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The Emergence of the Digital Humanities in Ireland

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"Digital 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. It might be more than these things, but it cannot not be these things."[1] [link: #_ftn1]

Abstract

Tracing the emergence of academic disciplines in a national context is a useful undertaking, as it goes beyond the definition of a field to an assessment of its evolution within a more specific cultural context. This is particularly the case in the Digital Humanities, where the infrastructural requirements are such that the development of the field is strongly connected to social and economic trends. This paper outlines the emergence of the Digital Humanities in Ireland, detailing the history and key milestones of the field's development, while delineating those particularities that are culturally significant in contrast with the global picture.

I. Introduction: The Emergence of Digital Humanities

The Digital Humanities has been an established and widely practiced branch of scholarship for longer than many realize. Misconceptions surrounding its historicization largely emerge from researchers and practitioners outside of the field, and are perhaps owing to the frequent and inconsistent "re-branding" of the discipline. What was initially considered innovative scholarship was soon formalized as "Humanities Computing," before, more recently, becoming widely regarded as "Digital Humanities."[2] [link: #_ftn2] Numerous variants and interrelated fields also exist, with Digital Humanities often seen as an umbrella term that, to quote Marija Dalbello, "encompass[es] a range of practices and scholarly products, including linguistic corpora, interactive digital archives and editing projects."[3] [link: #_ftn3] As is often debated, is it "Digital Humanities," or "*the* Digital Humanities," and how interchangeable (as in this paper) are these terms? Regardless of label, most digital humanists trace the origins of their discipline to the concordance work of Roberto Busa in the 1940s, but at a local level, many cultures are only now, some seven decades later, developing the necessary competencies.

The 1970s through the mid-80s witnessed the consolidation of DH, when, as Susan Hockey suggests, its methodologies were increasingly implemented in professional circles, and when dedicated periodicals and conferences were becoming more prevalent: "Knowledge of what is possible had gradually spread through normal scholarly channels of communication, and more and more people had come across computers in their everyday life and had begun to think about what computers might do for their research and teaching."[4] [link: #_ftn4] For Tim Berners-Lee, the impetus for the creation of the Web in the late 1980s was exactly this kind of scholarly communication, sharing knowledge and ideas within and outside of CERN, and facilitating collaboration in a robust virtual environment. And indeed, this impetus has shaped DH since. If dissemination and access to as wide an audience as possible are key tenets of Humanities research and scholarship, Digital Humanities serves to strengthen these core values, contributing, as Matthew K. Gold puts it, "to the sustenance of academic life as we know it, even as (and perhaps because) it upends academic life as we know it."[5] [link: #_ftn5] The tools used to serve this purpose once included voices, pens and pages; now they include simultaneous sentiment analysis from social media, 4D data visualization capturing space, time and movement, and stylometric analyses of literary works.

Digital Humanities in Ireland—while perhaps not operating under that "DH" banner—was taking shape along a timeline similar to the one suggested by Hockey above. Indeed, the technical knowledge and interest to which Hockey refers was present in Ireland far longer than has been acknowledged or, in fact, documented. For one, University College Cork's (UCC) Peter Flynn, the first webmaster in Ireland, worked with Tim Berners-Lee in the early days of the Web and in the development of HTML 2.0;[6] [link: #_ftn6] consequently, UCC boasts one of the world's first websites—the ninth to be precise. But, as Hockey further notes, a "straightforward chronological account" of an academic area of activity may not "do justice to the development of the activity," and thus, our purpose here is not to see whether or not the Irish academy is concurrent or late to the party, but to examine how it is that the emergence of the Digital Humanities has influenced, and been influenced by, social and economic trends in Ireland.

II. Digital Humanities in Ireland: A Brief History and Key Milestones

Even as the Web as we know it was still emerging, Ireland's scholars and academic practitioners were using a range of computational tools to interrogate research questions and represent knowledge in meaningful ways. Early projects to harness digital platforms include webpages by the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL), as well as the Princess Grace Library, which facilitates a space for scholars and researchers to communicate and share information, a convenience that we forget was once a rarity within some communities of practice. The first notable collaborative enterprise between Humanities and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) researchers in Ireland was Donnchadh Ó Corráin's Corpus of Electronic Texts [link: http://www.ucc.ie/celt/] (CELT) project in Cork. The project, which grew out of the joint involvement of University College Cork's Department of History and its Computer Centre, now provides an online resource for contemporary and historical Irish documents in literature, history, and politics. Under the guidance of the project's technical consultant, Peter Flynn, CELT moved from SGML to XML. Additionally, due to Flynn's understanding of international standards for the publication of textual material online and his awareness of metadata, the project was developed to be platform agnostic. Now over two decades old, CELT offers a searchable text-base of 16 million words, comprising 1,343 contemporary and historical documents from many areas across literature and the arts. The project remains among the primary textual resources for scholarship in Ireland.

The Irish Census Online Project [link: http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/] (2009) is an exemplar for the publication of Irish primary sources online. Managed by Caitriona Crowe, the Head of Special Projects at the National Archives of Ireland, the project is committed to being a free and open resource, built independently of any proprietary software to international standards. This commitment means that the census continues to prompt and resolve research questions for Irish Studies in a way in which private commercial resources cannot. In this way, the Census Project, as an open resource for both researchers and the public at large, clearly exhibits those values so central to the Humanities and the social sciences for the preservation and examination of culture, memory, and society. Additionally, the Project's composition is inherently collaborative: its partners include national colleagues in Ireland, particularly across the cultural heritage institutions; local partners, such as newspapers and museums; and even international colleagues in Canada, in which Library and Archives Canada have made their materials available.[7] [link: #_ftn7] In collaboration, these partners make the resource better than what any single entity could have created on its own. In addition to these, Ireland's cultural institutions have an increasing list of scholarly developments. Examples of such projects include Documents in Irish Foreign Policy [link: http://www.difp.ie/], Irish Script on Screen [link: http://www.isos.dias.ie/], the electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language [link: http://www.lgif.ie/] (eDIL), Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive [link: http://www.ucd.ie/irishfolklore/en/manuscripts/theirishvirtualresearchlibraryarchiveivrla/], Stormont Papers: 50 years of Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates Online [link: http://stormontpapers.ahds.ac.uk/stormontpapers/index.html], Documenting Ireland: Parliament, People, Migration [link: http://www.dippam.ac.uk/], and the 1641 Depositions Project [link: http://1641.tcd.ie/].

It is widely, though anecdotally, held that the Irish people have a special engagement with cultural identity—special in terms of level of curiosity, special in terms of mass interest, and special in terms of engagement with ongoing investigation and discovery of what it means to be Irish. This specialness is particularly evident when it comes to the practice of public history. Notable events such as the Europeana 1914-1918 Family History Roadshow [link: http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en], the Letters of 1916 [link: http://dh.tcd.ie/letters1916/] crowdsourcing project, and most recently, the World War One Roadshow [link: http://www.tcd.ie/decade-commemoration/events/world-war-one-roadshow/] involving Trinity College Dublin, the National Library of Ireland, and national broadcasting company, Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ), highlight this phenomenon of powerful surge of public interest in Ireland. We might more broadly consider this phenomenon a kind of "Public Humanities"; and 2014 may well be referred to as the year Ireland discovered the First World War. It seems that contested memory around the events of this period in history—formative in the cataclysm that would become the Irish Free State in 1922—has submerged engagement with these events in Irish public consciousness. And so, one hundred years on, Digital Humanities practitioners now have been gifted a role in a rapidly evolving public thirst for knowledge and engagement with digitized artifacts relating to the First World War. It is a mark of healing for Ireland, of its maturity, and it acts as another manifestation of Ireland's unique relationship with the Public Humanities. Furthermore, Irish involvement with extra-national projects such as Europeana and DARIAH [link: https://www.dariah.eu/]—that is, the Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities, a European-wide project seeking to assist research and teaching through digital means—demonstrates the means by which Irish Digital Arts and Humanities practitioners are increasingly contributing to the widespread development of digital practices and methodologies beyond the academy in Ireland.

Increased sophistication of intuitive tools allows us to move beyond the days of Web searches that returned little more than hits for clichéd B&Bs with "Irish" in their name. However, while the principles of the Digital Humanities community are reflected in early projects throughout the Higher Education Institution (HEI) sector, in comparison with developments in other countries, Ireland has arguably been late to formalize its own cohort. A key milestone in this process has been the launch of the Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions [link: http://www.djei.ie/science/technology/prtli.html] (PRTLI), an initiative introduced by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) designed to provide financial support to strategic research areas in Irish third-level institutions. Cycle 1 of the €1.22 billion fund

was introduced in 1998, with Ireland's Digital Arts and Humanities cohort receiving its "startup investment" from Cycle 4, awarded in 2007 for the development of the Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS) consortium. This progressive program fosters the development of three strands of focused Digital Humanities scholarship: Texts, Contexts, Cultures [link: http://www.textscontextscultures.ie/] (TCC), An Foras Feasa [link: http://www.forasfeasa.ie/] (AFF), and Global Ireland Institute [link: https://www.ria.ie/research/hsis/hsis-partner-projects/global-ireland-institute.aspx] (GII). Central to this consortium was the creation of the Digital Humanities Observatory [link: http://www.dho.ie/] (DHO) under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy (RIA). The DHO devised and delivered summer schools, seminars, symposia, and workshops to build skills and foster collaboration amongst scholars undertaking digital projects throughout Ireland. Major projects to have emerged out of the DHO include Digital Research and Projects in Ireland [link: http://drapier.dho.ie/] (DRAPier), and DHO: Discovery [link: http://discovery.dho.ie/]. DRAPIer seeks to provide an interactive database of Digital Humanities projects created by Ireland's third-level institutions, while DHO: Discovery acts as a gateway to Irish digital resources. Both projects were discontinued when, in August 2013, all DHO activities ceased. The advent of the DHO crystallized the nomenclature of Digital Humanities in the public mind and, from the outset, the team began a range of high-impact initiatives to support research and engagement as part of the HSIS initiative. The DHO's digital assets have since been transferred to the RIA.

III. Digital Humanities in Irish Universities

The success of PRTLI's substantial investment in 2007 meant additional funding in its fifth cycle (rolled out from 2011 to 2015); it also reflected the maturing of the Digital Arts and Humanities community in Ireland. The impact of the PRTLI in terms of the capital expenditure on buildings and equipment, and for research education, cannot be understated: in conjunction with Atlantic Philanthropies, PRTLI provides both the figurative and literal spaces in which innovative research questions across the higher education sector can be addressed.[8] [link: #_ftn8] The Long Room Hub [link: https://www.tcd.ie/trinitylongroomhub/] at Trinity College Dublin (TCD), the Moore Institute [link: http://www.nuigalway.ie/mooreinstitute/] at the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), and An Foras Feasa at Maynooth University (NUIM) provide key physical and virtual spaces for critical and engaged new work and research.

The proliferation of Digital Humanities institutes and organizing bodies throughout Ireland has also given rise to a number of Digital Humanities courses in various institutions throughout the island. In 2008, with funding received from PRTLI's Cycle 4, An Foras Feasa awarded twelve three-year doctoral fellowships to students across the Humanities disciplines working in the intersectional area between the Humanities and the emerging area of the Digital Humanities.[9] [link: #_ftn9] By 2010, National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM) offered a Master's program in Digital Humanities, the first of its kind to be made available in an Irish institution. Similar programs emerged shortly thereafter in Trinity College Dublin and most recently in University College Cork. In 2011, the Digital Arts and Humanities (DAH) four-year interdisciplinary structured PhD program was launched. Funded by Cycle 5 of PRTLI,[10] [link: #_ftn10] the PhD program is coordinated with an all-Irish university consortium: National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), TCD, UCC, and NUIM, and includes additional teaching contributions by Queen's University Belfast, University of Ulster, and the RIA, along with its industrial partners, Google, IBM, and Intel. Like An Foras Feasa, DAH was designed to enable students to carry out research in the arts and Humanities at the highest level using new media and computer technologies. While many of the convergences between the Humanities and the Digital Humanities have taken place at the post-graduate level, in the last two years, a number of undergraduate modules have been introduced in universities across Ireland, introducing students to the tools, methods, and debates in the digital Humanities.

An Foras Feasa's 2010 Digital Humanities MA program, in particular, is a pioneering attempt to draw together international practitioners to contribute actively to a program with a Digital Humanities focus.[11] [link: #_ftn11] Capitalizing on the resources and expertise available in Maynooth, this program combines excellence in a range of areas from computer science lenses on data modeling and curation to an engaged understanding of the text in Irish Studies scholarship. With innovative postgraduate work that relates directly to initiatives in the Digital Repository of Ireland [link: http://www.dri.ie/] (DRI) and that also looks to the European aggregation of Irish material, alongside a core of students who are developing skills drawn from cross- and interdisciplinary course design, the forward looking modules in the program at Maynooth set a high standard for MA work in the field.

The MA in DAH at University College Cork, now entering its third year of delivery, has attempted to move earlier in the teaching cycle to create a foundation for more advanced scholarship, particularly in the PhD program. It has recruited over 20 students from a wide range of Arts and Humanities disciplines, and caters to culture and heritage professionals more widely with an online MA in Digital Cultures, which UCC is currently preparing to launch. Working in collaboration with colleagues in the Boole Library and Electronic Publishing Unit, teams and individual students in UCC are working on exploring and digitizing primary source materials. Examples include materials from the Frank O'Connor Collection [link: http://frankoconnor.ucc.ie/], the Fleischmann Collection [link: http://fleischmanndiaries.ucc.ie/], the Boole Papers [link: http://georgeboole.ucc.ie/], and the Grehan [link: http://booleweb.ucc.ie/index.php?pageID=278] and Bantry House Estates [link: http://booleweb.ucc.ie/index.php?pageID=261]. Through exploration of these materials using DH methodologies, scholars are revealing new questions, and new dimensions, in Irish research.

The advent of the MPhil program in Digital Humanities and Culture [link: http://dh.tcd.ie/dhc/] at TCD in 2011 added another dimension to the available postgraduate programs in the region. The program is characterized by direct involvement with cultural institutions and the rooting of scholarship around the nature of engagement and digital curation. This program involves a team of interdisciplinary partners at TCD and culminates in an intensive internship module with partnered cultural institutions. The provision of these new and focused courses at this level has further cemented the larger learning cycle for Digital Humanities in Ireland.

Through these programs, students are being trained in both traditional arts subjects while simultaneously developing technical competency required for scholarship in the digital age. As both critical and cultural producers, these students are discovering, sharing, and making Irish material available across a range of media. The field of Irish Studies is and will continue to benefit from the innovative research being carried out by this new generation of scholars.[12] [link: #_ftn12]

IV. Peculiarities and Particularities

Of particular interest to this paper are those trends unique to the Irish community alongside an examination of their possible foundations. In an Irish context, the discipline has been formalized across third-level institutions as "Digital Arts and Humanities," as opposed to merely "Digital Humanities." Critically important in this Irish instance of the Digital Humanities phenomenon is the Arts component and the impact of this additional discipline/dimension, and similarly, the resulting impact on Arts scholarship. The Irish cohort is comprised of scholars acting as both cultural critics and producers, combining performative and traditional humanist practices in an exciting mix that enhances the work of both.[13] [link: #_ftn13] Using as a representative index the Digital Resources and Projects in Ireland (DRAPIer)—an interactive database of Irish Digital Studies projects (about which more shortly)—digital projects and resources pertaining to Irish subjects break down in the following manner:

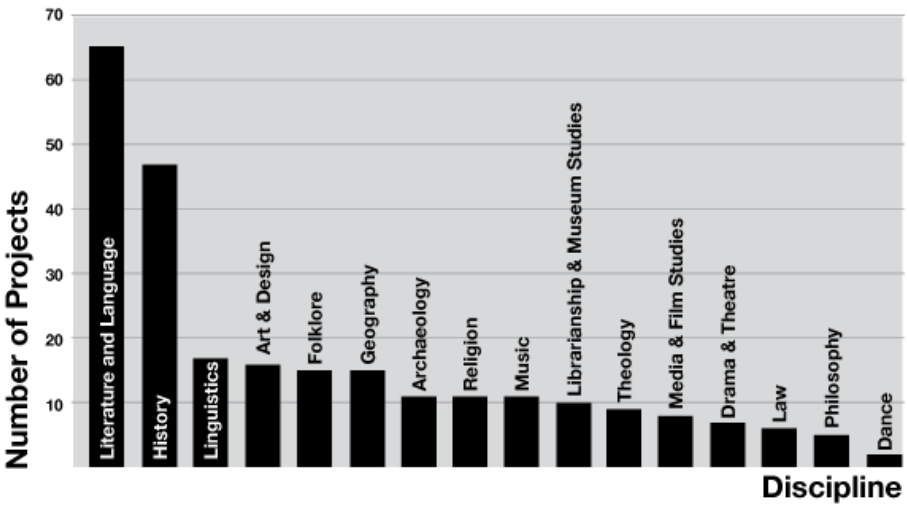


Figure 1. Digital projects in Ireland by discipline

As can be seen from Figure 1, Literary Studies is the dominant discipline within Ireland's Digital Humanities community, though the number of History projects trails behind by only a few. It is clear that, in a national context, Literary Studies and History dominate the wider field. This trend is comparable to that emerging in the international community, where Digital Humanities appears to reside most

frequently in departments of Language and Literature. Scott B. Weingart's analyses of 2013 and 2014 submissions to DH's largest gathering, the annual *Digital Humanities* conference, show similar trends:[14] [link: #_ftn14]

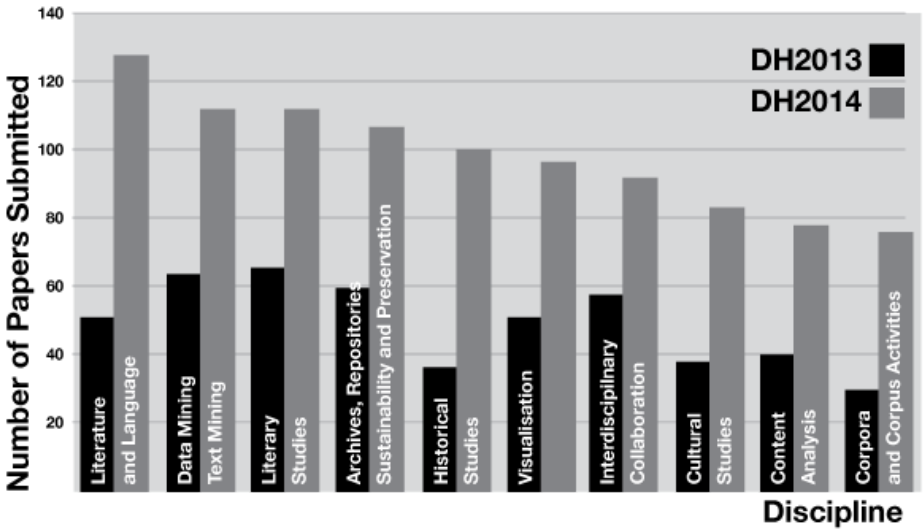


Figure 2. Submissions to annual DH conference by discipline

Weingart's dataset, of course, would also include Irish submissions, while both datasets are founded on the selections of project stakeholders, as opposed to being informed by any objective taxonomy. Furthermore, there are co-occurrences to be accounted for in both datasets. Nonetheless, as Weingart's research suggests, both graphs tend to reinforce the dominance of literary studies.[15] [link: #_ftn15] It is also possible that broader disciplinary trends within the Humanities are simply being reflected here. Comparison of DRAPIer and the Digital Humanities conference submissions data shows that the Irish academy, in a broad sense, is aligned with international disciplinary trends.

The criteria for inclusion in DRAPIer was threefold

1. The project must be affiliated with a higher education or cultural institution on the island of Ireland;
2. The project must have involved digital arts, Humanities, or Humanities/science interdisciplinary research and;
3. The project must have been mandated to produce, or produced, substantially extant digital content or deliverables.

These rigid criteria provide a significant limitation in order to recognize successful and delivered projects in a small sector as opposed to speculative or aspirational endeavors. Nonetheless, it does present a direct look at how solid scholarship has emerged in this area. The DRAPIer survey took place from 2009 to 2013 and was carried out by the staff of the Digital Humanities Observatory in conjunction with partners in the Humanities Serving Irish Society consortium. The intentions behind DRAPIer were to compile a self-sustaining and inclusive collection accessible to researchers working in this area. It attempts not just to chart the subject matter and content being addressed by projects in these sectors but also, and more importantly, to explore and share the methods and tools engaged in carrying out these projects. To this end, a collaborative project was undertaken in conjunction with the Centre for eResearch [link: http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/groups/cerch/index.aspx], King's College London, to develop shared, controlled vocabularies. This wider European collaboration has sown further seeds in Ireland with full participation in the aforementioned Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH) and associated projects such as the Network for Digital Methods in the Arts and Humanities [link: http://www.nedimah.eu/] (NeDiMAH), Collaborative EuropeaN Digital Archive Infrastructure [link: http://www.cendari.eu/] (CENDARI) and the Digital

Curator Vocational Education Europe Project [link: http://www.digcur-education.org/] (DigiCurV). Although past involvement in European projects occurred at a more individual level, the development of a stronger and more vibrant Irish Digital Humanities infrastructure and community has instilled and permitted an ethos of proactive collaboration beyond the individual level. One reflection of this is the large contingent of international enrollment in the Digital Arts and Humanities PhD cohort—a significant aspect of which is the increasing availability of digitized Irish Studies materials upon which to base innovative projects.

V. Challenges and Opportunities

The Digital Repository of Ireland project, which supports the Digital Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, and is funded under Cycle 5 of PRTLI as the National Audio Visual Repository, marks a significant moment in the history of Digital Humanities in Ireland. The DRI has embarked on a collaborative exercise with partners in higher education and the cultural sectors to provide "an interactive trusted digital repository for contemporary and historical, social and cultural data held by Irish institutions".[16] [link: #_ftn16] It promises a potential home for the resources currently being developed to support Irish Studies in Ireland and globally.

Historically it has been the case that collation of research over a period of time has led to a singular presentation of results. Digital Humanities asks for more—Digital Humanities asks for the data! And this remains a serious challenge for existing platforms. Although the promise of linked open data beckons seductively and tantalizingly, a conflation of the aims of open access with the reality of open data leaves data-driven Humanities practitioners asking for more. The shift in thinking needs to be around the data and we have a long way to go in this regard. Is the DRI the research infrastructure for Irish Studies, or will it be a cultural heritage exhibitor and curator? We need to engage with these key issues for the future of the Digital Humanities in Ireland, while continuing to create outstanding international research in a way that can be accessed, shared, repurposed, and reimagined beyond our initial conception as researchers. Who knows who else needs our data? How will they find it if they do? The DRI has proactively sought to develop a series of working papers and handbooks, and it has sponsored workshops and seminars to gain greater traction with active project practitioners.

What we need in this rapidly evolving research environment is a safe place to put all of our community's work, in an open manner, available to as wide a range of consumers as possible. The Discovery Programme [link: http://www.discoveryprogramme.ie/] ran a "share-it" initiative many years ago—few shared. This is not necessarily an Irish phenomenon, but there are peculiarities, such as levels of perceived authority, that call for Irish solutions to this challenge. We need to ask ourselves why such situations are the case, and look to models of best practice in similar international communities, as in the example of Catriona Crowe at the National Archives, who in the case of the 1901 and 1911 manuscript census records, has turned to North American partners such as the Minnesota Population Center [link: https://www.pop.umn.edu/] and the North Atlantic Population Project [link: https://www.nappdata.org/napp/] to facilitate scholarly access to the incredibly valuable social materials contained in these records. The ability to be able to work with these materials alongside spatially-enabled/aware datasets such as those at UCC or NUIM remain hamstrung by the lack of a trusted national coordinating body or platform. How best can we augment and sustain innovative scholarly practice in Irish Studies?

Irish Studies and Digital Humanities in Ireland faced a perceived challenge in coming late to the implementation of TEI as a text-encoding standard. Although this may have limited the options available for computational approaches to digital textual scholarship, it might also have put Irish scholarship in the strong position of being able to build on tools that subsequently emerged, doing so rapidly as part of the healthy investment under PRTLI in the Digital Humanities. This strong positioning has offered additional scope, but has also driven the discovery of potential replacement opportunities in other new areas too—such as data visualization or social network analysis—as part of our understanding of the Humanities. To be sure, in surveying the current situation in Irish academia, the picture of DH is much brighter than may have been presaged by this delay in adoption, and we now have a national, integrated program that has Arts and diversity as integral to the central endeavor.

The training of new practitioners in Digital Humanities, and in the digital practices surrounding Irish Studies, has been given a significant boost by the commitment of the Irish Research Councils and the Higher Education Authority to fund doctoral candidates in Digital Arts and Humanities. However, as with similarly funded opportunities, follow-on funding has been largely non-existent. The cut and thrust of institutional funding has forced Humanities practitioners to use STEM key performance indicators to attempt to define their success in the hope of sourcing sustained funding.

The issue of sustainability is a concern for Digital Humanities work both nationally and internationally. While the tendency of Irish funding bodies not to provide follow-on funding to projects may be read as an attempt to encourage sustainability, in reality, this poses severe constraints to perpetual Humanities projects which are faced with statutory funding as a primary means of perpetuity. Ireland's support infrastructure has been implemented in a manner that allows it to be reactive to the needs of its scholars. However, this rapid influx of funding has also, arguably, produced inorganic growth across Irish institutions as they vie for the strategic alignment necessary to capitalize on opportunities presented by the growth of the Digital Humanities. In little more than five years, third-level institutions in Ireland have gone from having relatively few postgraduate candidates in the field, to substantial cohorts. This undoubtedly raises issues

over quality control, where the motivations of students, scholars and funding bodies might be open to question. Without fully entering into the "who's in and who's out" debate,[17] [link: #_ftn17] often centered around development practices, one could justifiably speculate that not all of Ireland's scholars in receipt of funding intended for Digital Humanities have the expertise or desire to develop their technical proficiencies to the point where they are no longer reliant on black-box tools, or engaged in little more than surface-level remediation and dissemination. Of course, this is arguably an international issue; John Unsworth pointing out that the field is, by its very nature, susceptible to "charlatanism."[18] [link: #_ftn18] Is everyone using a computer a digital humanist?

The continuing negotiation around the nature of "data" is especially profound amongst Irish scholars, and departments have been less open to considering methods and tools from other disciplines, such as those spatial and visual tools that challenge traditional Humanities scholarship. As a result, the "DH moment" took place somewhat later in Ireland, despite the strong and pervasive influence from Archaeology and geographic disciplines that have more recently been actively engaging in successful collaborative projects. Despite this challenge, individual practitioners have attempted to creatively graft the necessities of this movement into existing scholarship, and individually contribute the resources called for to sustain Ireland's Digital Humanities agenda.

VI. Conclusion

Notwithstanding the aforementioned issues, the state of Digital Humanities in Ireland is one of a vibrant, engaged, collaborative community of established and emerging scholars. Digital Arts and Humanities scholarship can offer much to society as a whole, because we as scholars do as we have always done, "interven[ing] in the way knowledge is produced and constituted at the particular sites where a localized power-discourse prevails."[19] [link: #_ftn19] We see this in the publishing industry, in terms of access to public information, in terms of identity construction, and in the flattening out of access to knowledge. The Humanities continue to serve Irish society in a transdisciplinary, open engagement that reflects the dynamic, contextually linked environment that has long since left two dimensions behind. The open access movement and open source initiatives decry tolled access to knowledge; the open data movement advocates access to public information for citizen empowerment; and group and crowd-sourced outreach to local, national, and international citizen scholars has a transformational narrative that has been heralded globally as a rebellion against a staid academy. In the Irish context, there has been growth from existing practice where we are simply augmenting and cementing an engaged collegiality that sustains the academy, with dialogue and argument an inherent part of change, challenge, and growth. The impact can be observed in the multiplicity of inter- and trans-medial resources that are emerging from the Irish Studies/Irish Digital Humanities communities, and they are reflective of the traditionally porous edges of the Arts and Humanities in Ireland. The "digital" itself has a generative influence back into more traditional forms of textual and editorial scholarship, networking, publication, and dissemination. These scholars are critical and cultural producers who are seeking to ask new questions of Irish Studies, and in doing so, continue to make meaningful contributions to the field.

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[1] [link: #_ftnref1] Stephen Ramsay, "Who's In and Who's Out," (paper originally presented at the Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California, January 2011); transcript available at http://stephenramsay.us/text/2011/01/08/whos-in-and-whos-out/ [link: http://stephenramsay.us/text/2011/01/08/whos-in-and-whos-out/].

[2] [link: #_ftnref2] The term "Digital Humanities" is generally considered to have been coined by scholars present at an IATH Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH) meeting in the late 1990s, among whose participants included John Unsworth, Johnanna Drucker and Jerome McGann. As N. Katherine Hayles points out, replacing "Humanities computing" with "Digital Humanities" was "meant to signal that the field had emerged from the low-prestige status of a support service into a genuinely intellectual endeavor with its own professional practices, rigorous standards, and exciting theoretical explanations." See Hayles, *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 43.

[3] [link: #_ftnref3] Marija Dalbello, "A Genealogy of Digital Humanities," *Journal of Documentation* 67, no. 3 (2011): 481. Additionally, the field includes a particular discursive line that considers the opportunities and implications afforded by developments in new media.

[4] [link: #_ftnref4] Susan Hockey, "The History of Humanities Computing," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), accessed January 12, 2014, http://digitalhumanities.org/companion/ [link: http://digitalhumanities.org/companion/].

[5] [link: #_ftnref5] Matthew K. Gold, "The Digital Humanities Moment," in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), accessed January 6, 2013, http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/ [link: http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/].

[6] [link: #_ftnref6] "Hypertext Markup Language—2.0—Acknowledgments," Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, accessed December 3, 2013, http://www.lsi.upc.edu/~alvar/html-spec_15.html [link: http://www.lsi.upc.edu/~alvar/html-spec_15.html].

[7] [link: #_ftnref7] "Census of Ireland—Partners in the Census Online Project," The National Archives of Ireland, accessed December 20, 2013, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/about/partners.html [link: http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/about/partners.html]. For Library and Archives Canada specifically, see http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ireland/ [link: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ireland/].

[8] [link: #_ftnref8] For more on the specifics of the relationship between PRTLI and Atlantic Philanthropies, see "Revolutionising Research and Higher Education," *The Atlantic Philanthropies*, accessed December 21, 2013, http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/news/revolutionising-research-and-higher-education/ [link: http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/news/revolutionising-research-and-higher-education/].

[9] [link: #_ftnref9] Seven of the fellowships were awarded to students at Maynooth University, two at Dublin City University, and three at St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

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[11] [link: #_ftnref11] "MA in Digital Humanities," An Foras Feasa, accessed January 29, 2014, http://www.forasfeasa.ie/teaching-learning/ma-digital-humanities/ [link: http://www.forasfeasa.ie/teaching-learning/ma-digital-humanities/].

[12] [link: #_ftnref12] The foundation of numerous undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications during this period is moreover significant as it occurred in tandem with the country's considerable economic hardship. The commitment to putting the appropriate infrastructural requirements in place can be taken as evidence of a national agenda that sought, and continues to seek, to promote innovation within the Arts and Humanities as it benefits public engagement across these disciplines. While one could ascribe the motivations for this investment to a need to "keep up with the Joneses," it is a testament to the belief of Irish educators in Digital Humanities that, at a time when funding was scarce, new opportunities for students to pursue qualifications in this area continued—and continue—to emerge.

[13] [link: #_ftnref13] It is worth noting as well that in DH more generally, two strands tend to exist: one where the focus is predominately on technologies, and the other being rooted more firmly in the Humanities.

[14] [link: #_ftnref14] For 2014's submissions, see Scott B. Weingart, "Submissions to Digital Humanities 2014," *the scottbot irregular*, accessed February 12, 2014, http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=39588/ [link: http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=39588/]. For 2013, see Scott B. Weingart, "Analyzing Submissions to Digital Humanities 2013," *the scottbot irregular*, accessed February 12, 2014, http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=24437/ [link: http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=24437/].

[15] [link: #_ftnref15] Weingart, "Analyzing Submissions to Digital Humanities 2013."

[16] [link: #_ftnref16] "About the DRI," Digital Repository of Ireland, accessed January 19, 2014, http://dri.ie/about/ [link: http://dri.ie/about/].

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