Case study

Collaborative authorship in digital humanities

SOURCE: Spiro, L. (2009). Collaborative Authorship in the Humanities.
https://digitalscholarship.wordpress.com/2009/04/21/collaborative-authorship-in-the-humanities/

Lisa Spiro in her blog post on collaborative authorship in humanities wrote: "Recently I heard the editors of a history journal and a literature journal say that they rarely published articles written by more than one author—perhaps a couple every few years.   Around the same time, I was looking over a recent issue of *Literary and Linguistic Computing* and noticed that it included several jointly-authored articles.   This got me wondering: is collaborative authorship more common in digital humanities than in "traditional" humanities?

"Collaboration" is often associated with "digital humanities."   Building digital collections, creating software, devising new analytical methods, and authoring multimodal scholarship typically cannot be accomplished by a solo scholar; rather, digital humanities projects require contributions from people with content knowledge, technical skills, design skills, project management experience, metadata expertise, etc. [..]

Of course, collaboration poses some significant challenges, such as divvying up and managing work, negotiating conflicts, finding funding for complex projects, assigning credit, etc.   But as Lisa Ede and Andrea A. Lunsford point out, collaborative authorship can lead to a "widening of scholarly possibilities."   In talking to humanities scholars (particularly those in global humanities), I've noticed genuine enthusiasm about collaborative work that allows scholars to engage in community, consider alternative perspectives, and undertake ambitious projects that require diverse skills and/or knowledge."

Questions for discussion:

1) What are the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative research and publishing in digital humanities, especially bearing in mind the availability of large open data sets?
2) How to recognize the contribution of each co-author in case of collaborative authorship? How to recognize the contribution of authors of open data sets?
3) What ethical problems might arise in the context of collaborative authorship? How to prevent and solve these problems?
4) Please discuss in the small group what are the pro and contra arguments for individual and collaborative authorship in humanities. What are the advantages and disadvantages? Fill in the table below

	Pro - advantages	**Contra - disadvantages**
Individual authorship		
Collaborative authorship (group coauthorship)		