

Prospectus Review

Filipa Calado
Queer Tools

Reader 1

Wayne Koestenbaum

I approve Filipa Calado's prospectus, "Queer Tools." Filipa seems to be operating at the cutting edge of digital humanities; there are signs throughout the prospectus of her know-how and innovation. I certainly applaud any effort to bring the haptic to bear on things digital. Also, Filipa has a hardy sense of skepticism about "queer" itself, as a signifier. Valourously, she doesn't assume that "queer" means "good."

Always, however, because I am an outsider to digital humanities (though often I beg entrance to its halls and am willy-nilly interpellated by the digital), I remain skeptical about how much a DH approach to a short and oft-commented-upon text like Wilde's *Dorian Gray* can offer; my skepticism, however, should fuel Calado's argumentative efforts, and compel her to remember that some of her readers will be of my persuasion and indeed need to be converted. So she shouldn't assume that her readers are already *in the club*.

On page 2, an excellent sentence: "How do digital tools allow us to 'encode' or 'decode' queerness in texts that trouble the stability of a writing self?"

I love the sound of chapter three: the color-coded annotation tool, the heat map.

Some local ambiguities or mishaps:

page 1: what is a "critical making project"? Or, for that matter, what is a "making project"?

page 1, last sentence: a comma is missing after "memory."

page 3, footnote 6: "suffering in by queer subjects"?

page 4: "which continue trouble the line"?

page 4: "seminal," a heavily gendered adjective, is an odd word to use for Butler's troubling of gender.

page 4: "to inform human-computer computer interactions"?

page 5: "that disrupts our assumptions" should be "disrupt our assumptions" (the verb's subject, "processes," is plural)

page 5: why do we need a study of human-machine interactions to teach us how language "marks us, triggers our emotions and memories to create aesthetic, affective reading experiences," when we already know this fact and have been thinking about it for centuries?

page 5: "considerations about" should be "considerations of"

page 5: "understanding about" should be "understanding of"

page 5: misuse of "ranged": "Thinkers as ranged as Steven Shapiro...." (does Calado mean "wide-ranging"?)

page 6: "point to the ways" -- what is the subject of the verb "point"? is it "my final chapter"? or is it "archival practices"? I assume the subject is "chapter," and so "point" should be "points"

page 7: no comma after "edit, or 'encode'" --- simply "edit or 'encode'"

Reader 2

Karl Steel

I'm happy to approve the prospectus.

While I think the project is going to be interested in execution, and a good demonstration that Calado knows how to do DH in a variety of ways, how to use an archive, and how to engage with disability and queer theory, I'm uncertain about a few things:

- the relationship between queerness as a descriptor of sexuality and sex vs queerness as a reading practice: by choosing a set of texts that are, in some sense, "about" same-sex romance or sex, the dissertation feels like it's conflating the two. That conflation should be considered, as I'm sure it has been at length in queer theory.
- the actual archive: why 20th and 21st-century life writing in English? Because a dissertation has to have disciplinary boundaries, of course, but I'm wondering if there's something specific about these set of texts that particularly calls out for the methodologies Calado is developing for the diss?
- the tendency of queer theory to display its commitment to openness, a distaste for rigidity, and, well, 'freedom' is increasingly striking me as suspicious (who isn't in favor of 'freedom'?). I'm wondering, therefore, if Calado might consider the way that queer theory *generates* a sense of itself as liberated (and how this runs counter, say, to Foucault)

Reader 3

Mark McBeth

I approve Filipa Calado's dissertation prospectus and project. Calado proposes a fascinating endeavor to examine the intersections between Queerness, distant/close reading, and an elusive phenomenon of digital touch and embodiment. She has chosen a sophisticated and complicated scholarly labor but in the way that she has laid out the project seems to have a handle on how to identify primary sources, cross-analyze secondary sources, and integrate her own interpretations. I have some other suggestions for secondary source readings that I think could bolster Calado's already rich bibliography:

KJ Rawson's Trans Digital Archive <http://kjrason.net/trans-gender-timeline/>
<https://slis.simmons.edu/blogs/lis476/2017/11/11/kj-rawson-founder-of-the-digital-transgender-archives/>

Muñoz, José Esteban, *Disidentifications*

Halberstam, J. EVERYTHING SHE WRITES

Eichorn "DIY Collectors"

Stone, Amy and Jaine Cantrell, *Out of the Closet, Into the Archive*

De Kosnik, Abigail, *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom*

Now addressing Filipa Colada directly: Wishing you all the best with this project. If you ever visit John Jay College, stop by my office 7.63.10 New Building to see the piece that I have hanging in my office by Zach Blas. I may also have some other readings about the Queer cyber-world in my files so if you're interested email me: marknealmcbeth@gmail.com