Discussion

Brad Pasanek: You asked a question, so I'll answer it. I detected two questions, anyway. So the first one was maybe rhetorical, the question of, "From where?"—is that a separate question from "Whose words?" And another question I heard which was, I think, a true question: "How do you account for media, the ways in which a diagram might travel from being scratched on a piece of glass to finding its way into a miscellany or something like that, being printed on a fan?" That's a great question. So I'll take the first, the rhetorical question first, because it has an answer. And I think you and I are on the same wavelength here, which is, "Whose words?"—that's not interesting to me, and I'll take this as an opportunity to just in like three sentences sketch what I'm up to. So I take Roger Lonsdale as one of the animating spirits for the project, the way in which his sort of source finding is so impressive, because of the way it was done and when it was done, sort of before keyword search, and that there's a kind of elegiac way of thinking now that that erudition is replicable by any undergraduate who can go find all the Spenser and Milton allusions in a Gray poem.

The move I make is not… I guess, I'm not interested in this vertical dimension of going back and finding the way in which Spenser got into Milton and then that bit got into Gray. But I'm interested in a more flat or level kind of criticism, which looks at all of the common properties, so all of the poets who have some purchase on that bigram, that piece of language. And for me this is a kind of leveling or flattening activity as you described it. That seems … that's right. And I can't decide how much this is animated by my own sense of, I don't know, nihilism? Darkness? I've been reading—

Oz Kenshur: Newspapers?

Pasanek: I've been reading Malcolm Bull, who I sort of mention in the essay… But he sort of points out—in a way that's been, I think, haunting me and bothering me—that Nietzsche's a powerful nihilist, but he's not a nihilist about one thing … and that's aesthetics. And I'm wondering as I'm taking that poisoned pill, I'm wondering what that'd mean, as an English professor, to give up on sort of reading the good poems or trying to make decisions about which poems are the "good poems." And that's a "From where?" question; the "From where?" questions throw value aside. And then the second question I guess… This is a good question, and it's a question that, yeah, I begin to quell when I think about the poems printed on fans or on fabrics. I don't know. I mean, I can't even begin to be responsible for them. The nearest set of poems, and it's a very large set, that's just on the other side of this project are [sic] all the poems that are published in newspapers. And so I have a colleague, John O'Brien, who's working in parallel—like, he's kind of in the next office over, actually—but he has a project, and he has a team in Nebraska, and he has some graduate students at UVA, and they're trying to identify with OCR technology the poems in newspapers.[1] And they're at it, I mean it's… I don't know when they'll be done, but if he's done before I'm done he's told me that he'll hand these poems over, and I think at that point I'll have a large set of marked bigrams and we'll just point those at that new data-set and see. This is a mutually happy situation. I think we… I

[1] [Editor's Note. See http://projectaida.org]

could help him identify which poems are printed elsewhere, yeah, and which poems are printed first; there would be a question of priority then, to disentangle them. I think that answers—begins to answer, anyway—the questions.

Tim Campbell: I can just say a couple things in response. I mean, I first want to contextualize this by saying "this is a piece that's sort of written with the workshop in mind," so this comes out of my thinking about dress but also out of a project that doesn't have much to say about math or measure. So this is what I know, what I think we could say about these problems from what I know, and I'm just picking up on a couple of things from Mark's comments in particular. So the question of mediation and whose changes these are, like "Where do these changes come from?"—I think is one way of tackling this. And there is a big problem of mediation at the core of this, which is the fashion in the material dress object versus the fashion in the illustration—the twentieth-century accounts, they don't get back to the material dress object. But even in the moment, you have this sense of a kind of triangulation between the tailors who are confronting what people already expect is the fashion and the plates that are in some sense responding to that too. So these fashion plates in the moment are sort of—you know, they're almost up to date but they're also slightly commemorative. So, there's a way in which there's a common form that both the visual text and the material dress object are sort of aspiring to, so I think that's one thing that's helpful. They don't know where these changes come from, but… I mean, the other thing to say is the question of what's personal and what's impersonal… I'm interested in this problem that keeps coming up of the emic and the etic (I think I'm saying it right?). So the experiential place of the poet, the emic side of kind knowing that you're doing allusions but also realizing you're also in this etic place where you can't really fully process what you're doing—and some of this is not available to poets at a certain level. Right? I think this is… I mean, what's interesting to me about bringing the tailor's perspective back to the fore is bringing the emic to the foreground and the hyper-alertness of the contemporary to these things (that other people attribute to a kind of objective social reality that somehow they're not fully aware of). So, you know, fashion is attractive to these quantitative analysts because it's such a perfect system and because it's the embodiment of social determination and that which is without you.

For [Roland] Barthes in particular in thinking about fashion, I mean, fashion is the perfection of system, but he says it's doing two things at once. Right? It's perfect disorder up close. So he [in being able to perceive a "system"] has a very etic perspective. The experience of fashion is a disorder where things change completely from one year to the next by fiat, right?—people *say* what's in fashion. And it's perfect order at a distance. We're talking, like, at the order of a century here, so if you step back far enough you can see the gradations of change perfectly realized. So it's important that fashion combines both of these features, and there's no easy way to reconcile them. There's a moment in Brad's paper too—when you're thinking about transition, the difficulty of accounting for transition—and that's where structuralism collapses in Barthes's *Fashion System*, right? So there's no way to get between those two very easily. Right?

But I want to break that down by having in the foreground something about people's emic sense of the etic (or something like that, right?) already. And so, like, with dress it's not surprising that the output comes out so perfectly measured because it's perfectly measured to begin with. The other thing is… just our fascination with this sort of inevita-

bility, that thing that we're so closely measuring on the front end, it makes perfect sense that it's going to look so perfectly measured at the endpoint later on. Nevertheless, the spectacle of it all seems fascinating. And then, you know … just the novelty thing is just… To recur to Nick's paper and other things we've said: I mean, you have the exhaustion in Brad's paper of a neoclassical vocabulary, and once you've set it aside for a while then you can bring it back and it can work again, and fashion is the constant of the human body so it has that relatively simple template and you have archetypes of dress that you use for a while—in a lot of these accounts for thirty-three years, say—you exhaust it and you turn to the next one. There's three archetypes, and they just keep recurring on the meta-cycle of the century. And so fashion… I mean, fashion must be in some sense, at least—of course we're, we're reducing fashion to the most easily quantifiable features in something like dress length and waist width or something like that. In that sense, fashion must be a simpler system than words—but we're also talking about systems that, you know, they wear out their novelty and they have their own sort of temporality, and you can exhaust them sooner or later, but we're talking about limited systems of novelty, right? So just a few ways of responding, and I'll stop there.

Jesse Molesworth: Brad—Let me first, you know, begin by, you know, congratulating you on your digital study of poetry. I mean, there aren't that many; in the wake of Moretti, the novel has been so dominant. But at the same time I want to ask, you know, "Why poetry?" It seems, you know, every language has bigrams; one of the richest, you know, I think, avenues of criticism in the eighteenth century is the dialogue between the novel and poetry. I mean, it seems to me that, you know, I mean, you criticize Harold Bloom a bit and probably reasonably, but at the same time you're recapitulating what was the flaw in his, you know, kind of lame notion of, you know, Keats reading Milton and thinking "oh, I have to overcome that." I mean, what might be rich about this project is to show precisely how poetry borrows from the novel, which borrows from prose… and you can do that, I think, with digital tools in a way that, you know, would be impossible without them….

Pasanek: You said… You know, there's a measure or there's a score, right?—the term is frequency inverse document score—so you can hold a corpus of poetry against a corpus of prose and actually measure, yeah, which are the words or which are the bigrams that are uniquely poetic and which are uniquely prosaic, and that's (along the way) something I want to try out. The reason, so the "Why poetry?" question is: it gets back to the Philistinism, the sort of Malcolm Bull's charge to sort of think outside of aesthetics or beyond aesthetics. And so poetry seems… I mean we pretend that it's the most fragile, the most delicate of forms and so I'm going to treat it in the most brutal fashion, I think, and I'm going to read it badly on purpose. So one of the gauges that I use for what I'm up to is I walk down the hall and I talk to Chip Tucker and I say, "Chip, Chip!" like, "We don't need to do prosody; we can just count the words in a line." If he looks appropriately horrified, then I know I'm doing it right. And so that's it. So what happens if we treat poetry not as metered but as just sort of, you know, paving stones—that you need to fit a certain quantity of stuff in a line? I mean, that's a way of thinking about poetry that goes back to Horace at least.

Molesworth: But this is the richness of [John] Guillory, Brad—is that… you know… I mean Guillory's argument is that Wordsworth draws a lot from the novel, from the language of the novel and the novel's cultural influence.

Pasanek: But so I think… at this point this is just a counterclaim without basis as yet. I do think there's a *system* of poetry, I want to show what it looks like, and I think part of this project is it involves a kind of enmity. It's like… My Wordsworth loathing (I guess, you know) drives, there's an animus there, and I would like to take eighteenth-century poetry and drop it on Wordsworth's head and show, you know, that this is not a language that he's getting from novels necessarily: this is a culmination of an eighteenth-century tradition. He's just the latest in that series; he's no farther up the Spenser/Milton whatever, right—ladder—than anyone else, and that his words are everyone's words.

Fritz Breithaupt: We haven't had many tensions in the workshop, so I will maybe try to create one. My question is really geared towards Tim, but I think it brings a couple of other things together too. And what I've noticed in the workshop in general already is that for me personally the most interesting question has become the question of when and how and to what effect numbers, measurements, feed back on cognition. I mean, when do people perceive these numbers, and what happens if they do? Is this just an abstraction that we do now as Digital Humanities? That we do this in some way, or is it really something that feeds back: the people suddenly become aware of that, and it has an effect on their cognitive awareness of the environment and how they see it? And for me that has become a question… I mean, basically throughout the workshop. I mean, we had an opening of Sarah [Huebsch]'s musical presentations, where you have a perception of it; you know these numbers come to life. I mean, there's [sic] many answers to this question; it's not a single, sharp answer, but there you perceive it. There's a cognitive difference in the numbers, and suddenly you're aware of numbers too; the numbers play a role in it, the meter and so on and so on. It was a question that I had with Michael [Gavin]'s talk about the cities and proximity there: What part of that is a lived experience, and when does it become a metrical, theoretical element of that. Or Mary [Favret]'s question. (I don't know where Mary is today…)

Mary Favret: behind you.

Breithaupt: …of surprise. Is surprise ultimately a lived experience in the French Revolution, or is it more something where these measures and numbers are just remaining abstract? Does it become a cognitive effect?

And now so, Tim, what I find—and I'm asking you this question two ways—where does this happen? And if I read you correctly, or if I translate your paper into my question, I get a simple answer. And your answer—I like that answer!—but you can say [my interpretation] is the wrong answer. Basically so: when do numbers, these quantitative metric numbers, become part of our experience, of our awareness? Your answer seems to be, "It's in the moment where we translate them back to the body." So it's not the moment of abstraction that we can see, the moment of the cognitive act—the tailor does it and so on and so on—but it's rather when the metric systems translate it back to a more bodily awareness of it. So it's a way back from abstraction. That's the moment where the num-

bers cognitively match up. In the moment it becomes… Like, in the reading of Wordsworth's "Thorn,"—it's not when we have the metric numbers there but rather when they come to be translated back to the cause (or the dressing) of that. So that movement from numbers to body is the moment of the—of the cognitive development in that context. And so this is why I'm saying there's some tension: for some people here, it was—I mean, I took the latest statement from Brad as a polemical—"oh, no! There's no cognitive awareness that we need. This is a metric-abstractual level that we can study in itself. The cognitive effect in a way does not concern me: Wordsworth is just like anyone else in a big series… He's… there's no difference there." Which to me… I don't know; there's something different there. I mean, that is the question of, "Does it translate back into perception or cognition in some way?" It's not just an act later. So maybe we could write some papers here that could take a different stance on that. But my first question is for Tim here: How would you say that? What would *your* real answer be to the question: "How do numbers, metric numbers, re-tool cognition, or which role do they play there?"

Campbell: Yeah, well, I mean… it's alienation or misrecognition in Wordsworth there, right? Failure to accord with the body in some way, right? The problem with this paper is that the tailors don't have numbers. There's just no number. You never get back to the number. Right? So you're… that's why you can be in this realm where you're not so worried about it. I should say, like… I mean we should complicate Wordsworth, of course, because there is: I mean, there's number but there's also abstraction, and, like, the meter of a line doesn't seem like "number" in the sense you're describing. Right? "A difference from the world" is how Wordsworth accounts for it, or lived reality or something like that, that kind of abstraction is what Wordsworth likes. So numbers as—I don't know, maybe that makes sense of it then—is that when it comes back to the body, but "body" as, like, the thing that's reciting the poem. Right? The reader reading the meter of the poem; you *want* it in the body. So there is that paradox. I mean, the other thing about Wordsworth is—as Rachel will tell you better than I can—Wordsworth loves geometry, so when math approaches *form* it's good. So numbers, digits, might be bad in certain ways, but the form of numbers, the kind of platonic form of the geometrical, is a different story, maybe.

Rachel Feder: Or maybe geometry is true for Wordsworth? Euclidian geometry is true, whereas algebra is always signaling a way of knowing.

Campbell: And he doesn't have any trouble imposing geometry in a certain, like, platonic formal way, on the landscape. So this is the contradiction of Wordsworth. Right?

Feder: One of many.

Pasanek: Can I—well, I was going to read out some Wordsworth. So he makes a distinction (it's maybe the same distinction you're making) and I'm going to refuse it. So we can have an argument then. So here's Wordsworth, this is in a note to "The Thorn" in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*: "Words, a Poet's words more particularly, ought to be weighed in the balance of feeling and not measured in the space which they occupy upon paper." So, right, I mean that's a… like, "weighed in the balance of feeling" is there a

measure, is there quantification there? I mean, I don't—actually, I'm not sure of the word I want—but he does use the word "measure" on the other side of that conjunction: "not measured in the space which they occupy on paper." I am explicitly measuring the space which they occupy on paper. That's this project. But I don't think that work is divorced from experience, so I think one of the things—and this is performative, so maybe I have to *say* that I'm doing this so that you understand—is that I've slowed down the algorithm of distant reading, right, that normally runs and seems to just churn, so that you can see there's a little man inside of it: that's me. Right? And every time I highlight a two-word phrase—I did that, right?—and there was a moment where I experienced the two-word phrase, and I savored it on my tongue, and I clicked it with my mouse, and then the robots multiply the effort. So—

Nush Powell: So you kind of *are* Wordsworth. … [laughter]

Pasanek: Which is to say… I'll take that as a compliment, maybe, I don't know. See, I don't like Wordsworth. But it's only to say that there's still a critic at work here—it's not just a machine. And then we… I think the profession gets confused about this when they start arguing about close and distant reading. I mean: algorithms are made by people; they don't make themselves as yet. And so there's an opportunity to have some experience. I mean, if you're truly weird about it, if you're like Ian Bogost, right, the experience is down in the photo-receptors of the machine that's, you know, picking up photons. There's actual experience there according to him. I don't believe that, but we don't have to let go of our subjectivity, of our experience. Like, I want to let go of my taste, I guess. Right? So this is the minima. Like, I want to get down to a place where I'm not appraising, per se, but I'm still there. And shortly before I came here I read a piece—I don't know, is he here? Michel Chaouli wrote a piece about style. It's brilliant; it's really good.

Kenshur: He's here at the university.

Pasanek: Okay. Tell him I'm having a fanboy moment. But his point is that that's the, this is the mark of criticism, that, like, you know, Barthes did it—and we know Barthes did it because there's a way in which only Barthes would do that. Right? So, like, there's been this question over the last couple of days, like, "Could only Nick Paige do this?" I don't know. Right? I mean, like, for my project, like: only I would want to do this. Like, I don't know. Only, like, I'm really good at boredom, I don't know. Yeah, the horror of existence is, like, there's a kind of anesthesia involved in marking these two-word phrases that, you know, keeps me here. And that's to say not that I'm special or have a particular kind of insight, but there is some trace of me left, you know, when I mark the bigrams.

Vareschi: So we have two hooks, and one of the hooks jumps the queue.

Tracey Hutchings-Goetz: Thanks. This just reminded me of a conversation I had with Max [Nagano] last night, which was that to a certain extent you're actually kind of re-creating, reproducing eighteenth-century reading practices or perhaps even the reading practices of the "bad" eighteenth-century poets, right?

Pasanek: Yeah, I like that better.

Rob Schneider: Just building on what was said… I mean, it goes back to the first presentation on music; my comment then, what I really appreciated, it seems to me—and you will correct me, of course—that in the eighteenth century you have musical pieces that are based upon dance (sarabande and minuet) and then it seems to be less so in the nineteenth century (although we do have "dances," but they're not… you don't imagine them being *danced*. The "Hungarian dances" of Brahms are not dances the way the minuets of Bach are earlier). And so it seems to me in that case we have cognition and embodiment of meter and measure not just by the experts, not just by performers, but by the ladies and gentlemen enacting that music, dancing to that music. And that's a sort of periodicity that kind of ends… in the sense that that embodiment of dance—insofar as dances are not being produced, or music's not being produced primarily in the genre of the dance—that sort of peters out.

But here: it's going the other way around. Even though you say these tailors are not using numbers, there's still measurement and awareness by not just the tailors but of the wearer of the measurement. So it seems to me that we've got, according to the genre, according to the cultural experience, we've got the movement going in different directions: the decline of the body's sensitivity, cognition, with the numbers and an *increase* of…— So, we have to be careful with this, with a narrative which pushes us in one direction when we think of numbers and measurement as being some part of "modern" experience.

Campbell: There's just a small comment, just the fixity of dress, because I was thinking of the outrageous claim that dress is the most, the best side of measurement in the moment, I was like, "What else can we think about?" It's music and dancing but also food—I was thinking about measuring. But dress has a kind of fixity—this is the paradox—it's, like, embodied, but you have those strips of paper that are just there and then you have the clothes that are made. Right? So there's a kind of fixity maybe about that practice of measure that makes dress also interesting.

Rebecca Spang: Two hooks related to the Tim/Fritz conversation. First is to say that eighteenth-century cookbooks—and, in fact, well into the nineteenth-century—don't specify measures, except "some." So it's relentlessly un-metric, and there aren't temperatures set. So this really is a technical knowledge that is left to the body and the senses of the cook.

The other thing I was going to say with reference to alienation is an experience that I imagine most of the women in this room, and maybe some of the men, have had, which is the, being-in-a-fitting-room-and-thinking: "Oh, I'm really a size… whatever."

Powell: And particularly the insistence that no woman understands her own bra size? Like, how many listicles have been written.

Spang: But the way in which that measuring which, you know, in fact is a sort of objective truth—you know, "I'm not going to fit into (I dunno) a size children's 6X anymore"…

unidentified: Rebecca Spang problems.

Powell: It's a hard day for all of us. [laughter]

Spang: I'm trying to be as absurd as possible… But that doesn't just happen. So there is some, like, real truth there; and on the other hand, it's a completely made up system of numbers that has in fact changed over time. You know, in 1955 I'm a size 16 or something. So just some thoughts on that lived experience of numbers that come back to your body and tell you something about your body that you then experience as a truth.

Sarah Huebsch: Back to Rob's comment. So the gist about the dances. So the dances are still being danced, but there's a sense that there's a dance suite that people aren't dancing to and there's an embodiment to dance that they do when they're listening to it. And that persists much, there's a persistence of that idea much later than you would think because social dance (even now, but certainly into the early twentieth century) has corollaries in music.

But, for example, like a Ravel waltz that spins out of control is not one that you would dance to, but there's still a sense that you have a familiarity, I think, with the motions, and I think we can underestimate the value that the embodiment of dance has. Since we don't have it so persistently now I think we're unfamiliar with that. But so far as the bearing on your paper: in music there's a lot of consistency in measurement as far as it's there for making instruments, right, which is sort of different from the measurement of the time of the music. And you do end up with the object and the plan. And so you have the consistency of pitch and you're trying to make the same object over and over again, like a cabinet maker or something. But with dress you're making different objects and— even though it's the same person, if a woman gets pregnant or something you're still making a different object for her. How is that reconciled either in the poetry, right, or just by the tailors themselves?

Campbell: How do tailors reconcile making a different object each time?

Huebsch: Right. If they don't have measurements. I mean, do they just have other images, like, "This is Suzie before she was pregnant, and this is Suzie now"?

Campbell: Well I guess you've got… I guess you could come in again and get measured. Bodies change too, of course. This isn't perfection, because you might gain or lose a few pounds and your clothes might fit less well. But tailors… I mean, the rhetoric of this piece in particular, *The Tailor's Guide*, is always talking about, you're always padding or adjusting. And the other thing is, right, you're making an individual object for an individualized body, but what's *not* individualizing is that you're helping that body aspire to a general form of dress. So it's a mixed bag I guess. Right? It has to be perfectly responsive to the oddities of that body but in order to help that body conform to the standard.

Vareschi: Did you have a hook?

Michael Gavin: Yeah, I had a hook a while ago; I'm not sure if it's still "a hook"—if that's okay? I wanted to pick up on the question of experience and the affect or the experience of numbers. It seems to me … when I heard that question, it seems to me that there are at least a couple different kinds of counting that we've looked at; there's probably more than that, but I've sort of grouped them into two. Like, on one hand you could take an already existing object and decompose it into countable parts and as we saw yesterday (I mean, no one's mentioned the discussion yesterday), when you're doing that with people, you're taking a person and decomposing them into their units of labor that strikes me as having a very different kind of effect—there's something very different at stake in quantification there, with very different stakes, [but it's] kind of similar to the task of, like, taking some great novel and breaking it into pieces and treating it as just a bag of words or something like that. You have an object that is already recognized as such and you're abstracting over it and decomposing, you're doing kind of conceptual violence to it.

It seems to me to be a little bit different from the kind of stuff Brad's doing where, like… these bigrams where if you find like eight of them, those eight instances weren't themselves an object. Like, you have to assemble that heap. You know what I mean? And then someone's like, "Much of the counting I did with my paper is about finding things that… counting things that I'm *saying* are similar and assembling them and treating them as a kind of common object." And I don't know. So I'm curious if that resonates with you guys. I mean that as a question for you actually, Brad.

Pasanek: I think that's right. That's part of my sense that I'm changing my dimension, so that I'm going from vertical to horizontal. It's something like that: that you would see horizontally maybe different kinds of objects. I don't know if they're being discovered or invented, right, but they're there. But the shape of them as a kind of network or as a heap is not immediately apparent until this work's been done, or until my work's been multiplied by the robot.

I don't know, this might be a non sequitur, but it's something that I've been wanting to say so I might just stick it in here. Wordsworth does a particular kind of counting which I think is interesting. It might be, like, an echt-bigram way of counting, so that he looks at the daffodils and he's like, "Ten thousand." Like, that's how poets count. Right? Or: "host." Like, "How many daffodils?" "Host." Right? And I think that's a kind of counting. Right? That's how poets count. For poets things come in tens, thousands, and ten thousands. Right?

Mary Favret: So ten thousand is effectively the poet's "kajillion." It comes from the Greek. So the Greek word for ten thousand is "myriad," and it really means "more than I can count." So we say—because "a million," we can count that high—so we say "kajillion" or "googolplex" or something like that. But for them, throughout the eighteenth century and nineteenth century, they say: "ten thousand." Or Coleridge will say: "ten times ten thousand," you know? But it's just a magic number. It means, you know, "myriad." So it is the poet's "kajillion."

Campbell: Right. And I just want to, just want to broaden the numbers to Coleridge's abolitionist writing in the same moment. He's counting up 180 million slaves, most of

whom are killed in the process of becoming slaves, and so he's using a similar kind of poetic numbering but with a kind of… you know, the devastating double charge of statistics too. So those things bleeding into one another… worth thinking about.

Breithaupt: A very quick response to Michael. I agree; I think we have different measures of measurement, different forms of quantification. I would stress I think with Tim a little bit that there is a human uniqueness in this. The human is not just an object like other objects, so that you take one thing as object, or a human being as object; because the human can actually experience things himself/herself—the body is not an artificial standard of measurement. So in that sense I will say there could be—I agree that is the one form: the human body as the standard of any measurement; a very andro- androcentric view of things would be one form of measurement. And then the assembling of disparate objects that are not naturally linked: so that is probably a different cognitive act. But then you have some things in between. Like yesterday afternoon's session, we had the corpses and such. Yes, that is human experience that can be used as a standard, but it can also already be on a different order. So mostly agreeing, but with one little caveat….

Campbell: Can I, just making explicit something very obvious, of course? But feet, we're talking about feet and they're… I mean, at some point that's someone's foot. There's a gothic haunting by other bodies from the past that then becomes our abstraction; and ells (fabric measure), elbows.

Roberts: Just to come at this from an outside perspective for a moment, I'm thinking of conversations I've had recently with my graduate students, and I have a number of them now starting to work in the seventeenth century and … I guess this is a comment on the "myriad" idea. They come to me so often with these numbers they draw from seventeenth-century sources and they say, "Well, I've got a specific number" (because I am always saying, "Can you quantify this?") and I'm always having to say to them, "These numbers are… they're much more like adjectives in the seventeenth century, ways of describing. They're not numbers you should be trusting at all."

Favret: They're words; they're words.

Roberts: Exactly: they're words. Because the numbers are just wild. And I think one of the most wonderful examples I have is from a Spanish conquistador who was describing the Aztec skulls that he sees, and he comes along and he says—it's Bernal Díaz—and he says, "As we were moving through Tenochtitlan we saw this rack of a hundred thousand skulls," and then he says—I think he says "136,000 skulls" or something like that—and then he goes on. And I remember one of the students in class one time saying to me: "How did he count those?" And I said, "That's the point; he's not. It's just … this number is some sort of way of assigning a word to what he sees. It's an exaggeration to stress a *qualitative* idea. It's not quantitative." And see, then a very different sense of numeracy emerged in the eighteenth century. And I'm struck by the fact that even unconsciously I won't critique students for numbers they draw out of eighteenth-century sources as much. I'll say, "Okay, well that's when numeracy changes and people's ideas about how to use

numbers change. And these are more precise," but any they bring me in the seventeenth century I'll say, "Eh, I'm doubtful."

Vareschi: Nush?

Powell: This is a question, not a hook. Is that okay?

Vareschi: Mmm-hmm. We are onto questions.

Powell: Okay. Great. So to preface this: Brad, I'm sort of, kind of half a surface reader and like many people I've sort of struggled with finding digital humanities fascinating but ultimately not really knowing its purpose, but I find this electrically clarifying, what you say. Like, the purpose is "to get rid of Wordsworth"—thank you for that, that was something I needed to hear. Furthermore, my friend and colleague, Jesse Molesworth, is someone I respect tremendously. So I want to go back to his question or comment, which I will summarize as, "Blah, blah, blah novels."

Molesworth: That's my entire career corpus of criticism.

Powell: I know! And you can get a lot of good stuff out of "blah, blah, blah." Good for you. Yeah, I'm a genre person, not a novel person, but it's kind of a funny thing to be *in* the eighteenth century. So you go back to the seventeenth century where we're not really sure that they care about numbers; in the eighteenth century, they don't really care about genre and that's something that we impose. It's not that there's no concept of genre in the eighteenth century, but they'll sort of pick it up and put it down again when something more interesting comes along. So my question is, "Blah, blah, blah theatre." Like… Here's the problem with talking about poetry in the eighteenth century: What even is poetry? Right? Like, what about acrostics and anagrams? But also, like, what about John Dryden's Godawful two-part *Conquest of Granada* written entirely in heroic couplets. Like, it's certainly verse, and I love what you do with [Simon] Jarvis, by the way, in this piece because I use Jarvis to kind of justify my own theory of pedagogy when it comes to poetics—I kind of reject and then reverse [him]. So I think that's a distortion that D.H. has yet to really grapple with very well, is like, "Okay, but what even is a novel?"—I don't think it exists. And Moretti just… you know, he doesn't have a satisfactory answer for that. What is poetry? And you can try to come at this the way you're describing John O'Brien doing which is like, "Well, I'm just looking at verse that appears in newspapers." It's like: "Okay, those are boundaries that we can kind of see and draw; although then: what is a newspaper?" You know, you can kind of follow turtles all the way down here. But I am wondering, how do you go about determining what is and is not a poem? Like, I don't care about good poem/bad poem/medium poem, but, like: what counts as a poem?

Pasanek: So my bad answer is—I think it's in my paper, but it's brief—it's just, so it's "words stacked verse-wise." Right? So Dryden's verse drama would count. And the DH take on this would be, "Are there lines and line groups?" So is the tagging such that the text doesn't hit the margin and keep running? Does it get cut somewhere? And if it gets cut somewhere it's verse for me. And that means, yeah… So when I, like, suck verse out

of the TCP archives[2] I get everything that's got line tags around it, and so some of those things are epigraphs and some of those things are, I don't know. And some of those things I'm not even sure, it's such a zoo, I don't even know yet. Some of those things I might decide are not in verse form. I think my sense is if it's got line group or line tags kind of on it then it's verse. And that's something about how it's appearing on the page.

Powell: Well but then you do have… to go back to "blah blah blah novels" …

Pasanek: Right. So I'm going to get the verse out of novels too, because that suction just pulls, like, it will pull the verse out of all the novels too.

Powell: Which is excellent; pull it all out. But, I mean, there are also—I mean, not tons of them—but there are moments in novels where there are line breaks but it's not for… Like, you know, the rape scene in *Clarissa* or, I mean, the aftermath of the rape in Clarissa. I mean, you could argue that's poetry… Maybe a better example would be, you know, in *Captain Singleton* there's this great moment—it's great because there's no real reason for it. But, like, towards the end of the novel when William and Bob have decided to kind of like abscond with all the pirates' money they leave a note telling, like, the first lieutenant, "Run!" you know, "We saw a ship!" and for whatever reason this little two-line note is, like, offset in the… and there's no reason for it, because: Defoe. Like it's not important, it's not poetic. "Run, Ensign Williams!" Like, it's just, like, kind of in there in the middle of the page. And of course, like, any reproduction of the novel because, like, Defoe chose to do that, you reproduce the weird typographical whatever's going on. So it's interesting that one of the effects of what you're doing is to take that "I don't know what it is" and basically, like, mark it as verse.

Pasanek: I'm going to overmark, and in some cases I'll undermark, I guess. I mean, it'll be interesting to know; I'll have to check to see if *Captain Singleton* made it in. There's another intelligence here, right.

Powell: Actually, let me know.

Pasanek: Yeah, yeah, I mean, that's interesting. There's another… I would guess not, because one of the ways those tags got on the TCP texts anyway—and this is different depending on what archive we're talking about—but right now I've mostly just been working with the TCP archives and there was another human intelligence preceding mine (somewhere in Hyderabad or Manila or wherever) that keyed the thing and they were told to put the tags on. So I don't know what the structure of, you know, management was, but it could be that, like, somebody was wandering around in this warehouse as people were typing and saying, "No, no, no, that's prose. Don't use the line in coding." But it's certainly… I'm getting epigraphs for sure, I know that. But I'm just starting, so there's a lot of stuff and I don't even know what's in there. It's rather woolly.

Powell: It's fascinating.

[2] Editor's Note: https://www.textcreationpartnership.org/tcp-ecco/

Pasanek: But yeah, I'm sort of excited to get… to be surprised by things that I don't think are verse appearing as verse, yeah.

Campbell: And just a quick—Wordsworth sometimes says there's no difference between poetry and prose, so he's kind of on your side.

Pasanek: Maybe, yeah. So I like to perform, you know, the loathing; but he's not *that* bad, maybe. I don't know. Maybe it's like in nineteen…, You know, in 1796 we could still be friends or… I don't know, like, maybe, but it'd be a strained relationship and I think I'd give up on him at some point.

Vareschi: Just a quick note on genre: Theater is the place where genre *does* matter. On playbills, on cataloging, at least from Kirkman. So in the seventeenth century, genre is the marker and the defining term for the theater, more so than author, even sometimes more so than players. So that is the one space and I mean, yeah, we can talk more about that offline, but we have a hook.

Hutchings-Goetz: Well that was precisely my hook, which was that I'm so glad that you're doing theater also, because to not include *Tragedy of Tragedies*, right, *Tom Thumb*, in this, right? What is that if not a heaping of bigrams. Right? It's bad poetry, you know—"Ten thousand giants before the"—you know, right? So I'm so glad that that's included in there.

Pasanek: A lot of songs… songs tend not to have bigrams in them, so that's a very early kind of observation. So all the airs that appear in different semi-musical/semi-operatic theater….

Powell: Do broadsides make it in?

Pasanek: No. So it's… I mean, I come to these premade archives, and so I guess I could go and try to visit the broadside archive at Santa Barbara and suck that in to. I don't know if that'd be, that's the, if it's like a Hoover-like way in which we can go about this.

Nick Valvo: So this is a question that's kind of in the same spirit as Nush's, maybe. And I want to think, and I want to include both of you in this, I think it could be interesting, I hope… And this is a question about occasion or topicality, which is in some sense so hostile to Brad's project, but I think actually (maybe, kind of) comes around the other side and becomes interesting again. I'm wondering if one way of thinking about the arrival of new bigrams—which you will discover in this thing, right? there will be ones that show up for the first time—and I'm wondering if that ends up giving you a kind of quantitative approach to the problems of topicality which have kind of haunted our profession since its origin. You know, where all of a sudden some historically recognizable individual arrives, like all of a sudden Admiral Nelson is in a poem. You know? But I also wanted to think about that in terms of clothing. And, you know, I've read Ribeiro and she has all of this interesting stuff about topical prints for fabric that have sort of like… you know, like wearing a gown that has like a balloon on it. You know what I'm talking about? But also

so many of these actually-existing garments that people have are being remade from the same stuff to suit—I mean, this is my understanding—to suit the changing fashions of, you know. So you'll have a dress that's been recut three times, for instance, over four years, perhaps for different individuals, and it still has a balloon on it. Like, do you see what I'm saying? And so there's this way that there's this kind of weird, gradual kind of dissolution of the referentiality of that garment that's this… I don't know, I haven't read your book yet but I'm really excited to and I suspect you have something really smart to say about that. So that's my question.

Campbell: So yes that's true. So, I mean, one of the things to say—it depends on what dress you're talking about. It's true that dress is often modified. It's particularly true as an archival problem for us that almost all eighteenth century dress has been modified, so it's hard to know its original state. Those are just generalities. Like the specific referentiality, I mean, I guess one of the—I'm not thinking about topicality, exactly, I don't…—but just, you know, things like printed textiles that are more minutely in touch with a kind of micro-moment of fashion. I mean, those tend, especially if you're looking down the social spectrum or something like that, it tends to: the poor get tailored clothes but only every once in a while, special occasions in life or something like that. So maybe if you look at the community of the poor there's enough people every so often about to be married so they have fashionable clothes that there's still a kind of sense of it. But we're talking—you know, people do buy handkerchiefs once a year and those kinds of things. They're also the things that wear out quickly, so there is kind of built into the system, like, the more immediate and ephemeral does tend to appear more in the exhaustible accessory clothing item.

Valvo: At the Walpole we just saw a silk handkerchief with basically a political cartoon printed on it about the performance. I mean, does that interest you at all?

Pasanek: It is interesting to me. I'm not sure what to do with… I mean, I don't yet have a set protocol for identifying modifiers, I guess, so there are some that I'm not sure I want to mark them or not. So I know that I don't want to mark possessive pronouns. Those are uninteresting to me. But that's a modifier that would go in front of a head, like, "her" dress. But I'm not sure what to do with other kinds of possession. So, like, "Nelson's victory," right? Something like that, I don't know; I haven't started yet… for sure. Right? Like, at some point I have to say, "Go!" and I will clear the database, bring the poems in and the timestamps will start marking this project in earnest, but I need a protocol first in order to do that because I have to keep doing the same thing the whole time that I'm marking bigrams. So I don't know. I would take it you'd want me maybe to mark "Nelson's victory," right?

Valvo: Oh, I don't know if I want that. Like, I'm wondering how you're thinking about it.

Pasanek: Yeah, I'm not sure how I feel about it yet, so this is one of the reasons I'm here. Please help me.

Valvo: It might be that one of the positive things about your project is that it gets us away from caring so much about immediate referentiality that, like, and just being *Tale of a Tub* again.

Pasanek: Right. But then we have, so, like, "Athena's white arms" or something like that, or… no, it's "Juno's white arms." Who has white arms? Juno, I guess, typically, yeah, yeah, yeah, which is a different kind of piece of diction that maybe I do want. It's like maybe that "ten thousand" which, yeah, as I was looking through modifiers I was like, "Oh, they're all sorts of numbers in here, but only certain numbers," and the numbers I think I want to mark are because they struck me as being poetic. I don't know.

I have things I want to say to Tim. Am I allowed to do that? I don't know, but the one is, like, there's some set of subterranean quotations we can pass back and forth. Like, one of them is "language is the dress of thought"… but there's this other thing that I just, it came up in a grad class a couple weeks ago. So it's—and I didn't know about tailors' hells—but the tailors' hells, can you tell us more about this? It's like this space where all these scraps and ribbons and bits go, and it's used in the eighteenth century to talk about poetic diction and recycling. So there are critics in the eighteenth century who are thinking about those last bits and scraps in terms of fabrics that are being then re-stitched together crazy-quilt-like. And I know, like, from Stallybrass's book,[3] that dress and fashion in the theaters—there's some ecosystem that goes, like, "Wealthy woman buys dress, gives it to servant, winds up on stage" or, I don't know, maybe "starts on the stage," whatever—but there are these, like, pieces of fabric are descending in some way but they are actually then sublimed into paper when the rag pickers get them, and they're turned into the medium on which these poems are actually printed, so Stallybrass is like: "This dress is there and then, like, twenty years on it's actually the thing that the play is printed on," which is for him a really nice kind of ecosystem. But I don't know. So that kind of circle I like.

Campbell: Yeah, the theater's a particular site of remainder too because they keep old clothes for a long time and then they end up having clothes that still have gold in them that are better carriers of value than—so yeah, we're also talking around, like, the delay, the remainder, the un-levelness of the world of dress. For instance, when you look around your…like with poetry, that's partly old and not just "new." And so what I didn't cite—because you asked about the commemorative in particular, but, I didn't say this, and this is partly the last book—but when you're talking about contemporary dress you're also talking about, like, talking anecdotally about the portraits of your ancestors all the time, and you're always marking what's right now against what was. But the hyper-alertness to the contemporary that fashion produces for everyone (even if you don't have the newest dress) makes you more alert to the variegated world. So even though there is old stuff around, you're more alert to the fact of how precisely old it is. Right? So these cycles, you know, as they're depicted in the fashion plates, it's really selective; but that selective basis point gives you a perspective on the world and on how old things are.

Vareschi: So next on my list I have… Mary? No? Nick Paige? Wait—is there a hook?

[3] Editor's Note: Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Whitney Sperrazza: It's not really a hook, but I would feel remiss as a representative of the early modern period in the room not to mention—this is off your comment, Brad—about the tailors'… was it the "hall"?

Pasanek: "Hell"? I think it's hell, as in "an infernal place underneath where the tailor works and sits."

Sperrazza: Right. So you mentioned this is brought up in the eighteenth century a lot to talk about, like, scraps of poetry. Margaret Cavendish talks about it in relation to her *handwriting*. And so it goes back kind of to Fritz's point about embodiment, and it's really an interesting moment where she's really materializing the labor, the bodily labor time of the poet in a way that resonates with what you said.

Nick Paige: So I just had a comment and a few questions. And so my first comment is that after Rachel's paper yesterday I was convinced that for my personal edification I needed to read Wordsworth and now I don't need to read him anymore, so thank you both for that cycle. I guess my question would be, "How would we actually put together Brad, your project with what Rebecca and Simon talked from yesterday?" I mean, isn't there kind of a question of surprising-ness in terms of the bigrams? Right? I mean, in one sense you're kind of, you're tracing the spread of not quite topoi—I mean, right, at one point you call them clichés—but, I mean, is there a way in which we could actually analyze diachronically how surprising poetic diction is at any one period. Right? I don't know how that actually … I couldn't grasp all those surprising equations and so on, but that kind of strikes me. And then I just kind of have some questions about your protocol. So in your metadata—so when you mention, right, correcting for first date of publication, then presumably you also keep track of which occurrences are occurring in reprint, right, and then do you do things like also try to indicate whether a poem is parodic, for example? You mention the problem of parody. Are you going to keep track? I'm just kind of wondering then to what extent you're going to be able to go back in, if you're going to be able to say, "Okay, so this is… so if we look at what's going on including reprints, we see we've got this kind of spread of a given bigram but then if we cut that out and only take new poems, we see this; if we take parody out, we get this…" and that sort of thing and maybe it would be actually interesting to then… "okay, dramatic poetry does this…". I mean, I would imagine there would be so much traveling between dramatic poetry and, say, lyric poetry that you wouldn't really have a problem or a difference. But anyway, I thought it was a fantastically interesting project. The melancholy nature of it, there's an aesthetic—the kind of lived-reaction to numbers, that you seem to live them as this kind of spiritually deflating experience into melancholy, right? Whereas for me, I observe things going up and down and for me there's this relief that, you know, our individual labors aren't that important. [laughter] This is, like, completely antithetical to that whole affect for me this kind of scholarship produces, which is one of my own just kind of—I'm just in the wave, in the wave going through. But it's not melancholy for me, but for you, you have the heaps of Josephine Miles's documents there so that's, like, really kind of weighty. Anyway, that's a lot of stuff, but I guess the important thing was a question on exactly what your protocols are and then the part about surprising-ness is just… I

don't know if you think, Rebecca—what you would make of it, coming out of your study, what you're working on…

Spang: Right. Well I don't have a strong enough sense of how Brad's material is organized to… could you do a sort of chronological slice through and make, "Okay, so here are all the bigrams from 1719/1720/1721/1722?" Yeah, well then you certainly could….

Pasanek: Yeah, those measures can be applied.

Spang: Yeah. So then you certainly could do that.

Pasanek: I'm starting… Like this is a kind of dumb DH project; that too is part of the performance, that this is a, right, like, I'm not using the fancy methods yet, but maybe on the back-end I will. And so yeah, mutual information is an interesting measure, but I feel like starting with mutual information is always alienating. Like, in my experience of talking to audiences (like, who are not DH audiences), I like to deflate first. Right? Which is like, "I'm not doing anything we don't already do," which is, like, "You underline things; I hit them with my cursor." And, like, look at what Josephine Miles is doing. She did this first and she's a champion close reader. Like, that's what I'm doing.

But so I think, yeah, surprisingness—it would be fun to use those measures and figure out who the most surprising poets are. That would just be fun to say. And maybe Wordsworth is not very surprising. Right? That too would be fun to say. But the question of parody is, yeah, I want to keep track of those but there's not yet a place in the database tables, there's not a line to say, "This is parody." But I do, I imagine… I mean one of the ways in which I'm going to sort poems as reprints is once I've marked bigrams, poems that share a lot of bigrams I need to investigate: I need to look at and say, "Is this a rewriting, or did the same author produce these two poems?" So, "Was this plagiarized, or was it a parody, or what is it?" But one of the ways I can check and connect two poems is if they share, you know, eight of ten bigrams, something like that. And if they're sharing eight of ten bigrams something is going on; it's not clear what yet. But yeah, that's also work for a later date, and I'm not sure if that's something I want to do automatically or something I want to do by hand.

Roman Ivanovitch: I had I guess a comment—this is for Brad—and some of what you've talked about is something that's going on in eighteenth-century music studies as well… which has tended over the last few years to … to look particularly at the formulaic and commonplace, and to look at some three or four notes and kind of three- or four-note chunks and then sort of filter through schema theory. But the aim of that—I mean, it does a couple of things. One is to sort of to bring to light the everyday (sort of) quotidian language in which, sort of, great composers were embedded, but also sort of to try to demystify the music of the Mozarts and the Haydns and the Beethovens. So the project that you're describing actually sort of is very similar, at least in what I've seen, where you trace sort of the life cycle of the schema: it appears and first of all it's novel and then it sort of becomes ubiquitous and then it becomes sort of relatively rare. And it's, so it's a linguistic thing as well—it's something people no longer use or no longer have access to. It traces a sort of bell curve. And I was so struck by how that seems almost the opposite

shape from *your* description. Okay, so it'd go out of fashion, out of use, and then later on once they becomes [*unintelligible*] they return. So at least in the musical realm there's a claim that these forms become something like "common property," which at least lets you sort of explain how it is that they keep cropping up over time. So getting back to something you just said: which is when a bigram appears again is there implicitly a claim that there has to be some sort of a relationship between those two things, or is it just an accident?

Pasanek: Yeah, there's a sort of… This is, like the question I still want Nick [Paige] to answer or think more about, which is: "Is *this* counterfactual—I am forgetting the term now—fiction the same as *that* counterfactual fiction?" Yeah—"pseudofactual," thank you, yeah… In the case of the bigrams, I mean, they're just graphemes and so there's so many of them in the modifier and in the head and so when it comes back it's "the same thing" and it's not… I don't know, not to sound like Derrida, I guess… But one of the things, like in the very first version of this study (which I did in, like, 2009 or something like that), I saw that bimodal shape and I keep seeing that bimodal shape. So I don't know, at this point I may be hallucinating it, but I think it's there and I think that's one of the things that Wordsworth is reacting to when he's having his freak-out in the "Appendix" and in the "Preface" because the language of the Augustan moment—the '20s and '30s—is coming back. And it really is. And it washes, I mean, he sees it coming to wash over him and I don't think he … he doesn't want to catch that wave. Yeah, that's part of it. I mean, it's amusing that he's like, that he says, you know, "The language of Milton and Dryden" because that's the language we're talking about. But he describes that, as if it's somehow sunk beneath this other inane, gaudy, novelistic language. But, in fact, the language that's coming to get him is the language of Milton and Dryden and it's [become] cliché because the laboring-class poets, the women, the enslaved Africans who are writing verse are all using that language and they're using it in a way that looks parasitic, I think (if you're Wordsworth), but that kind of, that ability of a certain… strata? (I don't know) of poets to participate in poetry is interesting to me, and they can sound neoclassical because they go to Pope's translation of the *Iliad*: "I'm Stephen Duck. I don't know Greek, but I can memorize Milton or I can pull bigrams out of Pope's translation of the *Iliad* and I can write the same kinds of poems that Dryden does." I think for Wordsworth that's disturbing—that's part of what's disturbing him. He's going to call it "the market" (the mechanical operation of some kind of automatic force), but I don't know. I mean, it has this shape, it's coming back, and part of what this wave is is all these new voices that are using the old words.

Vareschi: Sarah.
Sarah Grandin: This is a question for Tim. So I have a question about how we bring technical sources in dialogue with literature or, in my case, art. So you do a really beautiful job of identifying how Wordsworth, Walter Scott, and *The Complete Tailor's Guide* are sort of channeling this transition in embodied measurement through this negotiation between the measured and the contingent, the unit and the body. But how are you thinking about these sources in relation to each other? Is your analysis of the rhetoric of *The Tailor's Guide* a way for you to put into words this sort of nonverbal culture of fashion and it's from there that you can sort of make an argument for how—I don't know what

the other poets are that you're planning on including—but how they're engaging with the culture of measurement?

Campbell: So the question is whether the rhetoric of *The Tailor's Guide* itself matters for, or speaks directly to, the literary texts? Am I hearing you right?

Grandin: Well, I didn't read you as saying that, it didn't seem to me that you were saying that Wordsworth or Walter Scott were reading...[*The Tailor's Guide*].

Campbell: That's right.

Grandin: Yeah. Right. So I'm saying, "How are *you*…?" You know, I see that you're reading them to make a similar argument, so I'm wondering how are you using these sources in relation to each other, and is one source the primary focus of the project? Is this about how poetry changes in the culture of measurement and fashion?

Campbell: No.

Grandin: No. Okay.

Campbell: I'm viewing them as mutually responsive to this elusive object of actual dress and embodied practice of measure, which is really hard to get at.

Grandin: Yeah, I bet. But does, are you also saying that tailors respond to poetry? Or what's the directionality of the exchange?

Campbell: Do tailors respond to poetry? Yeah. This is like—well I don't have anything smart at hand ready to say about tailors just going into poetry—but Rancière is the person who comes up for me, thinking about the poetic aspirations of the people who make clothes, and he has a few, Rancière doesn't talk much about fashion but there are Parisian workers who are particularly important because they're in touch with fashion, but there's a… you know, one of the things I'm exploring in that line of thinking is for Rancière it really matters that actually… someone like a tailor goes home at night and does a literary or political journal and writes things, and so he's insisting on that discrepancy. So I'm not sure I fully want that discrepancy either. I mean, that you necessarily need to have tailors talking articulately. Of course, this is a problem because then what do we, how do we know and what do we know about them? but I'm certainly, you know, happy to—

Powell: We know they went to plays.

Campbell: —I am happy to entertain the idea of tailors as participants.

Grandin: Yeah, I guess I'm just always also sort of aware of the difference between the treatise and practice, you know? And so it's, I… it's really… Treatises are really useful because they give us this armature and they give us this vocabulary and rhetoric, but then it obviously gets trickier. So perhaps in a way literature gives insight into—because you

use both prose and verse—but it gives us insight into practice or experience in a way that the treatise doesn't, so … and that way there's a potential.

Campbell: I think that's right. Literature does fill out things. Unreliably, but it does.

Grandin: Yeah, unreliably, but…

Campbell: Possibilities, right?

Grandin: Yeah, yeah, they're possibilities.

Campbell: But this… I mean, I'm attracted to the strangeness of *The Tailor's Guide* as a sort of treatise. Right? It makes all these claims to being, to aspiring to a general audience and having kind of the "liberal arts" in mind, but then on every page it's kind of hard. I mean, it makes its bids for more general attention, but it's meant for the expert eye or someone with particular interests, because you're getting pretty intricate help with actually how to make these things. Right? So, like, there… as a manual, it can't be self-sufficient (it seems to me). So, like, who is the proper audience for this? I mean, there isn't one, and that's like the paradox of the genre, in a sense. It's interesting to me.

Melanie Conroy: Yeah, I had a similar question about the role of expertise and the difference between being a tailor and having, you know, clothes put on you versus, you know, writing a treatise. Because it seems (I mean, just naïvely thinking about this) it seems like there's something analogous in, you know, people who study poetry and metrics and maybe write treaties about how to write poetry and then the sort of actual, you know, use of metrics in poetry and the tailor versus, like—I really like the analogy you made to dance—versus maybe someone who can hear poetry and maybe have some sense of how the meter works, but not actually reproduce it themselves. So, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit more about the role of the tailor. Is the role of a tailor… is he more like the guy that understands metrics in terms of quantification, is he more like the guy who uses them? Like, how do you *think* a tailor would think about their skills in relation to quantification?

Campbell: Yeah. Well, I mean so it's not quite quantification… at least, my tailors, right, because they're measuring, but without putting a number to it, right? So, I mean, they… the posture is that they have the expertise to help you realize the look that you want, and people on the street can recognize whether it's the right look or not—although maybe not quite as well as tailors (because "tailors see even better" is partly the claim). But there is also, like, a way in which tailors are agential, crucial mediators—maybe this is something helpful?—so good tailors are supposed to discourage their clients from following the absolute excesses of fashion too closely. Right? So, you know… maybe the tailor convinces his—"employer" is the word for it in the text, right?—that he wants a different article of dress, that it should be made differently. Maybe the tailor makes this change for the person, right, without consent in this person's best interest. Right? And so, I mean, there is that kind of… So there's the technical expertise of the tailor but there's also, like, the

style expertise that comes out here a little bit, right? The tailor does foresee a little bit how quickly the most excessive extreme of the moment is going to be outmoded, right.

Vareschi: We have five minutes left. So maybe… rapid fire?

Sperrazza: Mine's not really a hook, it's a question, but that's fine. For Tim I'm wondering … I'm just sort of tracing this genealogy from kind of intimate, embodied tailor to the standardized measure and sizes that seem disconnected from the body. As Rebecca was saying, like, we get these moments of disjunction when we realize we're not the size we thought we were (or whatever). I'm wondering what you would do with spandex. [laughter] Right? This is a moment to me where the material comes back to haunt us and takes on that sort of tailored measure form fit, right? And so I think that that… I don't know, I would love to hear your thoughts on that. And then for Brad what's been striking me as we talk a little more about the project and then reading the paper, hearing more about it… I wonder if there's a bit of a tension, or maybe a productive tension, in some of the metaphors you're using to describe the work you're doing? Because to me you're using both "flattening" and "heaping" and I think—I immediately go to Beckett on this one for some reason and I think about, you know, what happens when we get to an accumulation that takes on a new kind of sublime? So Sianne Ngai actually talks about this (Nick brought her up yesterday, I think it was) as "stuplime."[4] Right?

Pasanek: Stuplimity, right.

Sperrazza: Yeah, where we get this moment where one has sort of seen the really mechanical and, you know, flat, and starts to, you know, you breathe new life into it by this sort of excessive heaping—I wonder if that is or can be part of the conversation you're working towards?

Richard Nash: Okay, this is for Brad. I have both a comment and a question. The question, there's a phrase in your paper that I make fun of all the time, so I will tell you that in private. The comment would be in response to your question about whether or not to use possessive pronouns, and I was thinking of Pope's talk about "But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song; /And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong" where "Poet's song" would fit if you're using possessives but shouldn't because that is actually a contraction to make the numbers fit because it's actually "a Poet, his song." So that would be a trigram, so you don't want to use those possessives. So that's my suggestion.

Vareschi: Rachel?

Feder: Mine's really whacky if you [Sarah Knott] want to go first.

Sarah Knott: I think I want to save mine for the last session. Go ahead.

[4] Editor's Note: Sianne Ngai, "Stuplimity: Shock and Boredom in Twentieth-Century Aesthetics," *Postmodern Culture* 10:2 (2000).

Feder: So in lieu of a defense of Wordsworth [laughter] and his sense of language as bound I did a little digital humanities project with my digits, and composed a poem out of random phrases from our conversations. Will you indulge me? [see the next item in this volume]

[Laughter. Applause.]

Spang: And on that note, we'll end and take a break!