

William Blake and the Digital Humanities: Collaboration, Participation, and Social Media (Routledge Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Literature)

By Roger Whitson, Jason Whittaker

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William Blake’s work demonstrates two tendencies that are central to social media: collaboration and participation. Not only does Blake cite and adapt the work of earlier authors and visual artists, but contemporary authors, musicians, and filmmakers feel compelled to use Blake in their own creative acts. This book identifies and examines Blake’s work as a social and participatory network, a phenomenon described as zoamorphosis, which encourages ? even demands ? that others take up Blake’s creative mission. The authors rexamine the history of the digital humanities in relation to the study and dissemination of Blake’s work: from alternatives to traditional forms of archiving embodied by Blake’s citation on Twitter and Blakean remixes on YouTube, smartmobs using Blake’s name as an inspiration to protest the 2004 Republican National Convention, and students crowdsourcing reading and instruction in digital classrooms to better understand and participate in Blake’s world. The book also includes a consideration of Blakean motifs that have created artistic networks in music, literature, and film in the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries, showing how Blake is an ideal exemplar for understanding creativity in the digital age.

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Editorial Review

Review

"They offer the most informed and informative tour of Blake in the digital age that I have read…I found this study absorbing, informative, and emblematic of how thoughtful teachers and scholars are engaging twenty-first century students and colleagues in the ongoing conversation about the eternally-fresh William Blake." *--Mark Greenberg, Drexel University, Review 19*

"In this study, Roger Whitson and Jason Whittaker do an excellent job of describing Blake in popular culture (Whittaker's forte) and in social media: Twitter, Flickr, Wikipedia, and YouTube (Whitson's)…Excellent concerning the relationship of Blake to popular culture and digital media studies, this book calls for discussion because it purports more largely to bring a message from Digital Humanities (DH) to traditional disciplines of English literature and history. The book…does an extraordinary job of exploring the popularity of Blake on the Internet as well as the uses of social media to 'customize' his work." *–Laura Mandell, Texas A&M University, Studies in Romanticism*

About the Author
Roger Whitson is Assistant Professor of Nineteenth-Century British Literature and the Digital Humanities at Washington State University, USA.

Jason Whittaker is Professor of Blake Studies at University College Falmouth, UK.

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