

**Digital Detectives: Sherlock Holmes**  
**ENGL 2298/HIST2802**  
**Spring 2016**

Instructor: Paul Vierthaler  
Office: Stokes South 271 (in Classics/Honors Program area)  
Office Hours: Wednesdays: 1:00-4:00  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.**

This course is an introduction to the digital humanities through the lens of the Sherlock Holmes novels and short stories. It will provide students with a wide-ranging introduction to digital research and analytic tools. We will read a large portion of the Sherlock Holmes canon. We will also read secondary literature on the Digital Humanities, Doyle's stories, as well as the history of late nineteenth and early twentieth century London.

We cover a number of digital tools and methods, which we will use to analyze the Holmes stories. These include mapping, social network analysis, databases, timelines, 3D modeling, game-making, and basic textual analysis.

Each session will begin with a lecture discussing the readings for the day. Most days I have assigned three short stories. Discussion will focus on one (which I will announce prior to the session), but you should read all of them. The class will shift into discussions of digital tools and interpretive frameworks that are applicable to the readings or the canon as a whole. Each session will finish with a brief class discussion.

There will be an assignment each week. I will send it out on Tuesday after class. It will be due the following Tuesday by class time. It will involve applying digital tools to the readings for the previous week. The first assignment will be sent out on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

By the end of the course, each student will have produced a project that utilizes tools covered in class. This can be a traditional research paper, a multimedia project, or a website. It can also be a creative endeavor, such as a game. This project will be due May 12<sup>th</sup>. On the last week of class (and during the finals period if necessary) each student will make a 10-minute presentation on their final project.

If you choose to do a research paper, it must be at between 1,500 and 2,500 words and contain at least two visuals. Other project types should be of a similar length (websites could contain fewer words, but more visuals). Please consult with me if you decide to go for a project that is not easily comparable in content to a research paper.

This course requires

**Grading Rubric:**

Attendance and Participation: 10 percent

Assignments: 60 percent

Project Presentation: 10 percent

Final Project: 20 Percent

### **Textbooks and Tools**

Most of the Sherlock Holmes canon is in the public domain. You can download the stories we will be reading from the Internet Archive or various websites.

Most of the secondary readings are on the syllabus but I may add some readings through the semester if they are pertinent and add them to the syllabus online.

Most of the tools we will use are available freely on the internet. In one of the later portions of the course we will talk about the re-imagination of Sherlock Holmes into games and other media. You do not have to purchase anything.

### **Schedule:**

January 19<sup>th</sup>: Sherlock Holmes and the Digital Humanities  
Why Sherlock Holmes? Why the Digital Humanities?  
Introduction to Arthur Conan Doyle, his famous detective, and how they help us understand the digital humanities.

### **Part 1: Introduction**

January 21<sup>st</sup>: A Study in Scarlet: Chapters 1-4  
The science of deduction  
Data collection practices for the digital humanities.  
Ted Underwood “Seven ways humanists are using computers to understand text.”  
<http://tedunderwood.com/2015/06/04/seven-ways-humanists-are-using-computers-to-understand-text/>

January 26<sup>th</sup>: A Study in Scarlet: Chapters 5-7  
Carlo Ginzburg and Anna Davin, “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method,” *History Workshop*, No.9 (Spring, 1980), pp. 5-36.  
Extracting data from a text: Regular Expressions and XML

### **Part 2: Mapping**

January 28<sup>th</sup>: The Sign of Four Part 1  
Regular Expressions and XML Continued  
The Booth Online Archive: <http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>

February 2<sup>nd</sup>: The Sign of Four Part 2  
Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Introduction  
Historical Maps of London  
<http://mappinglondon.co.uk/2013/victorian-london-in-incredible-detail/>

February 4<sup>th</sup>: “A Scandal in Bohemia”, “The Adventures of the Red-Headed League”, “A Case of Identity”

Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*, Chapters 1 and 2

Tracking Character Movements, building a spreadsheet of movement data

**No classes February 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, I am out of town for a talk.**

February 16<sup>th</sup>: “The Boscombe Valley Mystery”, “The Five Orange Pips”, “The Man With the Twisted Lip”

More Mapping software and animating Holmes’ and Watson’s journeys through London.

### **Part 3: Basic Text Analysis and Digital Repositories**

February 18<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”, “The Adventure of the Speckled Band”, “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb”

<http://tedunderwood.com/2015/06/04/seven-ways-humanists-are-using-computers-to-understand-text/>

Basic Text Analysis: Word Frequencies, Concordances, Sentence Length

February 23<sup>rd</sup>: “The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor”, “The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet”, “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Digitized Repositories: Newspapers

Matthew Jockers, *Macroanalysis*: Part 1: Foundation, 3-32

February 25<sup>th</sup>: “The Silver Blaze”, “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box”, “The Adventure of the Yellow Face”

Digitized Repositories: Case files

March 1<sup>st</sup>: “The Adventure of the Stockbroker’s Clerk”, “The Adventure of the Gloria Scott”, “The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual”

Comparative Text Analysis: Sherlock Holmes vs The Newspaper and Scotland Yard

Stephen Ramsay, *An Algorithmic Criticism*: 1-17

March 3<sup>rd</sup>: “The Adventure of the Crooked Man”, “The Adventure of the Resident Patient”, “The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter”

The death of Sherlock Holmes = The death of “Sherlock Holmes?”

**No Classes March 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, spring break!**

### **Part 4: Network Analysis**

March 15<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter”, “The Final Problem”

Social Networks Demystified: Scott Wiengart and Basic Network Analysis

Parts 1-3

<http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?tag=networks-demystified&paged=2>

March 17<sup>th</sup>: “The Hound of the Baskervilles”

Tracking relationships: Who knew who and when did they know them?

Social Networks Demystified: Scott Wiengart and Basic Network Analysis

Parts 4-6

<http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?tag=networks-demystified&paged=2>

March 22<sup>nd</sup>: “The Adventure of the Empty House”, “The Adventure of the Norwood Builder”,  
“The Adventure of the Dancing Men”

Parts 7-9

<http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?tag=networks-demystified>

Networks in-depth: Analyzing Communities

### **Part 5: Timelines**

March 24<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist”, “The Adventure of the Priory School”,  
“The Adventure of Black Peter”

Building an informative timeline

### **Part 6: 3D Modeling**

March 29<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton”, “The Adventure of the Six  
Napoleons”

Introduction to SketchUp

March 31<sup>st</sup>: “The Adventure of the Three Students”, “The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez”,  
“The Adventure of the Missing Three-quarter”

Modeling 221B Baker Street

### **Part 7: Reimagining Sherlock Holmes into modern formats.**

April 4<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Abbey Grange”, “The Adventure of the Second Stain”

Telling stories with games

April 7<sup>th</sup>: “The Valley of Fear”

Sherlock Holmes in Games

Michael Saler, “‘Clap if you Believe in Sherlock Holmes’: Mass Culture and the  
Re-enchantment of Modernity,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Sep., 2003),  
pp. 599-622

April 12<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge”, “The Adventure of the Red Circle”, “The  
Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans”

Building a Holmes story in Minecraft

April 14<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Dying Detective”, “The Disappearance of Lady Frances  
Carfax”, “The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot”

Sherlock Holmes in TV and Movies

## **Part 8: Putting it together**

April 19<sup>th</sup>: “His Last Bow”, “The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone”, “The Problem of Thor Bridge”

Website Construction: Where to host a website

April 21<sup>st</sup>: “The Adventure of the Creeping Man”, “The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire”, “The Adventure of the Three Garridebs”

Basics of Word Press

April 26<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Illustrious Client”, “The Adventure of the Three Gables”, “The Adventure of the Lion’s Mane”

Presenting your project

April 28<sup>th</sup>: “The Adventure of the Retired Colourman”, “The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger”, “The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place”

Online Scholarly Communities

## **Part 9: Show off your projects!**

May 3<sup>rd</sup>: Presentations

May 5<sup>th</sup>: Presentations