



## National School of Arts Winter Seminar Series Teaching and Researching in the Digital Humanities

Zoom meeting details to be sent in calendar invite

**Monday June 21, 1-2pm**

**Kath Bode, Formulating research questions in the Digital Humanities**

Professor Kath Bode is at the forefront of Digital Humanities teaching and research in Australia. In this hour-long Q&A, she will be discussing how she came to the field and her research projects in digital literary studies. She will talk about the kinds of questions digital methods enable you to ask, the limitations of those methods and the future potential of the field. We will also talk about some of the reasons that humanities scholars have been slow to embrace the digital humanities in their work.

**Katherine Bode** is professor of literary and textual studies at the Australian National University. Her research explores the critical potential and limitations of computational approaches to literature, including in *A World of Fiction: Digital Collections and the Future of Literary History* (University of Michigan Press, 2018), *Advancing Digital Humanities: Research, Methods, Theories* (Palgrave, 2014), *Reading by Numbers: Recalibrating the Literary Field* (Anthem, 2012) and *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, eResearch and Australian Literary Culture* (Sydney UP, 2009).

**Tuesday June 22, 11am-midday**

**Baylee Brits, Truth and Lies in Artificial Intelligence**

The humanities often engage with Artificial Intelligence in the form of ethical questions, or through engaging with filmic or narrative fantasies of Artificial General Intelligence that mimics or exceeds human intelligence and often literally wears a human mask. In a recent project for the ONI, I attempted not to critique AI research but to participate in it, using methods from literary studies to assess the prospects and limitations of AI approaches to deceit detection. In this seminar, I will discuss some experimental methods that link philosophy and literary studies to AI capabilities, and the potential role of the humanities in a world increasingly defined by big data. One of the consequences of the rise of the internet is the perils and possibilities of big data. Big data allows us to assess trends but also to notice linguistic or text-based anomalies. AI programs that can detect anomalies can be significant for intelligence and cybersecurity. But these innovations depend on sophisticated theories of truth, meaning and signification that can only come from the humanities. I will use my experience in AI research to reflect on the core topic of truth and lies in AI, and what 'truth' might mean in the context of big data and in terms of the rise of internet sleuthing (particularly apropos of sites like Bellingcat).

**Baylee Brits** wrote her PhD on how discoveries in the mathematics of infinity and the development of set theory were integrated into literature of the 20th century. Her book, *Literary Infinities: Number and Narrative in Modern Fiction* (Bloomsbury 2018), developed a theory of transfinite allegory, linking the methods used by Georg Cantor and modern set theory to shifting ideas about counting and indexing in literature. She co-edited *Aesthetics After Finitude* (2017, with Amy Ireland and Prue Gibson) which assessed the impact of speculative realist philosophy, new rationalisms and object-linked ontologies on art and literature. She has also edited *The Covert Plant* (with Prue Gibson, 2018), which linked work in the humanities with new theories emerging from the biosciences. This volume was published as part of Punctum Books' collaboration with UC Santa Barbara's 'Literature and the Mind' program. She was recently the recipient of a grant from the Defence Science Institute and the Office of National Intelligence as part of the 'Artificial Intelligence for Decision Making' program, in which she conducted experimental research that linked scientific and humanities methods to contribute to the prospect of using AI for deceit detection. She is currently working on a book project on AI and judgment.

**Tuesday 22 June, 2-3pm**

**Nica Tsakmakis, Using Text-Mining and Data Analysis Tools**

This hour-long session is aimed at introducing text-mining and text analysis tools that are freely available to anyone. Nica will introduce Google Ngram and Voyant as examples of these tools. Prior to the seminar, it would be worth downloading Voyant.

- Home: <https://voyant-tools.org/>
- Getting started: <https://voyant-tools.org/docs/#!/guide/start>
- Documentation: <http://docs.voyant-tools.org/tools/>

**Nica Tsakmakis** is a Senior Librarian at the Australian Catholic University on the Brisbane campus. She is the CAUL digital Dexterity Champion for the University and a certified Library Carpentry instructor. This means that she can teach code to those of us with a non-computer/techie background. The aim is to use free, open-source software so that all can have access.

**Thursday 24 June, 10-11am**

**Fiannuala Morgan, Geo-locating Real and Fictional Place: Analysis of Bushfires in Australian Literature and Newspaper Articles.**

In this seminar I present my research process mapping the locations of bushfires in Australian colonial fiction and newspapers. This includes a critical overview of the use of Natural Language Processing Software, its limitations, and affordances, as well as consideration of the kinds of questions most amenable to the use of this tool. Further, I outline the use of Trove, an Australian online library database aggregator and service which includes full text documents and digital images, in conducting historical research. This includes discussion of harvesting data, making use of available meta-data, and data quality considerations. In so doing, I intend to bring to light some of the difficulties in conducting large scale place-based analysis as well as outlining alternative methodological approaches to place-based questions. As only a recent practitioner of Digital Humanities based research, this seminar intends to balance theory and practice with practical direction for moving towards digital research.

**Fiannuala Morgan** is a PhD Literature candidate at the Australian National University and a Librarian and Archivist at the National Library of Australia. Her research interrogates the use of digital mapping software and other quantitative and computational methods in the humanities with a particular interest in geospatial analysis of 19th century Australian literature.

She is the current recipient of The Graduate Research Digital Fellowship with the University of Queensland for which she is constructing a map of historical and fictional bushfires across the 19th century.

**Thursday June 24, 1-3pm**

**Bill Pascoe, Translating Places: meaning and technology in humanities digital mapping and the landscape**

This two-hour session will look at the theory of digital humanities mapping and how this can be applied with TLCMap digital mapping tools in a beginner's level workshop. Learning from indigenous mapping technology, critical theory and information theory we will look at how the meaning of places works; how digital maps and the landscape itself can be written, read, spoken and translated, and; how active critical reading of place can reveal layers of history and culture that affect daily life and transform the way we see the places we inhabit.

**Bill Pascoe** is a Digital Humanities specialist and the System Architect of Time Layered Cultural Map, a national digital humanities mapping infrastructure project. He has worked with the Centre for 21st Century Humanities and the Centre for Literary and Linguistic Computing at the University of Newcastle. He has been a leader and contributor in innovative and high impact DH and eResearch projects, including the Colonial Frontier Massacres project, the EMWRN archive, ELDTA endangered languages, IA stylometry, Virtual Biobank 3D medical image processing and eWater. He combines software development experience across finance, water engineering, science, health and humanities with an education in English, creative writing, semiotics and philosophy.

There are no requirements to participate and use TLCMap, but those serious about starting digital mapping may wish to have these basic tools:

- Access Google Earth for web and/or install Google Earth Pro for desktop: <https://www.google.com/earth/versions/>
- Microsoft Excel, or other spreadsheet software.
- A \*free\* text editor such as Notepad++ or Komodo Edit (note that free text editors often have ways to encourage you to pay, but the free version will suffice).