

Data as Culture:

LIS 600 Proposal

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Abstract/General Description:

Professor Melanie Walsh's "Data as Culture" project uses a mix of data science methods and more qualitative analysis to explore the social media afterlives of different works of literature in contemporary culture, through the usage of famous bits of language across online communities and political movements. Building from her [Tweets of a Native Son](#) project, which analyzes American writer James Baldwin's influence on the Black Lives Matter movement, I hope to help explore how data can be used as a window to observe and analyze wider cultural discourses, using a mix of computational methods and more qualitative approaches found in the humanities to answer complex, interdisciplinary questions.

Since I am interested in an academic career producing similar digital humanities work, I am proposing to work with Professor Walsh on this project through an LIS 600 independent study, so that I can begin relating the theoretical knowledge I've gained in the MLIS program to a specific information context. Aside from the data science skills I learned in her LIS 572 course, I see myself implementing mixed-methods approaches to working with research data as discussed in LIS 570 and awareness of the biases occurring in data learned from LIS 520, as well as the skills I will build this coming quarter in the preservation and management of research data in LIS 530 and 545.

My main guiding question, which influenced why I wanted to join the project, is: ***how are cultural materials used by Internet users, and how do they spread around the Internet?***

This will be explored through a variety of outcomes, including hands-on work with the data, academic writings reviewing current academic discourse, and more humanities-based reflective writing activities on both the data and the project itself through a public blog.

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes/Project Deliverables</i>	<i>Evaluation/ Assessment Methods</i>
Develop skills in the management and analysis of cultural data.	Asynchronous textbook readings. Weekly meetings with Professor Walsh where I continue practicing data science skills and learn to work with the Twitter API, and asynchronous work developing skills learned in the textbook and synchronous meetings. Asynchronous work "cleaning" or editing research data as needed.	Code files, stored on my GitHub page (https://github.com/ChessPiece21/), featuring data analysis and visualization related to the project.	Data analysis and visualization contributions to the research project.

Learning Outcomes	Activities	Expected Outcomes/Project Deliverables	Evaluation/ Assessment Methods
Gain experience in mixed-methods research combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to working with cultural materials.	Asynchronous reflections/analysis on readings and synchronous discussions regarding them.	Weekly written work regarding analysis of the readings.	Reflective and analytical writing piece hosted on the final blog/portfolio for the work I did over the quarter. Contributions to research.
Understand and analyze past research in digital humanities and cultural analytics and how this project relates to them.	Discussing additional assigned readings in weekly meetings with Melanie, discussing some main takeaways/points and how they can influence this project.	Literature review explaining how each of these assigned readings informs the project.	Literature review hosted on the final blog/portfolio for the work I did over the quarter.
Understand and practice professional development strategies in digital humanities research.	Attending events that are relevant to the content of the research project, either in-person or online. Developing a portfolio of research work to share with a public audience, and a writing sample for a future doctoral program.	End-of-the quarter portfolio or blog in a platform of my choice. Draft of a writing sample for a future doctoral program. Event summaries of iSchool, Simpson Center, and related events I attend.	Portfolio related to the work I've done over the quarter, either on my website (https://chesspiece21.github.io/) or another platform such as Google Sites or Medium.

Textbooks Required:

No external purchases are required for this Independent Study, as everything is open-source and available online.

D'Ignazio, Catherine, and Lauren F. Klein. *Data Feminism*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020. Web.
<https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/>.

Lee, Jason. "Pulling Tweets into the Twitter API." *Towards Data Science*, 2020. Web.
<https://towardsdatascience.com/pulling-tweets-into-r-e17d4981cfe2>. Retrieved 1 December 2022.

Walsh, Melanie. *Introduction to Cultural Analytics & Python*. Independently Published, 2020. Web. <https://melaniewalsh.github.io/Intro-Cultural-Analytics/welcome.html>. Retrieved 12 November 2022.

Wickham, Hadley. *R for Data Science*. Independently Published, 2017. Web. <https://r4ds.had.co.nz/>. Retrieved 12 November 2022.

Resources Required:

Academic TwitteR (R package for Twitter API): <https://github.com/cjbarrie/academictwitteR>

Black Lives Matter Twitter data, from 2015 to the present, available from the *Tweets of a Native Son* repository: <https://github.com/melaniewalsh/tweetsofanativeson.com>

Data sets from the Twitter API. <https://developer.twitter.com/en/docs/twitter-api>