

UCSF

Advancing Digital Health Humanities Institute

Title

ADHHI_PlenarySession2_RoadMaps_LessonPlan

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Session 2: Roadmaps

Warm Up:

Discuss in Breakout Groups:

What ingredient should never be put on a pizza? Why?

Readings provided before the meeting:

Kimberly Christen. Does information want to be free?

Jessica Marie Johnson. Markup Bodies.

Readings provided after the meeting:

Miriam Posner Blog Post

Digital_Humanities first chapter

Additional readings:

Medical Apartheid

Doing Ethics with Cod

Tallbear Reading

Roadmap Questions

We provided three pieces of feedback in this roadmap document.

- 1) There is a summary of what the selection committee thought your project was about. We include this to help you think about what aspects of the project which are popping out to us, and to see if there's vitally important materials that we didn't get that you'd like to foreground more as you work.
- 2) We have included a brainstormed list of audiences, interlocutors, and subjects.
 - a. These are broken up in the ways scholarly research engages with others
 - i. Audiences: Are the people who will read, respond to, or engage with your work
 - ii. Interlocutors: are the people that you actively collaborate with, and whose time/energy/expertise you are using in your research. They have some buy-in and engagement
 - iii. Subjects: People who you are using for your research, but that don't seem to be active participants.

1. We split these two kinds of research participants in such a way as to stress the ethical considerations we'd like you to think about right now.
- 3) We also have included the feedback from our selection committee.

We want to provide these frames to help think about how your arguments are received, as a form of early peer review. We are expecting your projects to change quite a bit over the next two years, and we want to foreground some of the ways that your work being received by one audience, and may be understood by others. We also are encouraging you to think very critically about the data you are going to make, find, and frame in your work. When working in biomedical contexts, when people are already vulnerable, when the history of medicine is defined by harm after harm, when the harm materializes in systemic inequities, we need to be cognizant about how our research reproduces these harms.

Think-Pair-Share:

Think

Write a response to these questions:

- Thinking about your roadmap, was there anything you didn't think about before? What was it?
- Thinking about your roadmap, is there anything the reviewers omitted in their summaries or their comments?
- What about your audiences? Was there anything you didn't expect? Was there anyone we missed?

Pair

In breakout groups: Talk about your roadmaps. Share your responses to any questions you are comfortable sharing.

Share

In the whole meeting: Let's chat!

Audiences, Interlocutors, and Subjects

We need to talk about data, about its assumptions, and how the critical digital humanities engages with these frameworks.

- 1) All of our data comes from someone, and it's kind of fucked up that we just assume its available to us.
 - a. This is a big problem in digital spaces: we give our information as part of inhabiting the web. Information flows so quickly, so nonchalantly, that we assume it is okay that we use it for our work. But is our access to other people's information ethical? Is our use of it anything other than self-serving.
 - b. "What is not generally discussed is the vast store of materials in Western museums, archives, libraries, and personal collections that were not *voluntarily* given, and would not generally meet the standards of prior informed consent. The colonial collecting history of Western nations is comfortably forgotten in the celebration of freedom and openness that would give 'us' a storehouse of materials for the common good. In fact, the commons was never a place of inclusion, nor was it ever unregulated or uncontrolled. . . . [The] commons have always been regulated and exclusive; they work precisely because they function within a system defined by many options for use. Commons were never free, nor did they promote an unregulated notion of freedom"
 - i. Note here: Christen is attacking techno-utopianism and libertarian ideologies in tech.
 - c. The assumptions that we as researchers are free to use information, should we find it, is one we need to reflect on.
- 2) It is important to know that all of this information comes from someone or some community. If we ignore their process of giving, and just assume it is ours, we can do irreparable harm.
 - a. This means we need to be sure that we incorporate the perspectives and knowledge from these communities.
 - i. To borrow from Disability Studies: "Nothing About Us Without Us"
 - b. We also need to acknowledge that the people who benefit most from our research is ourselves. We need to acknowledge that the system we're in prioritizes our outputs. We need to publish, present research, and so on. It is much easier to take information, say we've thought about these communities and peoples, and then move on.
 - c. Finally, we need to consider how our thinking reifies existing narratives and ideas implicitly in our work.
 - i. Eve Tuck talks about "damage centered research"

- ii. “[S]cholars using digital tools mark up the bodies and requantify the lives of people of African descent. These pursuits have not and do not exist in isolation from the tensions inherent to constructing histories of bondage. Databases, for example, reinscribe enslaved Africans’ bimetrics as users transfer the racial nomenclature of the time period (*negro*, *moreno*, *quadoon*) into the present and encode skin color, hair texture, height, weight, age, and gender new digital forms, replicating the surveilling actions of slave owners and slave traders. There is nothing neutral, even in a digital environment, about doing histories of slavery, and technology has not made the realities of bondage anymore palatable or easier to discuss across audiences or platforms”
 - 1. “The archive of Atlantic slavery—images, numbers, and texts created by slave owners, traders, investors, abolitionists, and the enslaved themselves—haunts efforts to render black people as humans.”
- 3) Finally, we need to recognize that at points our interlocutors will say no, and we need to listen to them. (Sometimes no will not be actively said, but implied, so we need to be sensitive to this.) We also need to be willing to shelve our ideas if we realize they will do harm.
 - a. We’re the ones with power, power inscribed on us by our affiliation and trainings.

So, let’s think about audiences, publics, interlocutors, and subjects:

Returning to our roadmaps, we’re going to do another think-pair-share (but actually a think-think-pair-share)

First, think:

I want you to brainstorm as many potential examples for the three categories that are broken down in the roadmap. Try to be specific

Audience: (Who are speaking to? Who is listening? Also if you say “the public” define that more concretely?)

- This can include our disciplines (health humanities, DH), and people outside those disciplines (librarians and archivists, dark tourists, governments)

Interlocutors: (Who are you speaking with? This can be scholarly conversations, and IMPORTANTLY, the people you work with to produce your arguments.)

- This can include interview subjects, other scholars, government entities

Subjects: (Who do you take from for this research?)

- Web users? Media conglomerates? Communities? Companies?

Ideally, we don't want any subjects, because they are helping our research, and we are obligated to help them in return.

You may also notice that your subjects may be WAAY TOO BIG. How can an entire nation be a subject or geographic region? You'll need to think about narrowing.

Second, think:

With your list of the people and communities you are working with, I want you to choose 2 examples from each of the three headings above. (You may have more than three, but pick the most significant)

Answer these questions (1 sentence for each): we'll take 10 minutes, so you may not get through all of these. It is okay to write. I don't know.

Why is your project important for this group?

How do you know that it is important to them?

Will your project help them? How?

Does the community want to be helped? How do you know this?

Who are your connections to this community?

And for subjects specifically:

Is there any way you can change a subject into an interlocutor? How might you?

Pair:

In your groups, I want you to share one example of each of these.

Had you thought about these questions before?

Share what you hadn't thought about.

Share any changes you might make to your project?

This may be a vulnerable moment for some of us. Be generous, and kind.

We wanted to foreground these issues early, so we can use them to adjust our research early in the process.

Share:

Let's talk.

Sean will bring in some of his own work here. There may be too many people. There may be historical reasons why you can't incorporate input from folx.

We'll talk about ethics with cod.

"These obligations also come from our research, both as scientists and as STS scholars, as feminists and as anticolonialists. Yet as you may have anticipated, these obligations are sometimes at odds with one another. Thus, our obligations and relations are often compromised, meaning we are beholden to some over others, and reproduce problematic parts of dominant frameworks while reproducing good relations at other scales. Compromise not a mistake or a failure—it is the condition for action in a diverse field of relations."

Data Talk

Finally, I want us to think about the data we're planning on using. We'll do a quicker sketch and not do a pair moment.

Think:

Each of you listed at least one data source in your application. I want you to choose one of those sources link that source to one (or more) of the communities you listed. For that source

What is the source:

From whom did the source originate:

Did they consent to you have access? Did they give consent to having it digitized?

Could they have?

Why are you using it?

Now, take that source and let's think about how we may engage with it digitally. In order to do digital work, we can only take parts of the information because our tools are very strict about what will work with them.

Think:

What is useful for your project in this source?

How would you describe the data?

What is the most common kind of object that you're working with?

What is it that interests you?

What is the data you need? (Is it text, geographical information, oral histories, images?)

Miriam Posner Quote

Discuss as a group: How do you feel about thinking of your material as data? (How do you think the people who supplied this data feel about it?)

We will be working in consultations later this month to talk more specifically about your projects. In these consults, we will work together on figuring out next steps for your research, and I will be sending additional materials your way about these next steps.

[[This from the old outline. We'll have them work through this after the first consult.]]

What do we do with a large project?

One of the things that you're probably seeing is that we're asking scaling and structuring questions. Some of these are quite big, and some of you may have never engaged in a project at this scale before. We want to make sure you have the conceptual skills to work through a large project.

Activity: Project Timelines

We are going to make two timelines. There is a provided spreadsheet. [!!! Link to it]

You can also draw freehand if that is better for you.

Step 1: Pick an accomplishment that required more than a couple months to accomplish.

Examples: A published essay, a conference presentation, a book, a grant award, a degree, or acceptance into a degree program.

For that project I want you to make a note when it was completed. (Accepted, published, presented and so on)

Step 2: I want you to map onto that timeline all of the major steps to complete that project

Think about grants or fellowships, archival time, completed drafts, submissions, classes or lectures attended.

You will notice that you accomplishments are done through a series of small steps, often requiring more work to achieve those smaller goals.

Step 3: Add in the small steps to each of the goals outlined in step 2.

You have to apply for grants, draft submissions for journals, take classes, or attend workshops. What were these?

This is all overwhelming! How did any of us finish any of these projects? Small steps, sometimes made with intention and sometimes by accident.

There are three important things to consider here:

- 1) We can think of each of these smaller stepping stones as potential ways to work on our projects. Any large project is a leviathan of smaller achievements and struggles.
- 2) We can think about the small steps we can take now that will work towards our larger goals. (And think about how these steps contribute to our CV's, our scholarly impact and so on.)
- 3) We can understand the labor that we're doing as making headway, even when we're overwhelmed.

Step 4: Now this about your Institute project and the next year. Make a new timeline and add in a few concrete nodes.

What would you like to be finished with and when? What conferences might you want to present at? Which journals would you like to submit to? What grants do you want to apply to? List them out.

Step 5: Now think about the steps you might need to do to accomplish that.

For example, I usually need a month of time to develop a grant proposal. I'd add draft 1, draft 2, final draft, to my timeline.

Be as granular as you'd like, and try to be honest about your own plans. I often will put too much on my plate and have to make decisions about what I need to focus on.

Think-Pair-Share

Think

- How do you feel on a scale of 1-10?
- What is ONE thing you might be able to do today to feel less stressed?
- What is one thing that may be too much for this schedule?
- What is one thing that may be pushed into year two of the project?

Pair

Discuss your timelines and your responses. This is pretty open, so feel free to just chat too if you need to 😊

Share

Discuss as a group

Homework

Please fill out the Data Plan Worksheet and Methods Questionnaire by next Friday and send them to Sean. He will give you asynch feedback, and schedule a consult from there.