

ideological concerns of composition scholarship, like assessment, learning outcomes, and professional development. This section of *Naming* is crucial, because it puts a practical face to the many abstracted concepts, and chapter authors consistently provide references back to specific concepts introduced earlier. In their chapter, for instance, Doug Downs and Liane Robertson offer an imagined framework for incorporating threshold concepts into a first-year writing course, breaking the course into four possible units and, for each unit, suggesting potential concept options and ways to weave them together. The chapters of this second section serve both a practical and what we might call a meta-practical purpose, in that they act to offset the theory-heavy first section as well as to satisfy composition's historical commitment to practice-oriented discussion.

Indeed, a primary impetus of this book is the lack of consensus at the level of our conceptual frame, and the establishment of this frame is necessarily slippery and complex. Adler-Kassner and Wardle remind us that 'There is a difference between naming and describing principles and practices that extend from the research base of a discipline. . . and stripping the complexity from those principles in order to distill them into convenient categories' (8). Their resistance to this distillation and their call for greater attention to these threshold concepts which are, by definition, abstract and disruptive could be misconstrued as an attempt to shift the field away from practical concerns. The second section is a satisfying response to such concerns, as Adler-Kassner and Wardle assert unequivocally that 'Naming threshold concepts. . . should not be a navel-gazing exercise.' Instead, they argue, 'it is a pressing prerequisite to being able to work more effectively with our various stakeholders' (84). The book will prove most helpful, certainly, to teachers and scholars of composition, not only for what it articulates but also because of its flexibility. The concepts in the first section are not offered linearly or in any sort of rigid order, so one can break them apart and easily adapt them to a particular pedagogical scenario. Many of the entries are also written in an easy, accessible style that would likely appeal to students, so while there is undoubtedly a great deal of complexity packed into the first section, much of it could be shared directly with students.

Overall, *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies* is an immense contribution to the disciplinary knowledge of composition. One might argue that it is not really offering all that much that is original, in that it begins from the position that we must compile what we *already* know. Yet, this may be the book's greatest strength, and what makes it so uniquely significant. Adler-Kassner and Wardle have looked out across the discipline and acknowledged the lack of consensus in its content; they recognize the immensity of this absence and, from this, have taken first steps toward a more stable disciplinary frame. Given that these are first steps, there are ways to improve upon their efforts, of course. The lack of empirical support is frustrating, though reasonable given the context. They recognize the need to test these ideas, as well as to add to the current list of threshold concepts. The editors, as well as various contributors, are wise to acknowledge the book's 'contingency' at various turns, knowing that their list is necessarily incomplete and will surely be enacted through many different forms yet to be seen. It would also be useful to include greater background on the status of threshold concepts—and writing studies more broadly—within composition. Neither has been accepted wholesale within composition pedagogy or scholarship, and in many cases they receive considerable resistance. Adler-Kassner and Wardle address this briefly, but there is certainly a great deal more to say. A chapter reviewing this resistance would not only more firmly establish the book's position in the disciplinary history but also allow for the opportunity to directly address some of the major counterarguments the book might inspire and, as such, further empower those teachers and scholars looking to embrace a writing studies approach.

Debates in the Digital Humanities

M.K Gold & L.F Klein (Eds.)

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Review by Alan Bullimore

Contact: bullimorealan@gmail.com

My expectations of this book were that there would be a great of debate about the way in which Digital Humanities might differ from Digital Sciences and academic disciplines overall. This however this is woven into the arguments in the text rather than being treated as a subject by itself. One particular

topic which is touched upon is whether text mining of big data, the bits and bytes of the digital world, has possibly reduced digital humanities to a form of corpora. Hence we can count words, and patterns of words but this rigid logic of algorithms might be somewhat unsuited to the study of the arts.

This weighty tome of over 570 pages could have felt more daunting had it not been divided into over fifty chapters, covering many different angles on the subject (widely abbreviated to DH within the text). As a librarian I was a little concerned about the lack of an index, although the diverse nature of many chapters may have made this an eclectic list. The chapter and part headings listed give a good overall impression about what is contained within.

There are parts of the book dedicated to 'Practices' and 'Methods' although the boundary between these two topics is understandably somewhat blurred. The starting point for many chapters include here is about whether the pedagogy of DH has lagged behind much of the fine work which has been undertaken. This issue is first addressed in the introduction to the book, but taken up again many times in subsequent pages. Learning from digital projects which have not worked is referred to at one point as 'the success of failure '.

For someone less interested in the technicalities of DH, and more concerned with an overall picture, it was encouraging to read the chapter by Miriam Posner 'Here and there: Creating DH Community' which was such a digestible and practical summary of how to approach a digital humanities project. This chapter has resonances throughout, and also includes an interesting meditation on whether digital projects are better carried out within the library or in the faculty. Although librarians can provide impetus and enthusiasm for projects, it is vital that outreach to academics and departments is carried out if projects are to succeed. This argument is called poignantly 'Nobody comes to workshops'.

The 'big tent' of digital humanities is a phrase used several times in the volume, and it would have been good to have a chapter, or possibly even a full part to give an overview of what might be included under this large canvass. Spread throughout the work are references to MOOC's (massive online open-access courses), sonic dictionaries, 3D modelling of historical artefacts. These are three diverse applications of digital possibilities and it would have been interesting to hear about the pedagogy and practical challenges associated with each.

The amount which can be learnt from history in this text is one of the major themes. Thus, despite the temptation to assume that all academic contact these days goes on electronically, there is a good deal of discussion about what constitutes an academic community (particularly evident in Chapter 22). Debate like this will surely improve pedagogic principles in future digital projects. Moreover the way in which this book incorporated illustrations of old library collections, and even card catalogues (courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society) lent a homely yet strangely relevant feel to the whole work.