4Humanities Meeting 8
Monday, November 26, 2012
5pm, SH 2509

Assignment: Before our next meeting, please write a 1-2 sentence definition of the "humanities" and the values and frames we want to associate with the humanities, based on our discussion in this meeting (see Linda's summary of the values and frames we discussed below). We are aiming to produce a number and variety of different definitions, which we will use as part of a resource kit for applicants to the 4Humanities media design campaign next year.

General call: Humanities Showcase project needs volunteers, both for generating primary material and for site design

Linda's synthesis of core categories and values from our discussion (see below under II):
- Metaphors: Discovery, linkages, interdisciplinarity
- Affective qualities: Participation, innovation, ethical behaviors
- Service strategies/skills: Ability to analyze, critical thinking, writing and communication → could also include citizenship
- Citizenship
- "Economic" frame: Valuing products but not production; embedding skill sets in community, service, citizenship, etc.; the humanities take values associated with "private goods" and relate them to the public sphere/shared values

Meeting Agenda and Notes

I. Re-introductions
   a. Present: Cheryl Jaworski, Linda Adler-Kassner, Anna Brusutti, Zach Horton, Lindsay Thomas, Harry Reese, Bob Samuels, Harold Marcuse, Roberta Woolfson
   b. Review: Linda
      i. Why we need to work from a shared definition of the humanities (or derivations thereof); why we need to consider values extending from terms. Review original work on framing and messages from last year; the idea is to cycle back to that work now that we've generated materials.
      ii. How do we want to define the humanities and how do we want to define the values that are associated with these definitions?
      iii. Who are the audiences for this work? Having a shared resource bank of values and definitions will be useful
      iv. Stress importance of messaging – and *on* message.
      v. Alan: International 4Hum initiative will be starting a media design contest next year; we will give contestants a resource kit that will include what we come up with regarding resource frames for the humanities. One concrete "deliverable" for our work today and going forward is this campaign.

II. Values, Keywords/Ideas, Definitions Discussion
Example sites: Humanities Showcase; Humanities, Plain & Simple post by Christine Hensler; Humanities, Plain & Simple post by Alan Liu; Humanities, Plain & Simple post by Valerie Barr; Duke´s Haiti Lab; Humanities Laboratories at Duke; 19th- Century Caribbean Cholera TimeMap

b. Anna Brusutti – Haiti Lab cholera map: Basing learning more on humanist form of a videogame; creating an interactive video game of sorts about the humanities; look at the possibility of referring to the human cost of mapping, in this case, of mapping disease; need to create platforms that are easy to use in classes; human cost becomes integrated into the game, which makes it more interesting
- Value: human cost
- Alan: Common clusters of values: Humanities "skill set" (critical thinking, etc.); training people to be citizens; training people in ethics and how to be well-rounded human beings → need to identify categories and then relate these categories to one another
- "A humanist is one who is analyzing primary data but always brings it back to issues of human cost"

c. Lindsay Thomas – Humanities Showcase and Alan's Humanities Plain & Simple post: Other values clusters include interdisciplinarity and discovery/innovation → not just discovery but also placing "discoveries" in appropriate historical, cultural, analytical contexts
- Values: interdisciplinary, discovery/innovation

d. Zach Horton – Alan's Humanities Plain & Simple Post: Innovation is so often seen within a technical/scientific framework or paradigm; need to work with technical/scientific disciplines to articulate the "grand challenges;" the humanities can be an interdisciplinary framework for dialogue, a way to frame these questions or challenges as something other than a technical problem
- Alan: a good complement to Alan's statement about discovery is Valerie Barr's Humanities Plain & Simple posts

e. Roberta Woolfson – Hensler's Plain & Simple post: Common thread of well-roundedness; flexibility of the humanities; general notion of being able to approach an issue from different perspectives

f. Bob Samuels: problem of stressing job/economic possibilities is that education becomes a private good, which makes it easy to publicly defund higher education; temptation is to move toward economic metrics, but as soon as we head down that road, it becomes harder to make an argument about why the public should fund humanities education or why the public should be concerned. Bringing up values, idea of creating meaning allows us to circumvent privatization of education
- Alan: it may be that the critical factor here is the mix between private and public goods; the private must always be mixed up with the ethical, the social good. The big picture should focus on the public good.
- Alan: "Private good" could also mean private values; enjoyment, preparation for life, becoming a well-rounded person
- Claudio: Major linking concepts could be skills, ethics, and citizenship

g. Harold Marcuse – Haiti Lab cholera map: What do people want to do with their time? What would your normal Jill/Joe on the street do with this? People like to go to the movies – biopics, documentaries, etc. – which are very often based on humanities research (marketing research, history, media studies, etc). Much of what we would like to do with our spare time is to see *products* of the humanities, but we don't really want to pay for/support/value the *production* of them.

h. Cheryl Jaworski – Humanities Showcase site: Train students/people to use humanities "products;" skills/job values; intellectual values: making creative connections between

domains of knowledge, pondering enduring questions. Is there a way that we could inject a discussion of "ultimate values" into this? What does it mean to live a virtuous life? What does it mean to find your calling? It might be useful to inject some of the value of positive psychology into the discussion of the humanities as a way for students and others to find their calling, their vocation.

i. Claudio: What struck me the most is the unarticulated "newness" of the humanities today and also the momentous but understated merging of traditional codewords for science into humanistic language; if I had to make a slogan I would write, "the humanities are the new sciences." Discovery, lab, research, database → these are all related to collaboration, to a subterranean absorption of a different set of scientific practices by the humanities. This is an extremely powerful and unarticulated aspect of the humanities today. What it seemed to me is missing is this awareness of how momentous this crumbling of the wall between sciences and humanities is. This could be very socially valuable.
   - Core values: creative, linking two cultures

j. Alan: There is a natural affinity between science and the humanities (especially the basic research side of the sciences); the "enemy" here is a frame of mind that believes anything worthwhile has to be a skill set that can be harnessed to a very narrow entrepreneurial purpose. The vision we need to communicate is that there is a broad, extensive, rich ecology that exceeds that very narrow bandwidth of what skills are. Maybe as we try to communicate the vision of the new humanities that is able to collaborate with the sciences today, we ought not to turn our back on one of the strongest values of the humanities that we don't talk about a lot today. This has to do with the value of service. I think we would be selling ourselves short if we can't find a way to reintroduce the value of service and service society.
   - Core values: service
   - Harold: Need to figure out what the purpose is that we're all there for; why do some of us in research and academics or books or algorithms or biology? The purpose that is most socially accepted is to make more money, be a job creator, etc. → to step out of that entire frame is to say that we aren't here to make more money, to make a better world, to enjoy the world that we have, to find a whole different set of values and step out of that entire frame → how do we break this frame?

k. Linda: Common categories and keywords from our discussion (see above, first page)
   - Metaphors: Discovery, linkages, interdisciplinarity
   - Affective qualities: Participation, innovation, ethical behaviors
   - Service strategies/skills: Ability to analyze, critical thinking, writing and communication
   - Citizenship
   - Valuing products but not production
   - I agree that it would be great to reject the frame about private goods, but we do that at our own peril. If we want to speak to publics, legislators, policy person, even parents, without that conversation quickly going to earning potentials or jobs, etc. Thinking about how to position all of these values under that larger umbrella is really important.

l. Bob Samuels: Two issues the humanities could come out well on: 1) We produce student credit hours at a cheaper rate than anyone else. There is an economic argument the humanities can make. 2) Quality/Value argument: We are teaching our students how to do things with knowledge or information. Not just production, but products.

m. Linda: I've been doing a lot of research about general education. One thing that speaks very

powerfully to people is the value of story. If the humanities are seen as a deliverable, we need to express the core values of this "deliverable." How is it that 500-person lecture course is about discovery, innovation, empathy, ethics, citizenship, participation? How do we wind these values throughout our work?

n. Anna Brusutti: The humanities need to be at the forefront of investing in and making the idea of gaming convey our message. We have to provide the narrative for interactive or online teaching.

o. Alan Liu: Couldn't we say that the humanities are that branch of education and knowledge that takes skill sets and relates them to something else. The humanities are always about embedding certain skills in community, in service, in an idea of citizenship, in an idea of grand challenges.

p. Linda: Stories → data → change → new stories. Stories are not just things that people tell for themselves; they also reverberate outwards.

q. Harry Reese: Shaping information and putting it into context; communicating information. The way in which we perceive the problem, the way we describe it to someone else or shape it – all of that makes a difference. This is at the heart of what the humanities do all of the time.

r. Bob Samuels: Who are our audiences? Students. Politicians. Administrators. Other disciplines. One of our big challenges is to decide who are audiences are for particular projects.

s. Alan Liu: We also need to think about how all of our values/definitions can be related to each other. If we want a concrete deliverable – which is a definition of humanities values and frames – how should we proceed?

III. Next Steps: Creating Definitions and Values

Assignment: See above, first page

Possible intersections with Alan's list:

Basic Research in the Humanities (Definition):

1. The discovery, preservation, and communication of the historical and present record of human society;
2. The invention of methods for studying and interpreting that record;
3. The investigation and preservation of the languages and linguistic skills increasingly needed in a global age;
4. Experimentation in the creative arts with a wide range of social and cultural experience;
5. The new exploration of combined scientific-humanistic/artistic approaches (e.g., neuro-cognitive approaches to literature).
6. The investigation of all the above within a serious and expansive horizon of ethical reflection.