Reading Response 5:

Questions on Building Digital Infrastructure that withstands Evolving Identities and the Anti-Digital Caribbean

Throughout the semester, I’ve been considering tension between minority identities and power structures and how the digital space could aggravate that tension. This week's reading about minimal computing has thrown another wrench in my thinking. I've been trying to figure out where I fit in the field of Digital Humanities. As a black woman from a country that is primarily analog, how do I exist in a digital space without losing any aspect or compromising on my identities?

The essays “What’s in a Name?" by Arnold, Taylor, and Lauren Tilton, “Anglophone World Literatures: Introduction” by Neumann, Birgit, and Gabriele Rippl, “Undisciplining Victorian Studies” by Chatterjee, Ronjaunee, Alicia Mireles Christoff, and Amy R. Wong, “Intersectionality and Infrastructure: Toward a Critical Digital Humanities” by Christina Boyles, "Africa's Digitalization: From the Ecological Dilemma to the Decolonization of the Imaginary'' by Cédric Letermeand, and "Introduction: The Questions of Minimal Computing” by Roopika Risam and Alex Gil explore different aspects of identity and power structures and have helped me to explore my position with Digital Humanities.

One such theme is the idea that identity is complex and multifaceted. “What’s in a Name?” highlights the idea that names can carry a lot of cultural and personal significance, and that they are not always straightforward or easy to understand. Similarly, “Anglophone World Literatures” explores the complexities of identity in literature, noting that authors often draw on multiple cultures and experiences to create their work. “Intersectionality and Infrastructure” takes this a step further, arguing that we must recognize the multiple identities that individuals hold and the ways in which they intersect and influence each other. These essays all demonstrate that identity is not a simple or fixed concept, but rather a complex and constantly evolving one. Therefore, I’m forced to wonder, since identities are complex and constantly changing, then how do we develop a digital space that accommodates and evolves alongside identities? The essay "Introduction: The Questions of Minimal Computing” by Roopika Risam and Alex Gil discusses the concept of minimal computing, which involves using the least amount of resources possible to create and access digital content. This has complicated my thinking because if it were possible to develop an evolving digital space, how would it be possible to develop that space in a minimal computing fashion?

As someone from a Caribbean country that is behind in the digital age, I'm extremely interested in the process of closing the gap. In the essay "Africa's Digitalization: From the Ecological Dilemma to the Decolonization of the Imaginary'', Cédric Leterme argues that digitalization can be a tool for decolonization by promoting African narratives and challenging Western stereotypes. Leterme suggests that African content creators need to have greater control over the production and distribution of digital content, and for digital literacy and education to be promoted among African populations. This solution sounds like it would be easy to apply within the Caribbean community, however, specifically in my country, there's a distrust of anything digital. Therefore, I wonder if taking a minimal computing approach to introducing and implementing digital spaces to/within the Caribbean would be more effective?

I believe the most accurate and concise question that encompasses all of my thinking is: How do we build an accessible evolving digital space that properly upholds the Caribbean identity?