Evaluating Peer Review Criteria: The Geo-Twist

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Outline

- Peer review definitions and general issues
- Unique concerns for geohumanities
- Shaping a review criteria document
- Workshop & poster at DH2015
- Next steps
Peer Review is...?
Peer Review:

**Is one component of scholarly communication:**

- an evaluation as to the validity and merit of the particular research argument
- provides feedback during various stages in the scholarly endeavor
- is evolving to include a broader assortment of types of scholarly works, some with *no* formal research argument
Multiple Stakeholders / Venues for Peer Review

- Scholars
- Funders / Grant agencies
- University / college & department heads
- Hiring and Promotion & Tenure committees
- Peers / colleagues / scholarly societies
- Referees / Editors
- Others?
Peer Review is:

Peer Review is a Conversation ➔
The scholarly work evolves based on the feedback provided and input from reviewers/editors and authors.

“...digital work confounds the established markers of quality that successfully published material will present. The imprimatur of a prestigious university press, or that of a highly selective peer-reviewed journal, is absent from many, if not most, digital projects.”

Kathleen Fitzpatrick
“Peer Review, Judgment and Reading”
Profession 2011

What are the unique challenges for DH? GeoHumanities?
Concerns/Opportunities with Review in DH:

- Digital scholarship is often collaborative.
  - How to document and evaluate individual contributions

- Digital scholarship is rarely finished.
  - Reviews occur at different phases and fold into next phase
  - Intellectual work is required for ongoing preservation phase

- Digital scholarship is frequently public.
  - Web based / easily available

Risam, Roopika (2014)
Rethinking Peer Review in the Age of Digital Humanities.
Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology, no. 4.
Digital Works: (Non) Standard Formatting

Articles and books organize content in predictable ways:
- Abstract
- Introduction / Lit Review
- Methods, Results
- Discussion/Conclusion
- References / Works Cited

This standard publishing format has evolved over time and is now quite predictable. The predictable format facilitates peer review.

However, DH and Geo-DH works do not typically provide similar predictable arrangement of content, nor formal scholarly argument. Should they? How does this impact the peer review process?
How to review this?
Types of Geo-Projects

- Cultural atlases
  - Mapping events and artifacts
- Georeferenced collections (photos, text, various objects)
- Historical GIS
  - Administrative bounds, demographic, economic variables
- Literary geography
  - Georeferencing literature
  - Author lifepaths, publication events
- Geospatial databases
- “Interactive Scholarly Works” (interactive monograph)
  - Spatial analyses: buffers, intersections, viewsheds, accessibility, suitability
- Gazetteers
- Digitized map collections
Concerns in Geo-DH
Evaluating Digital Works

- **American Historical Association.** *Guidelines for the Professional Evaluation of Digital Scholarship by Historians*
- **DH Commons.** *Review Guidelines* dhcommons.org
- **Mandell, Laura.** “Promotion and Tenure for Digital Scholarship” *Journal of Digital Humanities* 2012:1(4)
- **Modern Language Association.** *Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities.*
- **NINES/NEH Summer Institute.** *Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure Committees in Judging Digital Work.*
- ‘Evaluating Digital Scholarship,” special theme in *Profession 2011*
- **University of Nebraska-Lincoln.** Center for Digital Research in the Humanities. *Best Practices for Digital Humanities Projects.*
We build on the DH Commons [Review Guidelines](http://dhcommons.org/journal) and [Submission Criteria](http://dhcommons.org/journal).

DH Commons Review Guidelines:

1. Contribution
2. Presentation
3. Preservation
The Geo-twist: Adding to DH Commons

- Geospatial methodologies and applications
- Centrality of mapping to the project
- Suitability of geo-analytic methods to the research
- Coherence of the maps and spatial representations
- Addressing issues of spatio-temporal uncertainty
- Map adaptive design
- Transparency of data provenance
DH2015 Workshop

Input from participants:
1) Who is the audience for the review?
2) Need a statement about how/when the project will end.

3) Could the GeoHumanities SIG provide a badge system (like NINES & MESA)?
4) Should the reviewer be asked to specify their expertise?
Input Gathered
Some Input from Poster Session

- Do the date match the historicity of the map (temporal aspect)?
- Are reused data appropriately cited?
- Would this help the non(mapping) expert understand the value of mapping in projects?
- Does the project address the question of granularity/scale?
- How do maps communicate to different ways of knowing/knowledge?
- Does the work produce new artifacts for the community? (ex. geo-referenced TIFFs that others could use & adapt)
- Could you consider the pitfalls of geo-visualization? (projection, etc.)
Gathering input: CommentPress

http://geohum.djwrisley.com (opened Sept. 2015)
GeoHumanities SIG

- Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations
  - geohumanities.org
  - @GeoHum_SIG
  - Founded 2013
  - Humanities GIS Projects
  - GeoDiRT
More Discussion at DF THATCamp

- CommentPress site:  
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