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DGAH398 - Capstone

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Capstone Paper Working Draft

My first introduction to Digital Arts & Humanities was through Carleton College's

course *Hacking the Humanities*. One of the first assignments we had was to answer the question

"what is digital arts & humanities?" At the time, the result of the assignment was discovering

just how complicated that question is. It seemed like everyone had their own opinion and reasons

why their opinion was the correct opinion. Many of the ideas I came across shared some

commonalities, but only in the broadest sense. That is where I will start my attempt to define

what Digital Arts & Humanities means to me. I think that the field has some defining

characteristics, one of which is breadth. I think that the fact that everyone's definition differs to

compliment their own work is an artifact of this breadth. To me, Digital Arts & Humanities is

defined by the use of digital tools to provide a new lens through which to view or create art and

humanities topics. I believe that a working knowledge of computer science and statistics is vital

for the growth and integrity of the field as a whole, but that not everyone needs either of those

skills. While much of my own work in digital arts and humanities does not necessarily center

around computer science, I do have a strong background in statistics and statistical analysis

software such as R Studio. This has helped me further my own interests in data visualizations,

which was the area which originally drew me to the field of digital arts and humanities. I believe

that the term "digital scholarship" is similarly broad. At its most basic and broad, I believe that

this contains any area of study which can be broadened or more fully investigated by the use of

software. Once again, I do not attempt to limit digital scholarship to only being performed by

those with knowledge of computer science and statistics. For both digital arts and humanities as a

whole and digital scholarship, I believe that collaboration between people and groups with a variety of skill sets is an important idea. This puts those with knowledge of computer science in high demand, but also emphasizes a working knowledge of other fields which computer science can be used to examine. Both of these concepts are lenses through which traditional disciplinary knowledge can be viewed and researched. The use of digital tools and knowledge should be used to create a new framework or tool for analyzing, researching, or otherwise changing how traditional disciplinary knowledge is viewed.

I believe that this is where my own work in digital arts and humanities is most applicable. I have work in a fairly broad range, although narrow in the scheme of digital arts and humanities as a whole. My work ranges from games written in Python to 3d modeling and from online journalism to data visualizations. While not all of my previous work has involved data visualization, this is the area which originally drew me to the field as a whole and the area which I believe I am most likely to continue after my time at Carleton.

At this point I need to situate my work in the broader schema of digital arts and humanities debates as a whole. I believe that much of this will center on data visualization. I think also that I will likely talk some about how my own work has had shortcomings in areas such as accessibility.