

Feasting on Collaborations

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Abstract: Just as any delicious dish inspires awe, hearty collaborations are made of people coming together to bring projects to life, one recipe at a time. A food item contains multiple ingredients, features myriad styles of making, and reveals a diversity of piquant spices; so, too, are hearty collaborations made of people from various collegial expertise, research traditions, differing perspectives, life experiences, etc. In this zine, I invite you to consider the relationship between food and collaboration. Drawing on theories from anthropology, gastropoetics, literary studies, and critical making in the digital humanities, we can explore how gathering around food relates to labor and radical notions in a world shaped by silos of expertise at workplaces. In this moment in time of an uncertain world over several matters of contention, my social imperatives point me to this local community of my own: you, my colleague, my collaborator, my friend. I hope you will join me in celebrating these lighthouse beacons of celebrations over our work together.

Keywords: gatherings, academia, digital humanities, community, collaboration

Just as any delicious dish that inspires awe, hearty collaborations are made of people coming together to build a project to life, one recipe at a time. A food item contains multiple ingredients, features myriad styles of making, and reveals (in my multicultural household) a diversity of piquant spices; so, too, are hearty collaborations made of people from collegial expertise, research traditions, differing perspectives, life experiences, etc. This piece consolidates my reflections on on-campus (and beyond) computational community building in the COVID-19 pandemic world. I share my positionality and experiences in the hope that the specific social ecologies I observed may be relevant to others, or at least that they may inspire a sense of kinship. The multimodal nature of the gatherings I am to describe are intentionally polyvocal and seek to complicate the power structures and politics of various spaces where people might find themselves enjoying a meal in the company of one another.

In the face of an ongoing COVID-19 (Sinders 2022) pandemic, conferences such as the 2024 Digital Humanities conference (DH 2024; Otis 2023) are fully hybrid. Conferences such as the 2024 Association for Computers and the Humanities conference (ACH 2024; Lach et al. 2024) have been fully online conferences. This is meant to foster a sense of belonging in a global conference in spite of visa issues, health concerns, childcare responsibilities, and other general accessibility considerations. A fully hybrid conference sets out with the intention to make its own online participants feel included and just as involved in the conference as the people attending in person. On campus, many of us are similarly in a hybrid mode, where we come in to work on some days and work from home a few days. In all these cases, the conference organizers and campus community have to be more mindful about social and networking opportunities that many, especially the students, go to conferences for in the first place. The bleary-eyed, jet-lagged exchange of business cards and social media handles during morning coffee breaks, along with the intellectual gossip sessions that occur in the interstitial moments of camaraderie while moving from one session or meeting room to another, are integral to the heady, euphoric atmosphere of a conference, even as one's social battery depletes by the end of the day. Indeed, direct messages, Twitter-era subtweets, mediated back-channels, and water cooler conversations are a space for productive discourse, sites for knowledge gathering and dissemination. ACH 2024 used Work Adventure and DH 2024 used Whova as a conference platform for all to mixed results (see fig. 1), regardless of their modality to communicate. The get-together around food, however, is harder to replicate, which is why the fee for online participation is lower than for in-person attendance.

What does academic community building in this world look like now? Given the wide range of contemporary conflicts, historical precedents, and the current state of flux that our colleagues, students, and peers are experiencing, how might we think capaciously and conscientiously about what a gathering can be?



Figure 1. Image from the social media app Bluesky. (Amanda Wyatt Visconti [@literaturegeek.bsky.social], Bluesky, August 9, 2024, 10:56 a.m.)

Food as an Ephemeral Synesthetic Art

Catherine Knight Steele (2023) shared how her team would begin their meetings with “What are we going to eat?” thus prioritizing the ethics of care (Corbera et al. 2020) in the Black Feminist research process. In the sections titled “Care and Feeding as Radical Method and Praxis” and “Radical Reflections for Care-Centered Collaborative Research,” Steele shares the autoethnographic account of institutional bureaucracies coming in the way of the intentional action of feeding and nurturing participants of a conference. She asks, “How is Black DH praxis informed by a history of care and feeding in Black activism and organizing?”

Food making and consuming is the most ephemeral synesthetic art of all. When combined alongside action-oriented gathering, it lends itself to a collective cathartic moment. Theatrical performances that culminate in a shared meal or hunger strikes are not uncommon (Borghini and Baldini 2022) in public art exhibit spaces. Sri Vamsi Matta’s “Come Eat With Me” is a deeply researched anti-caste based storytelling (Punyashloka 2022), as well as an autoethnographic, exercise in recounting his childhood experiences through the medium of food making. The theatrical performance of storytelling, cooking, feeding, and eating together is a political resistance against hegemonic structures. Social activist writer Mahasweta Devi used the iconography of food in her writings (Shankari 2019) to highlight the acts of local resistance to oppression of the so-called subaltern people.

Postcolonial feminist scholar Parama Roy (2002) theorized “gastropoetics” as a storytelling device for mapping the experience of history, place, and colonial trade movements through food making and eating for diasporic and migrant groups engaging in their own nostalgic sensemaking. Nour Ballout’s Habibi Collective (Almulaiki 2021) is a neighborhood-based community art space and social engagement residency in Detroit. They emphasize the joy-making process of developing immigrant queer programming with intentional food, music, and *dabke* dance. Tsohil Bhatia’s Red Flower Collective (Liscia 2023) affirms queer and diasporic identities receiving generational knowledge as they manifest themselves through food. They envision the collective as a conversation on participatory memory making while replicating the global economy structure outside of the capitalist art world by being mindful of the sources of ingredients, recipes, and homemaking practices.

By activating internal solidarity structures with culturally contextual food making, Tao Leigh Goffe’s (2020) Kitchen Marronage asks, “Is it possible these roles of kitchen marronage were not gendered and feminized in the way that the kitchen is viewed as a place of servitude and passivity in Western society?” She calls cooking an act of preservation. It strikes me that it is preservation of ancestral knowledge as well as self-preservation in sustenance as well. Gendered labor in a homemaking setting also

applies to workplaces. Mar Hicks (2021) calls this “a feature, not a bug” in the system referencing the history of labor in computation. Academia has yet to grapple with the impact of the pandemic on the contingent labor force and in particular the inequality and inclusion of women in the profession (understood as trans inclusive) throughout the academic labor system, including part-time employment, differential salary levels, service expectations, and matters of professional advancement (Modern Language Association, n.d.).

Food is an attractive feature to ensure student body presence in colloquia, symposia, and on-campus events as is evident by the marketing material of many university life communications. The “Gastropoetics of Asian/America: A Critical Food Studies Symposium” promises delicious food (Choudhary 2023) and conversation. In the North American context, students facing food insecurity (McCoy et al. 2022) and the lack of food pantries on-campus means that students seek other avenues for easy access to nourishment. My year-long stint as a facilitator for the Penn Asian Faculty Staff Association prompted me to note this extends to campus staff, especially in precarious or contingent roles as well. The politics of food (Lien 2004) involves multidisciplinary conditions including transnational access, insecurity, nutrition policies, and global inequities.

If gathering around food is one way to foster collaborations, food making is another form of community building. The Philadelphia Asian Food Collective is a mutual aid initiative to bring culturally contextual dishes (Carabeo 2023) sourced from local grocery stores (Krishna 2024) to communities in South Philadelphia. Indeed, the Saturday early morning bustle in a well-equipped industrial kitchen preparing 20–30 meals (Kim, n.d.) of biryani and raita, Shanghainese fried rice, Nepali momos, and more with fellow volunteers is my favorite way to start the weekend. Here I learned the Korean word *nunchi*, which describes the socio-cultural intuition of gauging a high-context situation, which could be applicable to the ingredient measurement in the meals we are preparing as well. In a seminar (Goffe 2024) about Afro-Asian food and music, we concluded by reflecting on the making of a Chinese-Jamaican recipe, Pop Chow Omelette, while enjoying PhDJ Tao Leigh Goffe’s beats. A group of prior strangers showed one another a photograph from their family albums then participated in the shared choreography and symphony of a kitchen. That night, the remixing of ancestral music echoed the remixing of ancestral recipes.

Critical food making where intentional process is forefront can be an extension of critical making. In “#DHmakes: Baking Craft into DH Discourse,” Amanda Visconti, Quinn Dombrowski, and Claudia Berger (2024) trace the history of this collaborative initiative. They make the case for the feminine-coded craft praxis (in western context) of textile and fabric arts using data but pushing the boundaries of DH into the tactile. Principles of iterative coding are ubiquitous in both craft making and programming computationally. The lockdown era of the COVID-19 pandemic (Moreshead and Salter

2023) gave us Critical Digital Humanities Making as an intersection of media studies, art making, and historically feminized labor such as fiber arts. #DHMAKES or the Digital Humanities Makes movement is a component of data physicalization (Bae, Szafir, and Do 2022) as tangible visualization including semiotics, fabrication techniques, and visualization tasks. With humanities scholarship made tangible, computational creativity (Salter 2024) made accessible, the #DHMAKES community is an exciting venture for pushing a digital humanities project back into the world. In ACH 2023, a virtual curated collection (Berger et al. 2023) of #DHMAKES projects was presented supporting a theme of collaborative making. The documentation of these data physicalization projects (Berger 2024) was then converted into a zine, *Play with Your Data*. Traditional Japanese art forms such as kirigami (Daneshzand, Perin, and Carpendale 2023) that use paper-cutting techniques can now represent data points as experimental pedagogical tools. In the design industry, Giorgia Lupi, an information designer, has developed a line of data-driven fashion projects based on a timeline of achievements of Ada Lovelace, Rachel Carson, and Mae Jemison, using these principles as well as a line of rugs that incorporate fifty-nine endangered textile-making techniques including an educational element to the products.

Healthy Collaborations, the Secret Sauce

As an interloper in multiple disciplines and the North American academy, I have long operated on the principles of *jugaad*. The closest western equivalent to the South Asian term *jugaad* might be the concept of “MacGyvering.” Padmini Ray Murray and Chris Hand (2015) conceptualize *jugaad* as a South Asian digital humanities concept, defining it as “an indigenous combination of making-do, hacking, and frugal engineering—against the backdrop of making/DIY culture, . . . local circumstances might shape intellectual explorations through critical making.” An integral element of *jugaad* (Sekhsaria 2013) is that it is a noun as much as it is a verb. In the South Asian context, the status of handloom craftsmanship tends to be more by caste and class considerations primarily over gender dynamics. Critical making thus can go beyond art objects that explore gendered praxis to synesthetic experiences that investigate marginalization of various geographical, social, and cultural forms. By engaging all the senses, including smell and taste, critical food making adds multiple dimensions to interacting with the haptic (Stark 2014) sans virtual reality or extended reality. This kind of work does require a lot of cooks to stir the pot. Whether in digital pedagogy (Estill, Crompton, and Siemens 2024) or in digital scholarship generally (Nowviskie 2016), collaborations are the intangible thread that bind together the final output. A fraying end shows the troubles of a project’s development. THATCamp (McGrath 2020) was a hallmark of

such collaboratory and social gatherings with scrappy but well-thought-out projects being showcased.

My current position information questionnaire (PIQ) includes the phrasing on-campus “computational community building.” As an applied data science librarian (Herndon 2021) in a relatively newly reconfigured Research Data and Digital Scholarship unit, this could mean developing a sense of camaraderie across patrons, that is, the students, faculty, staff, at all levels, in all departments and schools with a shared sense of learning goals, whether it is Python and R with Carpentries workshops or DH project development. It means facilitating data journalism literacy field visit workshops, creative coding activities, mapathons, and data zine-making workshops. It also includes speed networking sessions (Karajgikar 2023) themed around “Data and Digital Projects” aimed at matching researchers with individuals on campus who have similar interests in quantitative and qualitative analysis across the campus.

When the murmurs around the artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT became a buzz on campus by Spring 2023, I kept track of the campus community concerns and enthusiasm as I came across them in seminars, colloquia, symposia, classrooms, hallways, etc. In Fall 2023, I co-hosted a session on creative writing with large language models (Carduner and Karajgikar 2023) called “Prompt Battle-off” to initiate conversations on privacy, minimal computing, worker strikes, carbon emissions, and wax poetic philosophical expositions on creativity amid the sensationalization over all the creative possibilities with ChatGPT. In February 2024, I launched an Artificial Intelligence Literacy Interest Group (Karajgikar, n.d.), an intentional, recurring, and open to the public teach-in space for the campus community to discuss critical AI considerations without succumbing to doomerism (AI is taking over and is taking all our jobs) while being wary of techno-optimistic techno-solutionism (AI is going to solve everything). The group’s mission is to strive for a nuanced, informed-use approach of the capacious possibilities while developing awareness of relevant social issues (including environmental concerns, bias, imbalanced multilingualism, etc.).

This hybrid event included making the learning process fun and the material relatable to a wide-ranging multidisciplinary audience including students, faculty, staff, researchers, and general public who were merely curious. The two days launching the group included sessions such as (1) a pop-up media literacy zines library, (2) a special collections exhibit showcasing histories of computation representations in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, (3) a participatory data physicalization visualization weaving project with a loom calling to the history of computational labor of Jacquard Loom as a machine, (4) an informal debate encouraging dialogues on real-world implications of AI usage in different disciplines, and (5) making memes on data and digital project related topics. Among the giveaways at the event were a punched card bookmark, a codex facsimile, and a Magic: The Gathering-style information card deck on

the various large language models; each connected to the prior activities and sessions. Critical making at the AI Literacy Interest Group is an integral pedagogical method for multifaceted accessibility and prismatic knowledge dissemination.

Perhaps not so surprisingly, it was during the snack break at all these events with food from the local Levant spot (we were going to address AI usage in current warfare and felt the need to showcase the food we were consuming reflected the political conditions we were operating under) that conversations really started flowing. Zines (Visconti 2024) were exchanged over colorful boba (boba is just a very popular attraction for students to attend events). Projects were formulated; future collaborators met. Event attendees decided to contribute to the next session. Casual observers learned about the other research offerings in the library.

In Fall 2024, the AI Literacy Interest Group will be organizing a South Asia Digital Humanities Workshop series (Karajgikar 2024) on optical character recognition and handwritten text recognition of South Asian languages and collections as data. The thematic resonance of the food for such an event is important here. South Asian regional food being well represented in the lunch and snacks fare contributes to the immersion of the workshop. It also lends to the political and economic commitment, especially to relevant small businesses in the area. Dombrowski (2023) shares a glyph guessing exercise of designs on a soup at Face/Interface 2023 as their fondest memory of the digital multilingual typography conference. Gathering around food intentionally designed with these themes that academia grapples with, could be another way of fostering community while workplace silos are broken down.

In more practical terms, it means event management where I am working with student workers; operational, facility, catering, technology, and communications library staff behind the scenes; and sponsors, volunteers, instructors, speakers, etc. in a large, decentralized educational institution. The responsibility of developing an intentional session and curating a pedagogical experience goes hand in hand. Here I must acknowledge my positionality. I work at a well-resourced Ivy League institution where there is a budget that can be allocated for food at an event. There is generous space with the technological setup, seating, and facilitation of this event for such an ambitiously scaled event. There are resources available to make prints and the Education Commons makerspace (Alexander 2023) for any conceivable idea to be brought to fruition. Following COVID-19 cautiousness for in-person gatherings makes the event more inclusive. Acknowledging the multitude of privileges associated with possessing the time, energy, resources, and the access to these while being able-bodied is just as important as considering the same for the making of a meal. The work I am proposing is labor and time intensive beyond a traditional academic setting, even if empowering creative expression. While making connections between academic gatherings and culinary themes could be an imaginative exercise, it is important to recognize the diverse circumstances

and experiences of individuals and communities. I am fortunate to have the resources, and access to a specific cuisine's spices, much like access to an open source software makes for a more sustainable project. This is exactly the reason I believe the blending of food as a point of connection in alt-ac seems appropriate.

Feasting on Collaborations in a Third Space

I have the great good fortune to be allowed to make use of my tuition benefits to pursue a post-baccalaureate program of study for my professional development while working full time at the library. I have developed my competence in a wide range of topics from fine arts to technology ethics law within the structured format of a classroom setting with fellow students. I try to incorporate a DH-oriented project in each of these classes' assignments and projects. This article you are reading now was born out of a methods toolkit assignment (Mattern 2023) from the CIMS 5933 Media Studies Methods coursework. I developed a "Feasting on Collaborations" gathering as a method toolkit zine based on gatherings I had been organizing. Here I had the opportunity to carefully consider the nuances of the fundamental ingredient for facilitation of DH projects—collaborations: how they form, how they can be celebrated, and how they may evolve into a longer sustainable partnership and deeper merging of two or more people's ideas.

These ideas coalesced from study groups where we would discuss various topics of interest from the classroom and grew in writing groups with feverish ambitions to write 3,000 words or 20 pages over a weekend, in protest art builds and collage sessions, in unionizing efforts, and in cooking and cleaning after together. I've become close friends with my fellow librarians, instructors, colleagues, and classmates over the course of the years. They are friends who contribute to the food being prepared from scratch for these gatherings, help me with grocery runs, and keep me company while we cook elaborate meals. All the onion chopping and meal preparation tasks were akin to joining forces with different library departments to host a data visualization workshop.

Since the 2023–2024 academic year especially, the physical campus space has not been not a sanctuary for those upholding values of freedom of expression and academic integrity (AAUP-Penn 2024) through peaceful organizing. Food donations and community potlucks featuring the flipping of *maqlubeh* and its subsequent communal consumption (Families for Ceasefire et al. 2024) were forms of solidarity, acknowledgment, and education regarding the cultural genocide of the region. Meanwhile, in my country of citizenship, India, *gau rakshaks* (cow protectors) assaulting Muslims, Dalits, and Indigenous populations (Human Rights Watch 2019) on suspicions of beef consumption is a regular occurrence. How could I, an immigrant being sponsored to work in this country by the institution, contribute and help my community?

In recognition of the labor the professors employ, and the financial commitments my colleagues make, I intended to facilitate a third space (Hains-wesson 2023) outside of the campus for the class groups. An e-invitation, personalized by a zine-vitation, would then lead an attendee to a RSVP questionnaire.

Invitation to Fall 2024 Gathering, “Feasting on Collaborations”

Svāgatam, su-svāgatam! (Welcome)

You are now cordially invited to a feast in honour of your connection with me. If you would like a lino-printed invitation made by me, please share your address in the survey.

Please see the Tentative Menu below. Share a worker song, solidarity song, or a song you associate to food and gathering to add to the evening’s playlist.

Please be sure to be Covid-conscious. Thank you. Unfortunately, my home is not wheelchair accessible but let me know if you need any other accommodations.

Regalia:

Cultural Academia attire (Think a creative artsy conference catalogue) and SOCKS. Thank you, my fellow conspirator.

Theme:

Have you worked with Jaj on a project? Did you brainstorm on reading/writing a paper? Was there a workshop you co-led in a working group? Perhaps you became friends after a class? Hatched a scheme that led to a grant application? Maybe you went to a conference(s) to present cool ideas. Has she talked your ear off about a niche fascination of yours? Marched in a protest side-by-side after painting in an art build? Went to an art exhibit/artist studio & wondered about the worlds inside? Partners-in-artsy literary cultural academic crimes & pursuits? Hot Sauce in my bag buddies? Conspired to grocery shop, cook, eat, hammer, make, mould, wield, weld? (Maybe you just asked about the background of her Zoom screen - her house and she promised to give you a tour someday.) Consider “collaboration” capaciously.

This gathering is an implementation of my coursework 5933 Media Studies Methods Toolkit “Feasting as a Method.”

This is a SWANA, South Asia, South-East Asia centered food event, so plan accordingly.

1. *Do you have any dietary preferences?**
2. *Share music for the evening’s playlist. (Is there any music that calls back to a particular tradition around food and worker relations for you? Or songs about connections?)*
3. *Are you bringing any (savoury preferred) drink/food? Let me know if you have any setup requirements. Message me if confused about anything.*
4. *Would you be okay with photographs being taken of you and presented to my classes?**
5. *Please mention if you can offer/will need carpooling services.*
6. *Would you like my handmade invitation? Please share your address. Happy to also hand it over to you at some point!*

Once people joined in at the appointed time, eleven or so courses of fresh, hot meals would be laid out from instinctually cooking all day. The theme of the gathering explicated, the feasting would begin. I would share my own connection and fascination with everyone present so that the various disparate nodes of my own connections can be encouraged to become acquainted with one another, fostering further generative collaborations.

In the Fall 2022 SAST 2262/6262 The Making of Medieval India class, in lieu of a regular seminar, the professor hosted us in their house with food prepared by each of us potluck style. This being a medieval India class, and me being my mother's daughter, I went all out with two mildly elaborate South Indian dishes, *ennegayi* and *mor kuzhambu*. It was a great hit among my fellow Indian classmates, all of us continents away from home. In an attempt to share my gratitude for the time, energy, and camaraderie that my colleagues (both the faculty and students) and I share in a consistent space over the course of the semester (at no cost mostly), I began hosting mini-gatherings at the end of a semester. I organized the menu and tablescape to be thematic to the audience. For example, when I was to host my ARTH 3120 Indian Paintings 1100–Now class and the ARTH 3020 Methods of Object Study class held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Paper Conservation Lab, the menu followed the geographical and local specialties of the food from the regions where the art we were looking at each week came from laid in banana leaves and leaves-based plates (see fig. 2).

For Spring 2024, when I attended FNAR 2320 Queer Imaginings and DSGN 3250 MATTERS: Connecting Arts + Design to Materials, and Materials to Labor + Land, the



Figure 2. A feast in the author's home. (Image courtesy of Jaiwalya Ramesh Karajgikar.)

gathering titled “Imaginings Matter” was designed to speak to the current moment of academic freedom and integrity. Inspired by the artists previously mentioned, the gathering aimed to symmetrically convey queer solidarities in opposition to the extractive practices of land, labor, and material sources.

Invitation to Spring 2024 gathering, “Imaginings Matter”

Dear Artist Colleagues,

Inspired by the themes of “Queer Imaginings” & “MATTERS” coursework, you are cordially invited to a gathering.

Bring a food/drink that perhaps evokes the coursework for you, if you are so inclined.

For my Queer Imaginings colleagues, think “fruity,” muffins, etc.

For my Matters colleagues, think about food that matters to you, in the Materials Biography sense. You are also welcome to be experimental and creative with ephemeral food art like Vegetable carving, Fruit peel sculptures, containers, jewelry, restaurant experiences, cutlery, etc.

Dress Up! To your most Imaginative self. Remember to wear socks! This is a Covid-19 cautious event.

My final project exhibit for the MATTERS class, “Feasting on Matter” was a study of how diasporic and migrant communities create connections to their cultural past through food experiences. Using spices, natural dyes, and other household found objects I made patterned cotton and khadi fabric as a base. Spice and other ingredients from the “Imaginings Matter” gathering were assembled atop the base as social sculptures. This was in an attempt to answer transdisciplinary media scholar Shannon Mattern’s (2024) question, “How do different topologies embody different poetics & politics of assembly & assemblage, unite different forms of sociality and ways of knowing?” in her talk on “Interfaces of Assembly: Tables and Other Topologies.” The artist statement reads, “This project attempts to answer this by laying out food from a gathering on academic solidarity as a medium for community gatherings. The objects placed on a tablecloth dyed are made from food items ground up and are representations designed from decorative elements in the Philadelphia historical architecture house I call home. . . . The relation of food and caste with collaborations and who gets to make them is further reckoned with in these gatherings where I cosplay as the women in my family. Here I acknowledge the privilege of a seat at this Table.”

The aforementioned South Asia Digital Humanities Workshop series was followed by a gathering in the similar spirit. Towards the end of this current Fall 2024 semester, I will be hosting a gathering for my classes, THAR 0785 Queer Archives, Aesthetics, and Performance and ENGL 3308 Cooking with Words. Perhaps a food performance could be in the program? We shall see. Where does this impulse come from? I have written odes to my family matriarchs’ cooking (Tata LitLive! 2017) and strive to embody

their values with my found family in the city I consider home now. My own personal history of growing up in multiple parts of Asia contributes to my general fascination with global food cultures. I recognize the fulfillment I am seeking for in building a community comes from being an immigrant daughter of immigrants, continents away from her own. Academic validation is part of this yearning to quite an extent.

None of this would have occurred to me if not for the historic house I reside in. Built in 1878, the house has many original woodworking design details intact and is located in the historical district of Philadelphia. I often call myself a librarian by day and a museum caretaker by night in jest. The architectural features of the space, along with the serendipity of living in a dwelling that epitomizes the “dark academia” aesthetic while making it my own, naturally create an atmospheric mise-en-scène to be shared with my chosen community.

Indeed, from the final day of DH 2024, fellow conference organizers asking each other “Did you eat?” became the check-in refrain in my other in-person volunteering gigs as well. A revolving tray (also known as a “Lazy Susan” in somewhat ableist terms) in the center of a table makes not only the dishes accessible but also encourages harmony at the dining table. In parts of the world where being seated on the ground is preferable for sharing a meal together, leaning towards the food means bowing towards your fellow diners and servers too. Academic collaborations, as described in the other pieces (Bessette et al. 2024) in this special issue, sustain the volunteering alt-ac labor force. The value of this solidarity is unfathomable to me, and yet here I have tried.

Link to *Feasting on Collaboration: Zine of Zines*: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/030ac69845.html>.

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Author Biography

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With extensive experience in data storytelling, natural language processing, computational social sciences, data visualization, network analysis, and knowledge mining (text/data/etc), Jaj engages with researchers across the disciplines interested in employing these techniques. She founded the AI Literacy Interest Group, hosts Carpentry workshops, collaborating on digital scholarship projects, working with the graduate center and other campus partners to establish foundational programming in research computing, data literacy, and data ethics.

Her research interests and adventures range from multilingual manuscripts, Asian art and culture, games-based learning, media studies, critical making to Digital Humanities and Critical Artificial Intelligence.

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