Critical Information Literacy in the College Classroom:
Exploring Scholarly Knowledge Production
through the Digital Humanities

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In recent years librarians such as James Elmborg and Heidi L. M. Jacobs, looking to the connections between information literacy and studies in rhetoric and composition, have drawn attention to the inherently political and social nature of information literacy (IL) and information literacy instruction (ILI). Calling for a more critical pedagogical *praxis* for ILI, Elmborg and Jacobs assert that a holistic and critical understanding of IL, one which recognizes and embraces IL's political and social significance, must extend beyond rubrics and must involve more complex ways of exploring the relationships between information, society, and politics.

Given that formal ILI most often takes place in the college or university classroom, the implications of a critical praxis for IL seem particularly relevant to academic libraries, where students are often advised regarding scholarly practices and the use of scholarly sources. Although the aim of ILI in these contexts is most often to foster critical thinking and inquiry (and although this aim is frequently met in many respects), a great deal of academic library instruction neglects to draw attention to the subjective nature of academic publications, and to the fact that academic scholarship, like all information, is born out of social and political structures that are not immune to bias and power relations.

As a growing number of librarians and educators argue for a more critical praxis for ILI, one which encourages students to critically evaluate all information and to consider it in relation to social, political, and rhetorical contexts, ILI must go beyond making general distinctions between scholarly and non-scholarly sources which often elide the complexities of knowledge production.[1] Instead, a strong critical and socially-conscious

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1 Among others, the work of James Elmborg (2004, 2006), Heidi L. M. Jacobs (2008), Cushla Kapitzke (2003a, 2003b), Christine Pawley (2003), Maria T. Accardi, Emily Drabinski, and Alana

ILI praxis emphasizes the inherently biased nature of *all* information, and invites students to explore information as reflective of the specific rhetorical and sociopolitical situations in which it is created, shared, and responded to.

While many librarians and educators agree in principle with the idea of a critical praxis for ILI, knowing how to implement such an approach remains a difficult question. Drawing on Elmborg's conception of academic information literacy, I argue in this chapter that the digital humanities (DH) – understood perhaps most simply as the intersection between humanities scholarship and digital technologies – offers rich possibilities for fostering critical information literacy more broadly and academic information literacy more specifically through a critical pedagogical praxis. Because much of DH engages in alternative scholarly practices (such as the use of digital media, recognition of alternative forms of scholarship such as digital tools and experiments, and new models of publishing and peer review), DH presents numerous openings for exploring with students traditional and emerging scholarly practices, as well as ways that academic discourse and scholarship are influenced and shaped by social, political, institutional, and structural contexts. After considering ILI in relation to academic information literacy, I will discuss what DH in particular can contribute to ILI. Finally, I close with ideas for the classroom which address the sociopolitical dimensions of scholarly discourse and practices through the lens of DH.

Academic Information Literacy in the College Classroom

In higher education, a particularly important aspect of critical information literacy is what James Elmborg has called "academic information literacy." As Elmborg (2006) explains, "If literacy is the ability to read, interpret, and produce texts valued in a community, then academic information literacy is the ability to read, interpret, and produce information valued in academia" (p. 196).

Academic information literacy involves not merely recognizing and

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Kumbier (2010), Troy Swanson (2004, 2005, 2010), and Dane Ward (2006) has placed particular emphasis on the importance of a critical pedagogy for information literacy instruction.

reproducing scholarly discourse, but also thinking critically about the creation and use of scholarship. As Elmborg (2006) states, academic information literacy "involves the comprehension of an entire system of thought and the ways that information flows in that system. Ultimately, it also involves the capacity to critically evaluate the system itself" (p. 196). From this perspective, the university and scholarly communities are not the embodiment of truth, but rather one part of the complex social and political world in which we live.

Many college and library classes, however, often imply that academic sources require little scrutiny, based on the presumption that academic work is always well-researched and well-argued. Elmborg's conception of academic information literacy suggests that effective information literacy instruction goes beyond simple distinctions between scholarly and popular sources, as educators encourage deeper understandings of scholarly work, practices, and communities.

Deeper understandings of academic discourse require reflection on the institutional, structural, and sociopolitical contexts which largely shape academic work. Academic information literacy should not be a thought-less acceptance of all aspects of academic structures and discourse. To the contrary, a critical approach to academic information literacy offers openings for examining and perhaps even challenging that very system. Similarly, academic information literacy need not deny the experience that many individuals have of feeling "uninitiated" or excluded from the academic world. Rather, academic information literacy can help individuals to recognize the circumstances in which experiences of exclusion arise, and potentially to challenge those conditions from which some individuals feel alienated. To foster such approaches to information literacy educators need pedagogical approaches that invite students at once to become part of academic discussions and to analyze scholarly discourse from a critical perspective.

Elmborg (2006) convincingly argues that academic librarians can and should play a central role in promoting academic information literacy. He poses the question

Should librarians "serve" the academy by teaching its literacy skills

> unquestioningly, or should librarians participate in the critical reflection undertaken by "educators," a reflection that leads us to challenge, if necessary, the politics of academic exclusion, and to participate in the creation of new and better academic models? (p. 197)

If we agree that our role as librarians is to encourage both higher-level thinking and social consciousness, then the answers to these questions are clear. How we go about serving students, however, is a much more open question.

Critical Pedagogy for Academic Information Literacy

Critical pedagogy, a philosophical and pedagogical approach informed by the work of theorists like Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux, offers a valuable framework for information literacy instruction which emphasizes critical thought and social awareness, including within the academic context. Advocates of critical pedagogy posit that education should foster critical thought and inquiry, in particular in regards to the social, political, and institutional forces that shape our worlds and our experiences. For Freire (2002), this occurs not through content-focused teaching (what he calls the "banking concept" of education), but rather through students' active dialogue, reflection, and engagement in real-world problems. Through such education students take charge of their own learning and may develop "critical consciousness" (p. 73). This critical consciousness, according to Freire, involves awareness of how political, social, and structural conditions affect oneself and others, on both local and global scales.[2]

Such awareness is crucial to academic information literacy, for to understand and to engage critically in academic studies, one must examine and sometimes question the institutional, social, and power structures that largely shape academic discourse and scholarly practices. But if one finds academic discourse difficult or even alienating (as many students appear to do), it may be especially hard to trust one's own experiences and ideas about scholarly work.

Critical pedagogy may prove a particularly powerful approach in the

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2 It is worth noting that for Freire critical consciousness ultimately moves beyond social awareness to social action. This chapter, however, focuses primarily on fostering social awareness.

face of the intimidation that many students experience when they first encounter scholarly discourse. Because critical pedagogy emphasizes the value of students, their experiences, and their voices, many students may find assurance when encouraged to speak openly about both their intellectual and their emotional experiences in response to academic scholarship, especially if they have previously been frustrated with or felt alienated from academic discourse. Along with students' reflections on their personal experiences with academic work, they may begin to view their personal understandings of and relationships to academic work in new ways, and perhaps to find meaningful connections between scholarly work and their own lives.[3]

Imagine, for example, a classroom of students who have been told repeatedly that academic writing is proper and that informal ways of speaking are incorrect, without being encouraged to consider how notions of propriety and correctness are culturally and politically situated. What if those students were exposed to critiques of academia as elitist, or to arguments that academic discourse is not the single "correct" way of speaking but simply one linguistic style that has emerged from a specific context? When students are encouraged to consider the academic world in its sociopolitical context, they are better positioned to understand, to engage in, and to effect change in scholarly practices that have grown out of a complexity of sociopolitical and institutional structures, some of which do not align always with ideals of equality and social justice.

How might library instruction facilitate critical awareness of academic practices, and where might students begin to examine academic discourses and practices in a way that is accessible to individuals with limited exposure to academic scholarship? There is, of course, no single answer to these questions, and any given approach will have its own particular strengths and limitations. That said, I propose that the digital humanities, approached through the framework of critical pedagogy, presents especially

3 Conversations about students' relationships to academic work are, of course, not always easy. This may be particularly true in diverse classrooms in which individuals have varying degrees of familiarity and comfort with scholarly discourse (particularly since this level of familiarity sometimes corresponds with other factors such as social class). As Mary Louise Pratt has argued in "Arts of the Contact Zone" (1991), such moments of unease can be some of the richest opportunities for meaningful learning; they are also among the most challenging.

rich possibilities for introducing students to academic practices, while also encouraging critical thought and self-reflection on those practices. Because DH at once highlights and challenges traditional scholarly practices, particularly in response to ongoing technological and social changes, it presents unique openings for exploring academic discourse in relation to the social, political, and structural contexts that largely shape it.

In discussing what DH might offer to critical information literacy instruction, I will first consider how DH often both exposes and reflects sociopolitical structures and power relations that are central to the production and sharing of knowledge within academia. This will feed into a discussion of how DH can challenge and/or affirm traditional scholarly practices in the humanities, such as blind peer review and the privileging of the print monograph. Finally, I will present class activities and discussion topics intended to foster critical and academic information literacy.

The Digital Humanities

Digital humanities (DH), an emerging and complex concept, can be understood perhaps most simply as the intersection between humanities scholarship and digital technologies. This definition, however, does not capture the complexity of DH, a term which also implies new approaches to and attitudes about academic scholarship and the role of the university. These emerging practices include (but are by no means limited to) digital publishing, digital media, collective editing, hybrid models of peer review, new standards and procedures for tenure and promotion, and digital pedagogy and digital literacies.

These issues, of course, are inextricable from the social, political, institutional, and technological contexts and structures that largely shape academic practices. The complex relationships between these contexts and structures are reflected in many of DH's central concerns, including the use of digital tools and media, recognition of digital and collaborative scholarship, and alternative publishing models like open access and collaborative editing. An understanding of the practices and debates surrounding such issues is, I contend, essential to academic and critical

information literacy, particularly in the digital age.

The relevance of DH to academic and critical information literacy is evident in the many questions and debates within DH. What within the digital environment counts as scholarly activity? Should peer review be an open process to which anyone can contribute, or does such openness compromise the authority of academic writing? Should venues like Wikipedia and Twitter have a part in academic discussions, or do such tools trivialize or "dumb down" scholarly discourse? In what ways might digital technologies serve as openings and/or barriers to democratic systems that support open information and free expression? Are there dangers in viewing technology and digital tools as neutral, and if so how can we make more transparent the ways that digital tools and structures are shaped by cultural bias or philosophical perspective? Does hacking as a means of political engagement have a place in academia? These are all questions raised within the expansive areas of DH.

Projects associated with DH span a wide range of interests. One example is MediaCommons, described as a "community network for scholars, students, and practitioners in media studies" which explores new forms of digital publishing (MediaCommons, n.d.). MediaCommons' digital publishing projects, which take a variety of shapes, are intended not simply to increase digital content, but also to shift the structures of traditional publishing.

As MediaCommons makes evident, the structures and practices of publishing can be understood in political terms. For example, in the humanities the single-authored print monograph historically has been considered superior to other modes of writing, such as digital and open access publications and less formal academic writing such as blogs, collaboratively written wikis, and self-published digital books. MediaCommons, however, argues that humanities scholars need to respond to a rapidly changing and largely digital culture with new modes of publishing and communication. As is explained in the MediaCommons' "About" page,

> Our hope is that the interpenetration of these different forms of discourse will not simply shift the locus of publishing from print to screen, but will actually transform what it means to "publish," allowing the author, the

>publisher, and the reader all to make the process of such discourse just
>as visible as its product. (MediaCommons, n.d.)

This emphasis on transparency in the publishing process draws attention to the dynamic and social nature of publications, which involve not just the author and publisher but also readers and interested communities. MediaCommons' consideration of the reader appears to be realized in its projects, which use open peer review and invite reader comments and active engagement in discussions. Through these new approaches to academic work, the editors and contributors at MediaCommons hope that "new communities will be able to get involved in academic discourse, and new processes and products will emerge, leading to new forms of digital scholarship and pedagogy" (MediaCommons, n.d.). Many of these approaches may help to open discussions to a wider community and may challenge scholarly practices that reinforce more hierarchical structures and that tend to limit opportunities for reader input.

Endeavors like MediaCommons illustrate not only how academic practices like publishing and information sharing are changing, but also how such activities must be understood in relation to the structural, institutional, and sociocultural contexts that surround them. As MediaCommons points to the values of collaboration, openness, and even democracy, it demonstrates the often overlooked connections between how a community creates and shares knowledge and how individuals view themselves in relation to larger political, social, and institutional structures.

The potential for DH to raise awareness of power relations and structures in academia is also evident in the work of THATCamp (The Humanities and Technology Camp), an "unconference" at which "humanists and technologists at all skill levels learn and build together in sessions proposed on the spot" (THATCamp, n.d.). The impromptu nature of this event is intended to foster creativity and spontaneity, and to contrast the more formal style of most academic humanities conferences. The egalitarian model which participants aspire to is evident in THATCamp's About webpage, which explains that the event is "non-hierarchical[,] non-disciplinary[,] and inter-professional" (THATCamp, n.d.). The less formal culture of THATCamp reflects a growing interest held by many within DH in

breaking down boundaries between disciplines, institutional structures, and the university and the general public.

As in evident in the work of THATCamp and MediaCommons, many DH projects illustrate how tensions between traditional and emerging scholarly practices are closely tied to the social and power structures of academia. In so doing, such projects provide openings for discussing the politics and power relations of information and knowledge production in academia.

This is not, however, to say that DH erases social hierarchies and therefore offers a utopian model of scholarly engagement. While many in DH strive for a more egalitarian, open, and collaborative community, hierarchical power and social structures are clearly present in many (and on some level probably all) DH debates and scholarship. The fact that DH communities often aspire to a new social order, however, presents opportunities for thinking deliberately about the roles of power and social structure in communication and information practices.

The Appeal of Digital Humanities in Critical Information Literacy Instruction

Since DH has grown largely out of some scholars' frustrations with traditional approaches to scholarship and academic promotion that are sometimes associated with hierarchical structures and more narrow conceptions of scholarship, it offers a unique opening for exploring the academic arena as a complex and often contentious space in which varying perspectives and agendas are at play. As digital and emerging scholarly practices have been met with some resistance and skepticism by academics within and outside of the humanities, DH also calls attention to political and social issues and agendas that affect many disciplines today.

Issues in DH lend themselves particularly well to a critical pedagogy that explores students' personal experiences both at the university and in various digital environments. Students who are more versed in the digital world may tap into their knowledge, skills, and interests, while also being challenged to consider their relationships to technology, digital environments, and various digital communities in new ways. At the same

time, DH's focus on the intersections between technology and culture and between the university and the broader public encourages individuals to consider how their connections to information are profoundly influenced and often shaped by the contexts and communities in which they encounter and interact with that information.

Because DH often challenges traditional scholarly practices, as well as the exclusivity of academic language, it may also be refreshing to students who might otherwise feel frustrated or alienated by scholarly discourse. As DH tends to involve critical examinations of established and alternative approaches to academic work, it may encourage individuals to consider the reasons for established scholarly practices, as well as potential opportunities and limitations of these conventions. Similarly, the very fact that much of DH work is intended to reach the general public provides natural openings for considering information in relation to power and social structures, communities and students themselves.

Addressing Multivocality within DH

My description of DH as generally embracing alternative models of scholarship, along with greater inclusivity of communities outside of academia, could be interpreted as part of an "us against them" mentality, in which DH is presented as the positive and progressive force standing against regressive traditionalists. This is *not* my intent. To represent academia and DH in such a dualistic way would be a disservice to students which encourages all-or-none thinking rather than critical thought.

While I do believe in many of the ideals and principles commonly associated with DH (e.g., making scholarship accessible to a wider audience, challenging elitist tendencies that are often part of university structures), and while I am excited about many possibilities that DH offers to scholarship and to education, I do not view DH as a perfect model of what all scholarship should or must be. Rather, I would argue that concepts, practices, and communities related to DH can be explored in ways that foster critical inquiry about *all* information sources and the rhetorical circumstances in which those sources are produced.

DH is incredibly multi-faceted and complex, just as is academia more broadly. Indeed, much of DH literature centers on disagreements about what the digital humanities is and what it should or should not do. (Among those debates is the question of whether DH scholars engage sufficiently in social and political issues, or if technological tools actually become obstructions to doing so). The breadth and range of DH, as well as the debates both within and beyond it, demonstrate in large part the opportunities it presents for critical inquiry into academia and scholarly practices. An exploration of DH helps to communicate the actual diversity of philosophies and scholarly practices within academia, and challenges the notion of a monolithic university representative of a coherent group or a universal truth. With this in mind, I find it important when comparing DH to more traditional scholarly practices to acknowledge the diversity and breadth within both DH and the university more generally. Such acknowledgement affirms the varying voices, approaches, and interests evident not only in DH, but also in so many communities. Too often such multivocality is overlooked, and the sense of a consensus may discourage students from questioning ideas or expressing dissenting views.

Acknowledgement of multivocality is similarly essential to an open class environment that allows for critical dialogue and opposing views. As John Trimbur argues, allowing for a "rhetoric of dissensus" is particularly important in the classroom, as it helps students to "demystify the normal workings of discourse communities," operations which often involve silencing difference (as cited in Leverenz, 1994, p. 168). Such an approach, as Carrie Shively Leverenz (1994) explains, can "enable teachers and students to go beyond a mere replication of established knowledge-making communities to a critique of those communities' practices" (p. 168). As Leverenz's idea of a "dissensus pedagogy" suggests, when dissonances and heterogeneity are recognized and perhaps even celebrated, students may not only get a fuller picture of academic institutions; they may also feel more comfortable to voice their own ideas, regardless of whether those views seem to align with a given group.[4]

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4 It is notable that Leverenz (1994) focuses on the challenges of dissensus pedagogy in the multicultural classroom. She considers how dissensus pedagogy in practice (rather than in theory) is complicated by the rootedness of established institutional and sociocultural structures in the

Class Activities & Resources

The activities and resources described in this section point to concrete ways of exploring DH in order to foster critical understandings of scholarly practices, academic institutions, and scholarly information sources. The activities, informed by critical pedagogy, ask students to reflect on not only the social and political contexts of scholarly practices and discourse, but also on connections between academic work and students' personal experiences.

Each activity can be built upon, expanded, or otherwise modified, depending on the needs and circumstances of a given class. For many of the activities, I have suggested related resources and readings. These sources are by no means comprehensive, and other materials may prove more appropriate, depending on an instructor's focus and goals.

1: Defining Digital Humanities: Exploring the Impossible Question "What Is Digital Humanities?"

Adequately defining a concept like the digital humanities is incredibly difficult, and in some respects impossible, since DH encompasses so many viewpoints and areas of study. Given this reality, how does one effectively introduce a term that resists definition, and present it in a way that opens discussion of scholarly practices as reflections of the social, political, and structural dimensions of the university? In order to open deeper discussions of how DH relates to such issues, a class may begin by establishing a broader understanding of DH as a concept. The difficulty of defining DH, while possibly frustrating, reflects its rich potential for the IL classroom. The complexity of the concept of "digital humanities" highlights the reality that academia is not a monolithic entity, but rather includes communities and individuals with both overlapping and diverging interests and concerns.

The fact that the term "digital humanities" has no clear definition and

academy (many of which students have already come to accept without question). Unfortunately, the scope of this chapter does not allow for a detailed discussion of dissensus pedagogy in practice, though sensitivity to the challenges of encouraging dissensus is vital to the pedagogy and activities herein described.

is to a great extent open to interpretation also underscores the idea that scholarship and scholarly practices, like all forms of information, are situated within particular sociopolitical and structural contexts and within communities of individuals with both common and diverging interests and concerns. At the same time, work in DH reflects how communities and their practices evolve in response to numerous factors, including technological and social changes.

To open a discussion on defining DH, an instructor might first explain to students that DH is a diverse field, and that individuals often disagree on what it is and is not. The instructor might then indicate that an awareness of various definitions of DH will enable the class to explore many of the issues and concerns raised in DH in greater depth.

Students might then compare different definitions.[5] A class might examine where these definitions converge and diverge, and what these overlaps and differences suggest about academic culture and practices, including their relationships to digital environments. Part of this discussion would address how social and technological changes can be related to institutional and social structures.

Salient discussion points might include: the use of digital environments and digital tools for communication; the growing role of online communities for academic discussion (and in particular how these may affect social and power structures); evolving publishing models and the value placed on print vs. electronic sources; and the concept of scholarly work as a "social undertaking" (see Kirschenbaum's (2010) definition of DH).

To connect the discussion more directly to students' experiences, a class might also consider whether any of the issues expressed in the reviewed definitions of DH have clear relevance to their own lives (possible topics might include digital communication; online personas; digital privacy; the digital divide; methods of consensus building – particularly in relation to peer review or wiki creation; and inclusion/exclusion from a given group due to differences in ideology, politics, social practices or use of language).

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5 Varying definitions of the term "digital humanities" are abundant. Potentially useful sources include *Wikipedia* (n.d.a), Smith (2009, February 1), Bobley (2011, February 1), Kirschenbaum (2010), and Presner, Schnapp, Lunenfeld, et al. (2009, June 22).

2: Defining the DH Community

As the varying definitions of DH make clear (see Activity 1), those "doing" DH do not always agree on what it is. To deepen class discussions about scholarly debate and scholarly communities, instructors may ask students to read and to discuss debates about how DH is conceptualized.

There is a plethora of materials that might be used. I offer below three sources which are all part of a somewhat contentious discussion, begun in 2011, about who should and should not be considered a DH scholar (or a "DHer"). These sources can help to initiate a conversation about the politics, power dynamics, and interpersonal relations that are central to communication both within and outside of the academy.

In Ramsay's (2011b) "Who's In and Who's Out," he argues that in order to be a digital humanist one must build in some capacity. For him, simply using digital tools or theorizing about them does not make one a DH scholar. He also contends that despite common efforts within DH to be all-inclusive, the reality is that the humanities "is not some airy Lyceum. It is a series of concrete instantiations involving money, students, funding agencies, big schools, little schools, programs, curricula, old guards, new guards, gatekeepers, and prestige" (Ramsay, 2011b).

Ramsay's argument provides an opening for considering the value and the limitations of defining a given community or discipline, and how such definitions reflect both concrete realities and power relations of social and institutional structures. Ramsay, writing in response to critiques of this talk, also published a follow-up essay, "On Building," which may provide content for further discussion (Ramsay, 2011a).

In Mullen's (2010, April 29) "Digital humanities is a spectrum; Or, we're all digital humanists now," Mullen responds to Ramsay's talk "Who's In an Who's Out" by arguing that all scholars use digital tools and materials in some capacity, and that DH should therefore not be viewed as something from which an individual is either included or excluded.

THATCamp's (n.d.) description of its "unconferences," available on their "About" page, presents an additional perspective on what it means to participate in DH and to create highly inclusive, collaborative, and non-hierarchical communities.

Among the questions students might explore when discussing these readings are:

• How do these arguments work to include and/or exclude certain individuals or groups?
• How do the arguments reflect established and/or changing power and social structures within the humanities?
• What is the value of establishing definitions of a discipline, sub-discipline, or other academic pursuit? What are the limitations of developing such definitions?

3: DH Manifestos

A number of manifestos for DH have been written, some of which use playful and often purposely hyperbolic language to express legitimate concerns about the future of scholarly practices and higher education. These documents offer a humorous way of identifying central (and often political and institutional) concerns among DH scholars. It is notable that many of these documents have been created collaboratively, as is the case for much of the work in DH.

Listed below are two such manifestos. The first was created at THAT-Camp Paris 2010, and is relatively serious in tone. The second, written by Todd Presner, Jeffrey Schnapp, Peter Lunenfeld, and numerous others (2009, June 22), takes a clearly hyperbolic tone.

• Dacos, M. (2011, March 26). "Manifesto for the digital humanities." *THATCamp Paris 2010.* Retrieved from http://tcp.hypotheses.org/411
• Presner, T., Schnapp, J., Lunenfeld, P., et al. (2009, June 22). "The digital humanities manifesto 2.0." Retrieved from http://www.humanitiesblast.com/manifesto/Manifesto_V2.pdf

Possible discussion questions include:

• What central issues, concerns, and/or debates of DH are evident in these manifestos?
• How are power structures, political forces, and institutional structures represented in the DH manifestos? What attitude(s) do the authors suggest they have towards politics and institutional structures

in academia?

• What is your emotional response to the DH manifestos? How might other audiences relate or respond to the manifestos (e.g., a fellow DH scholar, a humanities academic unfamiliar with DH, a university administrator, a publisher of a peer-reviewed subscription journal, a Wikipedia editor, etc.)?

• Can you relate any specific issues raised in the DH manifestos to your own experiences with or beliefs about using information or technology? If so, what parallels can you draw? How do the concerns articulated in the manifestos compare to your own?

• What is a manifesto, and what is/are its purpose(s)? What are some examples of manifestos that have been used throughout history? What tone and rhetoric are used in these documents, and to what ends?

Students might explore these questions individually or in groups, and then report back to the class. The Wikipedia (n.d.b) entry for "Manifesto" includes a list of notable manifestos that might be useful for this activity. It may be particularly interesting to contrast the uses of tone and rhetoric in various manifestos, such as Marx and Engels' Communist Manifesto and "The Vow of Chastity," a manifesto written by Dogme 95, a movement of avant-garde filmmakers started by Danish film directors Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg (1995).[6]

Follow-up activity: Manifesto writing. Discussions might be coupled with groups' writing their own manifestos, whether for DH or for another community or concept. Afterwards the class might discuss how their experiences creating the manifesto collaboratively might have differed from writing such a document individually. Did participants experience disagreements, consensus, and/or acceptance of dissensus? Did they take on various roles in the group? Did this process affect how students think about the challenges, debates, or concerns within both DH and academia more broadly?

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6 "The Vow of Chastity" is a tongue-in-cheek manifesto which offers an effective exercise in analyzing tone, and rhetorical purpose and strategy. Before discussing this document with a class it is advisable to have some background information on the film movement Dogme 95.

4: Exploring Models of Peer Review and Digital Scholarship

While much of academic library instruction suggests that peer reviewed sources are of higher quality than other types of publication, there are growing questions about the value and sustainability of traditional models of blind peer review, particularly in the DH community. Discussions of peer review address concerns about whose voices get heard or silenced, whether the opinion of a single identified "expert" is superior to the collective views of a wider audience, and what dangers or possibilities alternative approaches to traditional blind peer review might present. Issues to consider include the purposes, advantages, and disadvantages of various forms of review. MediaCommons, discussed earlier in the section "Digital Humanities," is a prime example of how various forms of peer review are intertwined with social and institutional structures and power relations. The project uses a complex peer-to-peer reviewing system that allows all users to review others' work, but which does not weigh all reviewers' comments equally. Another significant aspect of the review system is the requirement that in order to publish through MediaCommons one must first become an active reviewer of its publications (Fitzpatrick, 2009). Such processes and guidelines for review point to the review process as a powerful force within the MediaCommons community, its structure, and its work. For a more detailed explanation of MediaCommons' review process, see Kathleen Fitzpatrick's (2009) *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy.*

To explore how the peer review and publishing processes relate to power and social structures, a class might begin by reading the "About MediaCommons" webpage, which explains the community's purpose and approaches (MediaCommons, n.d.). Students could discuss what makes this approach to publishing distinct from other forms of academic publication, and how the project's practices reflect the communities and social structures involved in the endeavor. To take discussion farther, students might explore some of MediaCommons' most prominent features: "In Media Res," "MediaCommons Press," and "The New Everyday." Each is accessible from MediaCommons homepage at http://mediacommons. futureofthebook.org.

Another valuable resource for discussions of peer review is the science journal *Nature*'s (n.d.) series of twenty-three articles about the peer review debate. Though this journal is not directly related to digital humanities, its experiments with and debates about peer review clearly address concerns vital in the humanities and across academic communities.[7]

Conclusion

The above ideas suggest the great potential for exploring DH in order to support academic information literacy and critical evaluation of all information sources, regardless of whether those sources are considered academic or humanities-specific, and regardless of the format or context in which the information appears. By no means do these activities address all aspects of DH that are central to academic information literacy. Indeed, there are numerous concerns of digital scholarship that I have not touched upon here. I hope that these activities and sources provide practical strategies, while also serving as catalysts for other teaching ideas.

Because DH exists in a unique space, somewhere in between the "traditional" world of academia and that of the "mainstream" blogosphere, it offers great potential for exploring scholarly discourse not as a unified way of thinking, but as a diversity of approaches which nonetheless tend to share some common assumptions and practices. When students examine the conversations, practices, and communities found within DH, they are introduced to a variety of scholarly practices and debates that they can in many respects relate to and compare to their own experiences within and outside of academia, and in both the digital and the analog realms.

As DH scholars often directly address political and institutional issues surrounding scholarly practices, including the roles of technologies and digital communities, DH proves particularly fruitful for fostering academic

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7 Additional resources relevant to a discussion of peer review include P. Cohen (2010, August 23), D. Cohen (2010, March 5), Updike (2006, June 25), Lehrer (2010, December 13), Engber (2005, April 5), Solomon (2007), Karush (2011, March 10), Clark (2006, December 20), and Salzman and Ruhl (2006). It is worth noting that the majority of the above listed sources (though not all) lean more favorably towards alternatives to traditional peer review. It may prove worthwhile to discuss with students reasons that publications made available through the "visible" Web might be more likely to express this perspective.

information literacy that will likely have resonance to students in the digital age. In connecting academic work to their own lives, students can develop understandings and abilities central to information literacy which extend beyond the more technical aspects of information use. Through such engagements students may develop deeper, more reflective, and more socially aware approaches to evaluating, using, and creating information, whether within or outside of the university.

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