

# Analyzing the works of H.P. Lovecraft

Projektarbeit zum Thema Topic Modelling in Digital Humanities  
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Einführung in Digital Humanities, Wintersemester 2022/23

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Datum: 14. Februar 2023

## 1 Introduction

This project aims to analyze the works of Howard Phillips Lovecraft, one of the most known horror authors, in regard to their themes and patterns. This will be done using digital humanities and topic modeling on all of his writings to collect a timeline-like collection of the most common themes in his works. H.P. Lovecraft highly contributed to the modern horror genre with his detailed descriptions of cosmic horror (a term defined by his writings) and stories about monsters and scary events. While his writings are known for complexity and style, his thematic and contextual depth is equally impressive and the subject of this project. Therefore, Lovecraft is well-known by fans of horror and science fiction literature, like Stephen King, who stated that Lovecraft heavily influenced his style and ideas.

Even though Lovecraft lived from 1890-1937 and did not encounter computers or other devices of our current age, his works and letters are digitalized and preserved for reading and research. One key aspect of this project is to apply the digital humanities method of topic modeling on all of Lovecraft's works. The digital humanities is a field of study, research, teaching, and invention concerned with the intersection of computing and the disciplines of the humanities. One can think of it as a bridge between the two cultures of natural science, which tries to explain what is going on, and humanities, which tries to understand what is happening. One key figure in this field is Roberto Busa (1913 - 2011), who used computational methods to create a collection of all the words of Thomas Aquinas, later known as the Index Thomisticus. He achieved his goal with the help of IBM, at that time one of the biggest computer manufacturers, and connected his studies with the help of digital computing to process the millions of words he strived to process.

By using the digital humanities, we can gain new insights on Lovecraft's writings and identify recurring themes, patterns, and motifs in the big corpus of his writings. The methods used in the digital humanities include Stylometry, Topic Modeling, Network Analysis, and Geovisualization. For the purpose of this project, we will use topic modeling to gather insight into the large corpus and structure the results like a timeline for every one of his works. Regarding digital humanities, this project aims to explore the humanities of literature and apply computational methods on it. That way we can see the most occurring themes from his first works to his last ones and compare them in terms of lore consistency (how did his themes and mythos change?), social correlation (does he refer to social events of his time?) and comprehensive insight on the different features of his works. Some works already covered features of his writings and life like the fear of progress, dangers of scientific progress, and persistence of ancient evils.

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