Citational Politics: Quantifying Impact in Digital Scholarship in the Humanities.

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Citational Politics: Quantifying Impact in Digital Scholarship in the Humanities

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Introduction

Digital humanities has made an important intervention in scholarly communication, particularly in the realm of citational practices. For example, it has facilitated quantitative analysis of citations within humanities disciplines, illuminated the citational networks in play, and led to the creation of workflows and tools for interpreting citations (Romanello 2016; Crymble and Flanders 2013; Blaney and Meyer 2013; Nyhan and Duke-Williams 2014). Such analysis has much to offer how we understand the confluence of citation, power, and privilege within academic communities of practice.

Yet, the lens of citational analysis has rarely been turned towards digital humanities scholarship itself so we might understand the dominant trends in citational practice. Doing so, however, offers insight into both the citational politics that reinforce homogeneous scholarly practices and illuminates the way that gender, race, and nation are understood in digital humanities. Further, we might map the ways that digital humanities citational practice reveals the contours of the field. One of the few truly international fields, digital humanities moves across nations, languages, and institutional structures. What might citational practices teach us about how digital humanists interact and how areas of inquiry within the field are understood across the world? This line of inquiry answers Isabel Galina’s (2013) challenge for greater inclusion in digital humanities scholarship by embracing her mandate:

We have a combination of scholars who can provide important insights to do this properly. Cultural theory, postcolonial studies, feminist perspectives and other forms of critical theory can make us aware of the problem. But their capacity and willingness to build things can allow us to create projects and tools that help us to be more inclusive.

As such, this paper presents the method, results, and implications of our analysis of citational politics in the journal Literary and Linguistic Computing (LLC), now Digital Schol-
Using this data set, we examined correlations between the following types of data to identify the primary influences on citational practice:

- Language of article
- National location of author’s institution
- Gender

The results of this study show that citation practices converge around subfields within the larger category of “digital humanities” and correlate to both national identity and language. We posit that recognizing such citational practice might help to diffuse tensions between the many methods and approaches that are subsumed under “digital humanities.” We also suggest that citational differences are apparent due to gender and language. Based on our results and analysis, we offer concrete solutions for redressing the troubling citational politics evident in our data set.

We will also discuss future steps for this project, including expansion of the data set to include scholarship from Digital Humanities Quarterly, Digital Studies / Le Champ Numérique, and the Journal of the Japanese Association of Digital Humanities. This will facilitate the exploration of the relationship between paywalled and open access journals and expand the results of our present study. We also intend to undertake a survey to identify racial self-identification of authors and enlarge the data set to explore the influence of race on citational practice and the intersecting influences of race, gender, and nation on the politics of citation in digital humanities scholarship.

**Bibliography**


