Abstract

My Day of DH (Digital Humanities) 2020 included an hour long talk with a social media platform about diversity and inclusion on said platform. Following their initial inquiry, I raised concern around the language of "inclusion," countering that inclusion implies bringing people into an already existing center. I asked if their BIPOC users really wanted to be included or if they wanted to be allowed to exist on the platform without being disproportionately surveilled. My ability to garner the attention of a social media platform and then critique its work is not something I envisioned for myself when I started out in DH.
addendum to the first issue of the *Journal of Digital Humanities* that brought critical theory into the DH mix. The zero degrees of separation of a small but digitally invested field, connected through well-funded unconferences and conferences alike, fueled my ability to get published, get a postdoc position myself, and ultimately helped me land a tenure track job.

And yet, I can’t help but feel the sails of DH starting to deflate. THATCamps are almost entirely gone as the initially generous philanthropic Mellon Foundation funding ran out. DH blogs and Twitter posts have reached a saturation point that thwarts the communal watercooler conversations they used to encourage. The big tent of DH has gotten bigger in terms of faculty and librarians who see themselves as practitioners in the field but the number of graduate students looking to DH for career advancement seems to be plateauing if not dwindling in the US. DH and alt-ac careers are slowly losing their shiny veneer as the market itself offers fewer options for all PhD graduates.

The early concerns of hack vs. yack – can you code or are you just talking about code – remain entrenched and I worry that students are still subtly taught that their DH doesn’t “count” if it’s not heavier on the digital than it is on the humanities. I see students trying to teach themselves coding languages on top of completing their regular coursework. Initiatives to bring HBCUs and liberal arts colleges into the DH universe seem to be about making these smaller communities mirror the larger better funded universities when these schools don’t have the same capacity. Simple tools that make our research easier to do and more accessible to students and communities remain on the margins of the field’s center of gravity. The way that digital pedagogy and its practitioners are subtly disparaged and considered less authentically DH comes to mind.

At the same time, I am heartened by the persistent if not growing number of BIPOC in the field of DH and its companion disciplines of communication studies and computer science. The creators of this volume and their white allies are doing the work to ensure that DH remains attentive to issues of race, ability, sexuality, and class as the ground of the field continues to shift. Texts like this one provide such an important possibility model for DH collaborative work and I hope we are in store for more.

**Works Cited**


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