A Companion to Digital Humanities. Edited by SUSAN SCHREIB-
MAN, RAY SIEMENS and JOHN UNSWORTH. Oxford: Wiley-
Blackwell, 2008. Pp. xxvii + 611. Paper, $49.95. 978–1–4051–6806–9.

It is by now old news that technology is of great relevance to the
Humanities in general, and to Classics specifically, and we would be
remiss if we failed to document the history of computing and Hu-
manities in a permanent way. Thankfully, Blackwell Publishing
(now Wiley–Blackwell) saw this need and produced the object of this
review. Originally published in hardcover in 2004, the volume was
released in paperback in 2008, albeit without updated content or ex-
tra essays documenting how Web 2.0 has affected a paradigm shift
in information sharing and research.

A Companion to Digital Humanities marks the 26th title (of 91) in
Blackwell's *Companions to Literature and Culture* series, and appears
to be a fish out of water when bookended by *A Companion to Latin
American Literature and Culture* and *A Companion to Emily Dickinson*.
Blackwell defines its *Companion* series as offering "comprehensive,
newly written surveys of key periods and movements and certain
major authors, in English literary culture and history…" written for
"experienced" undergraduates and new graduate students "with
current and new directions, as pioneered and developed by leading
scholars in the field."

This volume lives up to Blackwell's promise by providing 37 acces-
sibly written essays by luminaries in digital Humanities from across
a wide spectrum as selected by a Trinity of editors revered in the
field: John Unsworth, Susan Schreibman and Ray Siemens. The book
(unlike Gaul) is divided into four parts:

• History (a sampling of computing in various disciplines)
• Principles (understanding the engines that drive digital Humani-
ties)
• Applications (specific projects and current computing trends)
• Production, Dissemination, Archiving (digital publishing, libraries,
preservation, design).

The complex theory behind text analysis, promoting the usefulness
of relational databases, the singular importance of good interface
design, and other core concepts are clearly defined by each essay's
author and together make the case for the indispensable quality of
research, scholarship and communication afforded us through tech-
nology. While technology can seem a panacea in a volume like this,
the authors approach their subjects with due diligence and do not

gloss over the problems and hard work required to use emerging, constantly changing technologies, often suggesting changes that have either already come to pass or that should be effected by those who read this book. What I miss, however, is a chapter on technology and teaching. I invite the editors to consider including one if there will indeed be a second edition.

Two of the essays in the "History" section are written by the usual suspects in regard to computing and Classics/Archaeology: Harrison Eiteljorg II, on "Computing for Archaeologists," and Greg Crane on "Classics and the Computer: An End of the History." Eiteljorg has been merging archaeology and technology for decades and provides a history of database management and usage by archaeologists, offering a first-hand account of the technological changes that transformed the field. His call for database standards among archaeologists and museum professionals still resonates, as does his argument that we ought to preserve datasets, perhaps porting them to newer technologies including shared access portals like the one currently in development by the AIA/APA. Eiteljorg's essay also covers the rise in popularity and importance of GIS, CAD and imaging software, and touches on virtual reality, all of which are firmly in the mainstream as archaeologists work to reconstruct what they have uncovered, in effect undoing the destructive process of excavation. Eiteljorg's suggestions for further reading and selected websites are particularly useful. It would be beneficial to maintain a growing list of resources like these on the website dedicated to this book, if not elsewhere.

Crane's essay offers a lively account of computing and Classics, not so much a history as a call to action. Crane reminds us that Classicists have a rich tradition of engaging computers in their research; we in fact pushed the envelope, at least in the early days, of what these devices can do for the field and for Humanities in general. The issues facing us now are how Classicists can be heard in the general dialogue about standards, and how to bridge the gap between those who know and create technology and those who merely use it. Crane cites the wrong, poor, or costly choices made by Classicists in the early 1980s, not because we were not paying attention, but because the field simply did not know enough about the tools available or which would do the best job for the research tackled at the time. Crane next describes the state of the art of computing in 1982: computer power and storage, displays, networks, multilingual text editing and text retrieval, issues that seem either trivial or transparent to a contemporary undergraduate. The essay concludes with a look at past computing trends and prospects for the future that inspire hope

but also come with more than a hint of caution and a call for Classicists to be proactive in getting the tools they need built: "…we may find that simple steps that could radically improve our ability to work in the future will have been overlooked at crucial points in the coming years. Our history now lies with the larger story of computing and academia in the twenty-first century."

Aside from the essays, the *Companion* comes with a dynamic, online version, presented as an easily navigable eBook with options to print and even to send corrections to Unsworth. One has to search to find this online version of the book, however. The URL printed on the back cover (http://www.ach.org/companion/) leads to a parking page with "Coming Soon" positioned at the top. A search of the Wiley–Blackwell website indicates an online companion but yields no URL. A quick search on Google does provide the appropriate link, abbreviated here via the TinyURL service: http://tinyurl.com/d2fbpk.

The entire book is available here, making its contents accessible anywhere, a boon to those readers burdened by the volume's heft. The companion site does fall short of its promise to host "essays to be included in future editions, and other materials…", but there is hope that this material will appear soon. One could conceivably see Web 2.0 elements creeping into the site to facilitate real dialogue about the concepts discussed in the book. A wiki would be the best option, with one page dedicated to each of the 37 essays, plus introductory matter by the editors.

In all, *A Companion to Digital Humanities* stands on its own as a post-Revolution snapshot. It shows what happened immediately after computing became both practical, necessary and omnipresent in the Humanities. Looking back on the essays five years later, the underlying arguments for integrating technology and art history, archaeology, Classics, literature, music, linguistics and other fields remain unchanged. It will be exciting to see how we stand upon these giants' shoulders; let there be another volume like this to document the next five years.

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Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers
eClassics