

# Digital Storytelling and Open, Networked Social Scholarship: A Narrative

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Résumé de l'article

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Digital Storytelling and Open, Networked Social Scholarship: A Narrative

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This essay responds to a challenge of the INKE 2018 gathering: *To highlight activities that focus on the engagement and implementation of networked open social scholarship.* One response to this challenge is to distribute scholarly communication as storytelling through multiple digital media channels. The author participated in an international, multidisciplinary fellowship focused on how to implement such an undertaking. This narrative describes the collaborative efforts, presentations, and practices that emerged from this open, social scholarship endeavor.

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**Keywords:** Network; social network; open social scholarship; collaboration; digital media; interdisciplinary; multimodal; usability

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## Introduction

During the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) winter 2018 gathering, participants were challenged to highlight activities that focus on the engagement and implementation of networked open social scholarship. Networked open social scholarship was conceptualized as creating and disseminating research and research technologies to a broad, interdisciplinary audience of specialists and non-specialists in ways that are both accessible and significant. Participants were urged to consider how to model networked open social scholarship practices and behavior by pursuing the following leading questions:

- *What approaches to the development of workflows, tools, systems, technologies, publishing apparatus, protocols, policies, and initiatives best foster and encourage openness?*
- *How do we promote, record, archive, and study the evolving processes of engaging with data?*
- *How can we leverage existing resources in libraries and cultural institutions to provide regular opportunities for mentorship and training in core networked open social scholarship areas?*

Serendipitously, late in 2017, I had the opportunity to work with a group of six interdisciplinary scholar-teachers from the two coasts of the United States and Canada on a very similar challenge. We all were invited to the Triangle Scholarly Communications Institute (SCI), at the University of North Carolina, to explore digital storytelling and multimedia scholarship as potential means for improving communications between scholars and other communities. Included in my group's collaborative outcomes were plans to share our thinking, our ideas, our experiments, and our prototypes with as many communities as possible in the course of our scholarly activities. This narrative seeks to share insights from SCI with participants at the 2018 INKE gathering, and apply the results of the former to the challenge of the latter.

I will proceed by first outlining my conceptual framework for understanding and practicing open, social scholarship. Following, I will describe my group's final presentation at SCI in which we told, and tried to demonstrate, various media forms and channels for sharing scholarly storytelling with scholarly and public audiences. The result, I hope, will be an opportunity for further discussion about networked open social scholarship.

## Conceptual Framework

My conceptual framework for understanding and practicing open, social scholarship is based, primarily, on conversation. When Cory Doctorow says, 'Conversation is king. Content is just something to talk about'

(quoted in Shirky 2008, 99), we are reminded of media theorist Marshall McLuhan's famous aphorism 'the medium is the message' (McLuhan 1964, 9).<sup>1</sup>

McLuhan was talking generally about how new forms of media change societal perceptions, and specifically about the effects of new media rather than any content shared through them. For Doctorow, conversation is the mainstay of societal, social networks. Knowledge emerges from public and social thought and/or conversations in these networks. Authority, he suggests, is transferred from central sources (editors, content providers, broadcasting corporations, etc.) to individuals.

But this process moves beyond individuals, according to David Weinberger: 'Knowledge—its content and its organization—is becoming a social act' (Weinberger 2007, 133). Authority comes from enabling the group to explore differences and diverse viewpoints 'to get past the biases of individuals' (Weinberger 2007, 146). Social knowing changes the *who* and *how* of knowing, more than the *what* of knowledge (Weinberger 2007, 144). Knowledge exists in the gaps, in the connections, between the contributors and their individual standpoints and passions in lively, public conversations in online social networks. Getting to the knowledge requires active engagement 'because social knowing, like the global conversations that give rise to it, is never finished' (Weinberger 2007, 147).

For Weinberger and, as noted earlier, Doctorow, in talking about something, we are making it explicit, imbued with socially agreed upon knowledge. Clay Shirky (2008) agrees, noting that social knowledge creation is an outcome of online collaboration and conversation. These online conversations focus on what Andrew Dubber calls 'social objects' (2013, 111–112).

The notion and application of social objects stems from work by Yrjö Engeström (2000), Jyri Engeström (2005), and Hugh MacLeod (2007). For Jyri Engeström and MacLeod, social objects are something around which conversations occur; they are the focal point. Objects are shared to promote conversation. They may not shape or relate to what conversation evolves, but they are the reason and/or meaning for the conversation. It is not the social object, but the conversation that it promotes (MacLeod 2007). Yrjö Engeström positions object-oriented activities (conversations about social objects) as social activities based on the ways by which learning and knowledge are generated and shared. Meanings are derived in relation to the object, the actors, and whatever norms and/or regulations apply to the context.

These conversations need not be *about* social objects. Neither do conversations have to follow a particular agenda intended or imposed by the creators of the social objects. Content creators essentially share content that is remixable, content which derives value from the number of ways it can be employed to provide content for a number of different discussions. As a result, ideas and discussions are driven by the use of social objects constructed from raw materials (Dubber 2013, 17).

Where might we find the raw materials for social object conversations? Crowds could be a source of insight, good judgement, and wisdom, sometimes more so than the conventional wisdom of experts, according to financial reporter James Surowiecki (2004). But, sometimes, he says, crowds can fail. To test the wisdom of crowds, Surowiecki posed several questions. Pertinent to our discussion is the question of whether the crowd comes to a shared interest as a result of their own information gathering, or whether it was planted by another, organized interest before crowd members began influencing each other. The final test is to make a difference, to translate personal judgements of crowd members into a collective decision that leads to action or effect.

Given the rise of social media in the past decade, one might assume that social knowledge creation is a recent phenomenon. However, Peter Burke (2012), in his two-volume *A Social History of Knowledge*, argues that social knowledge creation is characterized by a long history—dating back to the Lyceum of ancient Greece—the involvement of various agents and elements, and a focus on intellectuals. Furthermore, he says knowledge is created by various institutions and groups of people, rather than solely by individuals (Burke 2012).

These ideas are explored by others. Terry Eagleton (2010), for example, says literature has a historical role in social development and nation building in England and elsewhere. Nancy Fjällbrant (1997) details the history of the scientific journal as developing from researchers' desire to share their findings with others in a cooperative forum. Along with journals, university presses were considered primary forms of knowledge dissemination and sharing (Jagodzinski 2008). Adrian Johns explores the history of printing, especially the social apparatus and construction of print and how it has been used socially. Rather than evolving from a deterministic cause-and-effect relationship with any single historical factor, he says multiple print cultures have evolved, each local in character (Johns 2011). Thomas Streeter (2010) examines how various historical and cultural contexts have contributed to the Internet as a socially constructed complex

<sup>1</sup> Doctorow first offered this comment in a blog post on BoingBoing.net entitled "Disney Exec: Piracy Is Just a Business Model."

of networks (technological, economic, and political) that foster openness concurrently with connectivity. Finally, following Johns' (Johns 2011) argument that there is no single print culture, Lisa Gitelman posits the absence of a singular, ubiquitous media. Instead, she says, media are plural, social communication structures that evolve with surrounding publics (Gitelman 2006).<sup>2</sup>

Liliana Bounegru (2008) says the emergence of social media, like Facebook, and microblogging, as via Twitter, are re-tribalizing our cultures through their facilitation of conversations between individuals and within groups. Conversations in these social spaces are 'rapid communication with large groups of people in a speed that would resemble oral storytelling, without having to share the same physical space with your audience' (Bounegru 2008). In this statement, Bounegru channels both Walter Ong and McLuhan. Referring to electronic media—telephone, radio, television, and sound recordings—Ong notes the advent of 'the age of secondary orality' with its sense of participatory, communal, and immediate communication (Ong 1982, 133). This communication is conversational in tone, but based on writing and print (Ong 1982).

The notion of tribal culture, as an expression of unity, was coined by McLuhan and is a recurrent theme in his work. He says a medium is more notable for its social effect, its ability to create a space for social interaction, than its content (McLuhan 1964). For example, McLuhan suggests that before developing and/or adopting the technologies of writing and printing, people formed tribal groups within which they developed and shared information and mythologies. Print turned the tribe into individuals, each immersed, alone, in an experience with books. Electric media, like radio and television, provided, said McLuhan, opportunities to return humanity to a tribal context, albeit a very large tribe, where everyone could be aware of the conversation, if not participate (McLuhan 1964).

## Scholarly Communications Institute

One might say the Triangle Scholarly Communications Institute (SCI) was a tribal gathering. SCI was hosted by the University of North Carolina, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, November 5–9, 2017. The theme of this gathering was 'Scholarly Storytelling: Compelling Research for an Engaged Public' (SCI 2017).

Six groups were selected from more than thirty proposals and awarded fellowships to articulate and address needs and opportunities in the domain of scholarly communications during this gathering. I was a member of one group of six interdisciplinary scholar-teachers from the two coasts of the United States and Canada.<sup>3</sup>

Each group proposed a different approach to the central theme of scholarly storytelling as a methodology of engaging the public with academic scholarship. The focus of my group was 'Digital Storytelling and the Future(s) of Multimedia Scholarship.' Our guiding questions included:

- *How can scholar-teachers integrate existing digital media platforms into current practice for more effective research, teaching, and community building?*
- *What frameworks are in place for assessing and rewarding these practices within colleges and universities, scholarly societies, and funding agencies?*
- *In what way(s) do our choices of what to build and deploy in research and teaching change those practices?*
- *How can we begin working with these vectors of activity to build better societies, from our classrooms to our regions, to our world?*
- *Can we do things online to actually impact our communities?*

In answering these questions, we were concerned to:

- *Build media literacy and civic engagement*
- *Communicate beyond the formal institution*
- *Package communications for accessibility and demonstrable impact*

<sup>2</sup> Alyssa Arbuckle, Nina Belojevic, Matthew Hiebert, and Ray Siemens, working with Shaun Wong, Derek Siemens, Alex Christie, Jon Saklofske, Jentery Sayers, and the INKE and ETCL (Electronic Textual Cultures Laboratory) Research Groups, have prepared three annotated bibliographies focusing on social knowledge creation. The first focuses on social knowledge creation and conveyance. The second deals with game-design models for digital social knowledge creation. The third takes social knowledge creation tools as its focus (Arbuckle et al. 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Group members included myself, John Barber (Washington State University Vancouver), Alyssa Arbuckle (University of Victoria), Dene Grigar (Washington State University Vancouver), Hannah McGregor (Simon Fraser University), Jon Saklofske (Acadia University), and Bonnie Stewart (University of Prince Edward Island).

- *Communicate in collaborative and performative ways*
- *Expand ability to communicate in temporal moments*

Our group brought a diverse array of practices and platforms, including podcasting, live stream broadcasting, digital games, social media, and electronic literature, to bear on the challenge of reframing scholarship and pedagogical practices as public-first information sharing, rather than the traditional model of dissemination after-the-fact (if at all). We challenged ourselves with the overarching question:

*How can podcasting, digital gaming, electronic literature, and internet broadcasting work together for social change?*

Our final presentation—representing four days of intense consideration—argued that distribution of scholarly communication through multiple digital media channels, especially those noted previously, could prove useful in reaching a broader audience, especially if, in each case, the content of the message is pitched to the needs and expectations of audiences for those media channels. With our presentation, we wanted to demonstrate how we thought various approaches to digital storytelling, using different media, might address the question:

*How to command attention and foster public engagement?*

With a concern for our central argument, we considered audiences beyond that gathered in the Rizzo Conference Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In making this effort, we contextualized our presentation as a blog post to *Inside Higher Ed*, a live presentation incorporating a Twitter chat, and a recorded podcast. The blog post, 'How Can We Make Scholarship More Relevant?', coauthored by Bonnie Stewart and Alyssa Arbuckle (2017), began provocatively:

If academia wants to matter—and continue to be funded—in a world where our societal narratives are shaped on media and social media platforms, new literacies for scholarly communications are needed, STAT.

The live Twitter chat, focused at #TriangleSCI, asked participants to respond to six questions introduced throughout our group presentation. I will introduce these questions below, in the transcription of our live presentation.

Our final presentation was recorded as the basis for future podcasts. This recording and the archived Twitter chat provide the only access to this presentation. I have transcribed portions of the presentation, particularly passages where each member of our group presented information in response to the 'What?', 'So what?', and 'What next?' format proposed by SCI organizers.

We began with introductory remarks by Bonnie Stewart, University of Prince Edward Island:

I read a great quote that said, 'Cultures are defined not only by the stories they tell, but by the stories they don't tell.' I wanted to think about that in terms of academic culture and what the stories and the ways in which we share academic knowledge have to do with the type of culture that we build. Our group has had some really interesting conversations around some of the challenges of academic culture meeting digital culture, so this is really an extension of some of those pieces.

Stewart then introduced Twitter chat as a collaborative conversation and encouraged the audience to participate. She introduced the first Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat question #1:

*We are talking storytelling/digital storytelling in higher education. How do YOU see narrative and story in relation to scholarship?*

## **What?**

Hannah McGregor, Simon Fraser University, addressed the 'What?' question. What are we doing, as individuals, but more importantly, as a group? What is our vision? What is our goal? Specifically, McGregor addressed our effort to conceptualize and collaborate toward a shared response to the challenges laid out by the SCI gathering:

We are a group of six scholars already doing our kinds of work, our own kind of scholarship, projects, and approaches to the question of the relationship between multimedia scholarship and digital storytelling. There was a very strong sense in the group that what we did *not* want to do was choose one person's project and put that at the center. What we *did* want to do was figure out a way that we could take six quite diverse projects and diverse approaches to the question and find a productive overlap, some way in which they could not only start to speak to each other, but they could start to resonate with each other and maybe possibly start to become something that is more than the sum of its parts.

And so, one of the first things that we needed to do was come up with a collective conceit. This is the question that is going to be our overriding question or concern:

*How can multimedia scholarship reframe our work as storytelling for/with multiple audiences in the current information ecosystem?*

For us, 'multimedia scholarship' stands in for a fairly complex set of terms and ideas. For one thing, we are thinking of scholarship both as research production and dissemination, but also as pedagogy and activism and a wide range of other kinds of work that are scholarly but not necessarily done by researchers all the time. 'Multimedia' signals what it means to be doing diverse forms of digital, intermedial, transmedial, multimedial scholarship that includes Twitter, gaming, podcasting, experimental radio, live streaming, and more.

The shared concern as we are looking at multimedia scholarship is the way that moving our scholarship outside traditional print or pseudo-print, for example online journals, gives us the opportunity to step back and rethink some of the fundamental premises of how we have been doing our work.

The way we want to rethink this is with storytelling, and particularly storytelling's attention to audience and to building relationships with audiences at its heart. So what happens if we set storytelling at the heart of multimedia scholarship and think about relationships with audiences as our foremost concern?

The end of our question, which has come to the forefront this week as an urgent concern, is the fact that you cannot divorce conversation about doing public and digitally oriented scholarship from questions about the nature of the platforms that we are working on, the kinds of conversations and publics that are formed in different digital environments and online environments, how those conversations form media silos, issues of trolling, issues of engagement or lack of engagement, and how those inform the kinds of public work we can or cannot do.

So there are questions of risk involved in this, questions of vulnerability, questions of mistrust, questions of concern over ed[ucational] tech[nology] and increasing surveillance of our students. These are all big components for us.

We are trying to set all these balls up in the air and see what happens when we try to keep them all in motion at the same time. In order to do that, and try to do it with a collective goal, we started off by developing a set of shared principles.

## Shared Principles

The set of shared principles were meant to focus our efforts and abilities across multiple platforms and with regard to multiple audiences. Alyssa Arbuckle, University of Victoria, presented these shared principles, collaboratively developed by our group:

Following earlier comments about the value of constraints, I know we don't usually think of guiding principles as constraints, but, I would like to seed the idea that maybe when we are doing digital and public work we can think of principles as constraints. Not in a negative way, but rather things that keep us on track and keep us honest.

[Our group] spent a lot of time discussing our own principles for our own scholarly practices, and decided that we should come up with a set of principles for our team to guide our work and to guide the various interconnected projects that we are working on. Another way that we were framing this project was to think of what happens if we take one scholarly research idea, research question, argument, theory, and try to manifest it across [different] platforms and modes.

Our first principle, that we wanted to keep in mind with regard to digital, public scholarship, is acknowledging privilege and politics. I think it is sometimes easy to do our work and do our

research and not acknowledge our privilege and politics. But when we are talking about reaching out and engaging so many other people from different areas and industries, knowing what our own privilege is—whether that is personal privilege and personal identity politics or whether that is just the privilege that is inherent to academic institutions and the politics that go with that—was quite key to us.

Our second principle is ensuring accessibility and accountability. We thought about accessibility and accountability in many, many different ways. Open access is one form, but we are also thinking about accessibility for people who are differently abled. How are we creating digital projects to think of those terms of accessibility? We also thought about the fact that just because something is 'open' and 'free' does not mean it is accessible. Academic research, even when it is 'open access' can still be obfuscated and dense.

Our third principle is to engage many audiences and engage many dialogues. That is something that we found easier said than done, because even though we might have our own broad reach and large communities that we are connected to, breaking into those communities can be difficult.

For our fourth principle, we want to think about scholarship as being in process. Trying to reframe scholarship as processual, to stop being so output focused, may help us to be more engaged with our own process.

Our fifth guiding principle is to think about fostering scholarship that is more open and more social, and what that means. One of my big stakes in the game is thinking about collaboration as actually working with other people, not just giving them my stuff. One of the amazing things about open access is that it has made research free and available but that still assumes that we are the knowledge bearers who are bestowing these presents and gifts of knowledge on other people. That is not really working with other people, and also circles back to thinking about privilege and politics.

Our sixth principle is rethinking audiences and modes of address. We are thinking about multiple access points for different audiences and trying to conceive of the fact that just because someone is a specialist with special knowledge, they might not have the time for a 20-page article. So how do we still communicate research in a way that does not assume that everybody has an hour set aside to dig into our article?

Arbuckle introduced the second Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat Question #2:

*Why is storytelling a word we keep hearing today? How do you think it can foster public engagement with scholarship in new or meaningful ways?*

### **P.I.E: Participatory, Interactive, Experiential**

Dene Grigar, Washington State University Vancouver, introduced P.I.E. as an approach to the digital and/or virtual components/context involved in our efforts to promote digital storytelling and multimedia scholarship:

Participatory, Interactive, Experiential. All the works we are dealing with: video games, live radio performances, live traversals of pioneering works of electronic literature, Twitter chats, all these objects have a sense of liveness to them because they are participatory, interactive, and experiential.

I get these terms from Vince Dzieken (2012). He is a curator who wrote a book called *Virtuality and the Art of Exhibition: Curatorial Design for the Multimedial Museum*, and he differentiates digital from virtual by saying that digital objects are those things that are pretty flat and static. They are two-dimensional in a sense, like email records, Word documents. They are digital, but there is not a sense of 'liveness' about them. And by liveness, he means that people participate in them, and these objects provide interactive or experimental features. Virtual objects have these features.

Dziekan predicts 'contemporary [venues] of the future will exhibit the virtual and the real alongside one another, crossing and overlapping each one's boundaries, creating an amazing visual and interactive experience within and without walls' (2012, 66).

So all virtual objects are digital, but not all digital objects are virtual. What we are dealing with as a group of digital makers are all virtual objects. When you get these objects together in the same space because of this liveness, they talk to each other, they interact with each other, they create new knowledge by being placed side-by-side. That is what curation is all about. So, we are embracing that

theoretical framework for our project. Dziekan uses the term 'multimedial' rather than 'multimedia' to define this type of participatory, interactive, experiential art. Multimediality, in this context, implies a shift from exhibit venues as 'an arena for contemplation of the unique artwork and its aesthetic immediacy to staging virtual experiences' (Dziekan 2012, 63).

I am also talking about process, because along with the theory the process has to go hand in hand and our process was very messy. In fact, we started by each giving four ideas about our project and then we organized these ideas so that we could see if there was something that talked about each of them, something that would help organize them. Then we put them on the whiteboard and began to move them around and came up with a structure that became the way we see our phases and our output. We ended up with a really great structure and system for six people working in six different areas to come together and be able to work on a single project together.

Grigar introduced the third Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat Question #3:

*Digital storytelling as scholarship shifts the onus of scholarly communications to individuals, sharing in public in real time. What challenges does that pose to/for academia?*

## What Next?

Jon Saklofske, Acadia University, shared our intended output, both short term and long term:

You are probably thinking, 'Wow! What are these people producing?' I am here to help crystallize what we have been doing, thinking, and coming up with over the last few days. As has been said already, we are focusing our work on common ideas, questions, themes, and motivations. We have decided to be almost metacritical in the sense that the stuff we are producing is reflecting on the theme of digital scholarly storytelling as it illustrates our points for digital scholarly storytelling, individually and collectively.

So, for instance, right now we are in the midst of a live Twitter chat on this theme, which is part of our argument about process-based engagement, participation, interaction. We also have some things planned for the very, very near future to integrate with this activity we are in, but also extend these questions and conversations, and ultimately come together.

We have an *Inside Higher Education* essay/article which is coming out next week.

Hannah has been going around collecting audio for a series of podcasts she is planning, given the work she has done already with podcasting, but pointing it toward this question, thinking through this question, thinking through the very means and ends.

Games are my thing and I have been working already on some game prototypes in which to examine the questions and ideas of digital scholarly storytelling, what it means for both an academic audience to diversify ways of communicating and doing research, and for publics. So I am thinking of different points of entry, different kinds of branching narratives that have these common points throughout a gamed experience.

We also plan live stream traversals which Dene is working on and will be working on over the short term as well.

We want to do these things separately after Triangle Scholarly Communications Institute is finished and then continue the conversations and extend the kinds of things we thought about and discovered at various communications venues. So, we are thinking ahead to a Modern Language Association 2018 workshop, a 2018 Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) 2018 presentation, a presentation at the 2018 Digital Humanities Summer Institute, Electronic Literature Organization in 2018, Digital Pedagogy 2018—we are planning to submit proposals to these and other venues for presentations where we will discuss our ideas and ways we are experimenting and working through those ideas with these communities. These are longer term extensions of what we have already begun working on here. We are already thinking ahead of how we are going to continue and extend these conversations as we work through some of the initial issues and prototypes.

We do not want to just talk about alternative forms of storytelling and collective possibilities for scholarly storytelling, but we want to do them, we want to see if we can initially explore them, practice them, play with them, experiment with them and get the community to reflect on those



experiments, give us some feedback as we feedback with each other about the various affordances and constraints of each and the ways in which they intersect or talk with each other.

So, we are showing and telling at the same time and exploring these multimedia ways into scholarly storytelling. We are trying to communicate these efforts broadly in an effort to illustrate and influence the narrative of public scholarship through this making and modeling process. So by next August, we will take these experiences that we all have had at these different events, these different explorations and prototypes, and transform them into stories to share with the larger community and centralize them in a website that we have been putting together already to serve as a portal into this discussion.

Saklofske introduced the fourth Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat Question #4:

*What are the risks—to individuals and higher education—of emphasizing storytelling and public communications as a goal of scholarship? What kinds of literacies and safety nets are needed?*

At this point, Dene demonstrated the website she developed for this project, and then introduced the fifth Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat Question #5:

*What stories do you have of digital media platforms being used to share effective stories of research? Of teaching? Who's doing this well?*

During the question and answer portion of our presentation, we introduced the sixth, and final, Twitter chat question prepared by our group.

Twitter chat Question #6:

*What frameworks can we work towards for assessing, rewarding, and protecting public storytelling and open scholarship practices within higher education?*

## **So What?**

What does all this mean? What might you, the reader, take from this essay with regard to networked, open social scholarship?

As I have suggested in discussing my conceptual framework, to promote and engage in social, open scholarship, one has to share one's scholarship and invite conversation to develop new knowledge around that work. Sharing scholarship is done with the hope to engage many audiences and dialogues. In order to achieve the greatest success in such a venture, we need to assess the modes of communication most useful or desirable to our intended audience. Will this be image (still or moving), writing, speech, 3D objects, or something else? Modes are socially shaped and culturally supported as semiotic resources for making meaning through representation and communication, and therefore can be quite powerful and valuable in reaching target audiences (Kress 2010).

My group brought diverse, multimedia methods to the table at SCI in order to propose and demonstrate the value of experiential storytelling contexts for the sharing of scholarly communication. Additionally, we believe this approach advocates for overcoming siloing and privilege through championing open access.

If stories are a way of distilling and communicating experience, and stories are shared through different modes, then it behooves us to promote the diversification of storytelling using different multimedia and digital storytelling venues that, more than reporting or archiving, open the possibility for multimodal communicable experiences (Kress 2010).

So, the 'So what?' is that my SCI group agreed to share our thinking through as many of our networks and communities as possible. I am sharing the outcomes of collaborative work with you, a new and different audience, in hopes of sparking conversations about topics of shared interest. The uncertainty of knowing where such conversations might lead is offset by the potential for creating and sharing new knowledge.

This sharing opens approaches to the development of workflows, tools, systems, technologies, publishing apparatus, protocols, policies, and initiatives that focus on process rather than product. This approach may be messy and unpredictable, but it may foster and encourage networked, open social scholarship that otherwise would not be possible. Additionally, our efforts to reconcile different theoretical backgrounds

and practices into shared principles may prove valuable in future attempts to promote, record, and study the evolving processes of engaging with data. Finally, insights and plans developed and promoted by my SCI group suggest how, through digital storytelling and multimedial/multimodal scholarship, we can produce and share stories and story environments that reconstitute and catalyze diverse and inclusive processes, leveraging existing resources in libraries and cultural institutions to provide regular opportunities for mentorship and training in core networked, open social scholarship areas.

In conclusion, I suggest that the direct experiences with networked, open social scholarship experienced at SCI have a direct connection to the challenge of the 2018 INKE gathering: to consider how networked, open social scholarship involves creating and disseminating research and research technologies to a broad, interdisciplinary audience of specialists and non-specialists in ways that are both accessible and significant. Surely, addressing this challenge will have, as suggested by Stewart and Arbuckle, direct bearing on the future of academia, especially as the institution and its practices must adopt new literacies and communication practices if it wishes to remain relevant and credible (Stewart and Arbuckle 2017).

## Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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