

AI News Digest

06/15/2026 - 06/21/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: HUMANITIES & CULTURAL STUDIES

Digital Preservation and Creative Expression in AI Era

This week's articles highlight the intersection of artificial intelligence with cultural preservation and creative expression. The concept of skeuomorphism is explored in relation to book history, emphasizing the misrepresentation of user interactions with AI. Additionally, initiatives like the Alabama Digitarium and 'Now & Here' showcase the role of digital humanists in preserving culture, while Dylan Field's insights encourage risk-taking in creative fields. The call for contributors to the Digital Orientalist reflects a growing interest in digital humanities and area studies.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Skeuomorphism misrepresents user interactions with AI language models.
- ✓ The Alabama Digitarium 2026 will focus on cultural preservation.
- ✓ 'Now & Here' highlights emerging scholars' contributions to community projects.

IMPLICATIONS

- Increased emphasis on digital preservation may reshape cultural studies.
- Creative fields could see a surge in innovative expressions due to AI.
- Opportunities for collaboration between digital humanists and community organizations are expanding.

1. Editors' Choice: A Skeuomorphic View of Book History

Category: Research

Departments: Communication, Philosophy, Political Science & Public Administration

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Skeuomorphism in AI Design, User Input Misrepresentation, Cultural Critique of Media Technology

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

The article examines the interplay between artificial intelligence and book history, focusing on the concept of skeuomorphism as a critical framework. Cordell argues that the chat box's design misrepresents the connection between user inputs and language model outputs, thereby obscuring understanding. He proposes skeuomorphism as a valuable heuristic for book historical scholarship and the activities of book labs, suggesting it serves as an embodied cultural critique that reveals the complex technical, social, and political dynamics of media technology.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/06/a-skeuomorphic-view-of-book-history-ryan-c-cordell/>

2. CFP: Alabama Digitorium

Category: Research

Departments: Communication, Philosophy, Sociology & Anthropology, Educational Leadership

Topics: AI Ethics, Digital Preservation, Cultural Heritage Documentation, Marginalized Experience Representation

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 3

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

In 2026, Digitorium will center its theme on "Preserve," emphasizing the role of Digital Humanists in the preservation of culture and society. The initiative aims to explore and document various levels of preservation, including the digital safeguarding of ancient artifacts and the representation of marginalized experiences often overlooked in mainstream archives. This focus on preservation is presented as a foundational value that enhances access to artifacts and narratives at risk of being lost.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/06/alabama-digitorium-alabama-digitorium/>

3. Weekly Highlight: Now & Here

Category: Research

Departments: Art, Communication, History, Sociology & Anthropology, Philosophy

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Community Engagement, Cultural Narrative Analysis, Collaborative Research Models

Impact Score: 19.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

The "Now & Here" initiative showcases original research projects developed by emerging scholars in partnership with various community organizations, historic sites, and public lands. This collection highlights the contributions of the Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, emphasizing collaborative efforts in the humanities. The projects aim to engage with local histories and cultural narratives, fostering a deeper understanding of community contexts.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/06/weekly-highlight-now-here/>

4. 'Hard Fork' Live Part 2: Dylan Field on Standing Out in the A.I. Era

Category: Business

Departments: Art, Communication, Creative Writing, Educational Leadership

Topics: Generative AI, Creative Expression, Risk-Taking in AI, Innovation in Design

Impact Score: 15.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 1

Educational Value: 2

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

Dylan Field, the CEO of Figma, emphasized the importance of taking risks in creative fields such as writing and design. He suggested that the current environment presents an opportunity for individuals with a creative voice to express themselves. This statement reflects a broader trend in the creative industry, where innovation and personal expression are increasingly valued.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/17/podcasts/hard-fork-live-dylan-field.html>

5. Opportunity: Join The DO Team 2026/27

Category: Education

Departments: Art, Communication, Chicano Studies, Languages & Linguistics, Sociology & Anthropology, Educational Leadership

Topics: Digital Humanities, Area Studies, GLAM Disciplines, Oceania Studies

Impact Score: 15.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 2

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 1

The Digital Orientalist has announced an open call for contributors and team members for the 2026-2027 academic year, targeting individuals engaged in digital humanities and area studies. The initiative encourages applications across a range of fields, including but not limited to African Studies, Central Asian Studies, and GLAM disciplines. Applicants are expected to demonstrate a clear connection to digital humanities methodologies and theoretical frameworks, with a particular interest in expanding coverage to include new areas such as Oceania and Pacific Island Studies.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/06/cfa-join-the-do-team-2026-27/>