

AI News Digest

03/16/2026 - 03/22/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: HUMANITIES & CULTURAL STUDIES

Generative AI Reshapes Academic Practices in Humanities

Recent articles highlight the transformative impact of Generative AI on academic practices within the humanities and social sciences. At the University of Tübingen, researchers and students are integrating GenAI into text-based work, leading to new epistemic practices. Additionally, the concept of dynamic transitional objects redefines user interactions with AI-generated content, emphasizing the ambiguity of authorship. Furthermore, discussions on decolonial narratives and innovative contributions from diverse figures underscore the evolving landscape of digital knowledge and cultural representation.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Generative AI is being integrated into academic practices at the University of Tübingen.
- ✓ The concept of dynamic transitional objects redefines user relationships with AI-generated material.
- ✓ Decolonial data narratives are gaining importance in digital humanities discussions.

IMPLICATIONS

- The integration of Generative AI may lead to new methodologies in qualitative research.
- Redefining authorship in AI-generated content could challenge traditional academic norms.
- Emphasizing diverse narratives may enhance inclusivity in digital humanities projects.

1. Hybrid epistemic practices and the transformation of academic assemblages: generative AI and epistemic messiness in the qualitative social sciences and humanities

Category: Education
Departments: Educational Leadership, Communication, Sociology & Anthropology, Philosophy
Topics: Generative AI, Academic Integration, Epistemic Practices, Research Efficiency, Idea Generation

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4	Educational Value: 4	Innovation / Novelty: 3
Practical Impact: 4	Interdisciplinary Potential: 5	Ethical / Policy Implications: 3

The article examines the integration of Generative AI (GenAI) into academic practices among students and researchers at the University of Tübingen, particularly in the context of text-based work in the humanities and social sciences. It highlights the experiences of a student, Peter, who initially approached GenAI with caution but later found it beneficial for generating ideas and structuring his BA thesis, likening its guidance to that of a real supervisor. The study reveals that nearly 70% of participants utilize GenAI for exploring and understanding texts, with many expressing that it enhances their research efficiency and idea generation. Overall, the findings indicate a shift in epistemic practices, where GenAI is increasingly viewed as a valuable tool for academic inquiry.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-026-02988-w>

2. The relational-epistemic stance: generative AI as a dynamic transitional object

Category: Research
Departments: Educational Leadership, Philosophy, Computer Science
Topics: Generative AI, Dynamic Transitional Object, Functional Alterity, User-AI Interaction

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4	Educational Value: 3	Innovation / Novelty: 5
Practical Impact: 3	Interdisciplinary Potential: 4	Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

The article introduces the concept of the dynamic transitional object (DTO), which redefines the relationship between users and AI by positioning AI-generated material in a "potential space" where authorship and origin are ambiguous. This framework allows users to engage with AI outputs as both external insights and personal contributions, facilitating a developmental process that encourages self-activation rather than dependency on AI for self-change. The DTO emphasizes the importance of maintaining this ambiguity to enable meaningful interaction with AI, which is characterized by "functional alterity"-a relational event that arises from the interaction between human intention and AI's generative capabilities. This approach challenges traditional philosophical notions of alterity by demonstrating that genuine difference can emerge without the need for conscious authorship.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-026-02984-0>

3. DHNow Newsletter, March 18, 2026

Category: Research

Departments: Computer Science, Educational Leadership, History, Communication

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Decolonial Data Narratives, Vibe-Coding Techniques, Transformers for Sequence Transduction

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

This issue highlights the importance of re-evaluating digital knowledge through decolonial data narratives and oral history practices. It also explores the potential of vibe-coding in small-scale digital history projects. Additionally, a detailed explanation of transformers for sequence transduction is provided. The issue includes job announcements, calls for papers, and resources that feature insights from data labelers involved in AI training.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/03/dhnow-newsletter-march-18-2026/>

4. "We the People" depicts inventors, dreamers, and innovators in all 50 states

Category: Other

Departments: English, Art, Philosophy

Topics: Generative AI, Cultural Narratives, Creative Expression, Historical Representation

Impact Score: 11.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 1

Educational Value: 2

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 1

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 0

Joshua Bennett, an MIT professor and poet, has published a new book titled "We (The People of the United States)," which commemorates the 250th anniversary of the U.S. by exploring the lives and contributions of 50 innovative figures from each state. The work highlights individuals who have faced adversity and whose achievements have often been overlooked, aiming to provide a nuanced portrayal of American identity and creativity. Inspired by Virgil's "Georgics," Bennett's collection reflects on themes of invention and the complexities of life in America, with a structured approach that involved writing a poem for each state. The book seeks to foster a life-affirming vision for the future through historically grounded narratives.

<https://news.mit.edu/2026/we-people-depicts-inventors-dreamers-innovators-50-states-joshua-bennett-book-0317>