CHAPTER 5.

COMPLICATING TECHNO-AFTERGLOW: PURSUING COMPOSITIONAL EQUITY AND MAKING LABOR VISIBLE IN DIGITAL SCHOLARLY PRODUCTION

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Abstract: *We explore digital scholarship in composition studies, specifically focusing on labor visibility and compositional equity. We critique the traditional preference for print scholarship over digital forms and argue for acknowledgment of the labor-intensive process of digital publication. By examining born-digital publications, we advocate for equity in assessing digital scholarship and encourage a shift in evaluative criteria to appreciate diverse modes of academic production. This work pushes for a more inclusive understanding of what constitutes scholarly labor, especially in digital contexts.*

It has been nearly 30 years since *Kairos: A Journal for Teachers of Writing in Webbed Environments* (now *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*) first published, and *Computers and Composition Online*'s digital scholarship archives go back as far as 2000. In other words, it has been quite a while since the excitement of born-digital scholarship flooded into the rhetoric and composition field, establishing itself as a vital and vibrant form of scholarship conveyed through digital texts/web texts, wikis, and multimodal works. The credibility and excitement, however, of digital texts more or less trickled through English departments. Scholars producing digital work found themselves needing to

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argue for the merits of digital scholarship, justifying its value and equality with traditional scholarship (Ball, 2004; Purdy & Walker, 2010).

Now, at least in rhetoric and composition circles, digital scholarship seems to be getting closer and closer to being considered "real" scholarship. There are more established spaces for publishing in the field (e.g., *JOMR* and *Computers and Composition Digital Press*). Teaching "digital literacy" has become a somewhat cliché and redundant phrase. It is just what happens in the rhetoric and composition classroom. Though substantial progress has been made in the field, it's still a little early for digital scholars to bask in techno-afterglow—to "rest on their laurels" and cease pursuing compositional equity. Digital scholarship remains stigmatized in the larger worlds of English and communication, as well as across our institutions—tenure committees and/or administrators often don't "get it."

Fundamental to supporting this stigma are the important differences in composing processes between digital scholarship and traditional scholarship that are glossed over—differences that would help challenge the stigma and add prestige to digital scholarship. These unseen differences are the invisible labors inherent in digital scholarship composing processes, labors not always part of traditional scholarly processes. Understanding these differences makes clear the compositional inequities inherent in how digital scholarship and traditional scholarship are defined, how they function, how they are created, and what they do.

Compositional equity is our term for acknowledging these differences and for inciting a change in perspectives between what digital scholars and traditional scholars do. We suggest compositional equity is a helpful framework for valuing the invisible labors of scholarship, in particular the product and processes of digital scholarship. We complicate the idea that digital scholarship has "made it," that there is some kind of techno-afterglow to indulge. Digital scholarship remains stigmatized as "easy" (i.e., easy to create), less rigorously peer reviewed, and, well, fun, at least when compared to traditional scholarship. The stigma is not something easy to quantify or qualify beyond a feeling, beyond microaggressions we have experienced about our work. However, the CCCC's statement on digital scholarship helping scholars express its value, as well as book chapters like "Making Digital Scholarship Count" (Kelly, 2013) and articles like "Valuing Digital Scholarship: Exploring the Changing Realities of Intellectual Work" (Purdy & Walker, 2010) and "Engaging Digital Scholarship: Thoughts on Evaluating Multimedia Scholarship" (Anderson & McPherson, 2011) point to an "othering," a less-than position for digital scholarship when compared to traditional scholarship. Digital scholarship, in other words, is regularly framed as having to continually "prove" itself.

Besides highlighting that almost Sisyphean task, another purpose of our survey was to, in a sense, "prove" the stigma's existence beyond framings and our

own feelings. By doing so, we hope to make clear the labors of process and the process of labor in born-digital productions. In our study, we investigate digital scholars' composing processes, the technologies they know or have had to learn to be successful, their motivations for publishing digital scholarship, and the invisible labors (including emotional) that may be inherent in their work. Our study, we hope, will assist digital scholars in making visible the work inherent in their compositional processes *and* products. We hope the trends we identify in this study can be used to develop stronger faculty writing support programs, elucidate helpful publishing practices in the field, and make clear the compositional inequity between digital and traditional scholarship, in an effort to move toward equity.

COMPLICATING CORE CONCEPTS: INVISIBLE LABOR, EMOTIONAL LABOR, AND COMPOSITIONAL EQUITY

Invisible labor is an important concept currently pervading rhetoric and composition studies research. The gist of the concept is to make visible and explicit the diverse and overlooked kinds of labor rhetoric and composition scholars perform. Teaching to a class for fifty minutes, grading/evaluating papers, and meeting with students are the obvious, stereotypical, visible aspects of rhetoric and composition labor. Prepping for classes, creating assignments to assess, the recovery from exhausting individual conferences with students, and conducting research and writing about it, on the other hand, are invisible labors—work of rhetoric and composition teaching and scholarship that often goes unnoticed and unappreciated by larger non-rhetoric and composition publics.

Rhetoric and composition scholars have applied the invisible labor "lens" in a variety of ways. In relation to Writing Program Administration (WPA) work, scholars argue that substantial aspects of the WPA's job are invisible, undervalued, and often go completely unnoticed (Day et al. 2013; McIntyre, 2019; Micciche, 2002). Much of the work of WPAs has been treated as work that does not produce new knowledge or require scholarly expertise (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2019). In particular, the invisibility of emotional labor (resolving conflicts, gaining trust, mentoring, advising) of WPAs goes unnoticed (Jackson et al., 2016), and the work products (e.g., policies or curriculum development) of WPAs are often not valued by tenure and promotion committees or the discipline at large (McIntyre, 2019).

The lenses of invisible labor and emotional labor are being applied to more aspects of rhetoric and composition experiences and work. Sano-Franchini (2016) examined emotional labor in the culture of the rhetoric and composition job market. Last year, *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics* (2021) devoted two

special issues (4.2 and 5.1) to invisible labor, exploring a range of invisible labors in academics (e.g., invisible labors experienced by people of color, differential invisible labor of single mothers, and how digital literacy can be considered a free form of labor students possess/don't possess in classrooms).

The consequences of invisible and emotional labor are significant and perceptible, often leading to exhaustion, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and "emotional angst" (Micciche, 2002). We argue that many of these problems hold true for another unique subset of rhetoric and composition scholars: scholars who produce digital scholarship.

While there are studies examining the work of the digital rhetoric and composition scholar, the research is focused more on defining digital scholarship (Ball, 2004), theorizing ways to legitimize digital scholarship, studying how users experience digital scholarship (Tham & Grace, 2020), or theorizing about the challenges and opportunities of publishing in new media environments (Journet, Ball, & Trauman, 2012; Sheffield, 2015). Few studies focus on the actual composing processes of digital scholars or the factors that influence or inhibit scholarly productivity for these scholars, who consider themselves "technorhetoricians" (Maid, 2000) or computers and writing researchers. Though it does mention many of the issues associated with digital scholarship (e.g., collaborative nature and time), even the helpful advice in the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (2015) "Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for Work with Technology" position statement lacks references supporting assumptions about digital scholarship. To that end, the extant research or scholarly statements are mostly anecdotal or driven by case studies, which are valuable but may not offer the scope necessary to incite change or convince non-digital scholars of its legitimacy.

Our study takes up this challenge, as we employ quantitative research methods to more fully grasp the extent of digital scholars' composing processes and the labor of their work. Therefore, much of our study extends into a concern about equity, a concern which has been on the minds of digitally focused rhetoric and composition scholars for a long time, especially with regards to access, student techno-literacies, and interface bias (e.g., Selber, 2004; Selfe, 1999; Selfe & Selfe, 1994). And Chamberlain, Haver, and Hartline (2015-2016), more recently, dispute the Do-It-Yourself ethic, noting it is not an equitable position and plays into white techno-patriarchal assumptions as well—do it alone, without help or consultation. Almjeld and England (2015-2016) show the value in creating equitable spaces for girls to learn digital technologies in their webtext, guiding scholars on how to work with the larger community and facilitate larger scholastic and community buy-in.

Muhlhauser and Self (2019) make equity explicit, describing the ways Tinder and Bumble perform "technological equity" and "technological equality" via

gender performance, critiquing how the apps treat power differentials in dating cultures between men and women. Muhlhauser and Salvati (2021) define "rhetorical equity," arguing for texts to practice transtextuality and accommodate a variety of audiences through multiple textual versions. *Compositional equity* is an effort to make explicit the ways texts are not the same, either in outcome or in their processes. In other words, there is a difference between compositional equity and *compositional equality*—the notion that composing processes are identical or egalitarian performances. With compositional equality, there's a presumption about process and product—that author processes are, though they may be different, regarded equally, even when the products, too, may be vastly different. Compositional equality's ethic rests on a value system that ignores differential composing processes and types of texts scholars produce.

Compositional equity, on the other hand, is *more* inclusive and empathetic to author processes and products, presuming processes and types of products are differentiated, requiring different expertise, invisible and emotional labors, time constraints, and difficulties. Compositional equity recognizes that processes and products are rarely equal. Compositional equity comes from an "all texts are created *equitable*" instead of an "all texts are created *equal*" position, acknowledging a diverse range of scholar creation processes and products.

METHODS

To understand compositional equity and the emotional labors inherent in digital scholarship, we sent a questionnaire to digital scholars in rhetoric and composition or closely related fields, asking them about their composing processes. Our pool of respondents came from the most recent research published over a five-year span in *Kairos*, *Computers and Composition Online*, *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics*, *Harlot of the Arts*,[1] and *Computers and Composition Digital Press*.

We selected the works that met our definition of digital scholarship and emailed the authors, asking them to participate in our survey. Though there is overlap between what we call traditional scholarship and digital scholarship, we provided the definitions of the concepts for our respondents for two reasons: (1) to provide conceptual foundations for our respondents, and (2) to help respondents understand why they were selected and how their works are examples of digital scholarship:

- *Traditional (Print) Scholarship:* Scholarship that primarily uses the written channel of communication (i.e., uses alphabetic text either in

1 Though no longer publishing new work, *Harlot* was an important outlet for webtexts in rhetoric and composition. We looked at their last five years of publication.

physical print or as a digital artifact). Presentation of product (research/article) is prescriptively formatted by the publisher's "house" rules. Though such scholarship may include non-linguistic aspects (tables, diagrams, bold-faced headings, and images), the creation of new imagery and formatting is limited. The arguments being made in traditional texts are generally meant to be experienced linearly.

- *Digital Scholarship*: Digital scholarship may take two forms:
  - Linguistic-centric scholarship, which uses a variety of communication channels beyond just alphabetic text to present arguments. Authors have agency in design and are involved in creation of new, not exclusively written, content.
  - Non-linguistic-centric scholarship (such as an argument made using images), in which other modes of communication take precedence over the written (if included at all). Authors have agency in design and are involved in creation of new, not exclusively written content.

Both forms of digital scholarship tend to "break away from linear modes of print traditions" (Ball, 2004, p. 403). Digital scholarship can be linear; however, regardless of linearity, the presentation of scholarship is generally not prescriptive. An important aspect of digital scholarship is how authors are highly involved in presentation, setting the scene for how their scholarship is displayed and experienced by audiences.

We used "linguistic-centric" and "non-linguistic-centric" to distinguish types of digital scholarship, as "linguistic" is the common parlance for describing multimodal and multimedia work using primarily *words* to communicate. Examples of additional modes include visual, aural, spatial, and gestural. Additionally, "linear" is also common parlance in digital scholarship referring to the "direction" a text can be read: beginning to end where a reader is "supposed" to experience a text in a linear order or a text with multiple entry points where linearity is not assumed necessary for readers to understand or engage with the text.

After creating a list of all authors who had published digital scholarship in the above-listed outlets, we then individually emailed each author who composed digital scholarship, asking them to respond to our questionnaire. Our list resulted in 188 possible respondents, and we received 58 total responses, for a 31% response rate.[2] The survey was open from June 29, 2021 through July 14, 2021.

The questionnaire was designed to address a few key areas:

- *Respondent demographics:* The demographic information we collected included (1) the race/ethnicity with which respondents identified,

2 We removed individuals from the pool if we could not find their current email address.

(2) gender, (3) type of school at which the respondent works (liberal arts college, community college, etc.), (4) respondents' faculty status (tenured, tenure-track, etc.), (5) their department, (6) the amount of digital scholarship they had published, and (7) their familiarity with a variety of technologies and technological principles.

- *Perceptions of digital scholarship:* We asked respondents closed- and open-ended questions regarding how they felt others perceive digital scholarship work. These questions were meant to help us understand the possible emotional labor of digital scholarship work and how scholars feel it is or is not valued amongst colleagues and others. (See Appendix A for all survey questions.)
- *Composing processes:* We asked a variety of questions about how respondents compose—what approaches are most successful for them.
- *Scholarly labor and affective dimensions of composing digital scholarship:* We also asked questions aimed at understanding scholars' feelings about composing digital scholarship that would help us understand the invisible labors involved in producing digital scholarship as compared to traditional scholarship.

In addition to analyzing responses to all closed-ended questions, we coded open-ended responses for common themes where applicable. In many cases, there were not enough responses for us to identify trends; however, we use the quotations in the results section to further illustrate responses from the open-ended questions.

POSITIONALITY

It is important for us to acknowledge our positionalities in relation to our study's population, the topic we selected to research, and our research process. In doing so, we are acknowledging known biases and assisting readers in assessing how our identities have shaped our research. When we began this study, we were both operating from a privileged position, in the sense that we both had already successfully achieved tenure and promotion to associate professor, and we had achieved this success publishing some digital scholarship. We came into this project aware that our respondents might not have earned tenure or might not be in tenure-track positions. We also realized that even though our respondents had published digital scholarship, they might not solely publish digital scholarship and might not consider themselves digital scholars. We generally considered ourselves "insiders," part of the community within which we were conducting our research (Huberman & Miles, 2002). We had both

been active in the computers and writing community for years, had published in some of the journals from which we selected respondents, and identified as digital scholars. In the end, we had a mix of respondents who identified as digital scholars and who did not; most had published some digital scholarship but had not done so exclusively. As such, we had a range of respondent types in terms of their level of comfort, familiarity, and identification with digital scholarship. Additionally, we're both white and have worked primarily in private institutions. In terms of demographics for our respondents, they were mostly white and worked at public universities or colleges. Though we tried to mitigate our own bias as much as possible in leaving space for respondents to provide their own identities and recontextualize questions, we understand that our positions in scholarship have certainly shaped our research process and product.

For example, our questions were certainly framed not just by the research in the field of computers and composition but by our own experiences. When we brainstormed the kinds of strategies respondents might have used to successfully defend their digital work, we used strategies we had successfully implemented in our own reviews as multiple-choice options. Our questions were also led by our own curiosities. In particular, we wanted to know whether others resorted to print projects after struggling to complete a digital scholarship project and, if so, why they had done so.

SURVEY RESULTS

Our results are divided into three major sections followed by our conclusion:

- *Respondent Demographics* provides context for our findings, reflecting the various positionalities of our respondents.
- *Making Visible the Pressures of "Resort to Print"* examines respondents' answers to questions involving the differences and similarities of traditional and digital scholarly composing processes.
- *Making Labors Visible: Emotion and Effort* describes respondents' answers to questions about their and others' perceptions of digital scholarship's value and respondents' experiences with and feelings about being digital scholars.

Both *Making Visible the Pressures of "Resort to Print"* and *Making Labors Visible: Emotion and Effort* are subdivided. Each subdivision provides "Results" sections, where we report our findings, and "Interpretations" sections, where we interpret our findings, describing their significance as well as larger compositional implications.

Respondent Demographics

A vast majority (77.78%) of the respondents work at public universities and colleges. At the time of taking the survey, 19 respondents were tenured, 14 were tenure-track, 4 were non-tenure-track (e.g., lecturers), 3 were no longer faculty members, none were adjuncts, and 5 selected "other" when asked their faculty status. Most of these faculty work in English departments, while some work in interdisciplinary departments or rhetoric & writing departments. The respondents' reported genders were as follows:

- Man: 37.78%
- Woman: 44.44%
- Non-binary/third gender: 6.67%
- Prefer not to say: 6.67%
- Prefer to self-describe: 4.44% (1 - gender fluid, 1 - cis male)

In terms of reported race/ethnicity, of the 46 respondents who answered this questions they selected as follows:

- White: 39
- Asian or Asian American: 3
- Prefer not to say: 2
- Hispanic or Latino: 1
- One respondent self-identified as Eelam Tamil
- No respondents identified as Pacific Islander, African American or Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern, or Multiracial.

To gain a sense of how much work the respondents had done in the realm of digital scholarship, we asked them to estimate how much of their published, peer-reviewed research would be considered digital scholarship, rather than traditional scholarship. Nearly 50% of the respondents selected 0-25%, meaning that less than 25% of their overall body of published scholarship would be considered digital scholarship. 31 percent of respondents selected 26-50%; 11 percent of respondents selected 51-75%, and 8 percent of respondents indicated that 76-100% of their scholarship is digital.

Making Visible the Pressures of "Resort to Print"

To better understand the cultural and structural pressures undergirding resort-to-print dispositions, we "complicated" or examined three aspects of respondents' answers: perceptions of digital scholarship, digital composing processes

and differences from traditional scholarship, and emotional labor and the extra efforts put forth in composing digital scholarship.

Results: Complicating Perceptions of Scholarship: Digital and Traditional

To determine how respondents perceived others' view of digital scholarship, we asked respondents (Question 1) to rate their level of agreement with the following:

1. Digital scholarship is as highly valued as traditional scholarship at my university/college.
2. Digital scholarship is as highly valued as traditional scholarship in the field of rhetoric and composition (or related fields).
3. Learning new technologies is a practice that is valued by my university/college in faculty evaluation processes such as annual reviews or tenure and promotion.

As Figure 5.1 shows, most respondents "somewhat agreed" that digital scholarship is as highly valued as traditional scholarship at both their institutions (21) and in the field of rhetoric and composition (22), indicating some level of uncertainty and inequality in the ways the two are valued. We found that 39% of respondents somewhat or strongly disagreed that learning new technologies is valued by their university or college in faculty review processes, and 20% were neutral.

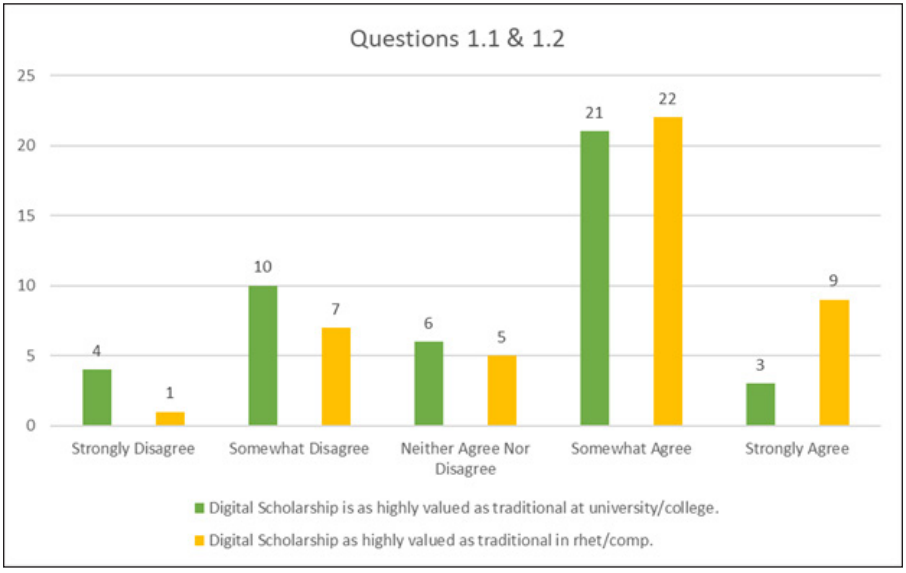

Figure 5.1. Value of digital scholarship in faculty review process

When we further sorted this data by respondents' self-identification as either digital scholars, traditional scholars, both, or neither, it was clear that those respondents who considered themselves digital scholars or "both" digital and traditional scholars felt more strongly that learning new technologies is not valued by their institutions.

Similarly, in Question 10, we asked respondents, "To the best of your knowledge, how has your digital scholarship been treated, valued, or understood by others during faculty review processes, such as annual reviews or tenure and promotion cases?" 15 respondents said the two types of scholarship were treated the same; 11 said digital scholarship was treated as inferior to traditional; 17 marked unsure; and 2 noted that their digital scholarship was treated as superior to traditional.

Interpretations: Complicating Perceptions of Digital Scholarship: Digital and Traditional

> Every time I complete a digital project, I swear I'm never going to do one again :).
>
> – Survey Respondent

Though the above respondent's oath is a humorous take on the time and effort involved in digital projects, there is an important kernel of truth in the respondent's declaration, what we refer to as "a resort-to-print mentality"—a publishing disposition in which outside forces drive authors towards more traditional forms of scholarship. We are fearful the resort-to-print disposition is or may become a tendency in rhetoric and composition, creating a kind of digital scholarly wasteland where "pushing the envelope," so to speak, is hegemonically discouraged. Resort to print or the choice to pursue traditional scholarship has, in other words, become a disposition we hope our current study makes visible.

The driving force behind our resort-to-print disposition is connected to the stigma surrounding digital scholarship; the effort and time it takes to compose digital scholarship (i.e., the learning curves for creating custom digital scholarship like Muhlhauser and Self's "Swipe Right on Find/Replace" and Sheffield's "Thinking Beyond Tools" are monumental in comparison to traditional scholarship); and a sense that there is an underappreciation of the knowledge, experience with programs, and non-alphabetic literacies digital scholars possess.

Overall, the results are encouraging. It's heartening to see digital scholarship being "somewhat" as highly valued as traditional scholarship in both the rhetoric and composition field and with the wider faculty. Yet, why only "somewhat"? Or

why are there only two examples of digital scholarship being treated as superior to traditional, when it's clear that many of our respondents find digital scholarship to take more time and skills to produce? In other words, there is nothing "somewhat" in digital scholarship's value: it remains stigmatized as inferior to traditional scholarship even though digital scholars acknowledge the ways digital scholarship should be as highly valued or even superior. Lastly, and somewhat ironically, it is noteworthy that learning new technologies is only moderately valued in review processes, since it is that learning that makes digital scholarship possible. It isn't that we expect the final product to be considered better because it took more time. Currently, and in a general sense, audience culture doesn't value time as part of the quality of a product, though certainly the time something takes to read is being featured more prominently in linguistic-mode-oriented texts (i.e., articles with read time included). Instead, the quality of the product—audience members' experiences with it—is valued: that is, it's "good" or "bad" or "alright."

However, with regard to the more specific audiences, specifically those evaluating faculty research (e.g., stakeholders like provosts, chairs, and other tenure-track evaluators), we do feel that it is appropriate and fair that time be an important consideration, one that acknowledges engagement and output. The time it takes authors to create digital text means there likely will be fewer publications per year. While our focus is on the competencies and skills digital scholars acquire and use to produce digital scholarship, we acknowledge that other activities take time—such as learning a new research methodology, doing archival research, etc. This, too, should be acknowledged in the context of evaluations of faculty productivity—it is just not the focus of our current study.

Results: Complicating Composing Processes: Digital Scholarship and Differences from Traditional Scholarship

We asked a range of questions about respondents' composing processes so that we could glean what works, and what doesn't, for writers of digital scholarship. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement for the following statements on a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree

1. Collaboration is vital to composing quality digital scholarship.
2. When composing digital scholarship, I typically write out my research as a traditional manuscript and then convert that research into a digital format.
3. When composing digital scholarship, I usually have an idea of the digital format I want to present my research in from the very beginning of my project.

4. When composing digital scholarship, I compose directly in the technology (such as in the HTML code or Content Management System).
5. Generally, composing digital scholarship takes me more time than traditional scholarship.
6. I often have to learn new technologies before I compose digital scholarship.

In Figure 5.2, we share the responses to each of the above items. The time commitment inherent in digital scholarship work was apparent. A majority of respondents agreed (32 strongly agreed and 7 somewhat agreed, or 70% of all respondents) that composing digital scholarship takes them more time than traditional scholarship (and none strongly disagreed). Nearly all respondents (42) also noted that they often have to learn new technologies before they begin composing digital scholarship. In fact, one respondent made a connection between time commitment, literacies, audience, and stigma: "Scholarship that requires more literacies and more time and that reflects the types of texts people now encounter is often perceived as inferior to traditional print scholarship."

Respondents were mixed in terms of what processes work best for them. For example, 19 respondents somewhat or strongly disagreed that their process begins with writing a print-based manuscript and then converting it into a digital format, whereas approximately 16 indicated that this mirrors their process. What was most common (41 respondents strongly or somewhat agreed) in the question about composing processes was that scholars already had an idea in their minds of the digital format they wanted to use to present their research from the very beginning of the project; the technology choice was not an afterthought.

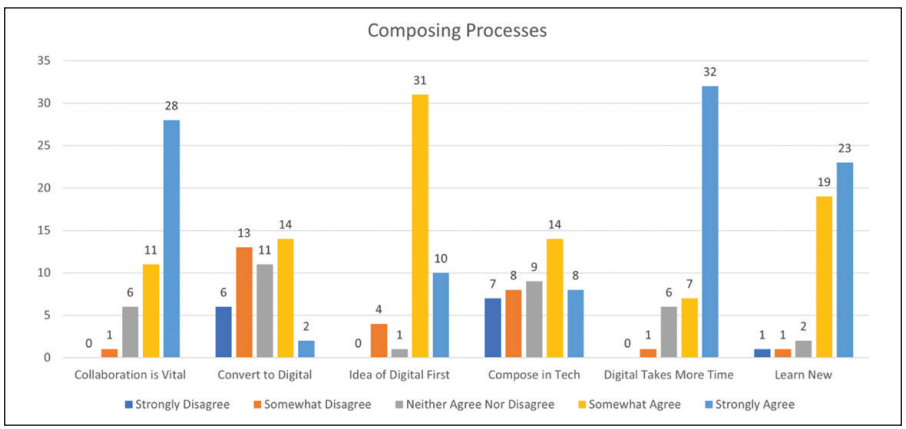

Figure 5.2. Beliefs about digital composing (n=46)

The respondents were mixed when asked if they tend to compose directly within the technology (such as a content management system) as they are writing. Fifteen percent strongly or somewhat disagreed, 22 percent somewhat or strongly agreed, and 9 percent selected neither agree nor disagree. In addition to the closed-ended question regarding composing processes, we asked our respondents to think about one of their most successful digital projects and "Describe your process for composing that work and why you think the process was successful." Responses were understandably varied. After all, composing digital rhetoric comes in all sorts of forms (e.g., podcasts, websites, videos, and/or mixes of forms). However, there were two common touchpoints in composing processes: sketching and iteration. Though sketching may have been keyed into our respondents, since it was an example we provided in the survey question to help our respondents understand what we meant by process, sketching/outlining/mockups (mentioned by 7/14 respondents for this question) was an important aspect of planning projects. The iterative and/or reciprocal aspects of the process (i.e., getting feedback from collaborators, editors, peers, then adjusting the project and getting more feedback) was also important (mentioned by 7/14 in response to this question).

To better understand respondents' technical capabilities and design knowledge, we asked respondents to rate their level of competence related to items such as web design languages, video-editing tools, app creation, accessibility, and usability. Our goal with this question was to demonstrate the many varied composing skills and abilities digital scholars have and/or need, which is ultimately connected to the labor inherent in this work and reveals some of the technical processes involved in digital scholarship. Most respondents indicated at least an average level of competence in WYSIWYG web building tools, content management systems, visual design, and user experience principles. Some of the areas in which respondents indicated the least technical competence included programming languages, video game-editing tools, app creation, data visualization, and image-editing tools.

In another question, we asked respondents if they had begun composing digital scholarship and later changed their mind, converting it into traditional scholarship, or vice versa. Fourteen respondents had indicated starting to compose digital scholarship and then resorting to traditional scholarship, and 13 respondents indicated they had started with traditional scholarship and later turned it into digital scholarship. Five respondents indicated they had done both transformations. In a follow-up question, we asked respondents to explain their decision-making processes when making such moves. When writing these questions, we were aiming to get at whether or not scholars had experienced the resort-to-print mentality, but the responses also revealed information about respondents' composing processes. Respondents turning from digital to traditional scholarship repeatedly mentioned time limits or lack of time to learn

technology (6 of 14). One respondent who turned from traditional to digital scholarship even mentioned having time to learn technology, which helped facilitate the change. Respondents transforming from digital scholarship to traditional scholarship also mentioned explicitly not having publication outlets (4 of 14). Respondents making the move from traditional to digital scholarship mentioned how digital scholarship seemed to fit the project better in one way or another (6 of 13)—e.g., "[Showing] possibilities with evidence" and "the message is probably best communicated in a visual (or audiovisual), non-alphanumeric format." One respondent deftly summarizes the difficulty and the complicated decision-making process in deciding between mediums:

> A project's move to traditional or digital has happened when the scope/focus of the project shifted and either a traditional or a digital approach no longer seemed like the right fit. Time is also a major factor, governing how much energy one can put into a particular project at any given moment.

Interpretations: Complicating Composing Processes—Digital Scholarship and Differences from Traditional Scholarship

> With a traditional composing process, I can basically get the draft done on my own or with my co-researchers. With a digital composing process, I needed to learn new technologies and invite additional collaborators to help me create the vision I had in my mind.
>
> – Survey Respondent

In short, we find that digital scholars consider the "right" fit in how projects develop and where their project may go; however, time *and* technical knowledge *and* energy are important factors guiding what a project becomes: traditional or digital. Relatedly, we found that 41 respondents had similar processes, in which they decided on the digital format of their scholarship early in their research processes. When this response is read in conjunction with other questions, it seems that our respondents have thought critically about the technology they want to use early in the process—that it is vital to their scholarship, to their arguments and research. We wish we could have dug deeper, because we now wonder why it was so vital for respondents to present their scholarship non-traditionally with more modal decisions (i.e., decisions beyond the content features of the linguistic mode). Additionally, we are interested in learning more about how respondents negotiated technological dead ends where something didn't work. Given the large number of respondents who agreed with this question, we think this points to opportunities for future research and exploration about these decisions.

The strong agreement on this particular point also led us to thinking about practical and more systemic advice. Practically, scholars creating webtexts should be flexible with technology: if one doesn't work, for instance, it does not necessarily mean switch to print. Instead, be ready to pivot with technologies as projects develops; there is more than one way to "CSSkin a caHTML." More systemically, we recommend that scholars and/or faculty teaching in rhetoric and composition graduate programs develop a (pardon the portmanteau) *technodology*—a technology methodology (maybe a "techno-methodology") for making design decisions for digitally born scholarship. A technodology for learning and considering how technologies can be used to create such scholarship. Developing technodology would assist scholars in making the "right" choice, in being able to pivot, and help a new generation of scholars appreciate the digitally born scholarship.

Furthermore, our study results showed that although composing processes are varied, much like they are for traditional scholarship, digital scholars have more options to consider along with more processes to perform. It makes sense that sketching, iteration, learning new technology, and collaborating with others who may be more *tech-savvy* are important aspects of composing digital scholarship. The process of building webtexts is multidimensional and relies on multiple literacies: planning the interface (sketching), creating the multimodal content (getting feedback on the elements, testing usability, accessibility, and readability), and figuring out how to make the interface function. Resort-to-print dispositions, in other words, may not exist when projects begin and/or as they start to take shape, but such dispositions seem to appear when larger structural and cultural elements become part of the composing process, a process that is *not* compositionally equitable.

Such dispositions have a history and can even be connected to those promoting digital scholarship. Concerns about some digital scholars' lack of technical ability, for example, was a flashpoint at Computers and Writing 2012, where a round table of enthusiastic digital scholars repeated a *learn-to-code* mantra. While encouraging scholars to take chances and be fearless in learning to program, there was simultaneously a shaming and stigmatizing effect on digital scholars whose processes were shaped by WYSIWYG technologies.

Though well-meaning, the mantra forgets digital scholarly processes and time in relation to technology's dynamic nature (i.e., the ways technologies change and how there is more than the most recent scholarship to keep up with, like with traditional linear scholarship). The mantra also forgets time and the positionality of digital scholars (i.e., in terms of work-life balance, institutional labor, and desire to learn such things). In other words, *learn to code* does not need to be the privileged way to compose digital scholarship. Such privilege plays into

the resort-to-print disposition, limiting who can do digital scholarship.

At the same time, it is impressive that, as our results show, scholars have solid competence in a range of technology and visual design principles that may not have been a part of their disciplinary training. This illustrates some of the knowledge and labor involved in digital composing, labor which is not always recognized by those who view the end product, an equitable understanding of process differences.

Making Labors Visible: Emotions and Effort

To better understand the differential emotional labors and efforts between digital and traditional composing processes, we complicated how respondents felt about their workload, how they felt about their digital and traditional scholarships—if there were differences, and to describe how they distribute their workloads for digital and traditional scholarship. We also wanted to know if there were differential experiences in labor between both gender and race.

Results: Complicating Emotional Labor

In the survey, we asked a variety of questions to gain a better understanding of the emotional labor that may, or may not, be inherent in composing digital scholarship. We began by asking questions about respondents' feelings about their employment—feelings of stress, burnout, hope, etc.—in general. In a later question, we asked if any of these feelings were connected to their digital scholarship work. We felt that by separating the two questions, we could get a more accurate and less biased depiction of how digital scholarship may or may not affect their emotions about their work.

In Question 13, respondents were presented with the statements below and asked to select how accurately the statements reflected their feelings on a 5-point Likert scale:

- I feel that I have control over my workload.
- I feel that I have sufficient time to learn.
- I am satisfied with my job.
- I feel stressed.
- I feel burned out.
- I feel supported by my colleagues.
- I feel supported by my college/university.[3]

A majority of the respondents selected that "I feel stressed" (38 out of 44)

3 Some of the categories we measured, such as stress, control over workload, and job satisfaction, were inspired by a study on burnout in academic health centers (Locke et al., 2020).

and "I feel burned out" (31 out of 44) moderately, mostly, or clearly describes their feelings. They also felt they had little control over their workload (29 out of 44). At the same time, they also indicated feeling very proud of their work; in fact, 41 out of the 44 respondents to this question said that the statement "I feel proud of my work" moderately (4), mostly (20), or clearly (17) describes their feelings. Respondents reported feeling moderately or mostly supported by their universities and colleagues (30 out of 44), and most (36) reponded that the statement "I feel that others value my work" mostly or clearly describes their feelings. Very few respondents felt cynical about their work, with only 20 indicating that this statement moderately to clearly describes their feelings.

Of course, the respondents' feelings about their work (Question 13) did not necessarily have a direct correlation with their digital scholarship. As such, for Question 14, we asked the respondents to indicate if any of their choices from Question 13 were related to their work in digital scholarship. The most commonly selected statements were the following:

- I feel proud of my work. (23)
- I feel that others value my work. (17)
- I feel hopeful about my work. (17)
- I feel like I work too much. (13)
- I feel that I have sufficient time to learn. (11)
- I feel stressed. (9)
- I feel burned out. (8)

To determine if these connections were positive or negative, we turned to the open-ended question, in which we asked respondents to explain their responses by describing how their work in digital scholarship had impacted their feelings in any of these areas. We also compared their responses in Question 13 and Question 14 to see the correlations between responses. Over half of the respondents who "clearly" or "mostly" felt proud of their work indicated that this was directly related to their work in digital scholarship. At the same time, those who felt that they work too much connected that statement to their work in digital scholarship. And while 11 indicated that the statement "I feel that I have sufficient time to learn" was connected to their digital composing, those responses were generally not positive; in other words, those respondents said that "I feel that I have sufficient time to learn" either "slightly" or "does not describe" their feelings. The respondents who felt stressed or burned out frequently noted that those feelings were connected to their work in digital scholarship. As one stated, "I … believe that the time-cost of creating these

projects contributes to stress." On an overall positive note, most respondents felt their digital scholarship work was supported by colleagues.

Most respondents did not indicate that the statement "I feel like I have control over my workload" was related to their digital composing. Only 2 of 29 felt digital composing played a factor in their feelings about their workload.

To better understand the connections between certain emotions and digital scholarship, we asked to what degree respondents' feelings corresponded with the following statements:

- I enjoy composing digital scholarship.
- I enjoy composing traditional scholarship.
- I prefer composing digital scholarship over traditional.
- I feel proud when I have successfully published digital scholarship.
- I feel proud when I have successfully published traditional scholarship.
- I feel pressure to help others in my department with technology issues because I am known as a digital scholar.
- When composing digital scholarship, I worry that my time and effort will be wasted if the publication does not get accepted.
- When composing traditional scholarship, I worry that my time and effort will be wasted if the publication does not get accepted.

Most respondents indicated they feel enjoyment composing digital scholarship (37 of 42 selected "moderate," "mostly," or "clearly describes my feelings") as well as when composing traditional scholarship (39 of 42). Ratings were similar in terms of respondents noting that they feel proud when they have successfully published digital scholarship (36) and traditional linear scholarship (36). In terms of the approach by which they prefer to compose (digital or traditional), responses were mixed, with about half of the respondents preferring digital and half preferring traditional.

As seen in Figure 5.3, when considering the statement, "When composing *digital* scholarship, I worry that my time and effort will be wasted if the publication does not get accepted," 34 out of 44 respondents said the statement moderately describes their feelings (9), mostly describes their feelings (10), or clearly describes their feelings (15). When the same question was asked about *traditional* scholarship, fewer respondents (28 out of 43) said they felt this worry. Additionally, when asked about how they felt about their work, scholars who identified themselves as traditional scholars felt the statement, "I feel hopeful about my work," described their feelings more so than those who considered themselves "both" (i.e., digital and traditional scholars) or primarily digital scholars.

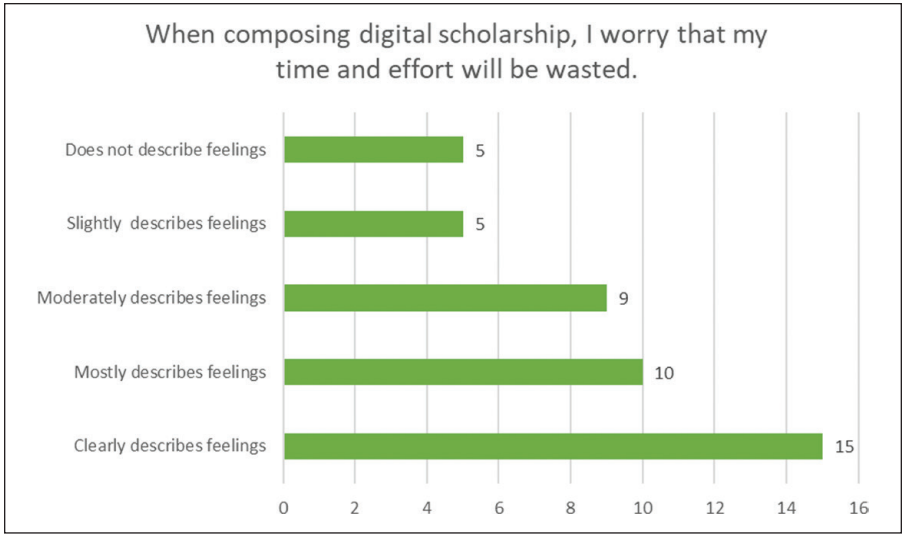

Figure 5.3. Perceptions of "Wasted Time" When Composing Digital Scholarship

Interpretations: Complicating Emotional Labor

> When I compose digitally, I'm reminded of just how much time it takes to learn new tools, and often that will ultimately lead me to create less ambitious projects just because this is kind of an optional or voluntary thing that I'm doing. I don't think my department or university penalizes me for this work, but they also don't reward it. So I have to have internal motivation (belief that it's the best way to pose the argument or make the argument accessible to audiences I care about) in order to do it.
>
> – Survey Respondent

The above respondent's comments summarize the themes we saw throughout the study. And read in conjunction with other responses, it was clear to us that the emotional investment, time investment, and limited outlets for digital publishing factored into the differences in worries and, thus, compositional inequity between digital and traditional scholarship. There is a nod to the resort-to-print mentality here as well, as the respondent comments on creating less ambitious projects because of the extra work. The respondent also notes that the extra work, while not disregarded, is not rewarded. Still, the respondent reflects the overall importance or value of digital scholarship—that sometimes it is the best way to make the argument one wants to make or that it is the best way to make the argument accessible to the audience one cares about. This *internal* motivation seems to be a driving force for many of our respondents that likely leads to

some of the feelings of pride and accomplishment surrounding the final product.

The time and effort of producing digital scholarship was clearly a limiting factor for our respondents reflecting compositional inequity, but despite that fact, it was exciting to see that while most consider themselves both digital and traditional scholars, most were proudest or felt the best about the digital scholarship they composed. Composing digital scholarship, at least for our respondents, was an ambivalent process, simultaneously leaving them feeling stressed and burned out during the process but proud of the product.

Of course, many factors can feed into how one feels about their work and, given that the survey was distributed during the COVID-19 pandemic, we imagine that factors like shifts to remote instruction, illness, deaths in the family, and many other personal concerns influenced respondents' choices.

While we are unsure why respondents did not often connect the feeling of having control over one's workload to their work in digital composing, it is possible, given responses to other questions, that they deem practices such as learning new technologies to be outside of their expected workload.

Results: Complicating Effort

In breaking down the time commitments by task, we asked respondents to characterize the level of time and effort they tend to spend on the following tasks for both digital scholarship and traditional scholarship: (1) conducting research, (2) writing alphabetic text, (3) formatting to submission guidelines set by the publisher, (4) using technology to create and/or edit multimedia elements, (5) designing/organizing the aesthetics of the work, (6) proofreading alphabetic text, (7) editing for accessibility, (8) learning new methodologies, and (9) learning new technologies. To compare time and effort between digital and traditional, respondents were given the option to select "none," "little," "somewhat," "much," "traditional," and a "great deal."

We used the "a great deal" scale response as our way to compare digital and traditional scholarship. Across a range of questions, respondents generally indicated that digital scholarship requires more labor than traditional. For example, for traditional scholarship, only the categories of "conducting research" and "writing alphabetic text" received a higher number of responses to the "a great deal" metric. In all other categories, digital scholarship took more time and effort. The most striking differences were in relationship to accessibility and design. Thirty-six respondents (or 81%) indicated that designing and organizing the aesthetics of digital scholarship takes a great deal of time and effort, whereas only 6 respondents (or 14%) selected "a great deal" for traditional scholarship. Similarly, using technology to create or edit multimedia elements and editing

for accessibility took a great deal of time and effort for 34 and 26 respondents, respectively, when composing digital scholarship. On the other hand, only 3 respondents selected "a great deal" for multimedia and only four selected "a great deal" for accessibility considerations with regard to traditional scholarship.

In addition to the time and effort involved in composing digital scholarship, there may be other factors that influence scholars' abilities to produce digital scholarship. For our study, the most prevalent limiting factors were, in order:

- lack of time (40),
- constraints in their own technological capabilities (21),
- a lack of funds to purchase assets (13),
- perceptions at their institutions that digital scholarship is not as important as traditional (13),
- lack of mentorship from someone who has published digital scholarship (12), and
- a need for funds to learn (12).

On the other hand, respondents generally did not indicate a lack of personal interest in composing digital scholarship, nor had many encountered bad experiences submitting to digital journals in the past. Only 5 respondents noted lack of support from their departments as a limiting factor.

Respondents were also invited to select any resources or opportunities they had used in order to successfully compose digital scholarship. Most commonly selected were free online tutorials (37), collaboration with a colleague and/or co-author on design (31), collaboration with a colleague and/or co-author on content or research (31), mentorship from colleagues who could help with technology or design skills (31), mentorship from colleagues who were willing to offer feedback on drafts/works in progress (29), feedback from a journal's or publisher's reviewers (26), and assistance received from an academic journal's staff (19). It was interesting to note that on-campus faculty development workshops were not selected often (7), nor were graduate school courses (17). This may point to areas for future institution-level improvement. In addition to asking respondents about resources and collaborations, we also asked respondents, "What successful strategies and/or resources have you used to help explain/support the importance of your digital scholarship to others during faculty review processes?" While our initial goal in asking this question was to offer faculty writers specific strategies for ensuring their work is valued, the results also showed us this work complicates the meaning of effort and labor in relationship to digital composing. The most common response, mentioned by 27 respondents, was that respondents used strategies to explain how digital scholarship allows audiences to engage with their research in multiple ways. Twenty-six

respondents noted the importance of explaining how digital scholarship is more accessible to broader audiences than traditional scholarship. Another important strategy was taking the time to explain the time and effort that went into the composing process. Sixteen respondents also indicated using position statements from national organizations in the rhetoric and composition field and 16 noted that they found ways to demonstrate the similarity of their digital scholarship to traditional scholarship. Only 7 had used screenshots to illustrate their composing processes.

Interpretations: Complicating Effort

While most of the strategies seemed to prove valuable for the respondents and therefore may serve as helpful to faculty writers in this area, the responses also reveal that there is additional labor in making one's digital scholarship be considered "up to par" with traditional scholarship. Though one respondent noted the opposite—"I haven't had to justify my use of digital scholarship. I have just included the scholarship with my other publications"—most others felt the need to spend time justifying why they were publishing in that format and explaining the work that went into the composing process. Considering how students and faculty negotiate a saturated multimodal media environment in their daily lives, it's important to note the irony in the perceived stigma of digital scholarship. Digital scholars' extra justification points to an academic value system of what English and/or rhetoric and composition is and does: composes scholarship in a very narrow, print-biased way. There remains a lack of equity in the labor of justifying composing traditional and digital scholarship, again, with digital scholarship shouldering a larger burden.

Granted, some of this information may seem obvious at first glance. It's less likely that scholars will spend time on multimedia elements for a print journal even as print is no longer the dominant way journals publish work. However, taken as a whole, the data demonstrates the drastic amount of work scholars put into aspects of their digital composing that may largely go unnoticed, unacknowledged, or unappreciated, such as learning new technologies (which, for example, took a great deal of time for only 4 respondents composing traditional scholarship but which took a great deal of time for 24 respondents when composing digitally).

Results: Complicating Effort—Gender and Race

More men reported that they feel they have the time to learn at their institutions (Question 13). Specifically, 10 out of 17 men indicated that the statement "I feel that I have sufficient time to learn" moderately, mostly, or clearly describes their

feelings. Responding to the same statement, women, on the other hand, reported feeling the statement "does not at all" or "only slightly" describes their feelings (13 of 20). In addition, more women (20, or all the women in our study) reported that lack of time has limited their production of digital scholarship as compared to 4 men out of 17.

As indicated in our "Respondent Demographics" section, there were too few (5) People of Color (POC), to draw any conclusions. We speculate on why this is the case below.

Interpretations: Complicating Effort—Gender and Race

In terms of equity related to factors such as gender and race, our study is hopeful in showing how women are composing digital scholarship in numbers similar to men (at least with regards to respondents in our study). And if we superficially evaluated names of the 191 possible participants (which itself is problematic) we contacted, this bears out, too. In fact, this suggests more women are participating in digital projects than men in the rhetoric and composition field. We wish we had more information, however, about the ratio of men and women in the rhetoric and composition field. Adding such context would help us better understand on a more general level the gender equity in composing digital scholarship: for instance, there might be a higher percentage of men in the field participating in digital scholarship than women.

Time, however, pointed towards some unsurprising aspects of gender inequity with regards to digital scholarship and resort to print dispositions. It is difficult to speculate on reasons why this is occurring since we did not specifically lead respondents in this direction with follow-up questions. Still, it is not a reach to apply hegemonic masculinity as an answer to why this is occurring—more specifically, the structures and cultures differentiating how men and women work. It is somewhat banal to bring up such inequity as it is a common practice. Mason, Wolfinger, and Goulden's (2013) comprehensive *Do Babies Matter: Gender and Family in the Ivory Tower* shows clearly how the structures of heterosexual family and invisible labors therein disadvantage women in their academic careers.

Guarino and Borden (2017) show how there is a differential between men and women in higher education, with women performing more service than men. El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown, & Ceynar (2018) observed how women are "Dancing Backward in High Heels: Female Professors Experience More Work Demands and Special Favor Requests, Particularly from Academically Entitled Students."

Time is a valuable resource that, for women, is often scarce for research. COVID-19 did not helping this situation. Holding classes online did not mean

there was necessarily more time for research, especially for women in academics. For instance, in their survey on how time is affected differently by women and men academics, Deryugina, Shurchkov, and Stearns (2021) found that there was a "disproportionate decline in research time among female academics relative to research time among male academics" (p. 166), yet other activities like teaching and research were not affected. Furthermore, "female academics with children—especially those with young children—were disadvantaged to a significantly greater extent" (Deryuginaet al., 2021, p. 164). Viglione's (2020) *Nature* article summarizes the most recent studies on the effect of COVID-19 on academic production: "across disciplines, women's publishing rate has fallen relative to men's amid the pandemic." This can be explained by invisible labors like childcare, caring for relatives, converting classes to online (with women faculty more often having greater teaching responsibilities). Furthermore, "because many institutions are shut owing to the pandemic, non-research university commitments—such as participation in hiring and curriculum committees—are probably taking up less time. These are often dominated by senior faculty members—more of whom are men. As a result, men could find themselves with more time to write papers while women experience the opposite." (pp. 367-368) It seems that the cards are stacked against women producing digital scholarship. We wonder how much more could have been generated. How many projects were scuttled?

With regards to POC responding to our survey, there were not enough non-white participants for us to draw conclusions about their experiences, but we hope future studies are able to better address why POC are not a larger part of digital scholarship.

Of course the easy answer as to why we had so few POC participate in our survey is to blame the pipeline (i.e., there just aren't enough rhetoric and composition faculty of color to find for our survey). Consider the 2018 National Center for Education Statistics observation about faculty of color (which includes adjuncts and interim professors) in "degree-granting postsecondary institutions" that only 25 percent were faculty of color (this number includes faculty who identify as two or more races). The less easy and more equitable answer has to do with the structures and cultures inhibiting people of color from staying in academics and being successful in technology and in the academy and from even wanting to participate in digital scholarship and/or academics.

Matthew (2016), in her work exploring the academic experiences of tenure-track faculty of color, summarizes the structural-cultural issues people of color in academics negotiate this way:

> Faculty of color always have to do at least two things at the same time as they go about their work: figure out how to cope

> with (confront, deflect, or absorb) the daily microaggressions of the academy while trying to navigate structural obstacles that everyone faces in environments that are either maddeningly indifferent or hostile." (pp. xv-xvi)

Faculty of color often face a more difficult tenure path, with more emotional labor, compared to white faculty. White-Lewis's (2020) study on faculty hiring practices shows another dimension of difficulty for POC to negotiate: a candidate's *fit*. In theory, a candidate's *fit* is supposed to be somewhat objective. Yet White-Lewis describes problems with the concept:

> (1) Its application to understanding and justifying hiring decisions is severely overstated, and (2) it obscures the abundance of idiosyncratic preferences throughout the entire hiring process, which perpetuate racial aversion, neutrality, and convenience. (p. 850)

Our results—though we do not have data on the racial breakdown of rhetoric and composition scholars with academic appointments—can be read as a call to action to discover why digital scholars of color are so low in number and then facilitate more ways to be inclusive. Is there a structural and/or cultural paradigm of *fit* in digital scholarship limiting who practices digital scholarship?

TECHNO-AFTERGLOW IS COMPLICATED

While we aren't ready to say the sun is setting on initial enthusiasm for digital scholarship, we do know that the afterglow for composing such scholarship is somewhat fleeting, especially in the current academic environment. The structures and cultures surrounding academia are *still* designed for traditional linear scholarship—for scholarship that doesn't have all the "extras." A resort-to-print mentality may not be occurring explicitly on an individual level where scholars are purposefully avoiding digital scholarship; however, there is a *printism* or *traditionalism*—a bias implicitly limiting digital composing processes and, thus, making it more difficult to make digital scholarship.

As we and our respondents have noted, there is much invisible labor that goes into composing born-digital scholarship, and being the *digital* scholar in an English, writing, or rhetoric and composition department also comes with its own pressures and labors. Digital scholars' research often takes much more time to complete than the average print text because these researchers are not only conducting research and writing the results but then coding websites or designing innovative, interactive ways for audiences to engage with the text.

They take on the extra burden of arguing for the scholarly value of their work. They often spend additional money and time learning new technologies or coding languages, and of course, there is an emotional labor component that many digital scholars take on, mentoring other digital scholars to help them navigate the complexities of creating, defending, and legitimizing one's work. Digital scholars even have to worry more about finding places to publish. At the heart of it, the costs of such invisible labor are about equity/inequity in composition processes and products between digital and traditional scholarship.

The logic behind the superiority of traditional scholarship is somewhat vexing. Though we understand this would not exactly be equitable, we wonder why digital scholarship is not more highly valued than traditional scholarship. With all the *extras* of time, techno-literacies, techno-training, and accessibility knowledge in composing digital scholarship, why aren't they compared differently? Why isn't the default different so that one has to argue for making traditional scholarship instead of the other way around? Digital scholarship, in other words, can easily be viewed as superior to traditional scholarship but isn't treated as such.

It's difficult to imagine how to shift the connotations and stigma still surrounding digital scholarship. Perhaps, time will tell as the perception seems to be heading in a more equitable direction. There are, for example, institutional experiences that are hopeful, as one respondent describes:

> Professional development opportunities in digital literacy and new tools support all of the feelings I've identifies [sic]. My institution also promotes collaboration and many colleagues are excellent collaborators. Digital scholarship is sufficiently complex to benefit from collaboration—which is to say that working in digital scholarship is hard, though not impossible, to do alone, so the need for many kinds of expertise lends authenticity and value to the collaborative process.

Still, the time when we will no longer view traditional linear scholarship as the default is probably a long way off. However, as this respondent and others observed, there are some avenues for improving digital scholarly production and making sure one has the tools to succeed as a digital scholar.

Structural Improvements

- *Course releases.* Higher education institutions should provide course releases specifically for learning new technologies, programming languages, and/or design principles to enable scholars to produce well-rounded, accessible digital scholarship.

- *Defining scholarship.* Departments and committees should work on creating definitions of scholarship that are both inclusive and acknowledge the workload, time, and inequity in digital scholarly production processes.
- *Digital opportunities.* More outlets for digital scholarship should emerge, thus reducing some of the challenges related to visibility and credibility.
- *Graduate education.* Graduate programs in rhetoric and composition focusing on digital technology should make sure to embed learning technologies in courses and assist digital scholars in understanding both the time and effort that makes up digital scholarship and the stigma associated with it.
- *Journal assistance.* Born-digital journals should or should continue to offer assistance in digital scholarly design in the editing process. In fact, it might be helpful to have digital mavens or digital editors that are consultants for helping to answer technical questions and learn how to imagine and design webtexts.
- *Collaboration database.* Our leading professional organizations should develop a collaboration database for rhetoric and composition. This would be a useful tool for matching technical skills and research interests. It would serve as a kind of academic matchmaker for rhetoric and composition scholars where they create academic profiles showcasing skills, expertise, and projects they are thinking about and/or working on that could use some digital collaboration.
- *Acknowledgment of gender differentiation.* Departments and committees should work to refine research guidelines and expectations in ways that acknowledge the differences in workload, time, and effort among faculty and how these differences are stratified by gender.

It's unlikely that some of our ideas here will come to fruition in the near future, and these ideas rely upon institutional change in academia, which is overwhelmingly slow. So, in the meantime, we settle by offering practical strategies for digital scholars to help defend their work, recognizing that we may be contributing to inequities by leaning into suggestions that digital scholars must do more to defend their work. Yet we hope these strategies, many used by our respondents, will prove helpful and perhaps encourage some faculty writers to not give in to the resort-to-print temptations.

- *Using disciplinary position statements.* The CCCC position statement on technology, for example, articulates many of the inequities inherent in digital scholarly production, which we have explored, and provides

guidelines/advice for how digital scholarship should be understood and valued. The statement also provides helpful case studies examining how different stakeholders view digital scholarship. Granted, the case studies were created in 2001 and appear to have not been updated, so they may only serve as a very general guide for how faculty writers might explain and defend their work. But they provide models on which arguments can be based.

- *Documenting process.* Digital scholars may find it beneficial to fully explain their composing processes, document the hours they spend learning technologies, take screenshots of webtexts in progress, etc. In other words, scholars need to make the labor visible for those who cannot currently see it.
- *Documenting interactions.* In addition to the impacts of citation, the metrics of which can be difficult to locate with webtexts, digital scholars may find it beneficial to track the impact of their work in the form of digital metrics related to their webtext (e.g., visits, time spent on a particular text, links to the webtext). Additionally, scholars may find using social media metrics helpful in arguing about impact and accessibility to larger publics (e.g., "likes" and "shares"). And in addition to numbers, scholars could contextualize who is sharing, providing explanations for how shares by those considered leaders in the field have more weight than other shares.
- *Making rhetorical choices.* The driving force behind many of our respondents' decisions to compose digital scholarship was their conclusion that it best fit the arguments they wanted to make. We suggest considering questions of audience, access, and context early in the composing process and letting those decisions drive whether or not you as a writer choose to compose digitally. Don't shy away from the digital because it isn't valued. Equally important, don't flock toward it just because it's shiny.
- *Embrace what you know, feel you can know, and collaborate.* We support the "readymade rhetoric" approach Muhlhauser and Kachur (2014) take in their webtext, and see their "Love the One You're with Pedagogy" as an inclusive and equitable practice, acknowledging the time and difficulty that goes into creating digital scholarship and the positionality of digital authors. Digital scholars, in other words, should remember to "love" or use the technology they know or feel they can know based on their current positionalities. Learning to code isn't the *only* or *ideal* way to design insightful and cutting edge works or think critically about technology. There is no shame in not knowing

coding or programming. And scholars should continue to be open to collaboration opportunities with scholars whose "readymade" knowledge is different/complementary to their own when imagining digital scholarship.

Composing digital scholarship is valuable and worthwhile. It is work that has made a difference and is often widely cited. However, we do want to be clear to scholars that digital scholarly composing processes are difficult, often take more time than traditional composing processes, and may not be viewed as highly as traditional scholarship. We hope that some of the data and the suggestions we have provided here can serve faculty writers in selecting what they write, how they write, and how they defend those choices.

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