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Internship Report

For six weeks during this summer, I interned for *The Offing*, an online literary magazine that foregrounds work by and about marginalized communities. While the journal began as a channel of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Offing* is transitioning to an independent basis after a very public fallout with the previous Editor in Chief. I was brought on as an Assistant Director of Fundraising, and my task was to research and propose an online fundraising campaign. Having had no prior experience in publishing, my research into long-term objectives such as grants, as well as sustaining short-term objectives such as crowd funding, introduced me to many of the practical concerns that structure the life of a literary journal. I produced a comprehensive crowd funding plan based on the Patreon platform—which is basically Kickstarter for “creatives” with a focus on sustaining memberships instead of one time donations—which the organization has just begun to evaluate.

While working on the fundraising project, I was offered other opportunities in the journal that complemented some of my actual areas of competency. Because I know HTML and have worked as a web designer, I was introduced to the production side of the journal. I worked with the Editor in Chief, the Executive Managing Editor, department editors, and the copy editor to produce pieces that have been published on the site. In this role, I started to learn much more about the production process in general as well as project management and Wordpress software. At the conclusion of my six-week

internship, I accepted an offer to stay on as Assistant Managing Editor in Production, a volunteer position that allows me to continue developing production skills in a digital environment. Prior to this experience, I would not have thought I would find production so appealing, but (perhaps after four or five years of writing a dissertation) I find great satisfaction in producing the pieces that we publish on a weekly basis due to the collaborative nature of the work and the immediate gratification that comes with its rapid temporality.

In my particular case, *The Offing* was generous enough to provide an opportunity for me late in the process, but because the journal was in such upheaval, there was little specific guidance in the fundraising portion of my work. I would have felt more comfortable entering into a situation with a bit more definition, although the people who work for *The Offing* were welcoming and helpful as I determined my own project and set about developing it. When I began to take on production duties, I *did* receive thorough training and clear yet flexible instructions before I was turned loose. In production, I did discover a potential alternative career track, and I have begun to develop skills that will help me pursue it if I should choose to do so.