

# The Digital Watts Project Assignments

Loyola Marymount University / English Graduate Level Course

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Also see: <http://dh.lmu.edu/digital-watts-project>

## The Fire Next Time Word Analysis

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In the exercise you will be using Voyant word analysis tool to analyze Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*. Please read the entire book before beginning.

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### Deliverables:

- Your Voyant session URL (email to [melanie.hubbard@lmu.edu](mailto:melanie.hubbard@lmu.edu))
- A list of stop words you added to/took away from the English stop words already available in Voyant. (Not to be turned in.)
- Prepared notes that will help you thoroughly explain your answers to the questions below. (Not to be turned in.)
- Prepared notes that will help you explain how you achieved your results, i.e. how you used a certain tool to explore a certain word or phrase. (Not to be turned in.)

### Getting Started:

- 1.) Search the "The Fire Next Time" in the Library catalog and select the [electronic resource version](#).
- 2.) Copy all of the text from the title, "My Dungeon Shook," to the end of the essay "Down At The Cross."
- 3.) Paste the text into Voyant ([voyant-tools.org](http://voyant-tools.org)) and click "reveal." (It may be easier to cut and paste the text into a word doc and clean it up there before pasting it into Voyant.)
- 4.) Use Voyant to explore *The Fire Next Time*. For more on this part of the assignment visit [lmu.box.com/v/VoyantHelp](http://lmu.box.com/v/VoyantHelp)

### Questions:

- 1.) How does the word cloud visualization align with or differ from your original reading of the text. What words did you expect to see more of or less of?
- 2.) What new insights into the text did you get from using Voyant? (Provide at least three.)
- 3.) How might you use Voyant in conjunction with rereading *The Fire Next Time*?

- 4.) In general, how can Voyant be used as a reading tool?
- 5.) Discuss the limitations of Voyant. What are the caveats or shortcomings that scholars need to keep in mind when using the tool?
- 6.) Explain how Voyant can be used as a distant reading tool? (If you don't know what "distant reading" means, you will need to look it up.)
- 7.) Explain a scenario in which Voyant may help you in your own scholarship and literary area of interest.

## Los Angeles Sentinel & Los Angeles Times Database Analysis

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In this exercise you will be using the *Los Angeles Sentinel* and the *Los Angeles Times* databases to explore media coverage of the Watts uprising. The intention is to learn more about Watts and how a database can be used as digital humanities tool.

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### Deliverables:

- Notes that will help you thoroughly articulate your answers to the questions below. (Not to be turned in.)
- 3 articles in pdf form (see #4 below)

### Getting Started:

- Open up two different browsers, e.g. Chrome and Safari. This will help prevent technical issues.
- In both browsers go to the [Library website](#) and, in one browser, search for the *Los Angeles Times* database in the library catalog. Do the same for the *Los Angeles Sentinel* in the other browser. For more on accessing and using these databases visit [lmu.box.com/v/DatabaseHelp](http://lmu.box.com/v/DatabaseHelp)
- Conduct all searches (explained below) in both databases.

### Searches/Questions:

#### 1.) Terms used to describe the event:

**Search A:** "Watts Rebellion" (use quotation marks)

**Publication Date Range:** August 8, 1965-December 31, 1993

**Search B:** "Watts Uprising" (use quotation marks)

**Publication Date Range:** August 8, 1965-December 31, 1993

**Search C:** "Watts Revolt" (use quotation marks)

**Publication Date Range:** August 8, 1965-December 31, 1993

- For each search, identify the peak date range(s) (e.g. 1990-1999) of a terms' use. Based on what you can discern from the articles, what is the historical context that helps explain the rise in the use of that term?

2.) Articles during and just after the uprising:

**Search:** *Watts Riot* (don't use quotation marks)

**Publication Date Range:** *August 8, 1965-September 30, 1965*

**Document Type:** *Article*

- Look at the journalists/writers. Are there any notable figures? Is there anything you can find out about some of them in a Google search?
- Are there any consistent characteristics you can identify, e.g. aspects of tone, rhetoric, perspective, etc.?

3.) Front page articles:

**Search:** *Watts Riot* (don't use quotation marks)

**Publication Date Range:** *August 8, 1965-August 31, 1966*

**Document Type:** *Front Page Article*

- In what months do the *Watts Riot* related articles appear on the front pages of the *LA Times* and the *LA Sentinel*? What is the general tone and/ or focus of these articles? Does this tell you anything about the media coverage of the Watts events?

- 5.) Identify 3 specific articles you would like to talk about in class. Be prepared to explain why you chose them and what significance they play in your understanding of the uprising.

## Twitter Analysis & Visualization

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In this two-part exercise you will be exploring Twitter as well as issues concerning data visualization.

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### Deliverables:

- Notes that will help you to clearly articulate your answers to the questions below. (For discussion only. Not to be turned in.)

### Part One: Twitter & Academia

- Read the #digped January 8<sup>th</sup> conversation (<http://bit.ly/24nwxUf>) referenced in one of this weeks readings, "[Digital Humanities, Public Work, Safety,](#)".
- Optional: Read more about academic Twitter - <https://lmu.box.com/v/AcademicTwitter>
- **Please note:** When conducting a lot of quick searches you might get this notice: *"Twitter has rate limited the application, please try your query again in a few minutes."* Just wait a little while and it will start working again.
- Answer the following questions:
  - 1.) Describe the tone and nature of the conversation, i.e. Is it collegial and communal? Is it focused? How "academic" is the conversation? etc.
  - 2.) How productive is the conversation in terms of addressing its intended topic: "the necessity and trouble of public work?" (You will have to have read the related article to fully answer this question.)
  - 3.) Share at least three things you learned from the Twitter conversation and some of the resources mentioned that you find useful.

### Part Two: Twitter Sentiment Tool

- Go to North Carolina State University's *Sentiment Viz*: <http://bit.ly/1RrOf0R>
- Read about the tool and how to use it before beginning: <http://bit.ly/1Tt6uzU>.

- In Sentiment Viz conduct individual searches of: *islamwatch*, *blacklivesmatter/ black lives matter*, *Trump*, *hilaryclinton/ Hilary Clinton*, *policebrutality/ police brutality* and any others you think of. (Try to find something current in the news.)

Answer the following questions:

- 1.) What are the most useful aspects of this tool and why are they useful?
- 2.) What are sentiment tool's limitations?
- 3.) How does the visualization aspect help and/ or hinder your understanding of the information it presents?
- 4.) How can the tool enable a deeper exploration of Twitter?
- 5.) Talk about the tool's use of terms like "pleasant" and "upset." Consider the fact that what is pleasant for one person may be unpleasant for another. What issues does this cause? How do you use the tool knowing this is an aspect of it?
- 6.) Based on what you have learned from using this tool and your readings, how might Twitter be an effective tool for "taking the pulse" of the public or for gauging public discourse and where might it fall short?

## Digital Project Analysis

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In this assignment you will be examining and critiquing existing digital projects.

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### Deliverables:

- Email both instructors completed answers to the questions below by June 14<sup>th</sup> at noon. You may use bullet points and lists
- Prepare examples to show in class

**Step One:** Examine the following digital projects:

- [Mapping the Republic of Letters](http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/) (<http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/>)
- [Freedom's Ring](http://stanford.io/1IDNhID) (<http://stanford.io/1IDNhID>)
- [NINES: Nineteenth-Century Scholarship Online](http://www.nines.org/) (<http://www.nines.org/>)

**Step Two:** Answer the following questions for all of the projects listed above. Identify some examples you can show in class to support your arguments:

### Content

- 1.) What is this project about and/or what is the purpose of this project?
- 2.) List the kind of elements it contains, i.e. *maps that show...*, *a database that allows you to discover...*, *a page with resources for...* Think of this as a general inventory.
- 3.) How well do the *elements* within the project align with the *purpose* of the project?
- 4.) How might a scholar use this project as a resource?

### Form & Function:

- 5.) What was your first impression and visceral response when you landed on the home page of the project?
- 6.) Using what you have learned about information architecture/wayfinding, evaluate the information organization, structure, and navigability of the project.

- 7.) Evaluate the site's aesthetics and design using what you learned in this week's videos and reading.
- 8.) How well do the elements in the site function? i.e. How well do the maps work? How easy is the database to use? Do the links work?

Creating the Watts Digital Collection

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The Watts Digital Collection is a public humanities project in which students will help the Southern California Library make their materials available via a digital library. The main objective is to assist the SoCal Library with determining best practices for digitization and metadata, as well as provide them with a described collection of digitized Watts materials with which to begin their digital library.

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**For this project students will:**

- Contribute to the digitization process of Watts objects
- Contribute to project quality control
- Upload the objects to Omeka, the digital library tool being used
- Generate all metadata for the digitized Watts objects. This process will involve:
  - Identifying different aspects of the materials, e.g. title, publication date, author, etc.
  - Describing the materials using established subject terms, i.e. Library of Congress subject headings, and creating new subject terms that are more relevant to diverse audiences
  - Proposing tagging system(s)
  - Maintaining a metadata spreadsheet
  - Data entry
  - Contribute to the creation of metadata best practices.
  - Completing blog posts

The most challenging aspect of this project is the identification and creation of subject terms and tagging system(s). As discussed in class, the way information is described has a significant impact on how it is perceived and how or whether it can be found. The various readings and discussions in this class are intended to help prepare students for this undertaking.

Because it is difficult to calculate how many Watts artifacts we will be able to get through, we will scale the project as we go. This means that the required amount of digitized/described Watts objects will be adjusted as we go.

**Basic Course of Action:**

**Tuesday (6/14):** Intro to Information Organization and the Watts project

**Thursday (6/18):** Go over controlled vocabulary suggestions; begin metadata creation and scanning

**Tuesday (6/21):** Discuss progress and questions; work on metadata and scanning

**Thursday (6/23):** Work on metadata; come to a consensus on the controlled vocabulary and tagging system(s)

**Sunday (6/27 by 12pm):** All work must be completed – This means the Watts project, the edited versions of your blogs and the annotated bibliography