# Feeling inspired?

Consider enrolling in **DLCL 203: Data Visualization with Textiles** (1-3 units) for spring quarter!

In this independent study course (i.e. you come by at a time that works for you), you'll spend time at the Textile Makerspace learning the basics of different textile methods, as well as how to translate data into something you can weave, knit, crochet, sew, embroider, etc.

You can also **check out a rigid heddle loom** like the one used to create this piece from the Terman Maker Bar: https://guides.library.stanford.edu/makerbar

# Future Text
## A reader's guide
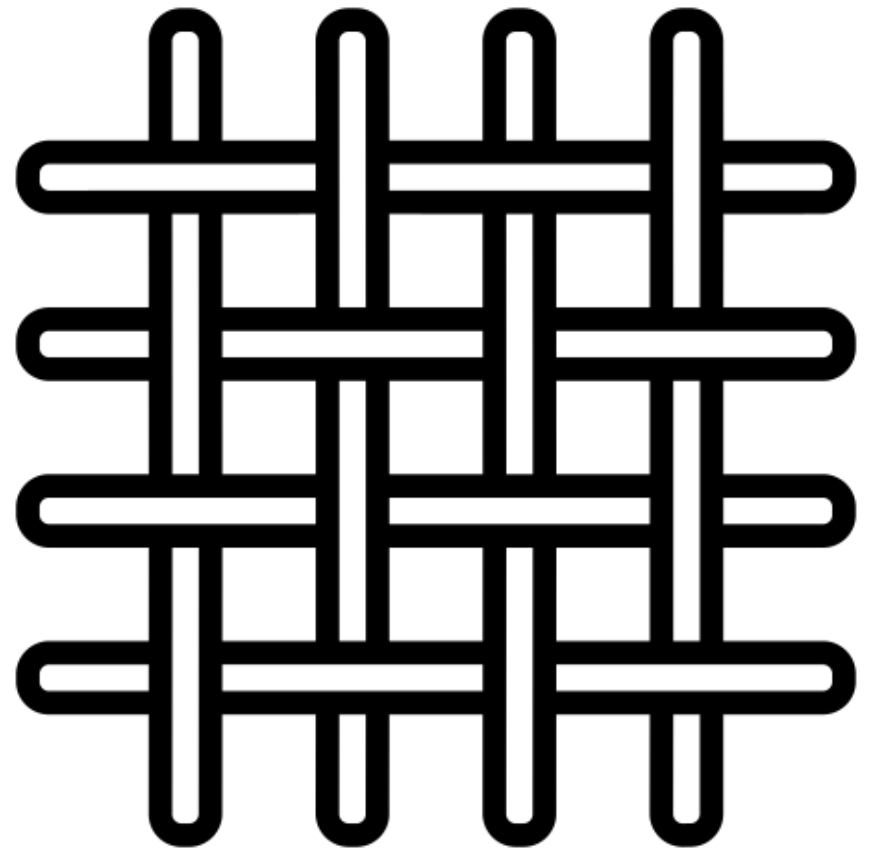


# Quinn Dombrowski

# The Class

DLCL 103 / Italian 103

FUTURE TEXT: AI and Literatures,
Cultures, and Languages

Autumn 2023

Laura Wittman
Quinn Dombrowski
Eric Kim
Andrew Nepomuceno

# About the Artist

Quinn Dombrowski doesn't really think of themself as an artist because they can't draw. Like, truly. At all. Not even stick figures, really.

Quinn also has basically no spatial imagination, and is now merely very bad at assembling things spatially after about 15 years of sewing.

*Future Text* is part therapy, part data, part experiment as part of the Year of the Loom, which Quinn declared for 2023-2024 in the Textile Makerspace.

You can find Quinn either in Berkeley with their family (three kids and a husband), or in Pigott Hall, where they've replaced their office desk with a standing loom, and replaced an unloved computer lab with a Textile Makerspace (https://textilemakerspace.stanford.edu).

Quinn sews all their own clothes and has an extensive vocabulary of work dresses, but loves weaving more than any other craft.

# Epilogue

Lots of thoughts.

This class was so different from what I'm used to teaching, for a very different group of students.

For the 180 minutes of the final project presentations, I could tell myself that maybe this class actually worked. Reading the course reviews after it was all over went a long way towards dispelling that fantasy.

I don't regret doing it. I learned a lot, the grad student TAs, learned a lot. But is it something I should do again? What else could I have done with those months that might have better supported my department?

These are still open questions. And ones I continue to ponder every time I catch sight of this weaving, which usually hangs in my office, above my beloved floor loom.

– Quinn

# About

In fall 2023, Laura Wittman and Quinn Dombrowski taught DLCL 103, *Future Text: AI in Literatures, Cultures, and Languages*. They were not expecting a 60-student class, mostly CS juniors and seniors looking to fulfill their humanities requirement.

The class had a final project where students could choose a technical, creative, or analytical option. Quinn decided to do a final project too: weaving the data from the class.

The *Future Text* weaving captures four main kinds of data: assigned readings, lecture slides, attendance, and assignment grades. The weaving ends with course evaluation data, final grades, and email discussions from after the quarter was over.

# Syllabus

## Politics and Policy
Lecture 1
- Jeff Jarvis, "Artificial General Bullshit". BuzzMachine blog, November 19, 2023.
- Angie Wong, "Is My Toddler a Stochastic Parrot?" The New Yorker, November 15, 2023.
- Derek Thomson, "The OpenAI Mess is About One Big Thing", The Atlantic, November 22, 2023.

Lecture 2
- Lise Jaillant and Arran Rees, "Applying AI to digital archives: trust, collaboration, and shared professional ethics." Digital Scholarship in the Humanities. November 17, 2022.

## Project final presentations
Two sessions of student final presentations

## Course evaluations
- How well did you achieve the learning goals of the course?
- Overall how would you describe the quality of the instruction in this course?
- How organized was this course?

# Syllabus

*Assignment: Write the least AI-like thing on a prompt of the class's choosing.*

**Doing and making**
Lecture 1
- Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy (U Chicago Press, 1974), selections.
- Lauren Panepinto, "The Envy of Non-Creatives". Muddy Colors, September 7, 2023.
- Joseph Weizenbaum, excerpt from "Computer Power and Human Reason".

Lecture 2
- Lise Jaillant and Arran Rees, "Applying AI to digital archives: trust, collaboration, and shared professional ethics." Digital Scholarship in the Humanities. November 17, 2022.

**AI and the apocalypse**
Lecture 1
- Philip K Dick, "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" 1968. [very long compared to other readings, represented by brown sheep wool; the holes correspond to the chapters in the novella]
- Erik Davis, "AI EEEEEEE!!!" Burning Shore, April 11, 2023.

Lecture 2
- Qntm, "Lena", 2021.

# Key

Course materials are represented by thicker yarn. The 7 thick red yarns at the beginning represent 7 months of planning.

## Readings

For each reading, every **1,000 words** are converted to 1 weft thread.

- Red: Blog post
- Orange: News
- Academic writing: Yellow
- Other: Variegated orange/yellow/black
- Fiction: raw brown wool (Philip K. Dick *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*) or spun wool. Wool is from sheep belonging to Prof. Amy Earhart at TAMU, which Quinn met over the summer.

## Slides

Students may or may not have done the readings, but they were more unambiguously exposed to the words on the slides. For each lecture, every **100 words** are converted to 1 thick white weft thread.

## Project proposals

The section with red (essay), black with rainbow specks (creative) and orange (technical) yarn shows the percentage of students who chose each project type for thor final project proposal

# Key

Student work is represented by thinner yarn.

## Attendance

Attendance is marked by alternating groups of two weft threads of the same color.

Students had three obligations per week: two lectures and a discussion section.

- White: 3
- Yellow: 2
- Red: 1
- Hot dog: 0
- Fuzzy yellow yarn: fuzzy data

## Grades

Grades are marked by alternating groups of four weft threads of the same color.
Some work was graded 3-1 (same color scale as above); some was graded on a letter scale:

- White: A
- Yellow: A- / B+ (later, A- is differentiated by variegated white/yellow thread)
- Red: B / B-
- Hot dog: C+ and below

## Field trip

The field trip to the library's exhibit *Encoding: Computers as a Global Medium* is represented by a fabric scrap of a keyboard, and the Textile Makerspace is represented by knitting machine "failure noodles".

# Syllabus

*Assignment: Find an image style that an image-generation model consistently gets wrong. Write up what you tried, and include some images to illustrate.*

Lecture 2

- Laurie Clarke, "When AI can make art: what does it mean for creativity?" The Guardian, November 12, 2022.
- Zachary Small, "An Art Professor says AI Is the Future. It's the Students Who Need Convincing." The New York Times, May 1, 2023.

*Assignment: Write a proposal for your final project.*

## Voice, personality, and psychology

Lecture 1

- Joseph Weizenbaum, ELIZA - A Computer Program for the Study of Natural Language Between Man and Machine. Communications of the ACM, 1966.
- Michelle Huang, Training an AI Chatbot on my Childhood Journal Entries, December 14, 2022.
- Mark Marino, "Can ChatGPT Copy Your Writing Style?" Medium, January 24, 2023.).

Lecture 2

- Abrams, "AI is changing every aspect of psychology." An overview of the situation from the American Psychological Association.
- Jensen, "Johannes Eichstaedt: Exploring the Intersection of AI and Psychology" This is a very short piece about work currently going on Stanford.
- Clinical Psychologist Lisa Damour interviewed by Ezra Klein on "The teen mental health crisis."

# Syllabus

**What is AI and how does it work?**
Lecture 1
- Karawynn Long, "Language is a Poor Heuristic for Intelligence". Nine Lives blog, June 26, 2023.

Lecture 2
- Stephen Wolfram, "What is ChatGPT Doing... And Why Does It Work?". Writings blog, February 14, 2023.
- Emily Bender, "Thought experiment in the National Library of Thailand. Blog, May 24, 2023.

**Digit(al/ized) language & the making of corpora**
Lecture 1
- Erin Kissane, "Meta in Myanmar, Part I: The Setup". September 28, 2023.

Lecture 2
- Rebecca L Johnson et al, "The Ghost in the Machine has an American accent: value conflict in GPT-3", read sections #1.2, #2, #3, and #4.
- Amy E. Elkins, "Introduction: The Weaver's Handshake" (through "Modernity Gets Crafty").

*Assignment: Write a short reflection on something surprising that you discovered during the field trip.*

**Form and genre**
Lecture 1
- Lila Shroff, "Datasets as Imagination", blog.
- Chiara Coetzee, "Generating a full-length work of fiction with GPT-4," Medium, March 24, 2023.
- Nina Beguš, "Experimental Narratives: A Comparison of Human Crowdsourced Storytelling and AI Storytelling", ArXiv, October 19, 2023.

# Key

## Final presentations

Each presentation has a weft yarn corresponding to the presentation grade, then some number of variegated orange/yellow/black weft yarns, each representing **100 words** on the student's presentation slides. Some students used zero or near-zero words.

## Course evaluations

Each of the three represented course evaluation metrics – attaining learning goals, instructional quality, and organization – is represented by a row of Danish medallions. The set of five possible responses are represented, from highest to lowest score, with white, light-yellow, yellow, red, and hot dog color weft threads.

The responses were converted into a percentage, and represented as a total of 10 weft yarns per question.

# Key

## Final grades

Final grades were represented using the same color scale as other grades. Disputed grades are represented as weft pile with the changed grade inserted beneath as a crochet chain.

A crochet chain to the following section connects students' final grades to the email threads they initiated after the quarter had ended.

## Post-quarter emails

Grade change petitions are represented by crochet chains. A logistical request (answered in class during the quarter) is represented by plain weave. Email is converted as **100 words** to one weft thread.

A long, thoughtful, and and sincere email about how the course failed to live up to its promise is represented by the Spanish Lace weaving pattern, using handspun wool in "spilling your guts" hues.

## "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep"

Quinn considered weaving a couple hundred rows of fluffy (get it, taking the insult for the humanities literally?) yarn to cover this particular reading, but as one of the only pieces of fiction (and a long one), they then rethought this plan. Instead, they stuffed the warp full of wool from analog sheep they had met over the summer, living at DH scholar Prof. Amy Earhart's ranch. It felt like the least AI thing possible. There are 22 holes in the wool, corresponding to the chapters in the novella.

The other piece of fiction, "Lena", is represented by yarn spun from this same pile of sheep wool.

## Warp

The warp for the entire weaving is student majors, repeated twice (once in a pattern of two, once in a pattern of four):
- Red: CS
- Hot dog: Non-CS engineering
- Orange: Sciences
- Yellow: Social sciences
- White: Humanities