

# POLONSKY DIGITAL HUMANITIES SCHOLARS SUMMER 2016

## THE NEW FASCICLES

### **Jonathan Armoza, English**

#### **Biography**

Jonathan Armoza is a PhD student in New York University's English department. He develops and studies methods of large-scale text analysis, as well as how big data patterning relates to past qualitative, close reading assessments of texts. Jonathan has an academic background in computer science from University of Maryland, College Park and language and literature studies from University of Washington in Seattle and McGill University in Montréal. He also has a past career in programming, having been a software developer, game programmer, and most recently a technical consultant for Google. Jonathan's digital humanities work has grown from programming word-based games like Scribblenauts for the Nintendo DS, to volunteering on the Ngram Viewer while at Google, to researching and speaking on digital text modeling, analytics, and visualization methods throughout the US and Canada.

#### **Project Description**

For over a hundred years, Emily Dickinson's poems have largely been studied separately and apart from her original ordering. Her poems were discovered in her room after she died. More than 800 poems of her almost 2000 work oeuvre were hand sewn into little books known as "fascicles." These book orderings were mostly neglected until the 1970's though due to a historical dispute in manuscript ownership rights. In 1981, R.W. Franklin put forward *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*, a comprehensive bibliographic account of her fascicles. However, with such a large number of works, comprehending their relationships has proven challenging. "The New Fascicles" is a website that offers new views of all of Emily Dickinson's poems found within her forty fascicle books. The site takes a probabilistic model of the words in her poems, known as a "topic" model, and visualizes it in two distinct ways via an interactive, data visualization called "Topic Words in Context" or "TWiC" ([github.com/jarmoza/twic](https://github.com/jarmoza/twic)). TWiC allows users to see the potential "topics" of these poems, and how the fascicle poems are related by shared topics. It also inserts that mathematically-modeled perspective back into Emily Dickinson's original, fascicle poem order to see how topics weave their way through the books. In addition, "The New Fascicles" allows visitors to create their own fascicle books from the potential topic narratives they discover via TWiC's new views of Dickinson's poetry. Included on the site is a TEI-encoded, digital corpus of the fascicle manuscript books and their poems for visitors to download, as well as a detailed description of the site's technology and methods.

## DIGITAL MAP AND DATABASE OF COIN HOARDS IN ANCIENT EGYPT

**Irene Soto, Institute for the Study of the Ancient World**

### **Biography**

Soto is a doctoral student at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. Her research focuses on assessing the extent of economic integration through trade in Late Antique Egypt, focusing also on Alexandria's role as Mediterranean emporium, by using archaeological, papyrological, and textual data. She first started researching trade as a ceramicist for the excavations at Amheida, in the Dakhleh Oasis of Egypt, where she has been working since 2009. Her interest in economy and trade expanded into numismatics with my participation in the American Numismatic Society's Eric P. Newman Graduate Summer Seminar in Numismatics in 2013 where she first conceptualized an in-depth study of post-Diocletianic hoards in Egypt.

### **Project Description**

For her internship project, Irene developed a digital map and database of the mints represented in coin hoards in Egypt. The economic role of the city of Alexandria as a major ancient port of the Mediterranean has not been well researched. Recent archaeological data uncovered along the Red Sea coast and within all of Egypt however, has presented the opportunity for understanding the key role that both Alexandria and Egypt played in the economy of the Roman Empire. Through coin hoards found within the territory, it is possible to map the movement of coins (and therefore) people from different areas of the Empire. Irene learned the tools to develop a script for mapping hoards, mints, and individual coins onto a mapping system (QGIS) that allows for statistical analyses. This will not only create a digital database for the hoard information, but it will also create an unprecedented visualization of economic connections. The project has become of interest to the American Numismatic Society and the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire Project at Oxford. Irene has been invited to come to Oxford in the fall to see how her data might contribute to a larger coin hoard analysis being undertaken by the Oxford Roman Economy Project.

## THE ARTIST ARCHIVES PROJECT AT FALES LIBRARY

**Regina Harsanyi, Art History at the Institute of Fine Arts**

### **Biography**

Regina Harsanyi is a second year MA candidate in Art History at the Institute of Fine Arts-NYU. Her academic writings focus on interwar period artist films, film exhibitions in the museum before 1970, film preservation, and the evolving relationship between archives and museums. She previously worked as an art registrar for Sotheby's, which sparked her interest in collections management and database technologies.

### **Project Description**

Regina project contributed to creating greater public visibility for artist David Wojnarowicz (1954-1992). Wojnarowicz was a key figure in the New York City downtown art scene from the late 1970s until the early 1990s, who has gained a resurgence in popularity during the last decade. Wojnarowicz's works are especially

challenging to categorize because of his use of variable media. For example, a paper mache mask created by the artist may show up in exhibited photographs taken by collaborators, His Super 8mm films, a live performance, or among other objects in changing configurations for multiple installations. To address these challenges and help curators, conservators, and scholars approach these works without access to the artist himself, Wojnarowicz was chosen as the first focus for the Artist Archive Project. The Artist Archive Project, started by Glenn Wharton, Deena Engel, and Marvin J. Taylor has produced a MediaWiki Knowledge base and WordPress website for Wojnarowicz. Regina joined the team in its second year, helping to structure and implement this alternative to the traditional artist database by focusing on the MediaWiki Knowledge Base. Foregoing the traditional database would give the ability to host deeplinking, more accurately representing the complex relationships between Wojnarowicz's works of art, locations, and people who affected his life. Tasks this summer consisted of creating research content, helping design how content should be expressed on each platform, producing controlled vocabularies, suggesting new forms of data visualization, and mapping out the best user experience for scholars, curators, and conservators.

## DOCUMENTATION OF COMPUTER-BASED ARTWORKS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

### **Lia Kramer, Institute of Fine Arts' Conservation Center**

#### **Biography**

Lia Kramer is a student at the Institute of Fine Arts' Conservation Center at New York University pursuing an MS in the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works and an MA in the History of Art and Archaeology. She will specialize in the conservation of modern and contemporary art and timebased media. She earned her BFA in Drawing and Painting from Georgia State University with additional studies in art history and chemistry. Lia has interned with objects and paintings conservators in museums and private practice since 2008, including Renee Stein at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Kate Moomaw (NUY '07) at the Denver Museum of Art, Stephanie Hornbeck (NYU '98), and Rustin Levenson.

#### **Project Description**

Computer-based artworks are quite complex and can be challenging to document comprehensively. Often the native environment of the work becomes outdated within a relatively short period of time; as technology advances, old hardware and software become obsolete. Proper documentation contributes to preservation of the artwork by creating a thorough record of how the work is intended to function. Conservator Joanna Phillips at the Guggenheim has collaborated with computer science students at the NYU Courant Institute to examine the source code of the museum's computer-based artworks. Lia's work focused on utilizing these findings and expanding upon earlier research, which was then used to revise a thorough documentation report addressing the intricacies of computer based art. This produced both a general and high-level record for use by museum staff with various levels of technical expertise. Lia's research resulted not only in a deeper understanding of the artwork that was not discernible from

the extracted code alone, but also contributed to the further development of the computer-based art documentation template. Once finalized, the template will be made publicly available on the Guggenheim's website. More information on time-based media conservation and documentation is available at <https://www.guggenheim.org/conservation/time-based-media>.

## 40 MAPS: BALTIMORE

### **David Sugarman, English**

#### **Biography**

David Sugarman is a doctoral candidate in New York University's Department of English. His research interests include 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> century American literature and philosophy; Marxist cartography; urban theory.

#### **Project Description**

40 Maps: Baltimore is a website designed to serve as a digital atlas of Baltimore City. If atlases are typically concerned with mapping roads and highways, 40 Maps: Baltimore maps the social, economic, and historical currents that run through the city. 40 Maps: Baltimore looks at the cracks in sidewalks, the potholes in roads, the grass in parks and the people in the street to discover patterns that might otherwise go unnoticed; are potholes filled faster in some neighborhoods than others? Do certain allergy-inducing weeds grow more freely on one street than another? These patterns are then "mapped" (defined broadly) using digital tools. Ultimately, 40 Maps: Baltimore will provide visitors to the site with a set of engaging, attractive, and provocative digital maps that visualize those habits, tendencies and structures – good and bad – that are all too often overlooked.

## A PROTOTYPE FOR PUBLIC HUMANITIES WEBSITES ABOUT THE INKA ROAD SYSTEM

### **Yanoa Pomalima, Museum Studies**

#### **Biography**

Yanoa Pomalima, received her Degree in Archaeology and completed her Master studies in Peruvian and Latin American Art History while she was working in cultural organizations in Peru. After her studies, she started working for the Peruvian Ministry of Culture in different archaeological and museum-curatorial projects. In the Ministry she had the opportunity to travel around Peru to learn about the living heritage and was able to publish a photo book about the festivities linked with the Inka Trail Project. She moved to New York in 2015 on a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue her Master's degree in Museum Studies at NYU. Combined with her studies she has been interning at the AMNH and the Hispanic Society of America. Her interests include museum education, archaeological and indigenous narrative in museums, and participatory experiences in cultural spaces.

### **Project Description**

For over 5 hundred years, the Inka Road has become a unique living heritage of the south American area. Its construction gave rise to an extraordinary road network that stands as the physical remnant of a very organized empire. Thanks to the Inka Road, the Incas were able to integrate a wide range of people and resources located in one of the world's extreme geographical terrains. The road network was used for military, commercial, and religious purposes. The Inka Road also connected villages and thanks to it, they were able to share traditions that still alive until current days. Featuring digital images of archaeological finds, maps, images of villagers and its traditions, and information about the different trails and the Inka History, the website will serve as an educational resource for students and museum visitors. In the web site they will learn the importance of this cultural heritage, its features, and the importance of its protection.

## **BRINE DIGITAL HUMANITIES SCHOLARS SUMMER 2016**

### **DIGITAL APONTE: WRITING, PAINTING, AND MAKING FREEDOM IN THE AFRICAN DIASPORA**

#### **Kris Minhae Choe, English**

##### **Biography**

Kris Minhae Choe received her bachelor's degree in English Literature from California State University, Fullerton. After completing her undergraduate studies, she moved to New York to pursue an M.A degree in English at NYU. Going into her second and final year, she is preparing to write her thesis on post-Korean War literature, with a focus on exploring the ethics of translation and the ways language is used to represent one's identity.

##### **Project Description**

José Antonio Aponte was a free man of color, carpenter, artist, and alleged revolutionary who led an anti-slavery rebellion to free colonial Cuba in 1811-1812. For the project, we developed "Digital Aponte", a site dedicated to providing a platform to "read" Aponte's lost "book of paintings". Its physical copy no longer in existence, the "book of paintings" is a work of art full of historical and mythical figures, including black kings, emperors, priests, and soldiers that Aponte allegedly used to mobilize fellow conspirators against Spanish colonization. "Digital Aponte" provides a comprehensive site for scholars, researchers, and students to "read" Aponte's "book of paintings" through four parts—an annotated version of the judicial record that details Aponte's description of the "book of paintings", a simulation of Aponte's library of books that

inspired the artwork he created, a map of Aponte's Havana, and an image gallery to investigate the culture of 19th Century Havana. A follow-up project from the first international symposium at New York University in 2015 dedicated to the interdisciplinary scholarship on Aponte, "Digital Aponte" preserves the political and historical legacy of José Antonio Aponte's vision of a sovereign future for free and enslaved people of color.

## SELLING THE INTERFACE

### **Joshua Kruchten, English Biography**

Joshua Kruchten is a current graduate student of English and American literature at New York University. As a former researcher in cell and molecular biology, his research interests are far-ranging and interdisciplinary, with a growing interest in intersection points between early modern literature, art, philosophy, and science. Interests include botany, cartography, violence, discovery, controversial scientific discoveries, theories of matter and space, and utopias and dystopias. In addition, he is particularly interested in the book as a material object and a history of books, readers, and reading. Josh has previously studied at Northeastern University and the American University of Paris, and has held research positions at the Harvard NeuroDiscovery Center and Weill-Cornell Medical College. He has also been awarded funding for independent research at both Northeastern University and New York University.

### **Project Description**

Dr. Kimon Keramidas's recent exhibition at the Bard Graduate Center, "The Interface Experience: Forty Years of Personal Computing," and its subsequent online exhibition both seek to explore what the historical evolution of the user interface tells us about our relationship to personal computing, and what it reveals about ourselves. How are tools used for computing, entertainment, and work intimately connected to each other and to us? A key part of the story lies not just in the history of the objects and how we used them, but why we bought them—and how they were sold to us. Advertisements for these personal products provide a rich source of information about their historical moment, but they also tell a story about changing relationships of these objects to the gender, class, age, and location of their consumers. This project seeks to uncover more about these changing relationships. The project involved collecting advertisements, organizing them in a database, analyzing them with textual and geospatial analysis tools, and presentation of findings through an interactive webpage.

## ENCODING THE 'MICHAEL FIELD' DIARIES

### **Cherrie Kwok, English Biography**

Cherrie Kwok is a second-year M.A. student in the English Department at New York

University. She earned her B.A. in English with Classical Studies and Theology from the University of Exeter, UK.

### **Project Description**

During the late Victorian era, Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper published over 40 works under their joint pseudonym as 'Michael Field'. But the couple's most culturally-significant material is arguably in their unpublished diaries. These have, however, been inaccessible to most scholars for two reasons. Firstly, they are tucked away in the British Library archives. Secondly, the handwritten script, scrawled on thousands of pages across 29 volumes, is extremely time-consuming to read. Fortunately, the Victorian Lives and Letters Consortium recently published the diary volumes as freely available digital images, and the director of the archive, Professor Marion Thain, is leading a team of scholars to digitally encode the manuscripts using TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) so that they are easily accessible and searchable. TEI has traditionally been used to record bibliographic metadata but, given the language's flexibility, it can also assist literary analysis by allowing scholars to mark up texts interpretively. The Brine project represents a crucial part of this on-going process around transcription and text encoding, working with one diary volume as the basis for developing encoding strategies outlined in Thain's journal article 'Digitizing the Diary: Experiments in Queer Encoding' to facilitate analysis of the manifestations of identity formation present in all diary writing. By developing innovative TEI encoding strategies for literary purposes, the project contributes to the Victorian Lives and Letters Consortium archive, to broader research on the digitization of manuscript diaries, and to the ongoing development of the TEI initiative.