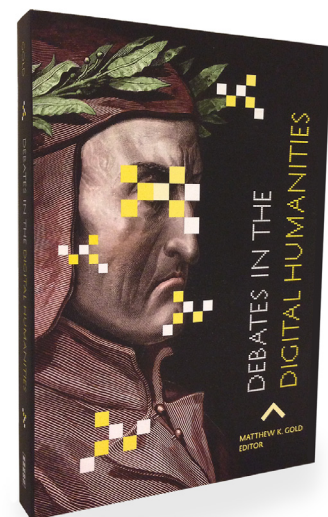# Debates in the Digital Humanities

dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu

Scholarly Publishing Across Print / Digital Streams

## FIRST INSTANCE: PRINT EDITION, 2012

504 Pages • Published by the University of Minnesota Press, 2012

Debates in the Digital Humanities, an edited collection featuring contributions from over forty DH scholars and practitioners, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in January 2012. Composed predominately of essays but also incorporating a variety of web-based materials such as blog posts, tweets, and wiki pages, the project utilized a semi-public, web-based review process that mixed online peer-to-peer review with more traditional models of publisher-based blind peer review.
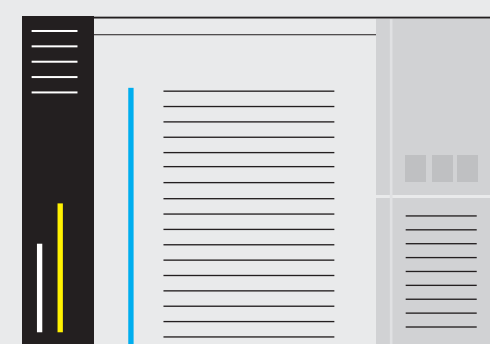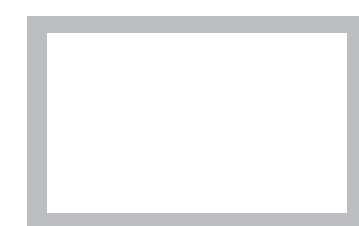
FROM PRINT TO DIGITAL: OPEN ACCESS EDITION, 2013

From its earliest conception, the book was planned for release in both printed and open-access digital versions. Seeking to go beyond the basic mandate of access and instead to create an innovative online reading experience, the University of Minnesota Press partnered with the GC Digital Scholarship Lab at the CUNY Graduate Center to create a new publication platform that would make the text available in an easy-to-read, interactive format. The text-highlighting feature on the platform was inspired by the Prism tool created by the Praxis Program at the University of Virginia. The interactive web version of the book was released in January 2013 and is available at **http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu**.
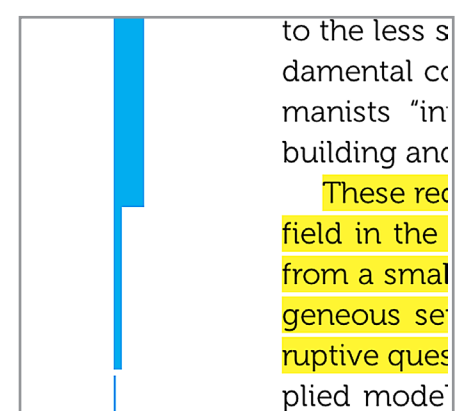
DIGITAL PLATFORM: OPEN + SOCIAL + DISTRIBUTED + INTERACTIVE + WEBBY

One of the key goals of the user experience when translating the book into a website was to offer the full text and to maintain an uncluttered design, while at the same time adding some unique interactive features.
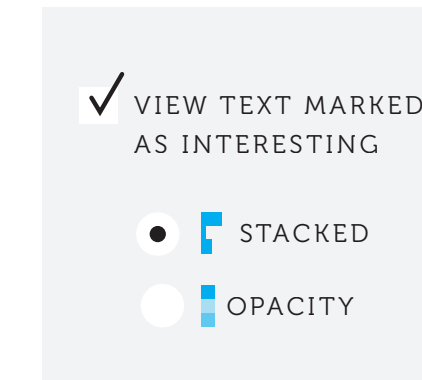
The site was designed for reading on both traditional personal computers and tablets. (The phone version is still in progress.)

PCs + tablets

✓ VIEW TEXT MARKED AS INTERESTING
● STACKED
○ OPACITY

The site focuses on making the text as simple and clear to read as possible, but also offers several interactive features, primarily the ability to mark text as interesting, and see what others have marked as well. All of these visualizations can be easily toggled on or off.

A DH PUBLISHING PLATFORM

The Debates in the Digital Humanities Project is built on top of a variety of open source tools:

- The site's back-end is built in Ruby on Rails.
- The site's front-end extends the Backbone javascript framework and includes the Underscore and jQuery Javascript libraries.
- Articles from book are broken down into their constituent sentences using the Java-based Stanford_CoreNLP (natural language parser) and the stanford-core-nlp gem for Ruby bindings.

- Authentication and session management relies on Devise.
- The site is hosted on an EC2 instance under Amazon Web Services.
- We automate the provisioning of the production host with Chef.
- All source code is available on Github. Contributions are welcome!
- We rely heavily on Basecamp for project management and on Pivotal Tracker for sprint planning.
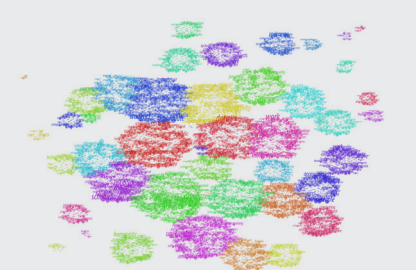
NEW FEATURES, JULY 2013
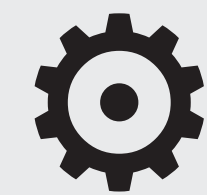
Commenting   APIs   New visualizations

BLURRING LINES BETWEEN PRINT AND DIGITAL STREAMS

A new set of texts will be published on the digital platform in August 2013, and a CFP will be released around that time soliciting new contributions to the publication. Once new texts are published on the digital platform, they will be packaged in various ways by the University of Minnesota Press in both future print and digital editions of *Debates in the Digital Humanities* and in other publications.

ROADMAP

- interactive visualizations of texts, user highlights, index
- features for logged in users
- development of a stand-alone, customizable publishing platform

Editor and Project Director: Matthew K. Gold   /   Director, University of Minnesota Press: Douglas Armato
Lead Developer: Zach Davis   /   Frontend Developer: Scott Mills   /   Designer: Mark Abrams
Project Manager: Micki Kaufman   /   Data Curation Specialist: Robin Camille Davis

Poster design: Mark Abrams

THE GRADUATE CENTER CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK   MINNESOTA   GC Digital Initiatives   GC Digital Scholarship Lab   CAST IRON coding