LUCAS DIPERNA. Shifting Walls: An Interpretation of Rejection and Denial in *House of Leaves*. (Under the direction of Professor David Rieder.)

This project serves as an example of the kinds of opportunities afforded by digital media, particularly as a means for scholarly inquiry and communication. The project was coded in Processing and creates a virtual, three-dimensional labyrinth inspired by the labyrinth in Mark Z. Danielewski’s novel *House of Leaves*. Responding to the ways in which *House of Leaves* uses rejection and denial as a means for engagement and acceptance, “Shifting Walls” demonstrates how performance plays a critical role in digital, scholarly texts. This concept of performance is enacted at two levels: the operation of the program itself, and its implication of the user in the performance. The process of acceptance through rejection is enacted by the program’s code, as seen through a critical-code studies (CCS) perspective, and by its interactive performance with the user. This performance forces users to engage with questions about their own subjectivity as they must negotiate the space between screen and body, as well as the impossibility of the virtual space. “Shifting Walls” argues that despite the de-centering nature of highly mediated interaction and communication, even the experience of rejection and denial can be used as a basis for engagement and understanding.