Stanford Text Technologies

2nd ANNUAL COLLEGIUM

CESTA
8th-10th June 2016
Networks are chains, systems, interrelations, threads, wires, links, and connections arranged with crossovers, intersections, and interstices. This Collegium brings together a small group of internationally renowned scholars to explore networks, through intense discussion, as a way of conceptualizing and quantifying the transmission and reception of textual objects and words.

We live in a networked world. The Internet, public transport networks, and power grids make our everyday lives possible; our careers are dependent on networking; and social networking sites provide an online account of our professional and personal capital. Networks have become a metaphor for connectedness, but also a concrete framework for visualizing and measuring complex systems of knowledge in the era of big data.

In textual studies, social networks form between correspondents; between scribes, manuscript compilers, audiences; authors, printers, and publishers; and between characters in a novel or play. Networks provide a model for the transmission of texts, concepts, and metaphors across time and space; they allow us to quantify influence and describe associations. We can also conceptualize as networks relationships that are not normally conceived of as such: between individual poems and miscellanies, or between dramatists and playhouses. But the question of methodology remains. How do we actually use networks? How can we integrate quantitative methods from the fields of mathematics and computer science? What is the role of visualization, and what does it add to our knowledge? How do such developments change the way we engage with primary texts, and how do they change the way we write and disseminate scholarship?
The idea of the Collegium is intensive and friendly scholarly exchange over two days. To this end, all talks are plenary and colleagues are expected to attend the whole event. Sessions are lengthy and allow for thorough presentations with time for questions. The Collegium is attended by a few guests from the Stanford community, but the focus at the table is on invited speakers. We record (on boards) key elements of discussion as the Collegium proceeds.