even more words, including connotations and denotations)
- Containers (to be unpacked)
- Means of concealing something else
- Vectors (or transmission devices)
- Poems

Consider "A BOX," from *Tender Buttons*:

"Out of kindness comes redness and out of rudeness comes rapid same question, out of an eye comes research, out of selection comes painful cattle. So then the order is that a white way of being round is something suggesting a pin and is it disappointing, it is not, it is so rudimentary to be analysed and see a fine substance strangely, it is so earnest to have a green point not to red but to point again."

Note how repetition (or what Stein calls "insistence") adds texture to language. This texture stresses how words always refer to something else. They are ways of mapping the world—of referencing that with this. Words are association blocks. Not, of course, that they capture everything. Think back to Shelley Jackson: "there can be no final unpacking."

Importantly, readings of "A BOX" change depending upon its medium, its context, and how we understand the terms "paradigm" and "syntagm" in the digital humanities.

Borrowing from Ferdinand de Saussure on natural languages

- The syntagm is a series of words or concepts strung together in a line. In print, these words appear in horizontal lines and are explicit (e.g., "A BOX" contains the phrase "out of kindness comes").
- The paradigm is the set of elements (e.g., nouns) from which a given a word is selected. In print, these words are implicit and inferred (e.g., associating "box" with "word" or "cattle" with "animals").

As Lev Manovich points out, new media reverse this relationship of explicit syntagm and implicit paradigm, with the "horizontal" syntagm emerging from a structured (or encoded) "vertical" paradigm. For example, most websites are not read exactly like a book, left to right, from page to page. Instead, the syntagm emerges from how the reader selects from the structured choices provided. This structure influences interpretation. Relating language with mapping here, the syntagm is comparable to a territory, and the paradigm is what's ostensibly included within that territory. (A ha! Now we can see why
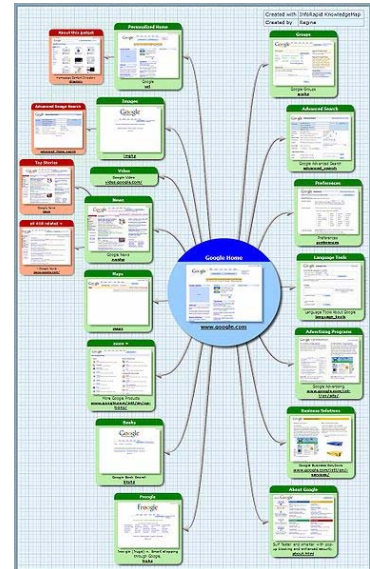
language *and* mapping are so important to scholars who, for example, study colonialism! Both are ways enabling what—and who!—is included/excluded!)

Implications on writing in code (e.g., in XHTML and CSS) and the digital humanities

- XHTML and CSS are relatively strict ways of encoding and stylizing language. When opened, a "box" (or an element) must always be closed (e.g., if <p>, then </p>).
- Encoding a "box" of code is not simply a technical matter. It has social dynamics, including influencing how people make sense of culture and texts. Sometimes the technical and the social are at odds.
- Still, the shift from syntagm-focused print text to paradigm-oriented digital text need not imply "dumbing" down a text (e.g., all links go to denotations in the dictionary) or determining how a reader interprets it. (See Module 1 on curious relationships. Here, it might be productive to think of Stein's style through "boundary" or "hybrid" objects, like the Scythian Lamb. Often, the words in her poetry fit, quite purposefully, in multiple categories simultaneously. Her writing's wonderfully monstrous.)

What Now?: Applications

- Select a specific paradigm for reading "A BOX"—a rule for reading, if you will. This will be your generative constraint for encoding your interpretation into the poem. Let's look at William Gass's etymology cluster of the poem for an example.
- Now let's review an example of a page written in XHTML. Note how the text is written in nested "boxes." Again, the boxes, when opened, must be closed.
- And let's review an example page in CSS. Note how CSS stylizes the boxes written in XHTML.
- In Notepad, practice encoding "A BOX" in XHTML and CSS (in two separate files) for the web. In the XHTML, include, at a minimum, the <html>, <body>, <p>, and <a> tags and elements. In your CSS, stylize the XHTML body and the <a> element.
- After your encoding, in the XHTML file, please write a sentence or two explaining what your generative constraint for encoding was.
- How did encoding the text influence your interpretation of it? How did that interpretation manifest in the encoding? How would your encoding influence how a reader interprets the poem?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Collecting Idea Pockets, Do You Believe in Angels?

What to Consider during Future Modules

- For a module in the near future, you'll start thinking about refashioning a print-based project you've already started. How might paradigms and syntagms play a role in this refashioning?

Stillman, in Paul Auster's *City of Glass*: *My brilliant stroke has been to confine myself to physical things, to the immediate and tangible. My motives are lofty, but my work now takes place in the realm of the everyday. That's why I'm so often misunderstood. But no matter. I've learned to shrug these things off. . . . You see, I am in the process of inventing a new language.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Understand how new media can be integrated into collecting information for, and collaborating in, digital humanities research projects.
- Practice some basics in WordPress and Google Books, Maps, & Reader.

The Paris arcades (iron and glass structures popular in the 1820s and 1830s) are, according to Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) in *The Arcades Project*:

- "a center of commerce in luxury items" (3)
- "a world in miniature" (*Illustrated Guide to Paris* qtd. in the text, 3)
- "buildings that serve transitory purposes" (4)

The collector and collecting play prominent roles in the arcades. Benjamin on collecting:

- "What is decisive in collecting is that the object is detached from all its original functions in order to enter into the closest conceivable relation to things of the same kind" (204).
- "Collecting is a form of practical memory, and of all the profane manifestations of 'nearness' it is the most binding" (205).
- "The true method of making things present is to represent them in our space (not to represent ourselves in their space)" (206).
- "The collector dreams his way not only into a distant or bygone world but also into a better one— one in which, to be sure, human beings are not better provided with what they need than in the everyday world, but in which things are freed from the drudgery of being useful" (9).

For *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin's method is collecting: snippets of writing put into juxtaposition, pockets of ideas that are contrived. (See Module 1 on contrivances, hybrid objects, and practicality, as well as Module 2 on association blocks and paradigms.) This method corresponds with the form of Benjamin's book (see the hard copy), not to mention his research practices. In a way, Benjamin gave theory a new language, with his dictionary of collections.

Implications for blogging and digital humanities research projects in this class

- Research as Wunderkammer-making (see Module 1)
- Relevance of the everyday to academic research and new media
- The habit of documenting work (archive it now, arrange it later, delete nothing)
- Articulating thoughts through paradigms first, then organizing the syntagms (e.g., compiling things before making a claim ("X causes Y"), rather than making a claim and finding the evidence to "fill it in" or support it) (see Module 2 on paradigms and syntagms)
- Embracing a type of experimentation in your academic work—as you collect, being open to change, flexibility, and failure and avoiding the "theory hammer," where everything in sight becomes a nail

- Class blog: Collaborative collection of microcontent in a networked space, which offers juxtapositions across our individual collections
- Conjecturing (per Willard McCarty in *Humanities Computing*): "a collecting or throwing together of particulars" in an attempt to make sense of them (47)

What Now?: Applications

- Log-in to the class blog. (I'll give you your username and password.)
- Post your first entry, categorized under "introductions" and tagged as you find appropriate. Before you publish it:
    - Introduce yourself to the class in whatever way you wish.
    - Provide a link to your XHTML and CSS exercise (which should be at students.washington.edu/[yourUWnetID]/chid498/)
    - Include an image of the book or text you encoded in your exercise. If you can't find one, then tell me. We'll think of something relevant.)   Of note, all images on the blog must be 400 pixels or less in width. You can always use a program to shrink them accordingly.
- When you are finished, I will also show you how to post a video. Of note, all videos on the blog must be 200 pixels or less in width.
- Now log-in to the class Google account ("mappingthedigitalhumanities"):
    - Note how a majority of our online class content is aggregated at iGoogle. Peruse it to see what's there.
    - In Google Books, add a book that you'll likely be using this quarter or that you think is relevant to the class.
    - In Google Maps, add something (e.g., a comment, an image, or a video) to the class map. We'll also have to decide by what standards we'll be collaborating to map the campus this quarter.
    - Time permitting, in Google Reader, add a relevant snippet from the web.
- How is each of these a form of collecting? Of research? Of everyday life?
- How is each of these a form of collaboration? And what kind of collaboration, exactly? Consider other ways you've collaborated that might differ from what we're doing here.

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Do You Believe in Angels?, Oh How Reductive

What to Consider during Future Modules

- When you have so much to collect for a given research project, then how do you refine your options? Data, but how to gather it?

module 4

do you believe in angels?:
imagining novel texts through
remediation and intermediation

mapping the digital humanities, spring 2009, university of washington

From Steve Tomasula's *The Book of Portraiture:*

> *The unexamined life is not worth living*
—Socrates, and www.homecams.com, the site that lets you see inside 1,024 private homes….

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Explore media differences between print and digital texts and the implications of these differences on remediation and intermediation projects.
- Examine the distinctions between "remediation" and "intermediation" through some examples.

Let's give a look at an animation of the first newsreel from John Dos Passos's *The 42nd Parallel* in tandem with a digitized version of it and its print version.

Now, let's unpack the relations between these three "versions" of the text through two terms: remediation and intermediation.

Per Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, **remediation is**

- "the representation of one medium in another" (45)
- nearly synonymous with "'repurposing:' to take a 'property' from one medium and reuse it in another" (45)

Per N. Katherine Hayles, **intermediation is**

- the "complex transactions between bodies and texts as well as between different forms of media" (7)
- includes "interactions between systems of representations, particularly language and code, as well as interactions between modes of representation, particularly analog and digital" (33)
- "denotes mediating interfaces connecting humans with the intelligent machines that are our collaborators in making, storing, and transmitting informational processes and objects" (33)

How do the two terms offer different readings of our three versions of Dos Passos? Consider what they emphasize (e.g., "medium," "representation," "bodies," and "collaborators").

To help us along, we might consider what Hayles, in a different text, says are **the characteristics of computer-mediated text**. It

- is "layered" (e.g., layer of text on a screen and code layer) (163)
- "tends to be multimodal" (e.g., including "text, images, video, and sound") (164)
- exists such that "storage is separate from performance" (e.g., store files on a server in Seattle, read them in Santiago) (164)
- "manifests fractured temporality" (e.g., reader does not control "how quickly the text becomes readable") (164)

Implications for Your Digital Humanities Project

When thinking of "remediating" or "intermediating" print, the characteristics of computer-mediated text should factor what remediation or intermediation will afford—how either invites or pressures certain
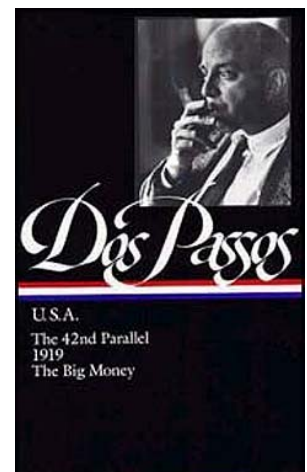
readings and engagements. (See Module 1 on curious relationships and Module 3 on the class blog as a collection.)

What Now?: Applications

- Check out *Marsha's Throne Angels*! As a parody of old school, low-tech personal web pages, what media is it remediating? How does it achieve humor in this remediation?
- In the above line, what happens to our interpretations when we revise "remediating" and "remediation" to "intermediating" and "intermediation"?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Oh How Reductive, Making Swervy Things

What to Consider during Future Modules

- How might these angels, not to mention these distinctions between intermediation and remediation, inform your project? Which of the two terms do you prefer? Why?

From Marianne Moore's "The Student":
> *"When will your experiment be finished?" "Science is never finished."*

And from her "People's Surroundings":
> *there is something attractive about a mind that moves in a straight line—*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Explore the implications of "reduction" and classification in digital humanities research.
- Consider ways you might use specific data elements to methodically reduce the primary text(s) in your research project.

Franco Moretti is a cartographer of sorts. He makes literary maps, with a science. In *Graphs, Maps, Trees*, he writes: "What do literary maps do . . . First, they are a good way to prepare a text for analysis. You choose a unit—walks, lawsuits, luxury goods, whatever—find its occurrences, place them in space . . . or in other words: you *reduce* the text to a few elements, and *abstract* them from the narrative flow, and construct a new, *artificial* object . . . And with a little luck, these maps will be *more than the sum of their parts*: they will posses 'emerging' qualities, which were not visible at the lower level" (53).

Literary maps also afford what Moretti calls a "distant reading," "where distance is however not an obstacle, but a specific form of knowledge: fewer elements, hence a sharper sense of their overall interconnection. Shapes, relations, structures. Forms. Models" (1). To flesh out "distant reading," let's look at a couple of examples (1 and 2) from Moretti's *Atlas of the European Novel: 1800-1900*. What's mapped? What's not?

One trick: How to avoid assuming that a distant reading fully accounts for its territory. Alfred North Whitehead called this slippage **"misplaced concreteness."** Abstractions such as maps—in their richness and utility—are used to explain the territory. They become objectifying media that always generate reliable results (e.g., facts from maps) or uniform products (e.g., the same houses from a single blueprint). As Matthew Fuller observes: "The ruse of concrete misplacedness, of an ideally isolatable element, produces its offspring—but they are unruly" (104).

Frankenstein's creature animates this very unruliness (e.g., the uncontrollable monster of science), as does Stein's poetry (e.g., "a rose is a rose is a rose," where the definition of a rose is historically and culturally dependent). (See Module 2.) So does the image (right) of Astaire's unruly movement; he looks positioned in the still shot, but photography needn't give us the illusion that this event is isolatable and easily repeated. (I certainly couldn't pull it off.) Consider, too, syntagms from Module 2. This shot of Astaire is in a sequence of shots. What comes before and after is crucial.

Abstraction here is not what Ezra Pound means when he writes (in *Poetry*, 1913), "Go in fear of abstractions." Pound's on a different register. For him, the idea is to avoid writing in imprecise language what someone else already wrote precisely. Treat the thing directly. Use the exact word. For Whitehead and Moretti, **abstractions are quite useful for *collecting elements and showing their relations*.** When they are understood as the causes that *produce* homogenous territories, then misplaced concreteness occurs. (Consider, too, Nietzsche on how the cause is generated after the effect.)

Implications of the reductive method for your digital humanities project:

- Textual/Literary maps are not only geographical maps. Think broadly about how to map the space of your text(s) (e.g., places in a novel, recurrence of concepts in a poem, publication dates in a genre/corpus).
- Novel questions, complex issues, and creativity can emerge from reduction and classification. (Consider Oulipo!) In fact, reduction and classification can help generate interpretations you may have never considered. Moretti writes, "I had found a problem for which I had absolutely no solution. And problems without a solution are exactly what we need . . . we are used to asking only those questions for which we already have an answer" (26).
- Reduction is a practical way of narrowing rich research projects, of keeping them simple. It forces you to not only isolate elements of the text, but to also articulate how you isolated them and how you are assessing/quantifying them.
- Distant reading runs contrary (in some ways) to "close reading" in the humanities. Keep in this in mind. How will some audiences object to the distant reading you're conducting?

What Now?: Applications

- In your clusters, work together so that each student selects three data elements that reduce the primary text(s) of her/his project. These elements would ostensibly lead to a textual mapping.
- On the blog, list your three elements and address three things about each: (1) what kind of interpretation would it afford? (2) what of importance might it ignore? (3) how does it relate to—or join—the other two elements?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Making Swervy Things, Mapping in Stakes

What to Consider during Future Modules

- How does the kind of map you ultimately produce influence your choice of data elements and vice versa?

From Donna Haraway's *Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium.FemaleMan_ Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*: *In Greek, trópos is a turn or a swerve; tropes mark the nonliteral quality of being and language. Metaphors are tropes, but there are many more kinds of swerves in language and in worlds. Models, whether conceptual or physical, are tropes in the sense of instruments built to be engaged, inhabited, lived.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Consider the implications of modeling for humanities research through examples from Google Visualization API.
- Become familiar with how digital models enable the organization of difference and patterns.
- Explore some possible options for modeling the data from your own project.

According to Willard McCarty, a model is "either *a representation of something for purposes of study*, or *a design for realizing something new*" (24). These two understandings of models correspond with Clifford Geertz's "**denotative 'model *of*'**, such as a grammar describing the features of a language, and an **exemplary 'model *for*'**, such as an architectural plan" (24).

Here, models relate to maps. McCarty suggests that, like modeling, mapping "can be either of or for a domain, either depicting the present landscape or specifying its future—or **altering how we think about it**, e.g., by renaming its paces. A map is never entirely neutral, politically or otherwise" (33). (For more, see his "Modeling: A Study in Words and Meanings.")
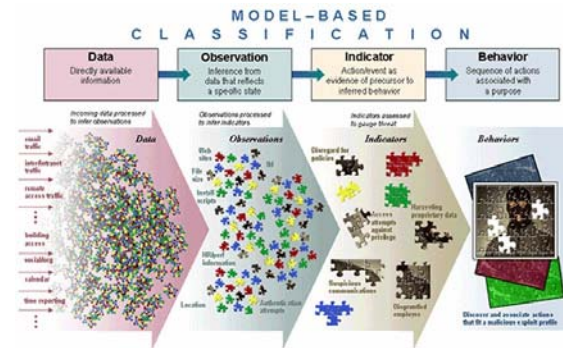
McCarty also suggests that there are **two features of modeling as a practice**

- Take knowledge for granted and just start modeling. Eventually, meaningful surprise occurs when the model generates an occurrence that cannot be explained (e.g., something is where it shouldn't be), or when the model fails to generate the expected occurrence (e.g., something isn't where it should be) (25-26). Both of these examples could also be called "contrivances," or the bringing about of unintended events. (See Module 1 on knowledge production, curiosity, and the Wunderkammer.)
- Perceive the manipulability of information. Models are repeatedly altered and must be interactive (26). Digital models are arguably more flexible, interactive, and manipulable than print ones.

How, then, does a map become Haraway's nonliteral swervy thing, or Geertz's "model for"? How might it alter common perceptions of history, of landscape, of culture, of literature? Or how might it become a vehicle for humor or political action? (We're really going to unpack these questions in the next module.)

Implications for your digital humanities research projects

Modeling entails the

- Introduction of, and interaction between, media layers (e.g., the spreadsheet, the motion chart, the notes, the text, and the essay) in the stages of research and collecting data. (See Module 4 on intermediation and remediation, and Module 3 on collecting and conjecturing.)

- Mobilization of theory through what McCarty calls "the continual process of coming to know by manipulating things" (28). In other words, the swervy thing is also a theory thing: it's a material object (that has force and is used by people in certain ways) *and* a concept repeatedly put into action.
- Integration of quantitative approaches and classifications into critical approaches to history, culture, and literature.
- "Distant reading" of texts and discovering a problem without a solution. (See Moretti's comments in Module 5.)
- Challenges of:
    o (1) Synthesizing various modes of perceiving, storing and transmitting information,
    o (2) Selecting the most effective data elements (for a swervy thing),
    o (3) Finding the most persuasive model for your audience(s) and purpose(s), and
    o (4) Determining whether you are representing information ("model of") or designing for the realization of the new ("model for").

What Now?: Applications

- Check out Google Visualization API library. Scroll through the options (e.g., motion chart, geo-map, and annotated time line) with your project in mind.
- For each that interests you, look (at least) at the examples provided, the data format, and configuration options. Considering the aims of your project, as well as your elements (from Module 5), does any of the visualizations work for you? Why or why not?
- As a class, we'll work through an example motion chart using a spreadsheet as a data source.
- When we are finished, on the blog, respond to the following in your own entry:
    o (1) Given this cursory look at modeling, what obstacles do you foresee?
    o (2) For your project, are you more invested in modeling for or modeling of? Why?
    o (3) How do the visualizations affect your perception of your elements (from Module 5)? What might need to change from that last module?
    o (4) What other kind of visualizations or models would you like to work with in class?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Mapping in Stakes, What's Data?

What to Consider during Future Modules

- Soon, you'll be submitting data for your project. Regardless of whether you are modeling for or modeling of, how will you make your data interesting, and how will it be organized? What audience(s) do you have in mind, and what matters to them?

Protagonist, from Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*: *All things, it is said, are duly recorded—all things of importance, that is. But not quite, for actually it is only the known, the seen, the heard and only those events that the recorder regards as important that are put down, those lies his keepers keep their power by. . . . Where were the historians today? And how would they put it down?*

Learning Goals for the Module

- Become familiar with some critical approaches to technology and how to apply one or two of those approaches to your own project, especially to how you are gathering data.
- Determine—through examples and an assessment of your data elements—how those critical approaches might help you increase the stakes of your project.
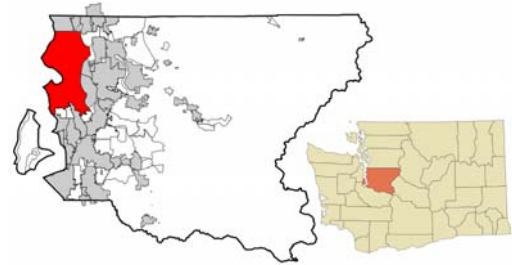
What or who a map excludes, as well as what or who it enables, are arguably its most important aspects. Often, humanities research projects attend to how objects, such as maps, function in certain social or cultural domains—how, for example, maps render invisible certain people, places, and events and how to change existing maps or create new ones accordingly. Indeed, maps are ways of writing and classifying history, of putting it down. A question, then, is how to recognize what's missing from your own work, why what's missing matters, and how to revise, if need be.

Before we start there, let's look at an example mapping project, "Queering the map: The Productive Tensions of Colliding Epistemologies," by Michael Brown and Larry Knopp. Here's the abstract from their article:

"Drawing on and speaking to literatures in geographic information systems (GIS), queer geography, and queer urban history, we chronicle ethnographically our experience as queer geographers using GIS in an action-research project. We made a map of sites of historical significance in Seattle, Washington, with the Northwest Lesbian and Gay History Museum Project. We detail how queer theory/activism and GIS technologies, in tension with one another, made the map successful, albeit imperfect, via five themes: colliding epistemologies, attempts to represent the unrepresentable, productive pragmatics, the contingencies of facts and truths, and power relations. This article thus answers recent calls in the discipline for joining GIS with social-theoretical geographies, as well as bringing a spatial epistemology to queer urban history, and a cartographic one to queer geography."

With this project as a case study, how might we consider how "Queering the Map" could emerge from different critical approaches to the map as a technology? Below are five possible approaches, which are broadly framed and adopted from Roel Nahuis's and Harro van Lente's "Where Are the Politics? Perspectives on Democracy and Technology."

- **Intentionalist**: How is a map (as an artifact representing the values of mapmakers and specific social groups) a materialization of power and authority?
- **Proceduralist**: How is mapping (as a set of social practices with rules and agreed-upon guidelines) a negotiation between interested groups? And who do these groups represent?
- **Actor-Network**: How is the map (as an artifact that affords and forbids certain actions) the result of a struggle between forces or programs, and how does it affect people's actions on a local level?

- **Interpretivist**: How are the map (as a text with multiple meanings) and the mapmaker (as an participant with certain investments) influencing and influenced by the discourse in which they are embedded?
- **Performative**: How is the setting of mapping practices (as activities influenced by particular biases) enabling people to act the way that they do, and what other approaches to the setting would somehow surprise or lay bare biased mapping practices?

As a class, let's unpack these approaches a bit. Then, in your clusters, you can decide—in the context of the "Queering the Map" case study—which two critical approaches you find most relevant. After you chat and blog (with one entry per group) about your decisions, then we'll reconvene and discuss.

Implications for your digital humanities research projects

- Digital projects that are motivated by and well aware of their specific critical approaches to technology will be more persuasive—they will have higher stakes—than those projects where the critical approach is loosely articulated or even nonexistent.
- Critical approaches to technology allow digital humanities projects to do more than simply "represent" information in new forms (e.g., digitize print texts). They allow them to produce new knowledge.
- Note how these five critical approaches relate to Module 5 (on modeling "of" and "for") and Module 1 (on emergent media and knowledge production).
- Selecting one or two of the approaches above and mobilizing it in your own work might be a way of focusing your project.
- These critical approaches affect both how projects are theorized and how they are practiced (e.g., your project as an idea and your project as a process of gathering and organizing data).

What Now?: Applications

- Return to your data elements from Module 5 and to your workflow. In your own blog entry, please respond to the following questions:
    - How, if at all, are your data elements emerging from one or several of the critical approaches listed above, and to what effects? If they don't appear to be emerging from one of these approaches, then explain why you think that is the case.
    - If you were to revise your data elements along the lines of one of these approaches, then what would change? (For example, would you cut an element? Add one? Revise them so that they relate differently? Change how they are worded?)
- Time permitting, let's discuss your entries in your clusters and as a class.

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- What's Data?, Close Reading

What to Consider during Future Modules

In the next module, you'll be gathering data based upon the data elements you selected in your workflow. Given this module, what kind of data do you expect?   How might you make that data more interesting? Riskier? More provocative?

module 8

wait, what's data anyway?:
on how to account for
miscellany in mapping

mapping the digital humanities, spring 2009, university of washington

From Linda Nagata's _Limit of Vision_: *Virgil squeezed his eyes shut, wondering if they ever would have the power to heal death. The human body was a machine; he knew that. He had looked deep into its workings, all the way down to the level of cellular mechanics, and there was no other way to interpret the processes there than as the workings of an intricate, beautiful, and delicate machine. Machines, though, could be repaired. They could be rebuilt, copied, and improved—and sometimes it seemed inevitable that all of that would soon be possible for the human machine too.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Understand how data elements (as categorizations of data) are imbricated in material practices, which are associated with actual people and places.
- Consider the importance of scope in assessing your data.
- Learn some "textured" language for assessing your own data and data sources.
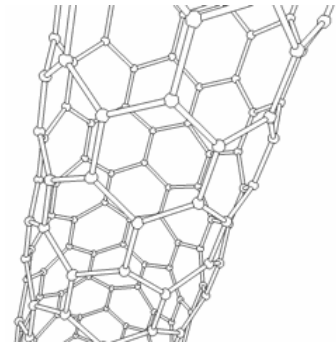
In _Nanovision_, Colin Milburn writes about how nanotechnologists and nanoscientists can "fashion their work as a **_mapping practice_**, an effort to contain novel territory within a representational topography that is pictorial, rhetorical, and numerical all at the same time—a 'data map,' a visual rendering, and a descriptive survey of the landscape that transforms its various *physical properties* into *property as such*" (65-66). Put broadly, nanovision, or, for instance, a researcher's ability to see objects and bodies at the atomic level, translates the **microscopic world** into a landscape to be explored, mapped, and territorialized—to **visualize it, give it a language, and quantify it**. The world as we know it is rendered strange through a new scale. For one, bodies and objects behave differently when we zoom in, when we use technologies such as scanning tunneling microscopes to see what the human eye cannot. What's more, if we can now map what we cannot see with the naked eye, then we can also start to **manipulate and shape** it. In short, the nanoworld becomes a world of new affordances and possibilities. And as Milburn points out: "Indeed, a vocabulary of western exploration and 'Manifest Destiny' plays a powerful epistemic role in nanoscience research" (67). Expand vision? Expand human control and domain over the world (67). (Martin Jay, among others, refers to this as "ocularcentrism.")

Perhaps a video spells it out better.   Let us see.

Implications for your digital humanities research projects

- With maps, we tend to think of how to make things that are larger than us (e.g., the whole world) smaller than us (e.g., a map of the world). Yet nanotechnology demonstrates how mapping is really a matter of scope—of expanding our scale (e.g., applicability) and range (e.g., breadth) of knowledge, whether that is seeing the entire world or seeing the minute, inner-workings of the body. The **scope of your data** (and not necessarily the amount of it) is thus always something to consider. Of course, thinking big isn't always the best option, and your acute knowledge of your project's scope—of why you are setting its scale and range the way that you are—will only enhance how persuasive audiences find it.
- While nanotechnologies afford us increasing freedom (e.g., of choice, of movement), freedom is not the same as control. For instance, our bodies still function in ways we cannot see, let alone grasp. Increased access to information about them does not imply that all material problems will be easily remedied. Put another way, political issues cannot be resolved technologically. (See Wendy Chun and Module 7 here.) Persuasive digital projects often recognize that knowledge does not exist in objects, bodies, technologies, or information alone, but rather in the material relationships between them. (Some refer to these relationships as ecologies.)

What Now?: Applications

- For this module, I asked you to bring in some data. More specifically, I asked you to actually cut up your print project—to cut into print, gather what you need, and consequently cut out the rest. I also asked you to arrange your data according to your data elements. Now, with that arranged data in front of you, let's ask the following questions of what we'll call your data's "texture." These metaphors, borrowed in part from *Sorting Things Out* by Bowker and Star, will be means of reminding ourselves of your data's materiality and its scope. Comparable to how nanotechnologists speak of carbon nanotubes, let's speak of your data as threads:

  - How "thick" of a thread is it? (That is, how well does it account for the range of possibilities suggested by your data elements?)
  - How "durable" of a thread is it? (That is, how would it hold up to critique? To what critical approaches (see Module 7) is it accountable?)
  - How "tightly or loosely woven" is it? (That is, how broadly or narrowly does it describe the place, people, or things it's describing?)
  - How well are your data sets "knotted" or "tied" together? (That is, how do they relate, and how do they contradict/complement each other?)

- With these questions in mind, please, in your own entry, blog about miscellany. But by "miscellany," I'm being quite specific. After conducting the above material assessment of your data's scope:

  - What do you think you "cut out" from the data sources and archive you've been working with? What's in the remnants? In "zooming in" on specific elements of the text, what did your nanovision occlude, and to what effects on your project?   Especially consider how tightly or loosely woven the data is.
  - What are the limits of your data sources and archive? Their limits of vision? Do you need to look to more texts? Why, or why not? Especially consider the thickness and durability of your threads.
  - Now that you have some data, how, if at all, did the data elements (as constraints) help you gather data that surprised you?   Put another way, what, if anything, did you think you had under control and all mapped out that, in fact, you do not? Especially consider the ties and knots across your data sets. If were not surprised, then why?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Close Reading, Assessing Your Project

What to Consider during Future Modules

- In the near future, you'll be producing a data model, which is essentially an abstraction of how you are organizing and processing your data. In composing such an abstraction, what are some ways to remind yourself of your data's texture? Of its material embeddedness and implications?

Good luck, humans.

From *The Verbal Icon*, by W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley: *One must ask how a critic expects to get an answer to the question about intention. How is he to find out what the poet tried to do? If the poet succeeded in doing it, then the poem itself shows what he was trying to do.*

Learning Outcomes for the Module

- Understand what might be some critiques of "distant reading" and how to engage those critiques.
- Collaboratively annotate a text that has been popular in the class thus far and see what collaborative annotation affords.
- Recognize some possible tensions between "distant reading" and "close reading" and articulate why that tension is productive.

Put this possibility on the table: For the entire quarter, you've been compiling data on an author's entire corpus—let's say Virginia Woolf's. More specifically, you're studying what places are referenced in her novels, and you're locating those places, together with relevant quotes from their texts, on a single map. When the quarter's finished, it's quite possible that you haven't read—in its entirety—a single book by Virginia Woolf.

My first suggestion? Read a book by Virginia Woolf. My next suggestion? Consider what someone (e.g., a literary critic, a fan of Woolf) would value as **"close reading,"** where careful attention is paid to the words and ideas of a text (and often just the text alone). Select passages of the text are then scrutinized in a work of criticism. (You've likely done this, no?)

Actually, for this module, let's conduct a close reading on a text that's been popular in the class. For now—of course, subject change—I'll go with Martin Heidegger's "The Question Concerning Technology," first published in 1954. I select it primarily because it's essentially a canonical (or ubiquitous) text as far as the culture, philosophy, history, and sociology of technology is concerned.

Regardless of the text (which should be only a chapter or an article), we'll go through it, in class, line by line, and annotate it using Microsoft Word. I'll then circulate that annotated text for your future reference. During the module, it might not be a bad idea for a number of us to play the role of transcriber, taking down the annotations, in the margins, as they emerge. After all, transcription is a matter of interpretation, and it's labor-intensive. Switching up transcribers will thus give people breaks and generate a broader range of experiences and questions during the exercise.

Once the text is annotated, we'll ask what we've learned from the close reading and how it differs, if at all, from the work you've been doing all quarter.

Implications for your digital humanities research projects

- Distant readings are often, fairly enough, critiqued as ignoring the principles and benefits of close reading. While assessing your project and speaking to it, keeping these critiques in mind is a smart practice.
- Rather than eschewing close reading for distant reading (or vice versa), a more complex response is to note how the two differ, to what effects, and why. For instance, a literary historian might be more invested in a distant reading, while a New Critic might be more invested in a close reading. Both afford distinct and (when done persuasively) equally important readings.
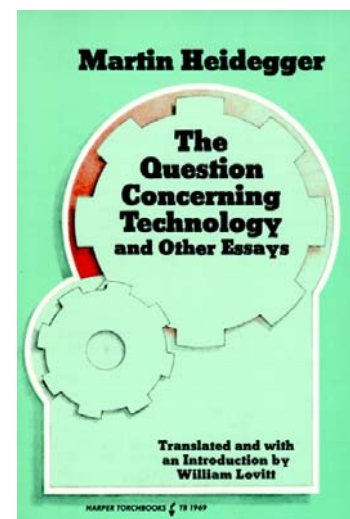
- If you've been asked to conduct close readings in the past, then you might consider how your project for this class has shaped your learning and humanities research differently.
- Collaboratively annotating a text, where a screen and document are shared, is one digital humanities practice that highlights how subordinating individual investments toward a shared goal (e.g., annotating a text as a group and collectively determining the benefits of close reading) becomes the vehicle for mutual, technology-focused learning. (See Chris Kelty here.)

What Now?: Applications

- As a class, we'll create a document that puts our annotated text into conversation with your individual projects. In so doing, we should draw upon each of them for evidence and address the following:
    - o What does a distant reading afford humanities research, especially digital humanities research? How?
    - o What does a close reading afford humanities research, especially digital humanities research? How?
    - o How are the two approaches coextensive or complementary? In tension?
    - o How, if at all, do computers and new media figure into the above questions?
- If we have time, then you should, in your own blog entry, respond to this exercise with your own thoughts. Things to consider: What concerns do you have about distant reading? How, if at all, is it at odds with other ways you've practiced reading and criticism? What approach(es) do you prefer and why?

What's Next?: Modules Ahead

- Assessing Your Project

What to Consider during Future Modules

- For the last module, you'll be thinking through how to assess your project. How might this conversation between close and distant reading figure into your assessment? By focusing, perhaps, on what your project is *not* doing, what have you learned about what it *is* doing persuasively?

prompt 1 (thought piece

m a p p i n g   t h e   d i g i t a l   h u m a n i t i e s ,   s p r i n g   2 0 0 9 ,   u n i v e r s i t y   o f   w a s h i n g t o n

Walter Benjamin, in "Theses on the Philosophy of History": *Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well.*

While it's tempting to spend the balance of the quarter aggregating data and piling on media, I say we stop for a second and start building things.

But! This one's not the whole idea. It's a thought piece. And it should consist of the following:

- As a field of study, what you think the digital humanities does,
- How you think its practitioners do what they do, and
- Initial and interesting ideas for at least one digital humanities project that you could develop this quarter. At least one.
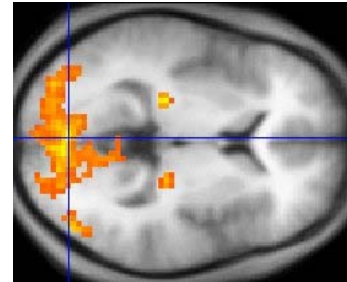
By "you," I mean you in particular. Be selfish, people.

How you shape this information is up to you. You can essay, diagram, video, draw . . . The medium is not the matter. Pick what you prefer. However, you should figure this in: your medium will influence how you (and your audience) create and think through a message. (Consider "remediation" and "intermediation" from Module 4, as well as "syntagms" and "paradigms" from Module 2.)

And remember: A thought piece is a riff. The point is to conjecture. Speculate. Toss out a rich idea or two or three, and later we'll talk about making the whole thing happen.

Outcomes

Your thought piece should:

- Demonstrate a general understanding of how Modules 1 through 4 relate to the digital humanities as a field and a set of practices (e.g., apply some of the concepts from the modules, think through how to use new media for new forms of scholarship, or unpack the distinctions between print and digital texts).
- Give your audience (that is, your 498 peers and me) a sense of why your project(s) would be filed under "digital humanities" and what's interesting—provocative, even—about your idea(s).

Before and during the process, consider:

- Reviewing the visualization/diagram of the class (in the syllabus). What's familiar? What isn't?
- Giving the class modules another gander. What appeals? What confounds?
- Looking back at some of your old work from other classes. What have you written on? Studied? What do you care about? What's curious, and what could be developed?

Conversation Coming Soon

Your thought piece is due—on the class blog (embedded, via a link, or as text)—before class on **Wednesday, April 15th**. It will serve as a vehicle for conversation during your first conference with me. Which is to say: I'll attend to it before we meet. That way, we don't start cold. I swear.

The thought piece will be graded on the 4.0 scale, and it can be revised once. It's part of your individual project grade. If you have problems with the blog, then let me know.

prompt ⟨2⟩ ⟨ needs assessment

mapping the digital humanities, spring 2009, university of washington

Ishmael, in Herman Melville's _Moby Dick_: _God keep me from ever completing anything. . . . Oh, Time, Strength, Cash, and Patience!_

Michel Eyquem de Montaigne in "Of Cannibals": _I am afraid our eyes are bigger than our bellies and that we have more curiosity than capacity. We grasp at all, but catch nothing but wind._

You've made a thought piece. We've talked about it. Now it's time to sketch out what—aside from time, strength, cash, and patience—is needed to put a thought in motion. Of course, a thought moving isn't a thought complete. Keep that pithy line in mind as you respond to this prompt. Or, to contextualize: The goal for the quarter isn't to finish a research project; it's to build one worth developing in the future. Recall Shelley Jackson, from Module 1: "there can be no final unpacking." Determine, then, what you can grasp—what's feasible—between now and June-ish.

How practical, especially for humanists. Let's give such practicality a name: "needs assessment." However! As opposed to the image below, your "needs" here won't simply be downloaded for regurgitation later. You'll have to come up with them on your own, with some guidelines.

As with the first prompt, the medium is yours. But please respond to the following:

- What do you want from your emerging project? Or, what is your objective, and what's motivating it?
- What do you need (e.g., knowledge, experience, materials, and practice) to pull everything off? Or, to return to Moretti and Module 5 for a sec: For now, what knowledge are you taking for granted?
- Where are you going for evidence or data? That is, what texts will you be working with?

Outcomes

Your needs assessment should be:

- Specific, pointing to the particular knowledge you need and want (e.g., XHTML, GIS, literature review, and media theory/history) and what materials you should have (e.g., software, time, and books).
- More refined and focused than your thought piece. (If the thought piece was about broad possibilities, then your needs assessment is about concrete ones.)
- A way of responding to your first conference with me. (Reference our conversation and expound upon it.)
- Aware that its audience consists of your peers and me. (Feel free to use names or speak to particular bits from class.)

Before and during the process, consider:

- What is realistic for a quarter?
- How do you avoid reinventing the wheel? What did you learn from another course or project that could be developed and re/intermediated?
- When the spring's finished, what kind of project will be most useful for you? Think before _and_ beyond now.

Critiques Soonish

Your needs assessment is due—on the class blog (embedded, via a link, or as text)—before class on **Monday, April 20th**. You will share it during in-class critiques. During those critiques, you'll also respond to your peers' assessments.

The needs assessment will be graded on the 4.0 scale, and it can be revised once. It's part of your individual project grade.

If you still have problems with the blog, then let's talk. I might need to revise or address something.
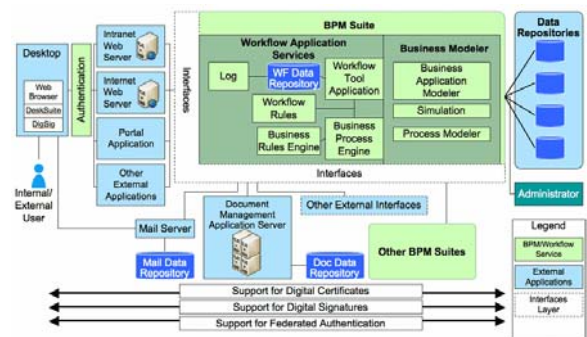
prompt |3| (

workflow

m a p p i n g   t h e   d i g i t a l   h u m a n i t i e s ,   s p r i n g   2 0 0 9 ,   u n i v e r s i t y   o f   w a s h i n g t o n

Carl von Clausewitz in *On War*: *Everything in strategy is very simple, but that does not mean that everything is very easy.*

Fair enough, Carl, but that doesn't mean we can't at least try to make things a tad easier, right? Despite the fact that plans and thoughts and needs and life are all subject to change, sketching out an agenda, through some simple elements, is rarely a bad idea. The key is—to borrow from Chris Kelty—"*planning in the ability to plan out*, an effort to continuously secure the ability to deal with surprise and unexpected outcomes" (12).

So how about what we'll call a "workflow"? Again, the medium is yours, but please transmit the following:

- What is your research question? (Try one that starts with "how.")
- What are the data elements for your project? (We have already discussed these in class; and, if all's on par, then you should have already drafted them.)
- How are you animating these elements (e.g., through what medium—for example, a motion chart, a geomap, or a timeline—are you shaping information)?
- What do you expect to emerge from this animation (e.g., what will information look like, how will the audience interpret it, or what might you learn from it)?
- Ultimately, what are you going to do with it (e.g., how will it influence your current work, how might you use it in other classes, how will it persuade audiences, or how will it change the ways in which you perceive the text(s) you're working with)?

Outcomes

Your workflow should:

- Be driven by a concrete and provocative research question, which emerges from your responses to Prompts 1 and 2.
- Be very specific about the data elements you are using.   Name them. List them out.
- Be very specific about the kind of animation you are using, including some knowledge of how that animation allows you and your audience to produce knowledge—or how that animation is a "swervy thing."
- Demonstrate that you are aware of why you are using the data elements and animation you're using and what might be the implications of your decision (e.g., what are the benefits and deficits, or the hot ideas worth some risk and not-so-hot possibilities that are deterring you).
- Aware that its audience consists of your peers and me.

Before and during the process, consider:

- How your digital project—through computational animation—demands a different mode of thought than, say, writing a paper. How might you take advantage of this difference? What does it afford?
- What options you have for animation, what you are most comfortable with, and—again, again, again—what seems feasible for a quarter.

- In your previous work, what terms or concepts pop up most often, which ones interest you the most, which ones you'd rather do without, and how those terms would translate in a computational approach.

Toward Making Animation Matter

Your workflow is due—on the class blog (embedded, via a link, or as text)—before class on **Monday, April 27th**. In class, we'll get theoretical and address the "stakes" of your animation and data elements, or how you can make them matter and for whom.

The workflow will be graded on the 4.0 scale, and it can be revised once. It's part of your individual project grade.

Keep me posted with questions and quibbles.

From Dyeth in Samuel R. Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*: *Someone once pointed out to me that there are two kinds of memory (I don't mean short- and long-term, either): recognition memory and reconstruction memory. The second is what artists train; and most of us live off the first—though even if we're not artists we have enough of the second to get us through the normal run of imaginings.*

A constant challenge in academic work, then, is to model something that reshapes the material with which you and others are already familiar—to re-construct and re-imagine history, culture, texts, territories, and places through new paradigms, without simply recognizing them as what you already know, using the same blueprints, strategies, and maps as before.

To produce a contrivance. To project a world and animate it. To swerve. I'm not saying it's easy. It's not. But give it a whirl.

You've thought about your project (in your Thought Piece), assessed its possibilities (in your Needs Assessment), made it elemental (in your Work Flow), and speculated on what might happen come June (during in-class workshops). Now's the time to give people the classification system for your information collecting and some results—that is, your data model and some data.
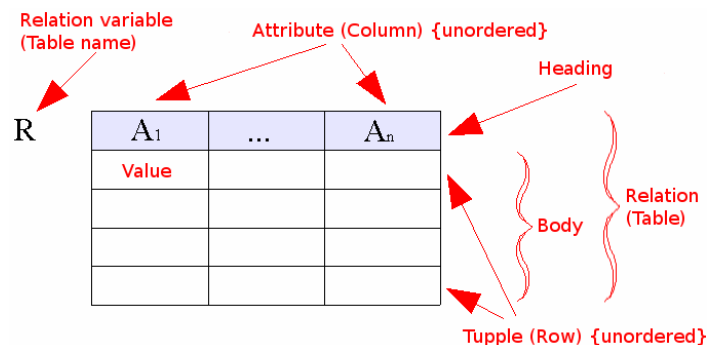
This time around, the medium isn't yours. Sorry. Please complete the data model worksheet.

However, when you provide your data, you can choose the medium. For instance, feel free to use a spreadsheet, provide copies of a log, or complete the table I provide at the end of the worksheet.

Outcomes

Your data model should be:
- Extremely specific, providing your audience with exact details for each of your data elements, following the form provided, and leaving no necessary field blank.
- A cogent means of giving a reader who is not familiar with your project a sense of how you are collecting and organizing your data.

Your elaboration on your data model should be:
- A mobilization of terms and concepts from class (e.g., classification, paradigms, re/intermediation, collecting, affordance, intent, procedures, bias, discourse, animation, and distant reading), putting them to work in the context of your project.
- Concrete and situated in your project. Abstract language should be avoided. Responses to each question should be based on examples from and exact instances in your project.
- Aware of the limits and benefits of the decisions you are making and how those decisions will affect your target audience *and* your own learning. Remember: you can't do everything, but you should be able to account for how you are mapping your project.

Your data should be:
- Well-organized and specific, based upon the framework outlined in your data model.
- Sufficient enough to—at this juncture in your project—allow you to make some preliminary findings based upon your research. (However, the data does not need to be complete. You

might still be in the process of collecting more. In the worksheet, I require three rows of data. I recommend collecting much more, if possible. For some projects, twenty to forty rows will be necessary.)

Before and during the process, consider:
- What you expect to emerge from your animation at the quarter's end. How do those expectations resonate with your data model?
- Returning to what you churned out in response to Prompts 1 through 3. What's your trajectory, collector?
- How, broadly speaking, this approach to humanities work relates to your previous coursework and experiences, and to what effects.
- Revisiting the modules and contacting me and/or your peers with any questions you have about the terms and concepts used.

Another Review Coming Soon

Your data model worksheet is due—on the class blog (embedded, via a link, or as text)—before class on **Monday, May 11**th. During that class, your worksheet will be peer reviewed, and I will grade your worksheet based on that peer review.

The data model will be graded on the 4.0 scale, and it can be revised once. It's part of your individual project grade.

Hope all's coming along well. As always, let me know about your concerns.

prompt (5)   abstract

m a p p i n g   t h e   d i g i t a l   h u m a n i t i e s ,   s p r i n g   2 0 0 9 ,   u n i v e r s i t y   o f   w a s h i n g t o n

From Hervé Le Tellier's "All Our Thoughts": *I think the exact shade of your eyes is No. 574 in the Pantone color scale.*

Ah . . . the abstract: the oh so academic act of summarizing work that's often still in progress. Your project's not finished, you're still not sure if everything coheres, and the thing's so deep you can't dare reduce it to a single paragraph. I know this. I don't particularly enjoy writing abstracts, either. But abstracts are necessary beasts. Aside from giving your readers a quick snapshot of your research, they also force you to articulate—in a precise fashion and in exact numbers—what, exactly, you are up to.

To the details, then.

Your abstract should include:

- The aim of your project and its motivation/purpose,
- Your research question (although it does not need to be articulated as a question),
- Your method (how you did what you did),
- Your results (what you learned),
- The implications of your results (or why your research matters), and
- The trajectory of your project (what you plan to do with it in the future).

This one should be in words. Despite Blake's abstract of humans (above-right), we're going with the industry standard here.

Outcomes

Your abstract should:

- Be no more than three hundred words.
- Be one concise and exact paragraph.
- Include a title for your project, three keywords for it, and a one-sentence tagline describing it. (The keywords and tagline are not part of the three-hundred word limit.)
- Be written for educated, non-expert audiences (e.g., academic types who might not be familiar with the digital humanities) and avoid jargon.
- Summarize your work as it stands, instead of becoming an idea hike into unventured regions (that is, avoid speculations).
- Mobilize terms and concepts from the class, again, for educated, non-expert audiences.
- Demonstrate, through clear language, how your project's motivation, question, method, results, and trajectory are related.
- Follow the form below on page two.

Before and during the process, consider:

- How your data model is one way of thinking through your method.

- Returning to your response to [Prompt 3](), which asked you for your research question, and to [Prompt 2](), which asked you what you want from your project.
- [Module 7]() (on making your project matter) and how it speaks to your project's motivation and the implications of your results.
- How to write for people who would have absolutely no clue what, exactly, the digital humanities is.
- How terms common in the course thus far (e.g., [paradigm, syntagm](), [model](), [distant reading](), [remediation, and intermediation]()) might be helpful when articulating your project.
- When terms should be defined.

Contextualizing the Thing

Your abstract is due—on the class blog (attached as a Word document)—before class on **Wednesday, May 20th**. On May 27th, we'll consider how to integrate your abstract into the presentation of your project. An abstract is nothing without what it's abstracting.

The abstract will be graded on the 4.0 scale, and it can be revised once. It's part of your individual project grade.

If you need help condensing, then let me know.

Form for the Abstract

Project Title
Your Name, Your Major
Tagline
Three keywords

Body of abstract (300 words, one paragraph)

Examples

[View some sample abstracts]() (which do not necessarily follow the format and outcomes for this prompt, but are nevertheless good references).

From DJ Spooky's *Rhythm Science*: *As George Santayana said so long ago, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." That one's scenario. But what happens when the memories filter through the machines we use to process culture and become software—a constantly updated, always turbulent terrain more powerful than the machine through which it runs? Memory, damnation, and repetition: That was then, this is now. We have machines to repeat history for us. . . . The circuitry of the machines is the constant in this picture; the software is the embodiment of infinite adaptability, an architecture of frozen music unthawed.*

Reflection, reflection, reflection. Instructors often like the word. I'm not sure it fits here, though. The purpose of this project assessment isn't for you to ruminate on whether you're good enough or smart enough. We know you are, and people like you. It's for you to articulate what—over the course of the quarter—ultimately emerged from your project and what you think of it.

The thing began as an idea. You then converted it into an agenda, with a model, compiling pieces of data, and ultimately animating those pieces. That said, I hope you collected something you're happy with.

The project goal was for you to think through "generative constraints" as strict as computation and data models to produce provocative questions, new knowledge, and reconfigurations of literature, culture, and history. After all, the hardware of history needn't determine its interpretation, and the wiring of culture is never neutral. Infinite adaptability.

With that adaptability in mind, please unpack this list, without, of course, the brazen assumption that your unpacking is final. The quarter just so happens to be over. (And I'm really sad about that.)

- How—for better and for worse—does your animation project differ from an academic paper (especially one intended for print)? What does it ask of audiences and to what effects?
- How does your project produce new knowledge and about what?
- Considering the brevity of a quarter, how was your project a success? What did you learn from it? What will others?
- How could you improve your project? What do you want to continuing learning from it?
- How, if at all, do you plan on developing (or using) your project in the future? Do you plan to circulate it to others or make it public? Why or why not?

Unless you are going for writing credit, I've decided to let you choose the medium or media here. You can make—or blend together—video, a website, audio, word docs, or what-have-you. Be creative.

Just do me two favors:

1. With your assessment, include three outcomes upon which I should assess your project and your assessment of it. Those outcomes should include references to your method for collecting data, your awareness of your own bias/intent/procedures, your project's design, and how your project produces knowledge (instead of just re-presenting known information).
2. Provide me with your final animation project. Upload it to the blog, provide a link, or the like. (See more below.)

Outcomes

By focusing on your project as a process, your project assessment should:

- Be composed for educated, non-expert audiences (e.g., academic types who might not be familiar with the digital humanities).
- Demonstrate your understanding of the digital humanities as a field, using material from the class when appropriate.
- Reference specific aspects of your project and draw upon it for evidence.
- Exhibit critical approaches to your own project (e.g., show that you know how you did what you did, what worked, and how you could have done things differently).
- If applicable, include a works cited page of texts quoted, paraphrased, or the like.

Before and during the process, consider:

- Returning to your responses to all prompts. How has your project—and your framing of it—changed since then?
- Returning to the course syllabus and assessing what you've learned in the class since day one of the quarter.
- Returning to the user's guide for CHID 498.
- Circulating a draft assessment to me and your peers. (Use the blog!)
- How to write for people who would have absolutely no clue what, exactly, the digital humanities is.
- Doing something that will keep you interested. It's finals week, in spring, just before summer, y'all.

This One Will Not Be Revised

Your project assessment and final portfolio are due—on the class blog (filed under your name)—by the end of the day, **Wednesday, June 10th**.

Here's what (ideally) should be uploaded to your author page on the blog:

- Mapping 1,
- Thought Piece (First Draft and Revision, if applicable),
- Needs Assessment (First Draft and Revision, if applicable),
- Work Flow (First Draft and Revision, if applicable)**,**
- Mapping 2
- Data Model (First Draft and Revision, if applicable),
- Abstract (First Draft and Revision, if applicable),
- Animation (all versions, including the one presented on June 3rd),
- Project Assessment, and
- Anything else you think is relevant.

As a reminder, here's how your work in 498 will be graded:

- Class participation (30% of the grade)
- Blogging and collaborative mapping (20% of the grade)
- HTML quiz (5% of the grade)
- Final exhibition (5% of the grade)
- Individual project (40% of the grade)

These five components of the class will each be graded on a 4.0 scale and then, for your final grade, averaged according to the percentages I provide above.

And here's how the portfolio is graded:

- Thought piece (10% of portfolio, can be revised once after it's graded),
- Needs assessment (10% of portfolio, can be revised once after it's graded),
- Work flow (10% of portfolio, can be revised once after it's graded),
- Data model (15% of portfolio, can be revised once after it's graded),
- Abstract (15% of portfolio, can be revised once after it's graded), and
- Final prototype and assessment (40% of portfolio, cannot be revised after it's graded).

See me with questions!

Have a rad summer break, people. It's been a pleasure, and—to reiterate—make this last bit interesting. After all, CHID 498 was, from the get-go, an experiment.