

Introduction: Bringing DH to the CC and Vice Versa

Delivered at the pre-conference session of the CCHA conference, Louisville, KY October 24, 2013

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Slide 1: Bringing DH to the CC

Good Morning. My name is Anne McGrail and I'm the project director for "Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa" an NEH Office of Digital Humanities (or "DH") Start-Up Grant Project.

My goal for this project is not just to add DH methods to my own courses. There are lots of ways of doing that, as digital humanities is a very generous community of scholar-practitioners who share their ideas all the time on the web. My goal is more strategic than that: how to jump-start development of a community of practice for DH at the CC, so that lower-division transfer students can learn DH now—before they get to upper division work or grad school. My second strategic goal is to see how mid-career cc faculty such as myself can learn from scholarly practitioners who share their work in a constant feedback loop of inspiration. Stretched as we are in our teaching workloads, is this possible for ccs?

Slide 2: Community Colleges and the Eternal September

This start-up project intentionally adds another layer to the "eternal September of the digital humanities." This term, recently coined by Bethany Nowviskie in [her blog post by that name](#), refers to the frustration, exhaustion and pique first expressed in the 90s by seasoned online forum habitués when newbies join their online culture. Questions such as "What is DH? How do I tweet? Can I come into the "big tent" too?" characterize the experience of experts living through the eternal September of DH. In the open culture of DH, experts inevitably tire of newbie enthusiasms and rookie mistakes. Nowviskie remarks that this fatigue can set in with even the most steadfast of DH ambassadors. In spite of these frustrations, DH is marked by its openness, as you can see by the willingness of our panelists here today to join us for a day of thinking about DH at the CC. In fact Matt Gold explicitly encouraged me to "aim high" in recruiting my panel and I'm grateful to him for that advice.

Of course, the "eternal September" is really an expert's subject position. Those who are already versed in it are fatigued by the Groundhog's Day effect of answering the same FAQs. But what is the subject position of the newbie, the neophyte, the interloper, the CC faculty stepping into the big tent of DH?

[Once when I discovered a cool new cloud-based software called "Markup" and tweeted about it, for example, I was quickly put in my place by a September-weary DHer who asked me whether it had the features of TEI—was it scalable? Etc... Oops, stepped in it, I thought.]

Slide 3: 90s Scholarly Labor: Harshin' in the Basement with the Microfiche

In spite of my own inadequacies and rookie mistakes, though, I'm a little bit in love with DH. And no wonder: As a graduate student in 18th Century Studies in the 90s, I wrote my dissertation by printing out

whole novels from microfiche in the basement of the UBuffalo library. Not only can students now find Eliza Haywood's novels in cheap paperbacks, but the scholarship about her work is readily available everywhere. Text mining, text encoding, Google's 5 million books, social media, free media production software, all of these have changed the field of humanities teaching and scholarship. And while I know that for some of my cc colleagues such innovations are merely distractions, I welcome this work with a flush of excitement.

Slide 4: For Me: More May-December

So I don't have a September feeling about DH so much as a May-December one, with me in the Susan Sarandon role in *White Palace*, a seasoned server to the CC student community meeting DH itself in the guise of a 27 year-old James Spader (Remember that Moya Bailey tells us "[All the digital humanists are white, all the nerds are men, but some of us are brave](#)").

For the past two years I have followed blogs and twitter feeds and tried to make sense of what DH means for me. What I love about DH is the accessibility to an entirely new conversation that is simultaneously a continuation of the cultural studies I practiced in grad school and have tried to maintain in my CC courses. It's as if I left the room for 15 years, and a whole bunch of new people have picked up the conversation and run with it—turbo-charged and at the speed of social media. And some of those folks are with us today, to help us join the conversation and see how we can expand it to more cc faculty and students.

Slide 5: Matthew K. Gold

Almost two years ago, our guest Matthew Gold called out the field of DH for its lackluster engagement of underresourced institutions such as community colleges. His essay "[Whose Revolution, Towards a More Equitable Digital Humanities](#)" gave me hope that while I had felt somewhat alone in the Twitterverse or on the Day of Digital Humanities 2012, there were still many committed scholars and teachers out there who are invested in deepening access to DH. Matt is Assoc Prof of English and DH at City Tech and Graduate Center at CUNY. His research & teaching interests center on the digital humanities, scholarly communication, pedagogy, digital rhetoric, & 19th-century American literature. He is Director of the CUNY Academic Commons & Editor of *_Debates in the Digital Humanities_* (Minnesota, 2012). He leads a number of digital initiatives at the Graduate Center, CUNY.

Slide 6: Jesse Stommel

THAT Camp stands for "The Humanities and Technology." Last Fall, I attended a THATCamp Hybrid Pedagogy in Portland, Oregon, and I was struck again by the openness and engagement of everyone there. [Hybrid Pedagogy](#) is one of our guest Jesse Stommel's passions, but perhaps most important to him is access: Jesse favors an "[humungous tent](#)" humanities as he put it recently (in a comment to Adeline Koh's post about what constitutes DH. [[Bio from his recent post](#): Jesse is assistant professor of Digital Humanities in the Department of Liberal Studies and the Arts at the [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)]. His projects include MOOC MOOC, a self-reflective massive open online course, Digital Writing Month, a digi-version of NOWRIMO, and Twitter vs. Zombies, which perhaps he is best equipped to

explain. He is founding director of [Hybrid Pedagogy](#) and an advocate for lifelong learning and the public digital humanities.]

Slide 7: Rebecca Frost Davis

We are very lucky to have with us today Rebecca Frost Davis, [Rebecca is Director of Instructional and Emerging Technologies at St. Edward’s University in Austin Texas]. I came across Rebecca’s work at NITLE, the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education, where she was before her current position. Given Rebecca’s extensive experience helping liberal-arts colleges [build capacity to use digital humanities in their programs](#), I expect that she will provide invaluable guidance today as we think about the unique needs and constraints of community college students. “Part of her responsibility will be helping her university create a “21st century learning environment . . . in which faculty and students access, assess and create knowledge in a world-wide exchange of ideas.” As she has put it, this work is a natural extension of the work [she’s] done at [NITLE](#) to help faculty transform and adapt new digital methods in teaching and research to advance the essential learning outcomes of liberal education.” [\[From her blog about new job.\]](#)

Slide 8: Dean Rehberger

Dean Rehberger comes to us from MATRIX, a center for digital humanities and social sciences at Michigan State. He is also Associate Professor of Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures. His primary areas of research include High Performance Computing and the Humanities, Oral History Online, information design and architecture, digital libraries, museums and archives, and online learning environments. He oversees a number of open-access projects including Oral History in the Digital Age, Overcoming Apartheid, Studs Turkel: Conversations with America and other MATRIX projects.

Slide 9: Terri Whitney

One thing about teaching in community colleges—you don’t necessarily teach your research area; rather, you learn how to teach everything in your discipline. Last winter, I taught American Lit Survey for the first time. As I had committed to teaching all my courses with DH labs, I was simultaneously creating a course quite outside my wheelhouse and also figuring out how to do DH. Our guest Terri Whitney’s project, *Hawthorne in Salem*, helped me enormously when students were looking for a way “in” to Hawthorne’s *Scarlet Letter*. Terri’s will tell us more about her work today. Seeing how she created a partnership with the Peabody Essex Museum, I realized that Terri’s project brings community colleges to DH--the “vice versa” in my own project’s title.

Slide 10: Jake Agatucci

The CCHA executive director, Dave Berry, was very supportive of this project; however, at the last minute he was called away to an executive board meeting double-booked for this time. Jake Agatucci, who writes the CCHA newsletter, agreed to join us and talk about his work using technology in the

classroom, including his course in “Digital Games Culture” which he teaches at Central Oregon Community College.

Slide 11: Anne McGrail

My own May-December romance with DH began as an extension of work on a Dept. of Ed. Title III grant aimed at increasing student engagement. I teach writing and literature at my home institution of Lane Community College in Eugene Oregon. I have been making DH a part of my life for about two years. Part of my practice is to try and read and tweet about some DH topic at least once a week, sometimes more than that. I have kept a Zotero library for more than a year, and you’re welcome to dig through it to see what one CC faculty member has found interesting and helpful.

Slide 12: Russell Shitabata

[Since there are 13 of you, perhaps you could introduce yourself and talk about why you are joining us today.]