

I went to these gatherings curious about how different scholars would address theoretical concerns underlying the situations we now face commonly. For instance, the question of how computers affect the interaction between text and reader is crucial in literary studies, because all of our work in teaching, research, and publishing is built on our assumptions about how people read. Other questions grew out of this one: are recent technologies being integrated into the activities of English departments, or are they being layered on top of existing practices? In other words, how do these new ways of interacting with literature acknowledge the older (or perhaps “other”) ways of reading? Do they build bridges from those ways or simply leap off into new territories?

In addition to questions about the effects of computer technologies on the reading process, I was interested in how this interaction would or could, in turn, affect the practices of researching literature, teaching literature, and conducting those practices within administrative or institutional contexts. How does the “digital imperative” compel adjustments in academic programs and budgets? In a similar vein, how do electronic technologies redefine our English departments? How are faculty members invited or forced to learn new technologies, and how do these situations affect workplace morale? Further, what are some effects of technology on our concepts of literature itself? Computers can transform what we think of as “literature” or a “book,” and they can also shift our ideas about how an author produces a text, or how a company produces a publication.

The papers included in this volume address these questions from various perspectives. They represent over half of the presentations from the Clemson colloquium, and they reflect on the issues that both Clemson and UNCG aimed to address in their discussions. In the first section, “Literary Study: Creating ‘Dignity’ in the Digital,” we first encounter Wayne Chapman’s opening remarks at Clemson. Chapman gives an overview of the scope and activities of the Clemson University Digital Press as well as its administrative office, the Center for Electronic and Digital Publishing (which co-sponsored the event). He outlines several issues in the brave new world of literary production, pedagogy, and research that stem from the increased reliance on digital technologies.

The next three papers in this section formed the afternoon panel at the Clemson colloquium, and they all deal with how digital technologies can improve the organization of scholarly information about literary works. The authors examine three rich case studies: bibliographies for William Butler Yeats, reading notebooks for Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas*, and an electronic compilation of resources for the study of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Warwick Gould compares an electronic Yeats bibliography to the codices of bibliographic records that have so far sufficed, and to similar bibliographic volumes for the work of Blake, Wilde, Milton, and Pound's *Cantos*. He contrasts the shortcomings of Richard Finneran's electronic Yeats bibliography with the advantages of an electronic bibliography for John Masefield whose highly usable "architecture" holds out hope for "the shape of things to come." He articulates a vision for electronic descriptive bibliographies that amass information, take into account the history of paper editions of the author's writings, and organize all of this information with strategic sophistication. According to Gould, electronic bibliographies should reflect the wisdom and "rigor" developed through decades of print-based bibliographic record-keeping. They should not be "shoddily conceived, quick-fix solutions" nor should they be unstructured conglomerations of interconnected information.

The other two papers on the panel discussed database projects composed for the elucidation of literary texts. Merry Pawlowski showcases her online archive of the scrapbooks Virginia Woolf kept while she was writing her anti-war treatise, *Three Guineas*. Pawlowski considers how Woolf's selection of articles and images, and their juxtapositions, expose Woolf's sense of how gender, empirical power, and visual "spectacle" can affect the impulse towards war. At the colloquium, these considerations were accompanied by Pawlowski's navigations through the web-based Virginia Woolf archive she has been compiling with Vara Neverow from Southern Connecticut State University. She demonstrated the utility of electronic databases in making archival materials available to readers, especially when the visual organization of this material is significant (as Pawlowski shows in Woolf's scrapbooks).

Next, Jack Lynch reflects on the history of the electronic edi-

tion of *Frankenstein* at the University of Pennsylvania. He describes a comprehensive database of hyperlinked texts, criticism, and materials to which the novel relates or refers. After recounting the rationales behind various editorial and design decisions, Lynch suggests that the advances of this electronic edition function within the paradigm established by the seventeenth-century variorum edition. In the variorum, a literary text is “dignified” by a collation of diverse critical commentaries, printed within the same volume and formatted for convenient reference. Researchers and common readers can engage easily with “questions that remain unanswered” about the text. Lynch offers “hopes for a new golden age of variorum scholarship in the electronic age,” and his article answers Warwick Gould’s call for a carefully crafted approach to the structure of a digital literary resource.

The last two entries in this section make it into a sort of variorum edition of its own: two scholars comment upon the proceedings of the conferences and open up broad questions for reflection. Jackie Grutsch McKinney and Karen Schiff participated in both gatherings by attending all the events at Clemson, and we selected different panels from among the twelve offerings (and two keynote addresses) during the UNCG conference. Our reflections were composed to introduce a final roundtable discussion in Greensboro. The articles printed here both recreate these remarks and incorporate the conversation that followed.

The second section of the volume, “Digital Publishing: ‘From Paper to Pixels,’” consists of an essay by Melvin Sterne, presented in April 2003, as part of Clemson’s final Tech Colloquium, “The Media of Publication: Reading, Writing, and Editing.” Sterne, like Chapman, is the editor of a small magazine published both online and in print. Sterne extends Chapman’s discussion of the history and economics of publishing today, based on his experience with *Carve*. He also gives historical context to debates about “the book” and explores the “intermediate” ground we inhabit between our habitual reliance on paper-based printing and the ever-growing economic necessity of digital publishing. Sterne organizes his ideas in response to William Gass’s essay, “In Defense of the Book,” in which Gass decries how digital technologies affect the physical act of reading. In “An Offense for the Book,” Sterne details how Gass fails to consider readers’ *access* to liter-

ary texts in the first place, and Sterne suggests that digital technologies will increase readership and support the practices of writing and publishing.

The publication of Sterne's 2003 article, in both electronic and paper-based formats by the Clemson University Digital Press, would seem to bring this volume full circle, as it represents two years of presentations at Clemson about digital technologies.<sup>3</sup> But in an age in which the future of these technologies remains to be created, it does not seem fitting to close the circle so neatly. Instead, let us open it up again, or perhaps simply widen it, by reconsidering the definition of a "digital technology" based on other activities at Clemson that coincide with these events. (One is the inscription of the title of this volume, on the half-title page, in the digital computer punch-card code that our library used before zebra stripe codes and laser-beam code readers were introduced.)

In both 2002 and 2003, Clemson's "Tech Colloquium" has included workshops with the University's "new" Vandercook IV letterpress. The letterpress represents literature's oldest digital production technology, as texts are produced letter by letter, with lead "digits" called "sorts." In 2002, Atlanta-based book artist Berwyn Hung was sponsored to teach letterpress operation and to give a slide lecture on his work. Hung showed his audience how electronic technologies can contribute to artistic reinterpretations of familiar bibliographic forms. For instance, he noted that plates for letterpress printing can be manufactured from computer files that include images as well as unusual typographic effects; Hung himself used a Quark program to create a paper chess board that is assembled through cutting and folding.

Later this year, we plan to bring book artist Matthew Liddle to campus. Liddle is Acting Head of the Art Department at Western North Carolina University in Cullowhee. He plans to involve students in a collaborative letterpress project in which the printed page will be folded to create a multi-dimensional final product. Both Liddle and Hung point toward new paradigms for literary production in the digital age: their work reminds us that new and old technologies alike can be bent to creative purposes, to ensure the continual metamorphosis of our familiar literary formats.

A more prosaic use of the letterpress is no less significant for

its contribution to literary production: Clemson also plans to produce broadsides of poems written by people associated with the university. First on the list is Ron Moran, Professor Emeritus of English and former Associate and Acting Dean of the College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities. Moran enthusiastically endorsed the Center for Electronic and Digital Publishing when it began and for many years served as poetry advisor to *The South Carolina Review*, the literary crux of Clemson's publication program; hence, now that the Tech series is ending, it seems appropriate to begin our letterpress productions with a tribute to him. Our renewed focus on literature can be seen on our website's "Writers' Nook" page, which gives details about our reading series and publishes work by our visiting writers. For instance, the site features two poems by Vivian Shipley, a poet from Southern Connecticut State University and editor of the *Connecticut Review*, along with reviews of her work. Shipley's reading at Clemson in October 2002 was sponsored by the CEDP and the Friends of *The South Carolina Review*.

In widening the scope of "digital technologies" so far as to include the production of literary texts through different kinds of digital machines, we have arrived at the heart of the enterprise that has driven this entire endeavor: the use of technologies to promote the circulation and reading of works of literature. The ways that the technologies inflect the reading experience depend on a confluence of innumerable factors; the papers in this volume focus specifically on issues that grow out of the intersection of electronic technologies and literary study. So let us open up the forum.

—Karen Schiff

## NOTES

1. Mark Hussey, "How Should you Read a Screen?" *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Garland, 2000) 249-65; see p. 261.
2. Stuart Moulthrop, "No War Machine," *Reading Matters: Narrative in the New Media Ecology*, ed. Joseph Tabbi and Michael Wutz (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997) 262-92. See p. 278, qtd. in Hussey 262.
3. The inaugural colloquium, entitled "New Technology and the Future of Publishing," was preserved in an elegant hypermedia anthology edited by Catherine Paul and. This anthology is available at the CUDP website, also created in 2001.