

LEVERAGING SCALE & OPPORTUNITY

Digital HASS in Australasia

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Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge and celebrate the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and all First Nations people on whose traditional lands we meet and work.

I pay my respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.



Preface

- ANU HASS Digital Research Hub: 2024 - >
 - Hosted in the College of Arts & Social Sciences (CASS).
 - Goal is to increase digital research capability across HASS research at ANU.
 - Assumes we have reached a point in the development of computational research in the humanities and social sciences where a step-change in capability and vision (and quality and sustainability) is needed.
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- But how do we conceptualise digital HASS in intellectual and methodological, as well as operational and organisational terms?



Agenda

01 A Brief History of Digital HASS

02 Global Examples

03 The HASS Stack

04 Australasian Digital HASS



A Brief History of Digital HASS

Humanities

- Pre-WW2: Empirical / quantitative history: Leopold von Ranke, the Annales School etc.
- Post-WW2: 'Humanities Computing': Father Roberto Busa & IBM (*Index Thomisticus*).
- Post-1960s: Relational databases in history, classics, literary studies etc.
- Post-1990s: Scholarly Text Encoding Initiative (TEI); web archives; web publishing.
- Post-2000: GIS, VR / AR, machine learning / text analysis, mobile apps, social media analysis, digital ethnography, infrastructure / platform studies, LLMs etc.
- Html / CSS, XML, Python, R.



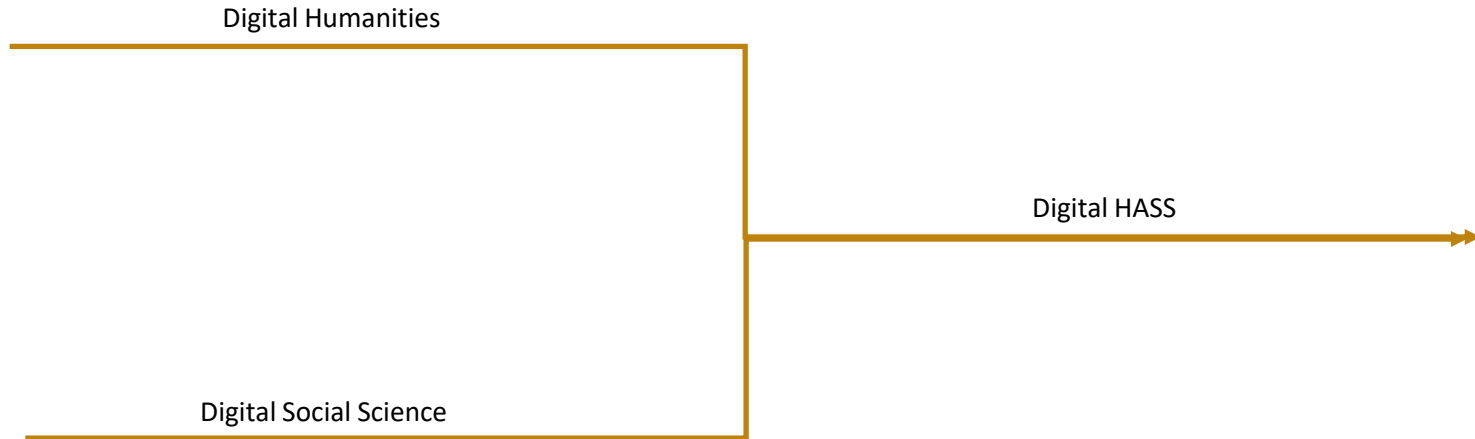
A Brief History of Digital HASS

Social Sciences

- Pre-WW2: Post-Enlightenment proto-statistics / demography, post-Weberian historical sociology.
- Post-WW2: Cold War policy development, urban planning, behaviouralism.
- Post-1960s: Corpus linguistics (the Brown Corpus of American English and derivatives); relational databases / governmental longitudinal datasets; SSPS (released 1968).
- Post-1990s: Statistical packages, quantitative statistics, media analysis in teaching.
- Post-2000: New media analysis, internet analysis, machine learning / text analysis, mobile apps, social media analysis, digital ethnography, infrastructure / platform studies, LLMs etc.
- Html / CSS, XML, Python , R.



A Weak ~~Hypothesis~~ Trendline?



Digital HASS

Common Issues

- **Research infrastructure:** Management, sustainability, alignment to institutional and national infrastructure, problems of scale and compute capacity.
- **Project management:** Estimation & financial management, software development life cycle management, architectural principles, cyber-security, sustainability.
- **Research methods:** Reproducibility, transparency, data life cycle management, code quality, FAIR & CARE data & software.
- **Human Resources:** RSE recruitment & retention; HDR & academic skills development.



Digital HASS

Common Solution

- Identify elements of a common digital HASS 'stack' and develop capabilities from that base, tailoring to specific disciplines when necessary.



The Digital HASS 'Stack'

Disciplinary-specific methods.

Common methods, programming languages & training.

Common Research Software Engineering (RSE)
Workflows, Processes, Standards.

Common Research Infrastructure



Global Examples

King's Digital Lab



- Identify more with humanities but supports both.

D-Lab Berkeley



- Identify more with social science but supports both.

The Alan Turing Institute



- Primarily support STEM projects but also HASS.
- Difficult to prioritise HASS, although have had successes.

These initiatives leverage common elements of the HASS stack but suffer from not identifying clearly with 'digital HASS'.



Australasian Digital HASS

- Digital Humanities and Digital Social Science are important to differentiate but cost-constraints mean it makes sense to share as many resources in the 'HASS stack' as possible.
- This argument is weaker in the UK and US but works well in Australasia (ARDC HASS-I RDC!).
- A combined HASS approach also allows us to:
 - Leverage national investments in RI and focus intellectual activity higher in the stack.
 - Leverage regional expertise in Indigenous HASS / data sovereignty.
 - Contribute to the regional and global development of HASS research software engineering (RSE).



Australasian Digital HASS

- Where should this activity sit?



- The larger point is whether we're ready to:
 - conceptualise 'Digital HASS' in intellectual terms, exploring its historical, methodological and epistemological implications alongside its operational requirements.
 - and use that understanding to define some common values, principles, and goals that can feed back into teaching and research in the core disciplines.



THANK YOU

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