

# Literary Computing and Literary Criticism

Theoretical and  
Practical Essays on  
Theme and Rhetoric

edited by

**Rosanne G. Potter**

Miles  
Shakespeare  
Scott  
Gide  
Camus  
Celine  
Beckett  
Gobineau  
Riffaterre  
Chaucer  
Gower  
Milton  
Blake  
James  
Ford Mac  
Shaw

## Literary Computing and Literary Criticism

### Theoretical and Practical Essays on Theme and Rhetoric

*Edited by* ROSANNE G. POTTER

To students and scholars of literature, the disciplines of computer science and literary criticism often seem to stand at opposite extremes of knowledge: one focusing on facts and the replicable, the other on ideas and the unique. The essays in this book were written and selected to demonstrate that computing, the ultimate tool of late twentieth-century life, can be applied appropriately and effectively to traditional questions in literary criticism.

*Literary Computing and Literary Criticism* is the first collection to show how computational analysis can yield significant insights into texts, rather than just technical discussions of computational methods. In these wide-ranging essays, leading scholars in the field show that literary computing enables the closest possible examination of theme and rhetoric, and vastly expands the field of interpretable data at the disposal of the thoughtful critic.

The volume is divided into three sections: essays on theory and hypothesis testing; on semantic analysis; and on rhetoric, employing syntactic analysis. Individual chapters deal with such authors as Chaucer, Gower, Milton, Blake, Gobineau, James, Ford Madox Ford, and Shaw, and topics as varied as French prose fiction and Romantic poetry.

Written clearly in a style free of complex computer jargon, *Literary Computing and Literary Criticism* is easily accessible to general readers and contains an annotated bibliography designed for those new to the field.

ROSANNE G. POTTER is Associate Professor of English at Iowa State University.

*Jacket design: Adrienne Onderdonk Dudden*

*Also of interest*

## **Pascal for the Humanities**

**NANCY M. IDE**

"Imagine, after all these years, having a programming text that makes humanists feel welcome as its intended readers . . . A readable, reliable and useful introduction to good programming practice for an audience not well served by other programming texts"—*Computers in the Humanities*.

This textbook, designed for novice programmers with backgrounds in the liberal arts, teaches fundamental programming as well as techniques for organizing and searching data.

1987. 390 pages, illustrations. Paper, ISBN 0-8122-1242-8


## **Computer Programs for Literary Analysis**

**JOHN R. ABERCROMBIE**

"This book, aimed at individuals who know *what* they want to do, but lack the knowledge of *how* to do it, will clearly aid in the solution of this problem. . . . Intended for those with a small amount of computer experience. By providing pre-tested programs, it gives the readers a sensible mechanism which will allow them to observe how the computer could assist in their own research"—*Journal of American Folklore*.

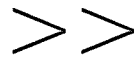
". . . provides help with everything from morphological analysis to index and concordance compilation"—*The Year's Work in English Studies*.

1984. 176 pages. Spiral: ISBN 0-8122-1177-4. Diskettes: IBM-PC (DOS 2.0): ISBN 0-8122-3000-0; DEC Rainbow: ISBN 0-8122-3002-7; Turbo Pascal: ISBN 0-8122-3003-5; Kaypro: ISBN 0-8122-3004-3

 **University of Pennsylvania Press**  
Blockley Hall, 418 Service Drive  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6097

ISBN 0-8122-8156-X

>> LITERARY COMPUTING AND  
LITERARY CRITICISM



*edited by*

*R O S A N N E G . P O T T E R*

*University of Pennsylvania Press · Philadelphia · 1989*

*u/p*

L I T E R A R Y  
C O M P U T I N G

>> *and*

L I T E R A R Y  
C R I T I C I S M

>> *Theoretical and Practical*

*Essays on Theme and Rhetoric*

Permission is acknowledged to reprint material from the following sources:

George Bernard Shaw, extracts from *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Major Barbara*, and *Heartbreak House*. Reprinted by permission of the Society of Authors.

Donald Ross, Jr., "Differences, Genres, and Influences," *Style* 11, 3 (1977): 262-73. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arkansas.

John B. Smith, "Computer Criticism," *Style* 12 (1978): 326-56. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arkansas.

Richard W. Bailey, "The Future of Computational Stylistics," *ALLC Bulletin* 7, 1 (1979): 4-11. Reprinted by permission of the Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing.

Passages from the preface also appear in Rosanne G. Potter, "Literary Criticism and Literary Computing: The Difficulties of a Synthesis," *CHum* 22, 2 (1988): 91-97.

Excerpts from *Literary Detection and Document Identification*, copyright © 1978 by Andrew Queen Morton, reprinted with the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company.

Copyright © 1989 by the University of Pennsylvania Press

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Literary computing and literary criticism : theoretical and practical essays on theme and rhetoric / edited by Rosanne G. Potter.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographies and index.

ISBN 0-8122-8156-X

1. English literature—History and criticism—Data processing.
  2. English literature—History and criticism—Theory, etc.
  3. English language—Style—Data processing.
  4. Style, Literary—Data processing.
  5. Criticism—Data processing.
- I. Potter, Rosanne G.

PR21.L58 1989

820'.28'5—dc19

88-38159

CIP

DESIGN: Adrienne Onderdonk Dudden



Dedicated to  
Bernice Powers Giuditta  
and  
Harry A. Giuditta

# CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments* ix

*List of Figures* xi

*List of Tables* xiii

*Preface* xv

ROSANNE G. POTTER

## PART I THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

- 1 *The Future of Computational Stylistics* 3  
RICHARD W. BAILEY
- 2 *Computer Criticism* 13  
JOHN B. SMITH
- 3 *Differences, Genres, and Influences* 45  
DONALD ROSS, JR.
- 4 *Adapting Hypothesis Testing to a Literary Problem* 61  
BARBARA STEVENSON

## PART II THEME AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

- 5 *Analysis of Twentieth-Century French Prose Fiction: Theoretical Context, Results, Perspective* 77  
PAUL A. FORTIER
- 6 *Computational Thematics, a Selective Database, and Literary Criticism: Gobineau, Tic Words, and Riffaterre Revisited* 97  
JOEL D. GOLDFIELD

- 7 *Meaning and Method: Computer-Assisted Analysis of Blake* 123  
NANCY IDE

PART III RHETORIC AND SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

- 8 *Samson Agonistes: Milton's Use of Syntax to Define Character* 145  
JULIA WAGGONER
- 9 *Speech Acts and the Art of the Exemplum in the Poetry of Chaucer and Gower* 167  
EUGENE GREEN
- 10 *Gender Patterns in Henry James: A Stylistic Approach to Dialogue in Daisy Miller, The Portrait of a Lady, and The Bostonians* 189  
EUNICE MERIDETH
- 11 *Reliable Narration in The Good Soldier* 207  
C. RUTH SABOL
- 12 *Changes in Shaw's Dramatic Rhetoric: Mrs. Warren's Profession, Major Barbara, and Heartbreak House* 225  
ROSANNE G. POTTER

*Selected Bibliography of Theoretical and Practical Works Related to Literary Computing* 259  
ROSANNE G. POTTER

*Index* 271

*List of Contributors* 277

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the contributors who wrote beautifully clear essays; David Sauke who designed the beautiful, clear charts; Art Evans, who had faith in this project; Iowa State University, which enabled my computing endeavors with funding and, more importantly, with interdisciplinary human support: from Jim Hoekstra, who wrote the COMP STYLE programs in PL/1, from Leroy Wolins, who did the statistics, from Kathy Shelley, who helped with the SAS programs. Working with specialists from many different disciplines has been constantly challenging and stimulating; it made me willing to assemble and guide the work of the community of scholars represented in this collection.

I most sincerely thank the people who taught me to believe in a community of scholars: Sister Mary Anthony Weinig of Rosemont College, Jim Kaufman and Jim Kinneavy at the University of Texas.

I also thank the people who got me started in computing: Helen Jo Hewitt at the Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas, Jim Hoekstra at Iowa State University, Joe Raben, editor of *Computers and the Humanities*. And I do not forget Elder Olson, who taught me about the structure of drama at the University of Chicago.

And, most of all, I thank Bill McCarthy, my strongest supporter, my editor, my colleague, and my husband.