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The aim of this workshop is to introduce participants to the types of research that can be done at the intersection of the digital and humanities scholarship, and to make participants aware of some of the issues, debates and key areas of interest related to these fields.

The Introductory Lecture provides historical overviews of the development of new technologies and of the interactions with these new technologies in humanities research. This is to enable participants to situate work on digital methods and cultures not only within the general context of developments in new technologies, but also within developments in specific humanistic research traditions. We will also broach some of the major debates within the field (to do particularly with questions of definition and institutionalisation). We will start by reflecting on the term “digital humanities” and discuss terminological and definitional issues which could help clarify some of these ongoing debates. Crucially, we argue that whilst a broad term such as the digital humanities may have (or have had) its uses, its vagueness can create further confusions and misunderstandings. We therefore seek to demystify the term by making clearer distinctions between two core types of projects at the intersection of the digital and humanities research: projects using digital methods and projects analysing digital culture. By differentiating these two strands of research from one another we hope to make clear the different kinds of interests, traditions and epistemologies that underpin these strands of research. However, an effort of differentiation will also bring to light the areas of overlap and complementarity between these strands of research. Thus, a greater effort of differentiation could help highlight areas for productive interaction between different fields and indeed help clarify some of the issues under debate. Each tutor will then present on their own field of speciality (Dorothy on Digital Cultures and Laura on Digital Methods) - introducing historical overviews, key concepts and issues as well as areas of debate specific to each field. And we will conclude by highlighting the areas where these two fields can complement one another.

This organisational rationale also underpins the choice of Key Texts and Concepts for discussion. Here we seek to delve deeper into an area of key concern for both Digital Methods and Cultures: the impact of interaction with new technologies. From a digital cultures point of view, we will discuss the impact of new technologies in terms of identity through notions of cyborg subjectivity and the “posthuman”. From the digital methods perspective we will discuss the implications of interacting with digital tools and methods for cultural analysis.

As a complement to the theoretical and conceptual discussions introduced in the lecture and the Discussion session, New Directions will be dedicated to presenting more “hands-on” practical examples of research at the intersection of the digital and the humanities. Here each tutor will present an example from their own research: Dorothy on digital cultures and Laura on using digital methods for textual analysis.

Finally, we hope that by the closing discussion participants will have gained an overview of the different possible types of research to be done at the interface between new technologies and humanities research, they will have gained critical insight in some of the key debates permeating the field, and will have reflected on some of the implications of the digital on notions of the self, identity and of analysis and interpretation. Most of all we hope that this will have inspired participants to engage directly with digital methods as a way of expanding and/or augmenting their own research and to consider how the themes and theories covered may complement, enhance or alter their ongoing research in the humanities.