

Reddit is a rich, robust forum for discussion of the humanities providing an unfiltered alternative to published media.

By contrast with mainstream journalism, which (as in *The New York Times*) has increasingly [moderated](#) or [throttled back on](#) reader comments, [Reddit](#) is a medium of unthrottled reader views. Its [subreddits](#) (individual, subject-specific forums) are characterized by ad hoc yet often also compellingly rich, deep, and even unnervingly raw conversations.

Reddit is thus a valuable complement to WE1S's study of public discourse on the humanities, which otherwise focuses on published journalism. As evidenced in our [C-39](#) collection of Reddit comments (primarily by students), Reddit hosts a broad ecosystem of discussion about the humanities spilling over from subreddits like [r/Humanities](#) dedicated for the purpose to many, ostensibly off-topic subreddits. Our [C-39.200](#) topic model of the collection thus reveals rich patterns of discourse on the humanities across numerous, often unexpected subreddit comment threads.

For example, the 50 comments most associated with [topic 126](#) (about the humanities and sciences) come from 27 different subreddits, many of which are non-academic in focus. A partial list of contributing subreddits include [r/videos](#), [r/cat](#), [r/TwoXChromosomes](#), [r/TrueReddit](#), [r/rpg](#), [r/SRSDiscussion](#), [r/rules](#), [r/lostgeneration](#), [r/Futurology](#), [r/Frugal](#), [r/actuallesbians](#), [r/enoughpetersonspam](#), [r/California](#), and [r/doublespeaklockstep](#). These show that concern about the humanities vs. STEM (e.g., among college students discussing their majors) arises from a wide set of interests. (See representative comments [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#).)

In contrast to the published journalism making up WE1S's main study materials, where the ecosystem of reader comments is relatively sparse and polite (still dominated by the traditional, moderated reader-response genres of "letter to the editor" or "op-ed"), Reddit commenters speak discursively, directly, and sometimes rawly with one another about the humanities. And, of course, unlike in mainstream journalism publications, there is no centralized editorial viewpoint or editorial vetting--even copy-editing.

An interesting research question is: how do Reddit student comments about the humanities compare in their themes and discourse with student articles in the college newspapers WE1S has studied by topic modeling collections gathered in [University Wire](#)? (Some of our key findings based on college newspapers include [KF-3-3](#), [KF-4-5](#), [KF-8-1](#), [KF-8-5](#), [KF-8-6](#), [KF-8-7](#).)

For possible answers, read top Reddit comments associated with [topic 126](#) in our C-39.200 model, and see [KF-8-1](#). Our research on student Reddit discussion of *stereotypes* and *stereotyping* by comparison with students writing in campus newspapers also bears on the issue ([KF-6-8](#)).

Collection: [C-39](#) ([start page](#))

Topic model studied: [C-39.200](#) (200 topics)

Interesting sample topics: [126](#), [89](#)

Representative articles: [a](#), [b](#).

Evidentiary documentation: Raymond Steding, "[A Digital Humanities Study of Reddit Student Discourse about the Humanities](#)" (2019)