Reply:

I thank Doris Sommer for reminding us that experimental humanities has measurable outcomes and that "statistically eloquent" ways of quantifying those outcomes might be key to maximizing their impact. Many of us tend to be wary of quantification, seeing it as standardizing and homogenizing. To guard against this danger, perhaps we should think of quantification as one tool among others, not the sole criterion but part of an evaluative infrastructure, working hand in hand with other, nonquantitative testimonies to create an evidentiary fabric, capturing a full range of outcomes. In that context, it might be important for us to take the design into our own hands, making sure that what the quantification registers and computes does in fact correspond to what we consider important about that particular project. Imaginatively designed by ourselves, "statistically eloquent" measurements cease to be an external imposition. They become instead an integral part of field-testing: a new language that clearly documents whether our objectives have been met, while disseminating our results in a form most readily understood by the world. Pre-Texts has set a splendid example learning that new language, using it to good effect with the Buenos Aires housing authority. It is a language all of us should know something about.

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