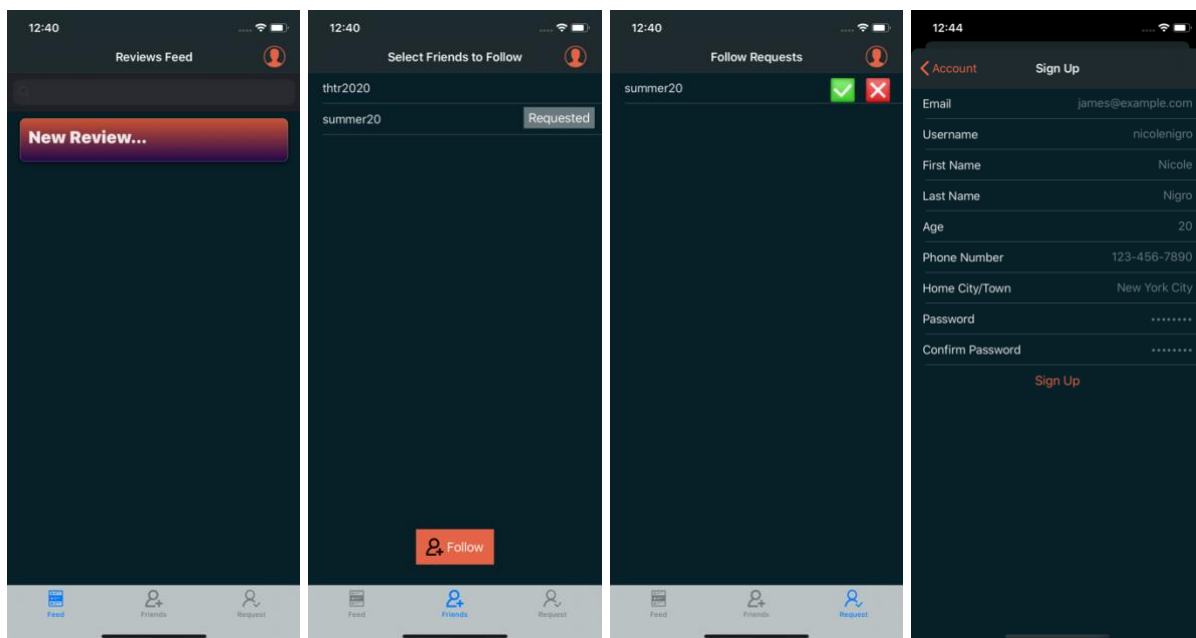# THTR: Theater Diary iOS App
Nicole Nigro, Class of 2022

Professor Nascimento (Digital and Computational Studies) and Professor Sarah Bay-Cheng (former Bowdoin faculty and current Dean of the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design at York University) have been collaborating on THTR: Theater Diary—an iOS mobile phone application that serves as a diary for people who enjoy thespian pursuits. The app is a platform for registering audience perceptions and experiences of theater plays that creates an important collection of data relevant for theater studies disciplines. This summer, I worked on new functionalities to make the THTR app more like an online affinity network.

Online affinity networks are "collectives that have shared interests, practices, and marked roles in the community that define levels of responsibility and expertise" (Pfister and Martin 39). These online communities are characterized by 3 key aspects: the network is specialized, involvement is intentional, and content sharing and communication take place on openly networked online platforms.

To familiarize myself with the project, I started by reading over thousands of lines of the preexisting code. This helped me understand how the app worked and which gestures triggered different functions. I also researched the programming language Swift in textbooks and on Stack Overflow to learn the fundamentals of the language and how to retrieve and store information in a Firebase Database. I tested my work by running the project on an iPhone simulator to evaluate its aesthetics and usability.

Using Swift and Storyboard in XCode, I designed and coded follow friends (fig. 2) and manage follow requests (fig. 3) screens based on the wireframes provided by Professor Nascimento. The follow friends screen displays all other THTR users, listed by username. The current user can select other users to follow from this list then hit the follow button to send follow requests to these users. The manage follow requests screen displays the usernames of users requesting to follow the current user with the choice to accept or decline each follow request. All of these requests and follower-following relationships are stored in a Firebase database. I also used Firebase to store new user information like hometown and profile picture when users sign up (fig. 4). Additionally, I designed and implemented tab bar view controllers with Storyboard to increase the visibility and accessibility of the new screens I built. The new functionalities I worked on this summer transform THTR from an online diary to a community-oriented online affinity network.

Figures 1-4 (L-R)

Faculty Mentor: Professor Nascimento

References

Pfister, Rachel Cody, and Crystle Martin. "Affinity: Bonding through Shared Cultures and Practices." *Affinity Online*, by Mizuko Ito, New York University Press, 2019, pp. 39–65..