





NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

OFFICE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES

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## **National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Digital Humanities**

### **Narrative Section of a Successful Application**

This sample of the narrative portion from a grant is provided as an example of a funded proposal. It will give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. It is not intended to serve as a model. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with staff members in the NEH Office of Digital Humanities well before a grant deadline. This sample proposal does not include a budget, letters of commitment, or resumes.

**Project Title:** *Broadening the Digital Humanities: The Vectors-IML Summer Institute on Multimodal Scholarship*

**Institution:** University of Southern California

**Project Director:** Holly Willis

**Grant Program:** Institutes for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities





















**Application for the NEH Institutes for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities  
Broadening the Digital Humanities: The Vectors-IML Summer Institute on Multimodal  
Scholarship**

**Detailed Curriculum and Workplan**

**Curriculum**

**Week 1: Introduction to Multimodal Scholarship**

The first week of the Institute will survey the shifting terrain of contemporary media-based and networked scholarship, examining shifts in writing (as in texts composed using collaborative software or books written “in public” with reader input), publishing (thanks to blogs, wikis and Web-based venues), and distribution. The overview will include examinations of various digital humanities projects, including archival projects, modeling projects such as *Rome Reborn*, and large-scale digital humanities initiatives such as *Project Bamboo*. Beyond the overview, specific attention will be paid to new modes of scholarly argument and analysis, emerging genres, and the ways in which new scholarly practices impact the university as an institution. Demonstrations will center on innovative Web-based scholarly projects and tools (such as *GAM3R 7H3ORY* and *Paris: Invisible City*), while the Hands-on Lab Workshops will introduce a full array of easy-to-use Web-based tools (such as Zotero, del.icio.us and Buzzword) designed to enhance the ways in which scholars manage and deploy research. Guests will include Sharon Daniel, an Associate Professor of Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who will present her award-winning Web-based interactive project *Public Secrets* (a *Vectors*-produced project), and Phil Ethington, a cultural and political historian of the United States and an intellectual historian of the social sciences and the humanities, who will present his most recent multimedia project, a dense, interactive map of Los Angeles that allows users to toggle through multiple layers of time and information.

**Readings**

“Scholarship at a Crossroads,” Christine L. Borgman, *Scholarship and the Digital Age: Information, Infrastructure and the Internet* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

“Cognitive and Educational Implications of Visually Rich Media: Images and Imagination,” Jennifer Wiley, in *Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media*, Mary E. Hocks and Michelle R. Kendrick, eds. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).

“Beginning Again: Humanities and Digital Culture, 1993 – 2000,” Jerome McGann, *Radiant Textuality: Literature After the World Wide Web* (NY: Palgrave, 2001).

“Extreme Inscription: a Grammatology of the Hard Drive, Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, in *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

“Regeneration: Multimedia Genres and Emerging Scholarship,” Steve Anderson, unpublished essay, 2007.

“Composing From the Underground: Combining Academic and Aesthetic Practices in New Media,” Cheryl E. Ball, unpublished essay, 2007.

“Presenting the Figural,” D. N. Rodowick, in *Reading the Figural: Philosophy After the New Media* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

## **Hands-on Lab Practicum**

Social software and tagging: del.icio.us, CiteYouLike and diigo

Managing bibliographic information: Zotero

Blogs and wikis: overview of platforms and the differences among them

Introduction to Vectors' database tools and templates

## **Demos**

Web-based scholarly projects and tools:

Rome Reborn

The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War

Vectors Journal of Culture and Technology in a Dynamic Vernacular

Comment Press

GAM3R 7H3ORY, by McKenzie Wark

Paris: Invisible City, by Bruno Latour

Public Secrets, by Erik Loyer and Sharon Daniel

## **Guests**

Sharon Daniel is an Associate Professor of Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz where she teaches classes in digital media theory and practice. Her research involves collaborations with local and online communities, which exploit information and communications technologies as new sites for "public art." Daniel is the co-creator of the Web-based interactive project Public Secrets, which examines the spaces of the prison system through the voices of incarcerated women. The award-winning project exemplifies precise and elegant interface design and the use of an algorithm to generate random "text boxes" that act as metaphors for the project's central thesis.

Phil Ethington is a cultural and political historian of the United States and an intellectual historian of the social sciences and the humanities. His central concern is with the historical conditions that enable and inhibit democratic citizenship. Ethington has pioneered the use of digital multimedia for advanced scholarship, publishing the American Historical Review's first online-only multimedia essay "Los Angeles and the Problem of Urban Historical Knowledge" (2000), and is now leading a digital publishing initiative for Cambridge Journals Online. He will present his most recent multimedia project, a dense, interactive map of Los Angeles that allows users to toggle through multiple layers of time and information.

## **Week 2: Design Issues in Multimedia**

This second week of the Institute offers an overview of design issues for those working with multimedia in the humanities. After a short tour of graphic design history as it relates to Web-based projects and interactivity, presenters will consider contemporary uses of typography, interface design, computational design, and information visualization, focusing on recent examples and their application to scholarly multimedia humanities projects. Demos will survey Web-based scholarly projects and tools, including the Institute for the Future of the Book's authoring tool Sophie, the database-centered Korsakow System which allows easy-to-achieve interactive video projects, and other applications that suggest the changing landscape of scholarly publication. The Hands-on Lab Workshops will focus on the multimedia project development design process. Guests will include Anne Burdick, chair of the graduate Media Design Program at Art Center College of Design and designer of several transmedia projects, and Peter Cho, a media designer and artist whose research and practice explores computational design and typography.

## **Readings**

"Design," Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen, in *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001).

“The Space of Information: Digital Media as Simulation of the Analogical Mind,” Peter Dallow, in *Technospaces: Inside the New Media*, Sally R. Munt, ed. (London: Continuum, 2001).

“Fluid Mechanics: Typographic Design Now,” Ellen Lupton, in *Design Culture Now: National Design Triennial*, Donald Albrecht, Steven Holt, and Ellen Lupton (New York: Princeton Architectural Press and Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2000).

“Database as Symbolic Form,” Lev Manovich, in *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

“Media Machines,” Noah Wardrip-Fruin, in *Expressive Processing*, excerpts via Grand Text Auto, 2008.

Excerpts from *Beautiful Evidence* by Edward Tufte.

### **Hands-on Lab Practicum**

Continued instruction on Vectors’ tools  
Intensive Design meetings  
Instruction in specific image and media tools as needed

### **Demos**

Web-based scholarly projects and tools:  
Korsakow System  
Sophie  
Text experiments by John Maeda, Ben Fry and Young Hae Chang Heavy Industries

### **Guests**

Anne Burdick is the Chair of the Graduate Media Design Program at Art Center College of Design where she is deeply invested in defining the future of graduate level education and research in design. In her practice, Burdick collaborates with texts and writers to produce new modes of reading and writing. Despite winning the prestigious Leipzig Award for the “Most Beautiful Book in the World,” Burdick does not call her practice book design. Rather, she designs spaces for writing in diverse media and environments, which sometimes includes books. Her projects are wide-ranging: poetry installations for the Getty Research Institute, unique approaches to lexicography with the Austrian Academy of Sciences, experimental fiction at the Walker Art Center’s Gallery 9, and books of literary/media criticism by authors such as Marshall McLuhan and N. Katherine Hayles. Burdick has been the Design Editor of *Electronic Book Review* since 1995.

Peter Cho is a Los Angeles-based media artist and designer. He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the UCLA Design | Media Arts department, where his work dealt with issues of language, writing, and meaning and a Master of Science degree from the MIT Media Lab, where his design research explored custom models for typography in time-based and reactive media. He has received honors for his work from *Ars Electronica*, Tokyo Type Directors Club, New York Art Directors Club, *ID Magazine*, and *Print Magazine*. His work has been shown at the Telic Gallery, Ginza Graphic Gallery, *Ars Electronica*, Art Sonje, Seoul Arts Center, the Art Directors Club, and Cooper Union. His interests include issues of electronic textuality, narrative, and mapping.

### **Week 3: Database Design and Information Architecture**

Week Three dives more fully into the design process as participants begin to develop their own multimodal project, focusing specifically on the structure and/or architecture of their project in relation to the discussions and template overviews of the previous week. Working with an array of tools designed to

foster relational thinking, participants will relinquish linear argument structures and explore new ways of expressing their ideas. Using a sequence honed over several previous workshops, presenters will move through four equally important stages: discovery, design, development and reflection. During the discovery phase, designers and scholars work together to establish a shared vocabulary and content priorities of the project; the design stage is devoted to mapping the basic strategies of interface design and user experience, leading to a set of features, parameters and user profiles; during the development stage, the goals articulated during the design phase are put into practice with scholars engaging directly in the process of integrating their work into a relational database structure via the Vectors dynamic backend generator; finally, the reflection stage includes establishing a metadata scheme that represents the project and the author's and designer's statements which are used to frame the project and the guide user experiences. Guests include Kim Christen, an assistant professor at Washington State University whose research explores the overlap of indigenous cultural heritage, intellectual property rights and the use of digital technologies in and by indigenous communities, and the creative team from USC's Labyrinth Project, which includes a long list of innovative scholarly multimedia projects.

### **Readings**

“Game Design as Narrative Architecture,” Henry Jenkins, *Electronic Book Review*, 2004. <  
<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/firstperson/lazzi-fair> >

“The Hidden Side of Visualization,” Agustin A. Araya, *The Alliance of Digital Humanities*, 2003. <  
<http://www.digitalhumanities.org/view/Essays/AgustinArayaVisualization> >

“Becoming Digital,” Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving and Presenting the Past on the Web*  
< <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/digitizing/> >

### **Hands-on Lab Practicum**

The Whale Hunt, Jonathan Harris  
Mind-mapping tools  
The Vectors dynamic backend generator  
Intensive design meetings  
Instruction in specific image and media tools as needed

### **Guests**

Kim Christen received her Ph.D. from the History of Consciousness department at the University of California at Santa Cruz in 2004. Her academic work focuses on contemporary global articulations of indigeneity. Specifically, since 1995, Christen has worked with Warumungu people from Tennant Creek, a remote town in the Northern Territory of Australia, on a range of community projects: writing a community history (Anyinginyi Manuku Apparr), producing digital video and audio recordings, and compiling archival data for use in the interpretive displays at the [Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre](#).

Marsha Kinder is a cultural theorist and prolific film scholar whose specializations include narrative theory, digital media, children's media culture, and Spanish cinema. Since 1997 Kinder has directed The Labyrinth Project, an art collective and research initiative on interactive cinema and database narrative at USC's Annenberg Center for Communication. She has published more than 100 essays and 10 books.

### **Week 4: Collaboration and Process**

The timeline of each week of workshops is tightly orchestrated to support the need for both exposure to existing models and strategies of multimodal scholarship and practical hands-on project design and

development. In our experience with Vectors residencies, scholars, designers and workshop facilitators forge strong creative and intellectual bonds, which become a crucial element of the development process. A shared set of values and goals are articulated, discussed and shaped according to the needs of individual contributors, but certain core values remain remarkably consistent from year to year. Without question, the most consistent indicator of a successful collaboration is when designer and scholar achieve a deep understanding of the contributions of the other and when a shared vocabulary emerges that is related to both the design process and the topic of the project itself. By the end of this process, designers are often able to speak with confidence and sophistication about topics as diverse as the economic development of agricultural communities in 15th century Tuscany, while scholars possess unexpected familiarity with the functioning of tables and tags in a relational database. Guests will include Tim Lenoir, professor of history and Co-chair of the Program in History and Philosophy of Science at Stanford University who has created several Web-based projects, including one on the history of computer-human interactions and one on the history of bioinformatics. Doug Thomas is an associate professor in the Annenberg School for Communication at USC, and is director of the Thinking Through Technology project, which examines the redefinition of entertainment in the digital age. At this point in the Institute, participants will be thoroughly immersed in their own project creation, and the lab time will be spent with hands-on design and development. The Institute will conclude by evaluating the Institute, as well as by charting next steps projects as they undergo the final stages of completion.

### Readings

“Who Is the Author? Sampling/Remixing/Open Source,” Lev Manovich, addition to Chapter Three of *The Language of New Media*.

“The Cyborg Author: Problems of Automated Poetics,” Espen J. Aarseth, *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

*The Social Life of Information*, John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid (Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2000).

“Show, not Tell: The Value of New Media Scholarship,” Cheryl E. Ball, *Computers and Composition* 21, 2004.

### Guests

Tim Lenoir is professor of history and chair of the Program in History and Philosophy of Science. Lenoir is the author of *The Strategy of Life: Teleology and Mechanics in Nineteenth Century German Biology*, which examines the development of non-Darwinian theories of evolution, particularly in the German context during the nineteenth century. His other books include: *Politik im Tempel der Wissenschaft: Forschung und Machtausübung im deutschen Kaiserreich*, *Instituting Science: The Cultural Production of Scientific Disciplines*, which examines the formation of disciplines and the role of public institutions in the construction of scientific knowledge; an edited volume, *Inscribing Science: Scientific Texts and the Materiality of Communication*, appeared in spring 1998 from Stanford Press. Lenoir is currently engaged in an investigation of the introduction of computers into biomedical research from the early 1960s through the 1990s, particularly the development of computer graphics, medical visualization technology, the development of virtual reality and its application in surgery. With funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Lenoir constructed two web projects on the [history of human computer interaction](#) and on the [history of bioinformatics](#). Lenoir has been a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and twice a Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Berlin. He is the co-founder and editor of the Stanford University Press series, [Writing Science](#). Lenoir was named [Bing Fellow](#) for Excellence in Teaching 1998-2001.

Douglas Thomas is Associate Professor in the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California. He received his Ph. D. from the University of Minnesota in Communication in 1992 and specializes in Critical Theory and Cultural Studies of Technology. He is founding editor of [Games & Culture: A Journal of Interactive Media](#), a quarterly international journal that aims to publish innovative theoretical and empirical research about games and culture within the context of interactive media. He is author of *Reading Nietzsche Rhetorically* (Guilford Press, 1998), an examination of the role of representation in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, and *Hacker Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003), a study of the cultural, social, and political dimensions of computer hacking. He is co-editor of *Technological Visions: The Hopes and Fears that Shape New Technologies* (with Marita Sturken and Sandra Ball-Rokeach, Temple UP, 2004) and *Cybercrime: Law Enforcement, Security and Surveillance in the Information Age* (with Brian D. Loader; Routledge, 2000). He has testified before the U.S. Congress on issues of computer hacking, cyberterrorism, and critical infrastructure protection.

## **WORK PLAN**

Fall 2008

Continuing work on Call for Proposals, Curriculum, Demos and Online resources

February 2, 2009

Call for Proposals distributed

Begin work on housing for fellows

March 16, 2009

Erik Loyer and Craig Dietrich continue refining platform for production and publishing for projects.

April 6, 2009

Deadline for receipt of proposals

April 20, 2009

Review panel convenes

April 24, 2009

Participants announced

May 4, 2009

Participants confirmed

May 5, 2009

Travel and housing plans initiated

May 11 - 15, 2009

Workshop planning retreat for key instructors

Begin preparing assessment and evaluation tools

May 18 - July 12, 2009

Workshop materials finalized

Online resources launched and sustained interaction begins with fellows

Survey of fellows' digital skills and needs undertaken

Final preparations of systems and materials

Logistical coordination (catering, etc.)

Technical coordination for labs

July 13, 2009

Institute begins; work on production and publishing platform continues

Ongoing assessment and evaluation throughout Institute

August 6, 2009

Institute ends

Ongoing select design/technical support

Continued assessment and evaluation

September 7, 2009

Work on production and publishing platform concludes