To read the work of modernist poet Marianne Moore is to become an interdisciplinary explorer.

IN MARIANNE MOORE’S “THE BUFFALO” | A Literary & Digital Analysis

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Clean copy of “The Buffalo” by Marianne Moore.

An initial read-through of the poem: begs the question: What does this mean? Subsequent research and analysis is necessary...

Annotation map of “The Buffalo”.
To derive meaning from the poem, it was necessary to hand-trace through the poem and map out various allusions to mythology, art, types of ungulates (i.e. hoofed mammals), and the like. Making sense of Moore’s use of distinctions—this, not that—led to a greater understanding of the poem’s breadth and significance.

Graphing Using Google Books N-gram Viewer
This graph demonstrates the frequency of various ungulates over time in English fiction from the years 1800-2000.

Summarizer Algorithm via Algorithmia.com
An example of a natural language processing (NLP) algorithm called a summarizer. This implementation of a summarizer cut down “The Buffalo” to ten lines. Using the summarizer brings forth interesting questions such as the significance of whitespace: How could one account for the sometimes ambiguous, yet often important role of whitespace in poetry like “The Buffalo”?

Above: Graphing Using Google Books N-Gram Viewer
Below: Summarizer Algorithm via Algorithmia.com

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