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Data Trouble: Toward a General Theory

ANDREW KOPEC, INDIANA UNIVERSITY – PURDUE UNIVERSITY, FORT WAYNE

Friday, March 17, 2017, 3:30 p.m.

GRUCCI ROOM • 102 BURROWES BUILDING



ANDREW KOPEC

This talk places the digital humanities' polemic against what Andrew Piper terms the "evidence gap" in cultural studies within a larger institutional context, exploring the ways in which anxiety over the scale of data required to make generalizations has long haunted the critical enterprise. In doing so, this talk adds a historicist edge to the digital humanities' urgent, reflexive construction of itself as a disciplinary formation. Forging connections among sources ranging from historical scholarship from the 1920s, late twentieth-century historicism, post-critical movements of the present, and digital literary scholarship, this talk thus examines (and challenges) DH's claims to novelty, rigor, and transparency.

ANDREW KOPEC is assistant professor of English at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW), where he specializes in American literature to 1900. His work on the relation between literature and economics in early America appears (or is forthcoming) in journals like *ELH: English Literary History*, *Early American Literature*, and *ESQ*. His essay "The Digital Humanities, Inc.," published in the journal *PMLA*, provides a historical perspective on new formalisms and digital humanities as intensified objects of professional desires. His book in progress, *Pacing Panic: American Romanticism and the Business Cycle*, identifies romantic literature in the United States from 1819 to 1867 as an art of high finance.