Reading Response 2:

In her essay, "Reprogramming the Invisible Discipline: An Emancipatory Approach to Digital Technology through Higher Education" Erin Rose Glass offers, "an analysis of digital technologies that instead focuses on the broader social and political realities that they reinforce, support, or create". I will admit that I had never thought deeply about the technology that I've used, nor the technologies that have been made available to me throughout my academic career. Glass argues that the current academic system is "teaching students to passively accept black-boxed, company-controlled technologies for research and writing". Glass's argument has forced me to reflect on my own unquestioned usage of technology in my academic career. My high school was fitted with IBM computers, my undergrad was on the Apple grid and connected everyone with Google office tools, and now UNL is connected through Microsoft office. Glass is correct, I have blindly and passively accepted whatever technological tools were given to me.

Glass asserts that most believe that "the way higher education has long encouraged (or even taught, if you will) its members to passively accept digital technology within research and learning environments as predominantly natural, neutral, and inevitable". Oftentimes people believe that technology is impartial, that is doesn't hold biases, however, people often forget that technology isn't an independent third party that exists in a vacuum. Technology is created and chosen by people. People are biased; therefore, it isn't unfathomable that people lean to those biases when they code technology and decide which form/program of technology is used. Glass writes that "in an academic culture submerged in the corporate ethos of speed, a rejection of popular digital tools and the important time-saving, collaborative, and networking affordances they offer may feel equivalent to professional suicide". Therefore, we, we as in academics, don't stop to think about the tools we are using, which means we don't consider what biases are in place, and then we become complacent and a part of a larger problem, the problem of unchecked biases.

So, what do we do about this problem? Glass suggests that "rather than teaching students to unquestioningly accept academic technologies, we might train them in the practices and values of community-governed software and encourage them to consider how they might continue to shape digital tools according to their needs and interests". When we stop and think about the tools that are given to us, then maybe we'll be able to check the biases that bar certain people and technologies from the light. Glass believes that "the cost of our complacency is not simply our individual privacy but is also the training of a generation to helplessly accept digital oppression as if there is no other choice". When Glass speaks of "digital oppression", I think of Storygraph, a digital book club much like its competitor, Goodreads. However, unlike Goodreads (owned and operated by Amazon), Storygraph was created by and ran by a black woman. Digital oppression just furthers the oppression of marginalized people.