



# Computational Approaches to Understanding Narrative

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Digital zugeschaltet

Kolloquium  
Computational  
Literary Studies

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Different discourse types present their own special challenges across the spectrum of **Natural Language Processing** (NLP) techniques. The **narrative discourse** type presents interesting challenges for existing techniques, and also suggests novel NLP tasks specifically relevant to narrative. A selection of recent progress in the **FIU Cognition, Narrative, and Culture (CogNaC)** Laboratory on NLP as applied to narrative will be presented:

- A new approach to **timeline extraction**
- Significantly improved **animacy & character detection**
- Improvements in **(sub-)event relationship detection** on narrative texts that take advantage of important features of narrative discourse
- **Inference from text of narrative structures**, as described by **Vladimir Propp**

Various applications of this work, focusing on efforts to **detect** and **model disinformation online**, will be shown.

Prof. Dr. Mark A. Finlayson is **Eminent Scholar Chaired Associate Professor of Computer Science** in the **Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences (KFSCIS)** at **Florida International University (FIU)**. His research intersects **artificial intelligence**, **natural language processing**, and **cognitive science**, and he directs the **FIU Cognition, Narrative, and Culture Laboratory**. From MIT he received a **M.S. in Electrical Engineering** and a **Ph.D. in Computer Science**. He served as research scientist at MIT before FIU, where he then became the **KFSCIS Interim Associate Director**. Dr. Finlayson has received awards, such as: An **IBM Faculty Award** (2019), a **DARPA Young Faculty Award** (2021), as well as scholar and teaching awards at FIU. His work has been funded by **NSF, NIH, ONR, DARPA, DHS, and IBM**.