
J.D. Porter

October 2, 2025

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Associate Director of Digital Research in the Humanities Price Lab for Digital Humanities, University of Pennsylvania	2024-present
Digital Humanities Specialist Price Lab for Digital Humanities, University of Pennsylvania	2020-2024
Technical Director Stanford Literary Lab	2019-2020
Associate Director; Postdoctoral Appointment Stanford Literary Lab	2018-2019
Assistant Director; Postdoctoral Appointment Stanford Literary Lab	2017-2018

EDUCATION

Stanford University Ph.D, English and American Literature	June 2017
Columbia University Bachelor of Arts in English Special Concentration in Jazz Studies <i>summa cum laude</i>	May 2008

DISSERTATION

“The Fact of Fiction: Race, Money, Gender and Nation in American Modernism”

AREAS OF INTEREST

Digital humanities; literature and philosophy; literary sociology; theories of race and ethnicity;
American literature; modernism; contemporary literature; jazz

PUBLICATIONS

“Distributional Semantics, Holism, and the Instability of Meaning.” With Nat Hansen, Jumbly Grindrod. Forthcoming in *Communicating with AI: Philosophical Perspective*, Oxford University Press.

“The Eclectic Reader.” With James English. *Journal of Cultural Analytics*. August 2025.

“Counting on the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*.” With Erik Fredner. *PMLA*. January 2024.

“A Quantitative History of Ordinary Language Philosophy.” With Nat Hansen. *Synthese*. 15 June 2023.

“The Affordances of Mere Length: Computational Approaches to Short Story Analysis.” With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Anna Mukamal. *The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story*. Eds. Michael Collins and Gavin Jones. Under contract with Cambridge University Press.

“Linguistic Fingerprints on Translation’s Lens.” With Quinn Dombrowski, Yuliya Ilchuk. *The Journal of Data Mining and Digital Humanities*. 2021.

“Prospects and Affordances for Ellison Studies in Digital Humanities/Digital Humanities in Ellison Studies.” Chapter in *Ralph Ellison in Context*. Ed. Paul Devlin. Cambridge University Press, 2021.

“Representing Race and Ethnicity in American Fiction: 1789-1964.” With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Hannah Walser. *Cultural Analytics*. December 2020.

“A Corpus Study of “Know”: On the Verification of Philosophers’ Frequency Claims about Language.” With Nat Hansen, Kathryn Francis. *Episteme*. 02 July 2019. Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-27.

“Popularity/Prestige.” Pamphlets of the Stanford Literary Lab. October 2018.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

“Genres of Everything.” Book manuscript.

REVIEWS AND PUBLIC WRITING

“Review of *The Digital Black Atlantic*, eds. Roopika Risam, Kelly Baker Josephs.” *African American Review*. Volume 57, Number 1, Spring 2024.

“Genre Juggernaut: Measuring “Romance”.” With Angelina Eimannsberger, James English, May Hathaway, & Ashna Yakooob. *Public Books*. November 2023.

“Review of *Redlining Culture: A Data History of Racial Inequality and Postwar Fiction* by Richard Jean So.” *African American Review*. Volume 56, Numbers 1-2, Spring/Summer 2023.

“The Work of the Audiobook”. With Alexander Manshel, Laura B. McGrath. *Los Angeles Review of Books*. May 16, 2023.

“The Rise of Must-Read TV: How Your Netflix Habit is Changing Contemporary Fiction.” With Alexander Manshel, Laura B. McGrath. *The Atlantic*. 16 July 2021.

“On Not Already Knowing. A Review of Ted Underwood, *Distant Horizons: Digital Evidence and Literary Change*.” *Criticism*. Vol. 63, No. 4. Fall 2021.

“Who Cares About Literary Prizes?” With Alexander Manshel, Laura B. McGrath. *Public Books*. 03 Sept 2019.

“Review of *Jazz Internationalism: Literary Afro-Modernism and the Cultural Politics of Black Music* by John Lowney.” *African American Review*. Vol. 51, No 4. Winter 2018.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Spring 2022-2025

Data Science for the Humanities

University of Pennsylvania. Introduction to data-driven inquiry in the humanities, with a focus on the Python programming language.

Instructor, Summer 2022-2025

Text Analysis

Dream Lab. University of Pennsylvania. With Nichole Nomura in 2022, individual thereafter. One-week intensive course in text-mining methods at the Price Lab’s summer Dream Lab program.

Invited Lecturer, Spring 2021

Intro to Digital Humanities

University of Pennsylvania. Seminar introducing methods in the digital humanities. I was invited to lecture on three occasions, focusing on analyzing data in spreadsheets and on data visualization. Course instructors were Dr. Stewart Varner and Professor James English.

Instructor, Spring 2019

Race, Gender, and Literary Digital Humanities

Stanford University. Seminar introducing methods in the digital humanities, like programming in Python and network analysis in Gephi, through the lens of present-day identity theories, with a focus on post-positivism, intersectionality, and the metaphysics of identity.

Instructor, Summer 2015 and 2016

Make It New: The Literature of the Jazz Age

Stanford University. Seminar introducing students to the literature of the jazz age in its cultural context, including music, film, art, comics, and social justice movements.

Co-instructor, Fall 2015

Narrative and Narrative Theory

Stanford University. Lecture course with Professor Paula Moya. Introduction to narratology. Evenly shared responsibility for syllabus, lectures, and leading TAs with Professor Moya.

Instructor, 2013

Writing for the Humanities: Radical Poetry

City College of New York. Introductory writing course for students in humanities. Structured around experimental poetry from Philip Sidney to Harryette Mullen. I was one of three instructors in the inaugural group of the Stanford/CCNY exchange program.

Course Assistant, Spring 2013

Doing Race and Ethnicity: How and Why It Matters

Stanford University. Professors Paula Moya and Hazel Markus. Seminar with online discussion section. Created and oversaw online discussion forum; co-wrote and graded midterm and final; lectured on poetry of Langston Hughes.

Instructor, Winter and Spring 2012

Program in Writing and Rhetoric 1: Rhetoric of Failure

Stanford University. Introductory course in academic writing and rhetoric.

Teaching Assistant, Winter 2011

Introduction to CSRE

Stanford University. Professors Paula Moya and Hazel Markus. Interdisciplinary course treating race and ethnicity as historically-derived and institutionalized ideas and practices. Led weekly one-hour discussion sections, organized exams with professors and other TAs, graded.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“The Popular Life of Literary Critical Language.” ACLA 2025.

““The ‘Already Implicit’ Canon of African American Literature in 2025: Data from Anthologies of African American Literature”. ALA 2025. With Erik Fredner, Arthur Knight.

“Anthologies as Databases.” ALA 2024. With Erik Fredner.

“Readers Explaining Genre To Us.” ASAP 2023. On the panel “DH Approaches to the Arts of the Present”. With Angelina Eimannsberger.

“Finding Genre in Criticism.” ACLA 2023. On the panel “Genre Theory Today”, convened by Martin Aagard Jensen. With Stewart Varner.

“Minor Labels: Detecting Genre in Pitchfork Reviews, a ‘Metamodularity’ Network Analysis.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2022. With Stewart Varner.

“Counting on the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*.” DH Unbound 2022. With Erik Fredner.

“Minor Labels: Detecting Genre in Pitchfork Reviews.” DH Unbound 2022. With Stewart Varner.

“Digitally Tracking Ellison’s Influence on *Public Television: A Program for Action*.” MLA 2021. On the panel “Ralph Ellison and Public Television,” convened by Paul Devlin.

“Microgenres.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2019. With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Michaela Bronstein, Abigail Droge, Erik Fredner, Alexander Manshel, Nichole Nomura.

“Representing Race in American Drama.” MLA 2019. On the panel “Digital and Computational Approaches to Race, Gender, and Literature,” convened by Richard Jean So.

“Vector Based Measure of Semantic Shifts Across Different Cultural Corpora as a Proxy to Comparative History of Ideas.” Japanese Association for Digital Humanities Conference 2017. With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Alexandre Gefen, Frédéric Glorieux, Marianne Reboul, Marine Riguet, David McClure.

“Reading the Norton Anthologies: Databases, Canons, and ‘Careers.’” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2017. With Erik Fredner, David McClure.

“Dramatic Networks and Kinship Structures in African-American Plays.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2016. With Vanessa Seals.

“Representations of Race: Mining Identity in American Fiction, 1789-1964.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2016. With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Hannah Walser.

“Suspense: Narrative, Language, Affect.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2015. With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Chelsea Davis, Abigail Droge, Tasha Eccles, Laura Eidem, Morgan Frank, Erik Fredner, Andrew Shephard, Hannah Walser.

“Gendering Literary Audience: A Case Study in Digital Feminism.” SyncDH Research Slam. University of California-Santa Barbara, 2015. With Hannah Walser.

“Problems and Solutions for Modernist Digital Humanities” (panelist). MSA 16: Confluence and Division. 2014.

“The Stanford Literary Lab Transhistorical Poetry Project Phase II: Metrical Form.” Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations. DH 2014. With Mark Algee-Hewitt, Ryan Heuser, Maria Kraxenberger, Jonny Sensenbaugh, Justin Tackett.

INVITED TALKS

“Genres of Existence: Network Graphs, Genre Theory, and the Metaphysics of Fictional Things.” Code & Culture lecture series. University of Potsdam. May 2025.

“Introduction to Large Language Models and AI.” Price Lab Seminar. University of Pennsylvania, September 2023.

“Mixed Digital Methods: An Introduction.” Critical Quantitative, Computational, and Mixed Methodologies (ICQCM) 2021 Seminar Series. Johns Hopkins University, July 2021.

“Short Story Unity: A Topic Model Approach to Poe’s Dicta.” University of Crete. Rethymno, Greece, May 2018.

“Representing Race and Ethnicity in American Fiction: 1789-1964.” Stanford Literary Lab and the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity. Stanford, California, May 2017.

“Representing Race and Ethnicity in American Fiction: 1789-1964.” NovelTM Annual Workshop. Banff, Canada, October 2016.

“On Popularity/Prestige.” Cultural Evolution Seminar. University of Tartu, April 2016.

“Popularity/Prestige.” Stanford Literary Lab. Stanford University, November 2015.

“Canon/Archive: Scaling the Literary Field.” Working Group on the Novel. Stanford University, October 2015. With Ryan Heuser, Hannah Walser.

“Popularity and Prestige”. FMSH/Mellon Foundation: Transatlantic Program for Collaborative Work. Université Paris 4 Sorbonne, October 2015. With Franco Moretti, Marissa Gemma.

“Direct Treatment of a Mess: Ezra Pound’s Keynesian Poetics.” Critical Theory Group. Stanford University, April 2014.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Co-editor, *Post-45 Data Collective*

2025

Co-leader of Price Lab workshop on AI

2025

ACADEMIC HONORS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowship in the Mellon Seminar for Digital Humanities, Price Lab

2020-2025

Postdoctoral Fellowship, Stanford Literary Lab

2017-2019

Geballe Dissertation Fellowship, Stanford Humanities Center

2016-2017

Research Grant, NovelTM: Text-Mining the Novel

2015-2016

Finalist, Paul Fortier Prize, Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations

2016

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Expert: Python, Tableau, Gephi, Excel/Google Sheets

Proficient: R, Django

REFERENCES

Paula Moya

Danily C. and Laura Louise Bell Professor of the Humanities
Stanford University

James English

John Welsh Centennial Professor of English
University of Pennsylvania

Mark Algee-Hewitt

Associate Professor of the Department of English
Stanford University