

## Introduction, *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*

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Volume 3, numéro 1, 2019

Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1084203ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5334/kula.55>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

University of Victoria Libraries

ISSN

2398-4112 (numérique)

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Citer ce document

Arbuckle, A., Meneses, L. & Siemens, R. (2019). Introduction, *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*. *KULA*, 3(1), 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.5334/kula.55>

Résumé de l'article

On January 10–11 2018 the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) Partnership held Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship, a gathering that brought ~60 researchers, students, librarians, and academic-aligned groups together on the topics of scholarly communication, open access, and community engagement. This special issue is a snapshot of the event proceedings, organized around open social scholarship theory, infrastructure, and projects. Wide-ranging in content, the authors included here all come together under the banner of imagining more social, community-minded applications for academic work.



## EDITORIAL

# Introduction, *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*

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On January 10–11 2018 the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) Partnership held *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*, a gathering that brought ~60 researchers, students, librarians, and academic-aligned groups together on the topics of scholarly communication, open access, and community engagement. This special issue is a snapshot of the event proceedings, organized around open social scholarship theory, infrastructure, and projects. Wide-ranging in content, the authors included here all come together under the banner of imagining more social, community-minded applications for academic work.

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**Keywords:** open social scholarship; scholarly communication; open access; open scholarship; digital humanities

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Researchers, universities, and funding agencies are becoming increasingly cognizant of the significance of open scholarship. Academic community members are now focusing more explicitly on how to embrace and enact social contexts, roles, and activities in their professional practices (Veletsianos 2016). As the academy continues on a trajectory toward more open, and more social, practices—including active collaboration, community building, and knowledge mobilization—opportunities arise to create knowledge across traditional disciplinary and institutional boundaries, as well as with members of the broader public. This movement toward socially-oriented work is facilitated by the development and creative use of networked technologies. As Canada Research Chair in Collaborative Digital Scholarship Susan Brown writes,

What is commonly called ‘Web 2.0’ was not so much a shift in technology but the application of existing technologies to make it very easy for people to write, which is to say publish, to the Web, with the result that vast numbers of people began to participate in knowledge creation online. (2016, 47)

The co-location of this networked, critical mass bears significant promise for cross-community connection. More specifically for our purposes here, through increasingly global, technical infrastructure, the academy can rise to public engagement and interaction imperatives, and embark on shared knowledge creation activities.

On January 10 and 11, 2018, the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) Partnership held *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*, a gathering that brought approximately 60 researchers, students, librarians, and academic-aligned groups together on the topics of scholarly communication, open access, and community engagement. This special issue is a snapshot of the event proceedings, organized around open social scholarship theory, infrastructure, and projects. Wide-ranging in content, the contributions included here all come together under the banner of imagining more social, community-minded applications for academic work.

The INKE Partnership brings together a broad, diverse group to advance understanding of, and resolve crucial issues in, the production, distribution, and widespread engagement of digital scholarship in Canada and beyond. Through inclusive, participatory, and publicly-engaged digital scholarship, the INKE Partnership addresses scholarly communication challenges. For the better part of a decade, key researchers and leading national organizations have collaborated on scholarly communication, open access, digital publishing, data management, knowledge mobilization, social knowledge creation, and community engagement—laying the foundation for *open*

*social scholarship*. Growing from such roots, as well as contemporary online practices, open social scholarship enables the creation, dissemination, and engagement of research by specialists and non-specialists in accessible and significant ways. This work is guided by objectives consensually developed by the INKE Partnership: to create and share knowledge, communicate scholarship, connect with policy and the public, and research and develop initiatives. To meet these open social scholarship objectives, the INKE Partnership

- develops, shares, and implements research that meets the needs of broad constituencies;
- provides opportunities for access to, and engagement with, humanities and social sciences material;
- explores, creates, and makes public tools and technologies in open ways to promote wide usage;
- facilitates discourse between researchers, supporters, policy makers, and the general public; and
- enables dialogue between academics and non-academics through integrated training, scholarly communication, and research activities and outputs.

Open social scholarship is, thus, the theme of this special issue, and authors included provide examples of open social scholarship in practice. Sara Humphreys discusses the *Cogewea* digital edition project, and her attempts to correct issues with the Western editing of Indigenous texts. Shawn Martin examines journals and professional associations in nineteenth-century America to reflect on the complex network of today's scholarly communication model. In the context of game jams, Jon Saklofske reimagines the process for implementing social scholarship through restrictions on the planning, design and implementation of time-constrained experiences. Lindsey Seatter explores how virtual collaboration is facilitated by web annotation tools, and interrogates issues of interface, usability, and online engagement.

Analyzing the organizational, infrastructural, and policy-based forces that shape open social scholarship is crucial for a fuller understanding of this transitional moment. University of Victoria Libraries Special Collections librarians Heather Dean and Dean Seeman ask to what extent archival and library metadata creation can be open and social. Stan Ruecker, Jennifer Roberts Smith, and Priscilla Ferronato propose that the next phase in the evolution of digital humanities centres should follow the user-centred, open innovation model of the 'Living Lab.' Lynne Siemens analyzes several aspects of industry partnerships in the humanities, which are often characterized and tracked by socio-economic benefits. Kim Silk and Sarah Milligan et al. introduce the Open Scholarship Policy Observatory: an online initiative that examines policies related to open scholarship and aims to provide a firm foundation for the development of relevant recommendations. The authors suggest that such a framework can address general confusion over the strategies and implications of the various open access mandates and policies.

Looking beyond both infrastructure and examples, it is also key to explore more theoretical angles to this area of scholarly research and practice. John Barber reports on an open social scholarship collaboration at the Triangle Scholarly Communications Institute hosted by the University of North Carolina in November 2017. Alyssa Arbuckle argues that academics should consider versioning their work—that is, publishing it in different forms and formats—in order to move from straightforward open access to more engaged open social scholarship. Moreover, Luis Meneses et al. discuss how social media can be used to reorganize and access a digital collection in order to unleash the potential of open scholarship more fully.

Such application of digital techniques in a humanistic context is no longer a radical or new practice; in fact, the connection between technology and the humanities is crucial for the evolution of open social scholarship practices. In the context of digital humanities initiatives like the Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada (LGLC) project, Constance Crompton, Caitlin Voth, and Ruth Truong explore how to study historical social networks that developed and mobilized information. Randa El Khatib examines potential models for crowdsourced cultural gazetteers. In doing so, she brings together elements from different digital and historical spatial repositories and data collection practices. Rachel Hendery and Jason Gibson report on the experience of two Australian 'community sourcing' projects: a type of crowdsourcing that engages a specified group of volunteers, rather than putting out a broader, more general call for participation. These authors reinforce the possibilities for open scholarship that digital humanities hold: collaborations across community groups were simply not possible at the same scale prior to the emergence of networked technologies.

As the contributions to these proceedings demonstrate, open scholarship comprises a varied and evolving set of practices. Often considered in relation to the sciences only (Eve 2014), the authors here unite under a banner of open scholarship in the humanities, and the digital humanities in particular. This combination of perspectives lends the collection a unique voice in the larger open scholarship conversation. A decade ago, John Willinsky wrote that 'there is a growing expectation among the public that open and free access to knowledge is the new standard of what it means to make things public' (2009, xiv–xv). Participants of

*Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship* are testing the boundaries of making research public, and the authors included in these proceedings exemplify such experiments in open social scholarship.

## Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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**How to cite this article:** Arbuckle, Alyssa, Luis Meneses, and Ray Siemens. 2019. Introduction, *Beyond Open: Implementing Social Scholarship*. *KULA: knowledge creation, dissemination, and preservation studies* 3(1): 8. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/kula.55>

**Submitted:** 28 June 2018

**Accepted:** 06 July 2018

**Published:** 27 February 2019

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