Publishing and Scholarly Communication in the Humanities is a collection of essays initially available on demand and then made discoverable on the Profession website, with links to the essays archived in the MLA Commons CORE repository. Profession publishes articles, news, and resources to support the work of Modern Language Association members. In this collection, members share their expertise in current practices in humanities scholarship.
# Publishing and Scholarly Communication in the Humanities

## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE ROLE OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION IN BUILDING A CAREER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacy Hartman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC VOICE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Communities beyond the Academy: Where Humanities Advocacy and the Publicly Engaged Humanities Meet</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice Gurwitz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Scholarship in Practice and Philosophy</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micah Vandegrift and Erin Rose Glass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEER REVIEW IN PRACTICE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review: Overview and Current Issues</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luís Madureira</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to Expect from Evaluation and How to Respond to Peer Review</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepika Bahri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving on an Editorial Board or Advisory Committee</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anjali Prabhu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOPING AND MANAGING SCHOLARLY PROJECTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and Managing Collaborative Scholarly Projects</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing in Journals</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Gikandi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing Books</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaurav Desai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and Managing a Successful Scholarly Project: Translations</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Poole, Kelly Y. Jeong, Christopher P. Hanscom, and Bruce Fulton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia Fernández Quintanilla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCHOLARS IN the humanities share their work in various ways: writing and peer-reviewing journal articles and books, creating digital projects and editions, developing courses and curricula, presenting at conferences, teaching, organizing public programs, curating exhibits, and participating in communities online and in person. This exchange of ideas among researchers and teachers today encompasses more than just traditional forms of publishing and is often referred to as scholarly communication, which the Association of College and Research Libraries defines as “the system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use” (“Principles”). Far from a fixed system, however, scholarly communication is a process for shaping how ideas are developed and exchanged. Publishing and Scholarly Communication in the Humanities grew out of conversations with and questions from MLA members at the MLA convention, among other venues. It aims to share humanities scholars’ insights into scholarly communication, not to prescribe a set of best practices but to gather individual reflections on scholarly communication that will help define what scholarly communication means for the humanities and provide a resource for colleagues looking to learn more.

Scholarly communication takes place within a complex ecosystem in which authors and creators work alongside the publishers, libraries, scholarly societies, and granting agencies that engage in work like facilitating peer review, editing and producing publications, operating repositories for sharing and preserving scholarship, and funding digital infrastructure to create opportunities for scholarly projects. The many ideas about how to sustain this ecosystem are driven by a few core values—notably, that scholarship and the processes and ecosystem supporting it should have integrity; that works of scholarly communication should be discoverable, accessible, and preserved; that scholarly communication should sustain the intellectual and professional needs of its creators and the community they work in; and that scholarly practice should challenge systemic inequities that affect who is able to create, publish, and access scholarship.

The essays in this collection discuss mechanisms for sharing scholarship, incentives for certain types of sharing, and processes for developing work and successfully reaching particular audiences. They provide practical guidance as well as context that illuminates the histories and values that inform these practices. At a time when so much is in crisis, such reflection can help us consider how to make our processes more transparent and equitable, how to engage with new audiences and collaborators, and how to advocate for recognition and support for the humanities.

In the first section, “The Role of Scholarly Communication in Building a Career,” Stacy Hartman considers a realm for self-presentation and connection with colleagues: the academic conference. Hartman’s essay outlines not only effective practices for presenting scholarly work but also ways to connect with other scholars through less formal conversations that happen in hallways, exhibit halls, and social gatherings.

The second section, “Establishing a Public Voice,” explores how scholarship can happen outside the traditional forums for academics, engaging a broader public. Micah Vandegrift and Erin Rose Glass outline ways of making scholarship more open, from sharing the process of creating scholarship publicly to collaborating with community groups and others on scholarly projects. They argue that the values of open scholarship are particularly crucial at a time when humanities fields and higher education are devalued and defunded. The question of advocacy for the humanities comes even more to the fore in Beatrice Gurwitz’s essay, which describes national
advocacy in the United States, conducted through the National Endowment for the Humanities and state humanities councils, and highlights projects where scholars partner with K–12 schools or community groups as models.

The essays included in the section “Peer Review in Practice” discuss the practices of peer review, responding to reviewer feedback, and serving as an editorial board member. Luís Madureira gives historical context for the current practice of peer review and calls for the scholarly community to address biases. Deepika Bahri provides guidance for authors receiving readers’ reports, describing best practices for making sense of this feedback and for corresponding with an editor about revisions. Anjali Prabhu’s essay reflects on the experience of serving on an editorial board, outlining the kind of work involved and the ways it expands the editorial board member’s own perspectives as a writer and scholar.

The final group of essays covers a number of practices and genres of scholarly work. Sandra Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard draw on their experiences to share insights into collaborative writing practices, highlighting some key decisions to be navigated, from the conceptual to the practical. Simon Gikandi writes about publishing in journals, discussing how to select a journal for submission, the genres published in a journal, and the process of getting published in a journal. Gaurav Desai reflects on how a scholar might approach book projects differently across the course of a career. Janet Poole, Kelly Y. Jeong, Christopher P. Hanscom, and Bruce Fulton offer insights into another kind of engagement with a text: translation. Their essay makes the case that translation not only deepens a scholar’s understanding of a text, which can benefit their research, but also benefits their teaching, making available a new text for classroom use. Sylvia Fernández Quintanilla writes about how digital projects can model ethical practices in collaboration, data collection, and project design.

In this collection of essays, scholars reflect on the practices that structure scholarly communication, including sharing scholarship through publication and engaging audiences, public and scholarly. The authors of these essays write to peers, elaborating on practices that may not always be transparent. The audience for these essays may be students, early-career scholars, or experienced scholars looking to learn more about certain aspects of scholarly communication. The perspective in the essays often reflects a location in the United States and a Global North anglophone experience; readers publishing elsewhere may find that practices vary geographically, linguistically, and culturally.

WORK CITED

CONFERENCES GIVE scholars many opportunities for scholarly communication and networking. At conferences, scholars can disseminate their work; learn about what others in their fields are doing; take part in professional development activities; reconnect with former colleagues, such as graduate school compatriots or advisers; develop an idea or receive feedback on a work in progress; and connect with new collaborators or interlocutors. If you are an early-career scholar, think of conferences as an ongoing conversation that you are looking to join; you’ll want to seek out and connect with the people who can help you do that.

Conferences are only in part about the sessions you attend, and most experienced conference-goers will mix sessions with other types of activities, such as getting coffee with new or old colleagues, participating in professional development activities, and exploring the city where the conference is held. Attending a variety of sessions and events will help you avoid conference burnout and ensure that the conference is useful to you in multiple ways. Practicing appropriate self-care, such as getting enough sleep, drinking enough water, and eating regular meals, also contributes to a positive conference experience.

Ways to Participate in a Conference

Organizing a Panel

Organizing a panel can be a great way for you to make new connections, ensure that your topic gets its due at the conference, draw attention to a new development in the field, or include a conversation you feel is missing. However, organizing a panel does come with responsibilities, both to your panelists and to the people who attend the panel. Remember that your audience will experience the panel as a whole, rather than as a series of discrete, unconnected papers, so it’s useful to think about how it will be structured overall and what your goals are for the panel.

Before the conference

To find panelists, panel organizers rely on a mix of invitations to people they know and a general call for papers. Even if you have potential panelists in mind, you might reserve one or two spots for scholars who answer the call, to avoid having the panel be too insular. This is also the best stage at which to consider diversity. In addition to institutional diversity, which many conferences require, you should aim for diversity with respect to gender, race, and career stage, so that your panel reflects multiple perspectives on the topic.

If and when your panel is accepted, be sure to contact your panelists and confirm some details, such as the following:
How long panelists will have to speak. For papers, they generally have about fifteen minutes; at roundtables, they may have much less time, each panelist being responsible only for brief introductory remarks.

Whether anyone will need audiovisual equipment.

Whether papers will be circulated among the panelists—or sent to a respondent—before the panel.

How the discussion and Q&A portions of the panel will be structured: for instance, whether panelists will have the chance to respond to one another.

Although not strictly necessary, an organizing video conference or call with your panelists ahead of time can be useful, especially if they don’t already know one another.

**During the conference**

If your panel is not at the very beginning of the conference, consider asking your fellow panelists to join you for coffee or a meal, so you can all get to know one another ahead of time. If there isn’t time for this, a video conference can serve the same purpose. Make sure that everyone has what they need for their presentations. Remind panelists to always use the provided microphone, even if they think they don’t need it. This is an important issue of accessibility.

If you are moderating the panel, be sure to keep time and arrange a signal with your participants so they know if they are exceeding their allotted time. It is your job to make sure that the panel starts and ends on time.

Q&As have a reputation for being difficult to manage, and senior scholars in the room can dominate a discussion, often without meaning to. Be cognizant of whom you are calling on and of how much each of your panelists has spoken relative to the others. Sometimes it can be helpful to open the Q&A by asking those in the room who feel comfortable speaking early and often in professional contexts to hold their questions and let others go first. Some panelists will inevitably receive more questions than others, but if, for example, people are posing questions to the entire group and only the men on the panel are responding, a moderator might usefully intervene. Some moderators prefer to give everyone a minute or two to gather their thoughts before beginning the Q&A, much as you might give students in your classroom a moment to come up with questions after you’ve finished delivering a lecture or after reading a text together.

**After the conference**

Many organizers consider their duties done once the panel is over, but following up with your panelists with a brief thank-you note can help maintain the relationships you’ve developed. If there were particular synergies on the panel, fruitful collaborations might come out of follow-up correspondence.

**Presenting at a Conference**

Presenting at a conference often starts with the submission of an abstract. It can be tempting to submit an abstract based on a dissertation or book chapter that is already completed, but sometimes it is more useful to submit an idea at an earlier stage of development. Conferences can be good places to try out a new concept, and the built-in deadlines help push you to further develop a nascent idea.
When you write your conference paper, it’s important to write it so that it may be read aloud. Sentences that are long and complicated when read to oneself can be reread; however, long, complicated sentences that are heard cannot be reheard. Write your conference paper so that your listener can hear and retain the information; this will make it more memorable and will leave a better impression on the audience.

You can achieve a memorable and accessible conference presentation using a number of methods. Some of them may remind you of things you have done in the classroom, since conference presentations are, in a sense, a type of teaching. These methods include the following:

Using visual aids, such as PowerPoint or handouts. When using PowerPoint, be careful not to overcrowd slides with text. Leave yourself time to describe visual aids aloud, and always bring a few copies of large-print handouts for audience members who may need them.

Using informal language, including the first person, as well as shorter, less complex sentences.

Signposting your argument more carefully and explicitly than you might be used to doing in articles or essays written for publication. Such signposting might include an introduction with a road map to the paper’s argument, clearly articulated transitions, and repetition of your major points, including at the end of the paper. As listeners, we tend to remember the first thing and the last thing someone says.

Always using the provided microphone. Even if you project your voice well, using the microphone is an issue of accessibility for members of the audience.

Making your paper or presentation accessible to others before or after the panel through your personal website or a subject or institutional repository, such as the MLA-supported CORE. This allows audience members to refer to the written text in case, for instance, they missed something you said, and it provides access to those who aren’t able to attend in person.

Asking a friend or colleague to listen to you run through a paper can help you ascertain whether you’ve achieved your goal of clarity. This does, however, require that you write the paper before you board your flight to the conference.

It is also not mandatory that you read a paper aloud at a conference. You could also speak more extemporaneously from notes. Conference-goers are, in fact, often pleasantly surprised when a presenter chooses not to read. If you do forgo reading your paper, you may be even more inclined to use a visual aid, such as PowerPoint. In this case, make certain that your technology is in good working order—and have a backup plan in case something goes wrong. You must also remain aware of how long you’ve been speaking. It is easier to go over your allotted time if you are not reading a paper, and that will do you no favors with either the panel organizers or your fellow presenters!

Working Groups or Seminars

Some conferences in the humanities have started offering alternatives to the traditional conference panel in the form of multiday working groups or seminars that allow scholars to engage in a more sustained and substantial way with one another’s work. Attending a working group or seminar allows you to broaden and deepen your scholarly network, often while receiving substantive feedback on your work. Although they require more time and energy than traditional panels require, working groups and seminars also offer a greater chance of long-term payoff in the form of collaborations and professional relationships.
Virtual Conferences

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 saw a sharp rise in the number of virtual conferences. Although virtual conferences don’t require travel, they do require other types of preparation. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the technological requirements for the conference you’re attending. To mitigate potential chaos, organizers may want all panelists to attend a preconference session to familiarize themselves with the platform they’ll be using.

Moderators may also need to plan a session more carefully for a virtual conference. Since it is harder to communicate on the fly with others in a virtual format, you’ll want to carefully consider the panel’s organization, including how and when questions will be asked, who will monitor the chat, and who will manage breakout rooms, polls, or other virtual tools during the session itself. If you’re organizing the session, communicate regularly with your panelists to make sure they are also up-to-date on the panel’s organization. Bear in mind that some panelists will be more comfortable with the virtual format than others are.

As an attendee at a virtual conference, you may need to be extra diligent in planning which sessions you want to attend and block those times out on your calendar (beware time-zone errors!). Carving out time to attend sessions and giving them your full attention can be harder with virtual conferences, since you are likely to have a lot more competition for your time and attention when you’re at home. It is perhaps even more important under these circumstances to be intentional about your conference attendance in order to get the most you can out of it.

Networking at a Conference

Too often, scholars see conferences as primarily a way to add a line to their CVs; however, conferences are most effective and perhaps even most enjoyable when they are treated as an opportunity to make new personal connections and maintain existing ones—in other words, to network. Networking is often viewed with suspicion as something superficial and transactional, but when done properly, networking is simply building and maintaining relationships with people you have things in common with. Conferences should bring you into contact with people who can help you—and whom you can help—either now or in the future.

Networking should not be treated as divorced from the scholarly work we all do. Networking lets more people learn about your work and enriches your work through the contributions of and connections with other people. Networking is not about competition; it is about community. You do not have to be brilliant and impressive every single minute in order to network well at conferences. Indeed, someone who seems constantly preoccupied with their own brilliance can be off-putting to others. You’ll be far better served by expressing genuine curiosity and interest in other people and their work.

Here is a list of places where networking is done at conferences. It should not be considered comprehensive:

Before panels, among fellow panelists
During panels, particularly the Q&A section
After panels, when audience members seek out particular panelists
In the hallway between panels
On the conference Twitter or other social media platforms
At the hotel bar or coffee shop
During excursions or outings
At receptions
In the exhibit hall
During meals organized around shared interests

If this list seems intimidating, remember that most people enjoy talking about their work with interested, thoughtful interlocutors.

If you are new to networking at conferences, or even if you aren’t, preparation can help you feel more comfortable and have more fruitful interactions. Note ahead of time any social events you want to attend, and email acquaintances or colleagues with whom you’d like to connect. Having a brief, pithy description of your own work handy is helpful, but so is having a few questions for the other person. These might include the following:

How has your conference been so far?
Thank you for your paper on [TOPIC]. Can you tell me a bit about your thought process behind [SUBTOPIC]?
Your work had a huge influence on me / my book / my dissertation. I have a particular problem I’d like to chat about, if you have time for coffee at some point during the conference. Or perhaps I could follow up with you by email?

In addition to being a place to pick up books, sometimes at a deep discount, the exhibit hall at a major conference is an important place to network. It allows you to get a sense of the titles a press publishes at a glance and to chat with the staff members at the booth. If you have a project that you are looking to pitch, you can contact editors ahead of time to set up a meeting. You can (and should!) follow up with editors or staff members that you meet in the exhibit hall or who express interest in your work based on your presentations.

One final note about networking: reliability and follow-through are key. Being reliable is one of the best ways to capitalize on a connection you made at a conference. If you say you are going to follow up with someone, find an effective way to remind yourself to do so. Business cards tossed loose into a convention tote can easily get lost or be forgotten. Instead, you might send yourself an email with a few details about what you wanted to speak to a particular person about, or set a calendar reminder to send them an email once the conference is over. If you’re not sure how to follow up, saying thank you or expressing interest and enthusiasm are always good places to start. Gratitude and enthusiasm are the most important tools in a networker’s toolbox.
ENGAGING COMMUNITIES BEYOND THE ACADEMY: WHERE HUMANITIES ADVOCACY AND THE PUBLICLY ENGAGED HUMANITIES MEET

Beatrice Gurwitz

This essay explores two types of scholarly communication in the humanities that engage audiences beyond the academy. The first is humanities advocacy, which makes the case for the value of humanistic learning and research to policy makers and other community stakeholders. The second is publicly engaged humanities, which works to involve audiences beyond the academy in humanistic activities, generally with the goal of addressing community needs. These types of engagement can overlap and be mutually reinforcing, but they are not often considered in tandem. At the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), where I am the deputy director, we see these endeavors as intertwined. The more humanities scholars work with communities to address vital needs, the more people understand the value of the humanities in their lives and the better that we, as an advocacy organization, can make the claim that the humanities benefit not only individuals but communities as well (“Typology”). In addition, considering these types of engagement in tandem reveals instances where publicly engaged work and advocacy work are simply one and the same.

Both types of engagement generally rely on partnerships with organizations beyond the academy. National advocacy organizations in the United States bring scholars into dialogue with policy makers to promote language learning, international education, and the humanities more generally. The fifty-five state and jurisdictional humanities councils, meanwhile, serve as partners in reaching state and local policy makers and communities across their states and jurisdictions through publicly engaged humanities work. Partnerships with K–12 schools and school systems can facilitate efforts to shape state-level policy and to work with students and teachers to enrich curricula. Finally, partnerships with a range of local organizations—from homeless shelters to historical societies—allow scholars to interact with local communities and harness the humanities to address communities’ needs. In considering partnerships with each type of organization, this essay explores examples of both advocacy and publicly engaged humanities work, offering concrete suggestions for scholars interested in either endeavor.

National Advocacy Organizations

On the national level, a variety of organizations are committed to advocating for federal policies that support languages, literature, and the humanities. They collaborate with scholars to ensure that their voices, as educators and as researchers, are heard. Perhaps the easiest entry point to working with these organizations is participating in their annual advocacy days, during which they arrange meetings between advocates and their members of Congress or their staff. NHA’s Humanities Advocacy Day draws faculty members, administrators, and federal relations officers from around the country to advocate for funding for the National Endowment for the...
Humanities (NEH), the Department of Education’s Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs, the National Archives, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The Coalition for International Education Advocacy Day is dedicated to advocacy for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. The Joint National Committee for Language (JNCL) hosts Language Advocacy Day to advocate for NEH, Title VI, and Fulbright-Hays, along with other policies supporting K–16 language learning. In all instances, the sponsoring organizations work closely with participants to make arguments that will resonate with particular members of Congress. Kristen Adams, the associate director of federal relations at Cornell University, attests to the value of this advocacy: “I enjoy lobbying days because I go to all the New York members’ offices and ask for things.” But she adds that for the members of Congress and their staff “hearing from the experts is better. . . . I’ve had Hill staff tell me they are valuable, even if it is a friendly office.” She also notes that visits on advocacy days lay the groundwork for further interactions. When a congressional office wants to call on someone to testify on a particular subject, members of staff might seek out a scholar they met at an advocacy day.

Connecting with these advocacy organizations can also open the door to other opportunities for federal advocacy. The NHA often brings scholars to Capitol Hill to offer congressional testimony on the value of funding the NEH. In crafting narratives that will resonate with members of Congress, the NHA encourages scholars to connect their own experiences with the members’ policy priorities. In 2013, for example, Mike Whitmore, the director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, testified before the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, which drafts funding bills for the NEH. He reflected on his experience teaching Shakespeare at Carnegie Mellon University, where his students were largely studying engineering and computer science. His testimony hit several key notes: a compelling personal story about the importance of exploring words with his students, a response to the perspective that STEM fields ought to be privileged in higher education, and a concrete sense of how the digital humanities that the NEH funds complement “traditional forms of reading and reflection” (Whitmore). National advocacy organizations also regularly organize briefings, informal events designed to educate members of Congress and their staff. The Coalition for International Education, for example, sponsored a briefing in 2015 where, among others, Stephen Hanson, now the vice provost for international affairs at William and Mary, spoke to the value of Title VI funding. He began his remarks by saying that “Title VI has truly changed my own life,” and he went on to trace the value of Title VI funding in his career, his students’ careers, and the community while also tying those funding streams to the broader goal of productive global engagement (Hanson). The K–12 and community engagement efforts of centers fund by Title VI, which will be discussed below, are particularly compelling in an advocacy context because they showcase the broad reach of the funding.

Finally, these national organizations work to connect with members of Congress in their districts, recognizing that such engagements offer unique opportunities to see the fruits of humanities funding firsthand. The NHA, for instance, collaborated with Humanities New York and the NEH on an event in Pocantico Hills, New York, that brought Representative Nita Lowey into conversations with faculty members at Mercy College and Westchester Community College about a new curriculum and a new humanities center, respectively, that NEH funding had made possible (“Lowey”). The American Academy of Arts and Sciences has also held events in congressional districts for advocacy purposes. The academy organizes commissions to investigate topics related to educational policy. A recent commission—composed of scholars; leaders of higher education associations, scholarly societies (including the MLA), and international businesses; and representatives from
diplomatic, military, and intelligence fields—investigated the role of languages in equipping Americans to engage productively with the world. After the commission released its report, the academy worked with North Carolina State University’s College of Humanities and Social Sciences to host an event with Representative David Price—along with other government officials and representatives from the private sector—at a local Mandarin immersion school (Kirkpatrick). The target audience here was not only Price, who was already a strong supporter. His presence and engagement raised the profile of the commission’s report and North Carolina State’s innovative language exchange program while also emphasizing the value of language immersion in the district (Tessitore).

State and Jurisdictional Humanities Councils

State and jurisdictional humanities councils are affiliates of the NEH that grew out of congressional efforts in the 1970s to ensure that the NEH serves grassroots communities as well as scholars (Zainaldin 34). In their earliest incarnations, the councils had a mandate to promote engagement between scholars and communities around issues of public policy (35). This mandate has since been replaced with a more flexible view of the role of humanities councils, but the councils remain grant-making and programming organizations with a commitment to both “engagement of grassroots audiences” and “facilitated dialogue around core humanities topics” (35). Scholars still have key roles to play in these efforts, and partnerships with state humanities councils are an avenue for publicly engaged humanities work. At the same time, relationships with humanities councils often open the door for additional advocacy opportunities at the local, state, and national level.

While each council has its own mission and approach to programming, many of their programs rely on collaboration with scholars. The Literature and Medicine Program is one example. Pioneered by the Maine Humanities Council in 1997, it now exists in at least twenty-five states. It involves reading and discussion groups for a wide range of hospital staff members—doctors, hospice personnel, cafeteria employees—and scholars often lead those discussions, helping participants grapple with “issues central to caring for people” and connecting with one another (Levin and Davis 428). Councils also provide opportunities for scholars to share their research in public forums. Nebraska Humanities, for example, identifies topics of interest in communities around the state and works to connect scholars in those areas (Sommerich). In addition to in-person programming, several councils produce radio shows or segments that offer venues for scholars to share their research with a public audience. Virginia Humanities’ With Good Reason and Maryland Humanities’ Humanities Connections air on public radio and provide opportunities for scholars—among others—to share their work.

Similar to the national organizations advocating for the humanities, councils also advocate on Capitol Hill and in state legislatures for humanities funding, often partnering with scholars, especially those serving on their boards of directors (Ogger). In addition, policy makers often call on councils as spokespeople for the humanities, opening additional avenues for advocacy. In 2017, the Virginia state legislature passed a bill to create the Virginia African American Cultural Resources Task Force and put Virginia Humanities in charge of it. The purpose of the task force—composed of state lawmakers, representatives from cultural institutions, and scholars from Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia Union University, which are both historically Black colleges—is to develop resources about heritage sites for classroom use and to more fully integrate the stories of African American Virginians into information provided at historic sites (Gibson; Virginia African American
Cultural Resources Task Force). Rhode Island Humanities has also been actively engaged in efforts to improve civics education. When the state created the Rhode Island Permanent Commission on Civic Education, it reserved a spot for the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities or a designee (“Title 16”). To help inform the work of the commission, the council has also created opportunities for scholars and K–12 teachers to meet with commission members and lawmakers, including the Rhode Island secretary of state, Nellie Gorbea, to offer feedback (“Engage!”). Additionally, as part of a recent Mellon Foundation–funded civics initiative, Why It Matters: Civic and Electoral Participation, administered by the Federation of State Humanities Councils, Humanities Guåhan has engaged scholars to speak about access to voting and voting rights through a program called Unincorporated.

Connecting with one’s state humanities council is a first step in all these engagement opportunities. The National Humanities Conference, hosted yearly by the NHA and the Federation of State Humanities Councils, brings together scholars with representatives from nearly all state humanities councils to build connections between the two communities. In addition, Phoebe Stein, the former executive director of the Maryland Humanities Council and now the president of the Federation of State Humanities Councils, suggests simply reaching out to one’s state or jurisdictional council: “As the membership organization of and for the councils, we connect both affiliated and independent scholars regularly with our councils and the results are always interesting and productive.” Stein adds some perspective for scholars interested in connecting with their councils: “I would think about it not only as an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise but as a learning experience. We hear a lot about how the experience of working in and with communities is very beneficial to scholarly work and in some cases life-changing for those inside the academy.” Chris Sommerich, the executive director of Humanities Nebraska, adds: “If there was a humanities scholar interested in getting involved, I’d love to hear from them and then figure out where to go from them. There are so many different possibilities. We are always grateful for scholars who do have that interest.”

Partnering with the K–12 Ecosystem

Opportunities for advocacy around K–12 education are plentiful, and scholars have found avenues for involvement that range from advocating for statewide policies to working with teachers on particular subject areas of their curricula. On the state level, scholars had a key role to play in the implementation of Utah’s dual language program, which was established in 2008 and enrolled thirty thousand students by 2014 (Commission 14). As Utah embarked on the program, Gregg Roberts, the state’s world language and dual language immersion specialist, developed strong relationships with several scholars to advise on the program’s implementation. Johanna Watzinger-Tharp, an associate professor of linguistics at the University of Utah, and Fernando Rubio, a professor of world languages and culture at the University of Utah, worked closely with him to develop tools for assessing language learning. They also helped craft the Bridge Program, which provides college-level courses (through concurrent enrollment) for dual immersion students after they take the AP exam in ninth grade. The scholars facilitated ongoing conversations among university professors, K–12 administrators, high school teachers, and state officials (Rubio et al.). In addition, Watzinger-Tharp and Rubio testified in 2016 before Utah’s Appropriations Subcommittee to support funding for the Bridge Program (Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee).
While the work done by Rubio and Watzinger-Tharp is a particularly robust example of shaping state policy, they note that involvement with state-level organizations of language educators often helps advocacy efforts (Watzinger-Tharp and Leite). Indeed, these organizations were particularly active of late in defeating so-called coding bills that would allow computer science courses to fulfill foreign language requirements at the high school level. In January 2019, the Virginia House of Delegates considered a coding bill, and the Foreign Language Association of Virginia collaborated with the JNCL and the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages to rally opposition, bringing eleven people—educators from the kindergarten to graduate school level—to testify before the committee considering the bill. Among them were Kathryn Murphy-Judy, of Virginia Commonwealth University, and Sharon Scinicariello, of the University of Richmond, who both testified that students need language skills to develop global competencies. After their testimonies, the bill was defeated in committee (Kuettner; Calvin).

Scholars’ efforts to promote policies supporting K–12 learning in the humanities are often complemented by other scholars’ efforts to enrich curricula through professional development programs for teachers, many of which are federally funded. The NEH funds scholar-led K–12 professional development programs, reaching over eleven thousand teachers between 2012 and 2017 (“Summer Programs”). Title VI supports campus-based area studies centers (designated as National Resource Centers once they receive Title VI funding) and requires that these centers engage K–12 schools and the community more broadly in their work. At the University of Michigan, several National Resource Centers collaborate with Michigan’s School of Education to host the World History and Literature Initiative, a three-day professional development workshop for Michigan teachers held every summer. The initiative brings graduate students, faculty members, and five hundred K–12 teachers into dialogue about how to translate research on world history and literature into their curricula (“World History and Literature Initiative”). The African Studies Center at Boston University works directly with local school systems and teachers while also partnering with larger organizations that provide professional development opportunities nationally. These collaborations have led to courses on teaching West African empires, South African apartheid, and internationalized versions of United States history that incorporate African history (Schmidt and Elliott). Sensitive to the need to advocate for the pedagogical value of African studies, these professional development offerings argue that teaching about Africa serves “to humanize the diverse people of Africa and to normalize the various lives they lead” (Elliott).

Instances also abound of scholars working with K–12 students directly. In western Pennsylvania, faculty members from Slippery Rock University teach courses at underfunded local high schools, at which their undergraduate students serve as mentors. The goal of the courses is to introduce the K–12 students to college-style learning in the humanities and the concrete skills gained through the humanities (“Humanities Ladder Program”). At Salisbury University in Maryland, professors of philosophy work with students at local elementary, middle, and high schools to explore philosophical questions such as, “What does it mean to be beautiful?” (“Philosophy Department”). Small-scale efforts like these, involving partnerships with one or more local schools, are common and span many disciplines. And like many professional development programs, they are at once publicly engaged humanities work and advocacy. As scholars engage teachers and students beyond the campus, they introduce humanistic content and modes of inquiry while also making the case for their value to a well-rounded K–12 education.
Partnering with Community Organizations and Institutions

The number of scholars reporting collaboration with local communities in teaching and research has increased significantly in recent years (Saltmarsh and Hartley). This trend has been tied to the growth of service learning pedagogies in the 1990s and then to a move in subsequent years to ensure that community engagements are reciprocal and designed with an awareness that knowledge can be constructed collaboratively (Eatman et al. 536–37; Deans et al. 2–4). The NHA has surveyed the landscape of publicly engaged humanities projects based at higher education institutions in the United States over the past ten years, and more than fifteen hundred examples can now be found on the website Humanities for All. The website allows users to sort the projects by type of partner, and the categories include state humanities councils and K–12 schools or school systems (including the efforts to engage students and teachers directly), along with a wide range of local service organizations and public humanities institutions. While partnerships with the last two are developed primarily around publicly engaged humanities work, they can occasionally present opportunities for humanities advocacy as well.

Partnering with local service organizations is often an avenue to expand educational access to nontraditional students and to harness the power of the humanities to help individuals navigating difficult experiences. Faculty members at the University of Notre Dame, for example, lead the World Masterpieces Seminar at the South Bend Center for the Homeless, which includes discussion of great works of literature like Sophocles’s Antigone, the Odyssey, Paradise Lost, and Plato’s dialogues (“World Masterpieces Seminar”). The course—and several other similar ones offered in partnership with community centers and service organizations around the country—are modeled on the Clemente Course, developed by Earl Shorris in 1995, which offers great-texts seminars for adults living in poverty or otherwise marginalized from traditional higher education offerings based on the idea that studying the humanities can offer critical skills that can empower people to reshape their lives (Shorris). A growing number of programs work with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, building off a premise similar to that of the Clemente Course and a desire to help incarcerated individuals connect with the broader community. There are currently over twenty examples of these programs in the Humanities for All database—some bring traditional undergraduate students to prisons to participate in the classes, others are designed specifically for incarcerated veterans, and still others work with local nonprofits to engage formerly incarcerated individuals. Scholars have also partnered with Veterans Administration hospitals and other veterans organizations to facilitate discussion of the literature and history of war, encouraging veterans to process their experiences and share them with their communities (Muir).

Scholars have also had great success in building partnerships with public humanities organizations, helping communities engage with their history and culture. Dave Tell of the University of Kansas partnered with the Emmett Till Memorial Commission in Tallahatchi County, Mississippi, to create a digital archive of Emmett Till memorials in order to respond to the ongoing vandalism of the physical versions. Tell’s process of working with community partners plays a key role in his book, Remembering Emmett Till, which centers on the contentious politics surrounding efforts to commemorate Till and integrates the knowledge derived from community partnerships (Fisher, “Remembering Emmett Till”). Dianne O’Donoghue, an art historian from Tufts University, worked closely with the Chinese Historical Society of New England to build an outdoor exhibition in Boston’s Chinatown that portrays the history of printing, reading, and writing in the community. This
collaboration, besides being a clear example of publicly engaged humanities work, also had an advocacy bent: the exhibition ended with a display on the community’s recent effort to return a branch of the Boston Public Library to Chinatown. This display, and the exhibition more broadly, ultimately reenergized the push for that library branch (“These Words”).

Publicly engaged projects often grow out of the efforts of an individual scholar or a particular campus center to reach the broader community. Nonetheless, there are initiatives that support scholars in building local relationships on a broader scale, and partnering with them can be a first step for scholars interested in pursuing publicly engaged work. For example, the first national project of the Humanities Action Lab (HAL), based at Rutgers University, Newark, involved working with twenty chapters at universities across the country. Faculty members in each chapter worked with their students to curate a museum exhibition in collaboration with “people directly affected by incarceration in their communities” (Ševčenko 10). The HAL chapter at the New School in New York collaborated with the Fortune Society, an organization supporting citizens returning from incarceration, to enter into direct dialogue with those citizens (“Humanities Action Lab”). Both HAL and the individual projects discussed above work to address particular community needs. In doing so, they also engage in a kind of advocacy, showing the broader community the important role the humanities can play in addressing its needs.

A discussion of ways that scholars can engage a broader public would be incomplete without recognizing a key barrier: that this work too often goes unrecognized in the current tenure and promotion system. There have been efforts to advocate for change in this system, and KerryAnn O’Meara, Timothy Eatman, and Saul Petersen have worked with various campus teams and charted a general road map for change. They cite the need to define publicly engaged work, identify criteria for assessment, and ensure that it is rewarded (O’Meara et al.). One clear way to make sure this work is rewarded is to translate publicly engaged work into traditional, peer-reviewed publications. Several of the projects mentioned in this essay have resulted in peer-reviewed publications. Tell’s Remembering Emmett Till shows that community engagement and scholarly inquiry can be intimately connected. The Literature and Medicine Program and the Humanities Action Lab have been described and analyzed in PMLA and Museums and Social Issues, respectively, and both journals are peer-reviewed. Though it is less common, advocacy efforts can also figure prominently in published work. Rubio and Watzinger-Tharp have each published on the development of the dual language immersion program and the value of collaboration with various community stakeholders in Utah (Rubio; Watzinger-Tharp and Leite).

There have also been efforts to support scholars in publishing their publicly engaged work. The University of Iowa’s Obermann Center for Advanced Studies collaborates with the University of Iowa Press on the series Humanities and Public Life, which publishes books that “document the exciting publicly engaged projects in which artists and humanities scholars, especially in college and university settings, are working with community partners and cultural institutions to produce new knowledge while also contributing to the public good” (Humanities and Public Life). The NHA, meanwhile, collaborated with Routledge, Taylor and Francis to compile Publishing and the Publicly Engaged Humanities, an open access collection of articles from its collection based on publicly engaged work. Collectively, these examples showcase the options for publication in journals “ranging from primary disciplinary journals to journals devoted to engagement with social issues, innovative scholarship, pedagogy, and community development” (Fisher, “Publishing”).
Nonetheless, O’Meara and her colleagues also note that for the academy to truly recognize publicly engaged work, it still needs to find ways to value other kinds of work, including “reports and studies, workshops, broadcasts, artistic and creative exhibits and performances, websites, diagnostic services, technical reports, and site plans.” They invoke the guidance for faculty from the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, as an example of a more inclusive statement of what work might count for tenure, while also noting that “articles, books, and book chapters are weighted more heavily” (O’Meara et al.). This more expansive view of what is valued in tenure and promotion lays the groundwork for more publicly engaged work. And finally, a more expansive definition of academic work might also open the door for advocacy work—whether testimony before state and local government or helping diversify the K–12 curriculum—to more readily fit the rubric of the kind of work that counts toward tenure and promotion.

WORKS CITED

“Humanities Action Lab: States of Incarceration.” The New School Collaboratory, 2018, thenewschoolcollaboratory.org/2018/03/14/hal-states-of-incarceration/.
Humanities and Public Life. U of Iowa, 2022, humanitiesandpubliclife.uiowa.edu/.
Humanities for All. National Humanities Alliance, 2018, humanitiesforall.org/.
“The Humanities Ladder Program.” Humanities for All, National Humanities Alliance, 2021, humanitiesforall.org/projects/the-humanities-ladder-program.


“These Words.” Humanities for All, National Humanities Alliance, 2022, humanitiesforall.org/projects/these-words-a-century-of-printing-writing-and-reading-in-bostons-chinese-community#.


CONnecting to the public is a key part of the mission of higher education. The global collective of humanity is both the benefactor and the beneficiary of higher education, whether through the education of members of the public in the classroom or through the building of new knowledge in a research program. Public engagement with scholarship is not new, but advances in knowledge-sharing technology, coupled with the renewed need for critical discourse in the public sphere, have created new opportunities and a new urgency for public scholarship.

This essay offers several threads that bind an ideal together, connecting the potential for public scholarship to the activity of it. There are practical actions one can take to increase the public value of scholarship, compelling reasons to adopt an outward orientation, and of course many challenges to performing public scholarship in higher education. Incentive and evaluation systems in higher education are still adapting to account for publicly engaged scholarship, so individual scholars will need to assess the appropriate timing for the activities we expound on here. We are both academic librarians, whose work has traditionally been situated adjacent to the daily work of teaching, graduate student development, research progress, and contributions to a field. But, as scholar-librarians in a new mold, we actively engage in each of these activities regularly. As such, we have a transdisciplinary perspective on the professional principles underlying the public access to information. Our goal in this essay is to offer an overarching picture of public scholarship as a common mission, available to anyone who is interested in engaging with their neighbors, communities, and colleagues in an open discourse across the boundaries of privilege and accessibility.

Public Scholarship in Practice

The first challenge in producing public-facing scholarship is that there is no single understanding of what it should be. Carlton College’s Center for Community and Civic Engagement defines public scholarship as “enriching research, creative activity, and public knowledge; enhancing curriculum, teaching and learning; preparing educated and engaged citizens; strengthening democratic values and civic responsibility; addressing and helping to solve critical social problems; and contributing to the public good” (“What Is Public Scholarship?”). The center treats public scholarship as an evolving practice drawing from public history, the open access movement, service learning, the digital humanities, and more. The growing diversity of representative projects, several highlighted in this essay, reveals the continuous active development of the means and modes of public scholarship. Here we offer five ways to apply public scholarship:
1. Share your scholarly outputs publicly.
2. Communicate the processes of creating scholarship.
3. Consider ways to make your teaching publicly accessible through open educational resources.
4. Engage with the public by making appearances in local media programs.
5. Invite collaborations with community groups and others.

Share Your Work

Authors should conduct their own investigations into the quality and background of a publisher, but there is an increasing variety of options for publishing in open, public, and reputable venues. The process of making research accessible online is often misunderstood, but it is nonetheless an important part of public scholarship. There is an ethical argument that the tax-paying public should have the right to consume research that is funded by tax dollars. And Kathleen Fitzpatrick argues that making more humanities research open to the public can help fight ignorance of and apathy toward the humanities (“Giving It Away”). Other studies, while focused on scientific literature, suggest that making research publicly available significantly increases its visibility and reach, especially increasing how often it is cited (Lawrence; Gargouri et al.; Hajjem et al.). Making research publicly available benefits both the academic discipline of the humanities and scholars.

Determining personal strategies for open humanities scholarship can be a daunting or uninteresting task, because the debates and opportunities are constantly evolving. The digital humanities has been particularly forthright in advocating for expanded modes of credit for new, collaborative, and open forms of research works. A relatively easy and low-risk way to provide public access to scholarly products is the sharing of prepublication versions of scholarly works in an institutional repository (if available) or a disciplinary repository such as MLA Commons. Despite common misunderstandings, this practice is allowed by many publishers and does not make one more prone to “being scooped,” since a publicly available, time-stamped version of the work would be clearly visible and attached to the author’s name. If you choose to deposit a preprint, thesis, or conference poster, understanding your rights to your own work is essential, and checking with your local subject specialist, scholarly communications expert, or digital scholarship librarian can resolve any questions you have about the process.

Disciplinary publishing conventions often dissuade emerging scholars from exploring open publishing options. However, support for open scholarship in the humanities is actively growing on the part of senior scholars, publishers, and institutions alike. There are likely more opportunities than you think to make some facet of your research public. As an example of evolving conventions, in 2018 Robin Truth Goodman, a professor of literature at Florida State University, published Promissory Notes: On the Literary Conditions of Debt with Lever Press. Aside from being the first monograph ever published on Lever’s digital platform Fulcrum, the press itself is a digital publisher designed to support sustainable open access monographs and is governed by a consortium of liberal arts institutions. It is encouraging to observe the tide shifting toward public scholarship when tenured professors, well established in their fields, choose open, public, and digital platforms to share their work.

Peter Suber, the director of the Harvard University office for scholarly communication, noted some common open access myths, like the notion that all open access publishing is expensive for authors or that openly published research is of lesser quality. In actuality, there are many high-quality publishers with open access
imprints, offering opportunities to participate in open access publishing without any author fees. University presses and publishers like the University of North Carolina Press, the University of Michigan Press (“New Public Scholarship”), the University of California’s Luminos, and Open Library of the Humanities are just a few of the publishers pioneering open access publishing focused on humanities scholarship. Even presses that are not currently engaged in open access publishing may be interested in experimenting with it given the broad interest in digital publishing.

**Communicate the Processes**

In a still evolving trend, some scholars have started sharing in-progress manuscripts for public review. Humanities scholars such as Fitzpatrick, Cathy N. Davidson, David Theo Goldberg, and McKenzie Wark have experimented with this method, using freely available publishing and commenting tools to invite prepublication peer review online (Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence*; Davidson and Goldberg; Wark). The MLA also piloted this method with the manuscript of its edited volume *Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities* (Davis et al.). In 2018, MIT Press hosted a prepublication public review of the book *Data Feminism* (D’Ignazio and Klein). Though some insist that the public isn’t interested in the scholarly process, anecdotal evidence suggests something different. The historian Karin Wulf writes about a book club she started with a local retiree organization for continued learning: “The goal [of the book club] is . . . the exposure to the scholarly process. . . . Of course we are reading history, but we are reading it in part to see how research becomes scholarship. . . . We spent quite a bit of time, for example, on peer review. Seriously.”

Though public-facing review projects are still somewhat marginal, there is a growing interest in developing better social, technical, and evaluative protocols for supporting this type of work, spurred on by academic organizations like FORCE11 and the Collaborative Knowledge Foundation. Scholars can easily set up their own virtual space for public review, using the *WordPress* theme *CommentPress*, a web-based annotation tool like hypothes.is, or even *Google Docs*. *MLA Commons* offers a free solution for those who don’t have web-hosting services at their home institution. Graduate students may also find these strategies useful for improving their research and writing, helping them develop academic and professional connections and confront the sometimes isolating conditions of dissertation work (Glass).

Granted, many scholars may worry that opening in-progress research to public review may leave their work vulnerable to plagiarism, public trolling, misunderstandings, and hasty criticism, or that it might result in endless labor responding to comments. And indeed, even advocates of the practice have confirmed that some of these fears can come true at times. However, for those interested in developing dialogue around their research process, the unique opportunities of public-facing review make it worthwhile to consider. Be advised that simply posting drafts of a paper online will likely not attract an audience automatically. Develop engagement strategies that draw the public in, such as asking a few close colleagues to seed comments, writing about and linking to the public-review session on a personal blog (on sites like *HASTAC*), or promoting the review session in your social and professional networks. Be sure to articulate what types of feedback you’re interested in as well as guidelines for participation (especially for sensitive topics). These acts of scholarly vulnerability create valuable sites for community interaction, broaden our concept of peer review, and display the sometimes bumpy process of producing scholarly work.
Consider Open Educational Resources and Pedagogy

When Matthew Wickman surveyed directors of humanities centers and institutes about how to outline the practices of public humanities, he discovered that “teaching is widely seen to benefit the institution and the public, whereas research benefits the institution only” (10). Since humanistic discourse is often born in the classroom, one example of public scholarship is adopting an open pedagogy. The Open Educational Resource (OER) movement is increasingly investing in the creation of shareable, adaptable, and accessible (in many senses of the word) teaching and learning materials. Joseph L. Locke and Ben Wright, the editors of The American Yawp, a massive, collaborative, and open American history textbook, argue that “every generation must write its own history. . . . This textbook therefore offers . . . a coherent and accessible narrative from all the best of recent historical scholarship” (“About”). In constructing The American Yawp with the help of the volunteer efforts of over three hundred historians, the editors also offer a glimpse into the classrooms engaging current events in the light of historical lessons learned. The American Yawp is a case study for turning the scholarship of learning materials inside out and creating a publicly consumable textbook that lives online and can be adapted to any learning environment.

A core value for open pedagogy is the involvement of learners in the learning environment. As Rajiv S. Jhangiani and Robin DeRosa write, “Open Pedagogy invites us to focus on how we can increase access to higher education and how we can increase access to knowledge—both its reception and its creation. This is, fundamentally, about the dream of a public learning commons, where learners are empowered to shape the world as they encounter it.” The collaboration between Nora Haenn and the libraries at North Carolina State University “to develop a new course that replaced writing a traditional term paper with making significant contributions to Wikipedia” is an example of open pedagogy (“Don’t Throw Away That Assignment!”). The exercise of writing in a classroom for a venue as public as Wikipedia “spurred them like no other writing assignment I have given in the past” (Haenn).

Many research libraries, ever the agent for broader access, are building OER support programs, offering grant and project support to create new OERs or using interlibrary loan and course reserves for more affordable learning materials. Additionally, libraries can provide basic understandings of copyright and fair use, which are essential concepts for OER and open pedagogy. The edited volume Guide to Making Open Textbooks with Students (Mays), the website OER Commons, and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition’s website Connect OER are all great resources for those interested in open pedagogy. We would also encourage OER practitioners to familiarize themselves with cautionary advice about “openwashing,” or the disingenuous use of the term open to refer to products that are actually closed (Thorne), and about inadvertently “signing students up for surveillance” when using certain tools for OER practices (Meinke).

Engage with Local Public Programs and Media

The public intellectual is a recognizable type inside and outside higher education, and we propose that any academic could fill that role in some capacity. Developing an online presence is a good first step toward becoming a public intellectual. According to Sarah Bond, a historian who writes a column for Forbes, another step is learning to code-switch. While discipline-specific language is important for advancing discourse within an academic field, developing a communication style that translates ideas into the public sphere is equally important.
As Bond argues, “We are teachers that discuss intellectual ideas with our students every day, which means we are already prepared to broaden the reaches of our classrooms and embrace the public as well. They may not always want to listen or to read our work, but we can make sure to present it in a way that is there for them if they wish to.” Recognizing that you are likely practicing some degree of code-switching already is a great start as you translate your ideas into language that is welcoming and accessible outside the academy.

Getting involved “in public programs in media, museums, and other forums” is a small step toward gaining recognition as a public intellectual (National Task Force). Becoming visible to the local community through op-eds on news websites, serving on boards of education for school districts, and developing an academic-in-residence program at the public library are other possibilities. One can also leverage personal blogs or social media as spaces to develop public audiences: see, for example, the historian Kevin M. Kruse’s Twitter account, which provides historical context on breaking news and debunks incorrect historical claims for his hundreds of thousands of followers (@KevinMKruse). The organization of expert scholarly annotation on popular issues, such as the Climate Feedback Project from the University of California, Berkeley, is another example, working almost like a public service (Climate Feedback). The Brooklyn Public Philosophers’ talk series, the Public Philosophy Journal (which provides peer review for publicly submitted pieces, among other activities), and the podcast Two Scientists Walk into a Bar are also innovative models for getting off campus into the public square and inviting conversations with the public in semistructured environments. Even small engagements, especially when collaborative, can help renew a sense of purpose and community around one’s academic work, not to mention demonstrate to the local community the practical side of scholarship.

**Invite Collaborations**

Collaborating directly with communities outside academia in the development and production of research projects is gaining more attention as a mode of public scholarship. Beyond just collecting feedback online, community-engaged scholarship also involves nonacademics playing active and direct roles in shaping projects’ goals, content, or even production. The field of public history, for example, aims to increase participation in knowledge-making practices, often seeking to address social and political inequities (Brennan). These forms of public collaboration often entail incorporating more diverse voices into academic projects and producing resources directly for public engagement, such as through museum or library exhibitions. Cara Burnidge, a scholar of American religious history, developed a service learning course in 2017 in partnership with a local ethnic minority group, where the project defined by that community for the course was to develop a leadership skills conference for high school students (Burnidge, Syllabus and “Relevant”). While we believe community-engaged scholarship is a worthwhile practice of public scholarship, there are many important things to consider before starting a project, such as making sure that the knowledge of community partners is respected and valued. Another essay in this collection by Beatrice Gurwitz offers sound guidance for partnering with community organizations and institutions.

Today, scholars have more options than ever before to develop academic projects with and for different publics thanks to the increasing number of free or low-cost tools such as Omeka, Scalar, and WordPress. The Gail Project: An Okinawan-American Dialogue, the Vietnamese American Oral History Project, and the September 11 Digital Archive are all good examples of public-facing projects that included community participation. There are
also public scholarship projects that are developed with broader public consumption in mind. *Torn Apart / Sepa-
rados*, a digital mapping project illustrating the territory and infrastructure of Immigration and Customs En-
forcement during the 2018 humanitarian crisis at the border between the United States and Mexico, received
considerable public attention and was written up by *Wired* (Dreyfuss). The app *Cleveland Historical* and the digi-
tal archive project *Apartheid Heritages* are other exciting examples of community-focused scholarly research. It
should be noted, however, that because of the scale of this style of public scholarship, these projects often in-
volve numerous collaborators, partnerships with libraries and cultural organizations, grant support, and student
participation. Community-led public scholarship should be carefully planned to account for technical needs,
cultural sensitivities, financial support, and the sustainability of the project.

**Considerations and Concerns**

The motivations for scholars to engage with the public vary. The potential for one’s own work to have a greater
reach through public engagement is a powerful incentive, and name recognition can benefit the scholar as
much as the scholarship. The moral argument for academic knowledge as a public good, increasing the health
of sociocultural institutions, provides the warm and fuzzy feeling that what we do in the ivory tower matters.
However, before enacting a public scholarship agenda, it is good to be aware of the various challenges and
complexities.

Achieving a balance between engaging a nonscholarly audience and the responsibilities one has to a depart-
ment, to colleagues, or to a mentor is no small order. Identifying an aspect of your research amenable to public
scholarship, or an entirely new line of inquiry, is a challenge in itself. Additionally, public scholarship can in-
volve an immense amount of additional labor that is not currently valued in the academy. As a recent study from
the ScholComm Lab at Simon Fraser University discovered in a survey of tenure and promotion guidelines,
“[W]hile there is a relatively high incidence of the terms ‘public’ and ‘community’ in the RPT [review, promo-
tion, and tenure] documents—that could be interpreted as an indicator that faculty do need to consider the na-
ture of the publicness of their work—there are neither explicit incentives, nor clear structures of support for as-
sessing the contributions of scholarship to the various dimensions of publicness” (Alperin et al.). Though there
are many professional organizations and projects working to change academic review practices in ways that
better reward public scholarship (such as HuMetricsHSS and the San Francisco Declaration on Research As-
sessment [*HuMetricsHSS; DORA*]), scholars should ask their departments (and their scholarly communication
or digital scholarship librarian) for clear guidelines on how this type of work can be evaluated.

Even properly rewarded public scholarship can have its complexities. Developing productive modes of getting
public attention and engagement is a learning process. Like (good) peer review, public scholarship should be a
conversation, inviting two-way communication. There is little point in communicating work to a public audi-
ence if one is unwilling to take its questions and concerns seriously, even if they seem irrelevant to the proj-
ec
Additionally, we in the academy need to be willing to admit that our work is not always, and may not always
need to be, directly applicable to the daily lives of our neighbors.

Enriching the information ecosystem with publicly accessible research products is certainly necessary. How-
ever, editing the *Wikipedia* page about contemporary Turkish hip-hop in Germany, for instance, may do more
than those products could to promote empathy and interest in global music cultures among high school students.
Public intellectuals always need to find venues for translating their work into common parlance, a skill set that will become more useful and necessary as works of scholarship like monographs are released online with open access. Increasing the possibility for public access to scholarship is not always the same as welcoming and inviting public engagement with scholarship, which is a useful distinction to keep in mind.

Many issues surrounding the use of digital technology are also relevant to the practice of public scholarship. Online harassment, doxing, bullying, and even death threats toward academics are on the rise, and scholars should carefully consider when and how to engage in public scholarship around politically or culturally sensitive issues (Cuevas). Scholars may also want to scrutinize the tools they use to produce and engage in public scholarship. Many proprietary digital technologies operate according to what has been called “surveillance capitalism,” a profit-making strategy based on surveilling and manipulating user behavior (Zuboff). Relatedly, Gary Hall questions whether the increasing importance of academic engagement with social media (an optional but nonetheless important tool of public scholarship) is a feature of the growing precarity of academic labor, what he calls the “uberification of the university.” Though these issues are difficult to avoid even when not participating in public scholarship, they are worth considering when choosing tools, creating guidelines for public participation in your project, and asking students to participate.

**Conclusion: Values Matter**

Public scholarship can achieve two goals at once, increasing the visibility and impact of a scholar’s expertise while enhancing public interest in what the humanities and higher education can bring to bear on global challenges. In some sense, the survival of scholarship in general depends on experimenting with and participating in public scholarship. The practices we propose here offer small steps in that direction and are underpinned by a value system that can seem at odds with the one we typically inherit from the academy. Keeping in mind the important work of the HuMetricsHSS project, “rethinking humane indicators of excellence in the humanities and social sciences” (HuMetricsHSS), we argue that public scholarship should align with values like respect, equity, social justice, open knowledge, and principled leadership. Enacting these and related values through scholarly pursuits is the purpose of public scholarship, especially in the humanities. To be certain, participation in public scholarship involves negotiating a broad range of technical, ethical, and professional issues. On the whole, however, public scholarship offers scholars exciting opportunities to broaden the reach of their research, contribute to the public good, and elevate the visibility, influence, and significance of humanities in the public eye.

**WORKS CITED**


Burnidge, Cara. “Relevant to the tweet storms I’m seeing: Last night Religion and Philosophy students shared their experiences in our dept’s service-learning class, where ‘useless’ majors tackle a ‘real world’ issue in our community. @UNIEngagementpic.” Twitter, 30 Nov. 2018, twitter.com/burnidge/status/1068567654043849730.


Cleveland Historical. Center for Public History and Digital Humanities, 2022, clevelandhistorical.org/.


Connect OER. SPARC, 2020, sparcopen.org/our-work/connect-oer/.


HuMetricsHSS—Rethinking Humane Indicators of Excellence in the Humanities and Social Sciences. 2022, humericshss.org/.


Torn Apart / Separados. 2018, xmethod.columbia.edu/torn-apart/volume/2/.


PEER REVIEW: OVERVIEW AND CURRENT ISSUES

Luís Madureira

PEER REVIEW. “What is it really worth?” asks an academic press editor on the website Scholarly Kitchen, widely read by publishing professionals (Crotty). Both the article and the ensuing discussion concern themselves chiefly with the tangible ways in which reviewers’ contributions could be rewarded and recognized and how this would affect the business of publishing. Rather than pursue this kind of inside baseball approach to the value of peer review, I should like to recast it as a more open-ended, fertile question, since the potential answers about peer review’s worth, while not entirely contradictory, are varied. And they differ depending precisely on the angle of vision from which the question is seen: from the perspective of the scholarly and professional values of peer review or the practical and ethical ones.

 Broadly, peer review entails the evaluation of a prospectus, manuscript, or data set by expert readers. While, traditionally, items requiring evaluation are submitted to journals, books, or digital publishers of academic research, the categories of peer-reviewed materials are continually expanding. For instance, through a Canadian Scholarly Podcasting initiative, podcasts will now undergo open peer review, in which the identities of author and reviewer are known to one another. Both the number of reviews required and the evaluative criteria may vary according to press and project, but the process seeks chiefly to suggest improvements of research findings and to impartially assess quality. The Association of University Presses (AUPresses) defines peer review concisely as “the process through which university press editors commission formal evaluations from respected experts (‘peers’) on the contribution to scholarship, teaching, and public debate of a work being considered for publication.” Scholarly publishers deem the practice essential to their “mission of advancing and disseminating scholarship” (“Why”). They take manuscript evaluations into close account, sharing and discussing them with authors as part of their deliberation on the merits and publishable quality of submitted work. The expert and ostensibly impartial feedback that anonymous manuscript evaluators impart enables authors to revise and enhance ongoing research projects, thus increasing both the value and significance of their scholarly contributions.

 At the same time, peer review is a service responsibility for academics. Like most academics, I regard performing peer reviews as integral to my professional responsibilities, a service I am expected to undertake for the benefit of my field and fellow researchers.

 Given this broad consensus around the indispensability of the referee system in scholarly publishing, one might reasonably assume that the practice has been in place at least since the dawn of modern scientific thought. As Aileen Fyfe indicates, however, peer review emerged as a term and acquired its “modern connotation of proof beyond a reasonable doubt” only in the late twentieth century. Indeed, Melinda Baldwin suggests that we should take with a heavy grain of salt the oft told tale that Henry Oldenburg, the editor who founded Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society in the seventeenth century, was the single-handed creator of external review (“Scientific Autonomy” 539). In effect, external refereeing in its current structure (within scientific circles, at least) began to emerge in the nineteenth century, and its subsequent development was far from smooth and linear. As late as the mid–twentieth century several journals, especially outside the anglophone world,
mostly “kept editorial decisions in-house” (542). Exploring the emergence of peer review as the yardstick for scientific respectability at academic journals and research grant agencies, Baldwin argues persuasively that refereeing procedures gained currency as scientists struggled to come to grips with the consequences of expanded public funding for their research in the late 1960s and 1970s, at the height of the Cold War. To cite the tongue-in-cheek caption of a photo illustrating an online interview with Baldwin, “[P]eer review, much like shag carpet and bell-bottoms, is largely a product of the 1970s” (Baldwin, “Rise”). Scientists began actively promoting the notion that evaluation by peers was the only legitimate mode of gauging the merits and quality of scientific research as a way of pushing back against increased political pressure to make them more accountable to the legislators and constituents who authorized and underwrote public funding for research. The phrase peer review itself arises in this context, as it narrowly limits the range of potential qualified evaluators.

We ought not to regard peer review, therefore, as a set of stable and ingrained procedures that have been vital to scholarly publishing since the scientific revolution. Rather, it is a “process that has changed over time in response to the scholarly community’s needs—and one that could change in the future” (Baldwin, “Rise”). By signaling the historical contingency of peer review, I wish the discussion of peer review that follows to be understood as necessarily time-bound and provisional.

With this caveat in mind, let me now turn to some of the key professional implications of the refereeing process. While editors and researchers widely recognize the value and importance of peer review, there is substantially less consensus around how and whether to devise standardized and measurable ways to confer career credit on the scholars and researchers who carry it out. More or less quantitatively acknowledged in merit exercises and promotion reviews as “service to the profession,” the significant time and effort invested in rigorously evaluating a manuscript seldom yield more tangible dividends than the ambivalent satisfaction of receiving an automated reply thanking one for reviewing a manuscript. Reviewers who are independent scholars, students, or academic staff members or who occupy contingent roles either inside or outside the academy garner even less professional credit for their efforts. Even if the expression of appreciation is more detailed and personal, it remains inevitably confidential, limited to a private exchange between evaluators and journal or academic press editors. The more meaningful professional rewards for carrying out this essential service to our fields and profession must therefore assume subtler, less quantifiable forms.

The AUPresses’ handbook Best Practices for Peer Review defines one of the key intangible benefits of participating in the referee system as follows. By operating as catalysts for the refereeing process, academic press editors are able to assemble the wide-ranging expertise of a diverse scholarly community, thus fostering “productive conversations between reviewers and the authors whose work they are asked to evaluate” (“Why”). Assessing research in progress that intersects or enters into dialogue with the subjects of the evaluators’ own scholarship enables these editors to engage rigorously with provocative and groundbreaking approaches and ideas. The innovative work they examine can potentially spur their own creative thinking, enhancing and enlivening their research. By the same token, since a crucial refereeing charge is to flag major structural and methodological flaws or gaps, peer review renders reviewers willy-nilly more self-critical about their own writing. In this way, the process can help referees to write more compellingly and, optimally, to articulate their own research with greater cogency and lucidity.

Concomitantly, the task of evaluating research in progress obliges reviewers to familiarize themselves with published work on apposite topics and delve deeply into the issues and questions with which works under review
engage. The extensive background research frequently required of external referees enables them not just to stay abreast of but also to gain a uniquely sweeping acquaintance with the current state of their fields. In addition, being asked to conduct an external review offers conclusive evidence of one’s growing or established stature in the field. Although arguably essential to the production and dissemination of quality research, peer review is by no means a readily acquired skill. As an initial step, prospective referees may wish to gain practical experience by soliciting a mentor (PhD supervisor, postdoc advisor, or senior colleague) to coreview. Websites like the Web of Science Academy (formerly the Publons Academy) offer courses on how to peer-review manuscripts for journals, which afford enrollees access to peer review templates, samples of expert reviews, and the training and experience necessary to become effective evaluators. How long the review process should take cannot be conclusively prescribed. To declare baldly that if peer review “takes more than three hours, you’re doing it wrong” is neither practical nor sound advice (DF). The amount of time needed to investigate the disciplinary or methodological contexts of specific papers clearly varies in accordance with the areas and types of research involved. To produce a scrupulous manuscript evaluation is undoubtedly time-consuming. Yet, the more frequently, promptly, and assiduously one responds to invitations to peer-review, the greater the prospect for building relationships with journal editors. Whether or not “editors have long memories” (DF), most will certainly recognize a prospective reviewer’s efforts and positive disposition. This recognition could (and not infrequently does) eventually lead to solicitations to join editorial boards or to requests for book reviews and editorials. Unlike the refereeing process itself, these potential dividends tangibly and substantively affect merit exercises, promotion, and posttenure review.

What does peer review entail in practical terms? To be sure, different projects call for different evaluative criteria. In a piece published on MLA Commons, Hannah McGregor gives a helpful overview of the existing forms of peer review, while thoughtfully exploring the various ways in which digital projects, for instance, often call for the adjustment and at times transformation of traditional evaluation practices. McGregor lists four main types of peer review. Commonly followed by most journals, the “double-blind” review is the so-called gold standard. This decidedly ableist metaphor refers to the practice of maintaining reviewers’ and authors’ reciprocal anonymity. As McGregor suggests, the consensus among academics in tier-one institutions is that publications subjected to a mutually anonymous review are accorded substantially more weight in promotion considerations and merit exercises. The main objective of this double anonymity is to eliminate such common forms of bias as ageism, racism, and sexism. According to McGregor, the most common reviews are so-called single-blind reviews, in which reviewers remain anonymous but know who the authors are. The widespread use of this form of peer evaluation by university presses attests to the near impossibility of keeping certain types of scholarly work fully anonymous. This is true not only of book manuscripts and articles by scholars in small fields but also of research in which the identity and personal experiences of the authors play a key role as well as in several variants of nontraditional scholarship in which the scholar’s voice is readily discernible, such as digital projects, blog posts, videos, exhibitions, and performances (McGregor). Partly because these are nascent fields, peer review can legitimize and sustain scholarship that is often unfamiliar to fellow researchers. Much of this academic work simply does not lend itself to anonymous evaluations, however.

Practices of open and transparent peer review, the last two types McGregor discusses, offer other models for evaluation. There are several models that fall under the umbrella of open peer review, including reviews in which the process is fairly traditional but the identities of author and reviewer are known to each other, signed
reviews that are published alongside the reviewed work, and public reviews, in which members of a community or public participate. Some of these practices are more commonly adopted in the sciences; in the humanities, open peer review tends to be taken up by open access publications, especially those that publish nontraditional and multimedia scholarship. Some of these models are collaborative, facilitating discussion between authors and reviewers. In some cases editorial boards may assign one or two editors to assist authors with the revisions they have requested (McGregor). Among the potential drawbacks attributed to open review, the principal is the concern that, out of courtesy, openness can lead to less rigorous and less candid assessments. However, the process arguably fosters collegial and mentoring relationships and is more compatible with emergent types of scholarship. In a completely transparent review, reviewers and authors know one another, and the press website may post both the reviews and the author’s responses. It constitutes the logical next stage in open evaluation. As McGregor points out, this process is especially useful as nongeneric varieties of research begin to develop their infrastructure. It is also eminently suitable to public scholarship, since participation in the process is not restricted to peers but extends to members of the public.

The general recommendations that follow are therefore across-the-board and suggestive rather than narrowly prescriptive. While some journals and presses provide a set of reviewer guidelines and questions tailored to specific kinds of projects, many do not specify evaluative criteria beyond a request to assess the project’s merits. It may be useful in these cases to peruse examples of prior evaluations performed for the same presses and journals, which acquisitions editors are ordinarily willing to provide. Four decades ago, William Kupersmith contended that the three central questions a referee ought to ask of a submitted manuscript concerned its truth, originality, and importance. Although decidedly the most difficult to explain, the last attribute—which I would define broadly as the quality and extent of a work’s contribution to its field—is the most critical in determining whether a paper or monograph is publishable (15). In essence, the task of peer reviewers boils down to cogently identifying and demonstrating with supporting detail what is (or is not) valid, new, and significant about a manuscript. Arguably, this quality control function of peer review is one of its greatest benefits. Concurrently, however, gatekeeping has at times been perceived as a mechanism for promoting the research agendas and interests of certain groups and barring and inhibiting others through an ostensibly objective and rigorous review. Although in my own editorial and peer-reviewing experience, I have rarely found this to be the case, the process is definitely not flawless. As I indicate below, instances of bias and exclusion certainly occur. Anecdotally, I can affirm that the examples of gatekeeping I have encountered have involved, at an initial stage, screening papers that are either poorly written and conceived or fall well outside the journal’s scope before sending them out to reviewers. At a subsequent level of evaluation, I have seen submissions rejected because of plagiarism, because authors had previously published a version of the submitted work with only slight variations, or because they failed to cite previous publications that covered largely similar ground. However, it is at times admittedly hard to make a persuasive case against the perception that young or relatively unknown scholars find it especially difficult to pass through the gate to publication in top journals. At the same time, editors eager to publish work by leading scholars may occasionally allow them to bypass the more stringent and protracted phases of the process.

Whether it recommends acceptance, rejection, or revision and resubmission, a review should aim to provide authors with unbiased, incisive, and constructive feedback on their submissions, a critical assessment that will help authors improve their work. It is therefore vital to be clear, respectful, and intellectually honest.
eminently sensible injunction I have repeatedly come across in most guides to manuscript reviewing is to treat the author’s work the way you would like your own to be treated. Even the weakest and most flawed papers will often disclose redeeming features upon closer and more broad-minded inspection. It is incumbent on the referee to convey these positive aspects to authors. To highlight what is promising or successful about their writing can help authors with subsequent submissions.

To shift now from pragmatic to more properly ethical questions, just as scholars are routinely enjoined always to accede to invitations to evaluate manuscripts that fall within their expertise, so too should they reveal any potential conflict of interest to the editors. For referees to acknowledge their own personal biases and (possibly antagonistic) disposition toward a particular approach or methodology is of course more challenging. An assessment marked by a specific methodological predilection may benefit authors and assist them in preempting criticism informed by rival approaches, especially in fields that are deeply fractured. Obviously, if a report is unequivocally biased against an author, it is of little or no use to editors and authors. Not only will editors normally disregard such clearly biased evaluations, they will seldom, if ever, return to the reviewers who submitted them. Undeniably, however, there are institutionalized prejudices informing the refereeing system that are much less tractable from an individual standpoint. Baldwin indicates, for instance, that “some studies of peer review outcomes have suggested that women and underrepresented minorities are more likely to receive unfavorable referee reports than their colleagues” (“Rise”). And David Crotty refers to studies revealing that researchers from lesser-known institutions or “developing countries” are less likely to receive invitations to peer-review. In effect, writes Alice Meadows, “the lack of diversity and inclusion in scholarly communications is increasingly well-documented.” She cites several recent surveys demonstrating that the academic publishing industry remains “overwhelmingly white and cis-female.” This lack of diversity is in turn reproduced in academia, generating “a feedback loop in scholarship that privileges and publishes the majority voice, which is often white and male.” As Safiya Noble argues, “[T]he whole system reproduces and consolidates power among a relatively small group of people” among the very people who, according to Sara Rouhi, “created the paradigm [and] its rules of engagement. . . . Everyone else—the global south and non-white, non-western countries—starts at a disadvantage by not belonging to the dominant group and constantly confronting the structural inequities of that exclusion” (qtd. in Meadows).

The fact that peer review is “less diverse and more biased than it could or should be” hampers efforts to maintain an “inclusive, ethical, and trustworthy” scholarly communications environment (Meadows). One of the “key” remedies Meadows and her colleague Karin Wulf prescribe is transparency, which they classify as an ethical and pragmatic position: “the single most important requirement for diversity in peer review.” Transparency, in this sense, does not signify the disclosure of the reviewer’s identity. It defines instead a system in which publications are free to recognize referees’ efforts and in which reviewers can openly lay claim to their labors. The transparent peer review platform employed by the multinational academic publishing company Wiley provides a cogent example of an important variant of this process. It allows authors to opt for a transparent peer review when they submit to a journal. Should their work be published, the referees’ reports, authors’ responses, and editors’ decisions will appear alongside their published article. In addition, reviewers can elect to sign their reports. While the latter exemplifies transparency in the review process and outcome, transparency, as I explain above, may also refer to transparent evaluative criteria and transparency concerning who evaluates manuscripts and how evaluators are selected.
Although some scholarly communities have given positive feedback regarding these various modalities of transparent review (Moylan), others acknowledge that, even if the transparency appears to have little impact on the recommendations evaluators make, it can sometimes make it more difficult to find referees (“Reviewer Concerns”). In effect, some publishers elect to name only reviewers who have accepted the paper, while keeping reviewers who have recommended rejection anonymous in order to avert conflict (“Reviewer Concerns”).

More than the kind of tangible reward or credential discussed above, the “vital benefit” transparency accords is thus “participation in a community of researchers,” a mode of fostering “organizational introspection.” In this way, by collectively acknowledging the partialities and preconceptions inherent to “institutional culture, history, and practice,” review process participants become better equipped to identify and effectively address the risk of bias. The ultimate objective is of course not just to minimize the potential for bias but to build “the inclusive, diverse peer review we want and need.” Indeed, increasing the diversity of the refereeing system is “essential to ensuring its future health” (Meadows and Wulf).

At the same time, as we can infer from Baldwin’s historical overview of the process, striving to achieve diversity in peer review is unlikely to allay every concern and deflect all criticisms. Some scholars have called the efficacy of the process into question. They claim, for instance, that current refereeing procedures suppress innovative research, concluding that peer review could be eliminated with little cost to the quality of scholarly production (Baldwin, “Scientific Autonomy” 558). These complaints are bolstered, in part, by the evident discrepancies between the theory and practice of peer review (558). It is probably an open secret that at some journals the editor often holds considerable sway over publishing decisions, even though, in theory, it is peer review that determines what gets published. Unsurprisingly, complaints about the shortcomings and failures of external refereeing spike in the wake of revelations of outright academic fraud or the intentional placement of academic fakes designed to ridicule particular academic discourses and subfields, which peer review has failed to detect. As one journalist cogently observed after a most recent “entrapment hoax” (Grech), “these hoaxes are not so much about academic hygiene as they are about discrediting one’s political opponents” (Beauchamp). As Baldwin aptly notes, “[T]he more we have expected of peer review, the more its opportunities to disappoint have expanded,” for complaints about peer review’s perceived failures are founded on what is ultimately an unsustainable premise: that peer review’s principal aim is to distinguish good from poor scholarship (“Scientific Autonomy” 558). Yet, since the entire refereeing system relies on honesty and good faith, it is not well equipped to uncover instances of intentional fraud (Beauchamp). As we have seen, peer review’s original purpose was relatively more modest: to secure the scholarly community’s autonomy (Baldwin, “Scientific Autonomy” 544).

As I have tried to show, from its inception peer review has never been determined by or reducible to a set of changeless evaluative criteria. Rather, it is an inevitably historical, dynamic, and growing process. The fundamental aspect that has remained constant throughout its existence is precisely the one Baldwin defines as its original purpose: to create and foster the conditions enabling a process of autonomous community decision-making underpinned by scholarly integrity. The critical and sustained reflection about peer review’s goals, methods, and evaluative criteria that I outline above plays a vital role in ensuring this very integrity. As scholars explore future pathways for the practice, they would do well to continue safeguarding this humbler and arguably “underappreciated function” (Baldwin, “Rise”).


WHAT TO EXPECT FROM EVALUATION AND HOW TO RESPOND TO PEER REVIEW

Deepika Bahri

Where to Begin

The moment when reader reports arrive can feel like a mixed blessing. Acknowledging the human, vulnerable moments of the process for both reviewer and reviewed can be a salutary first step. On the one hand, confronted with criticism, those reviewed can sometimes feel resentful that their hard work has not been sufficiently acknowledged, or that their project has been misunderstood, or that the comments offered in the review lack the delicacy of phrasing that can be an unfortunate casualty of demanding schedules. On the other hand, it is important to remember that peer reviewers are usually overcommitted and often uncompensated and can go without acknowledgment if they are conducting anonymous reviews, even though they perform an essential service to the profession. For those undergoing peer evaluation, pausing to meditate on these considerations can be a beneficial ritual that prepares the mind for the job at hand. Keep your eyes on the prize, and bear in mind that responding with care and wisdom could lead to a successful publication. This essay provides guidance about dealing with peer review comments in ways that accord with best practices. It helps readers craft responses that are professional, thoughtful, respectful of the process, and reassuring to editors who look for the aforementioned virtues while also expecting those reviewed to display confidence in the intellectual integrity of their manuscripts.

However eagerly awaited, criticism and suggestions for revision, even helpful, gentle, and concrete ones, are likely to prompt a defensive posture. Therefore, the prelude to composing a suitable response should be to set aside the impulse to respond. Instead, commit to reviewing all the comments carefully, preferably more than once. Expect and monitor yourself for your first defensive response. If time allows and you have at least a few days before the deadline for submitting the response, reread the comments a day after the initial perusal for more sober reflection. Reviews vary in many ways. Sometimes the shorter, apparently hasty review may contain a nugget of really useful advice. Resist the urge to dismiss such a review in favor of the longer, seemingly more thorough ones. Reviewers bring different perspectives to the task; you can profit from all comments, so read all the reviews carefully. Listening well is a crucial preliminary step in the composition of a thoughtful response.

Parsing the review with care is the second stage in the process. Take all comments seriously. Put a check mark, asterisk, or some other sign next to every suggestion. Underline key comments. Check for points of agreement in the reviews in order to isolate them for especially careful consideration. Categorize the suggestions for revision as major or minor; identify responses and suggestions that you agree with, whether readily on a first reading or reluctantly on a subsequent one; and, finally, identify problematic counsel. Examples of the last include conflicting advice from different reviewers, or comments that seem to betray an inadequate or unrealistic understanding of the project, or suggestions that conflict with a prior directive from the journal editor, acquisitions editor, or the developmental team at the press. Responses to each of these categories of commentary are addressed below.
Responding to Comments and Suggestions

Although the solutions they offer may not always be helpful, reviews are usually good at identifying problems. Evaluate major concerns in the light of the following questions: Do you have additional or previously undisclosed information you could use to address the concerns? If you do, provide this information in your response. Has a concern already been addressed in the manuscript? If yes, point this out, and articulate agreement about its importance. Does a suggestion require you to extend the project well beyond its current scope? If it does, say so. Is there value in expanding its scope in future scholarship in the field? If yes, acknowledge the validity of doing so. Is it possible to address a particular concern without compromising a core goal or aim of the project, ideally mutually agreed upon in your discussions with the editor or editorial team? Does the concern recall a moment of doubt you had at some stage in your project and then suppressed? If so, try to remember what caused the doubt and reassess your decision to dismiss it. Most important, will the project be substantially improved by your taking the concern on board as you revise? How will it be improved? Answer this question for yourself and then begin to outline specific ways in which you plan to revise. If a comment is susceptible to multiple interpretations, offer your understanding of it as a prelude to your response. This gesture will also demonstrate your ability to listen and pay attention.

Even if it requires more work and time, when a suggestion is valuable in your considered assessment, be willing to commit to making the necessary revision. As you labor to maintain a thoughtful, receptive tone, however, do not veer completely toward agreeing with each and every suggestion, unless they are all equally useful. Unreflective agreement without thoughtful consideration can be just as problematic as defensive or wholesale disagreement. It is entirely acceptable, therefore, to set aside suggestions that conflict with the mission of the press or the coherence or goal of the project. Indicate your willingness to undertake revisions, but feel free to reject suggestions that require a lot of labor and yield no significant advantage or those that compromise an otherwise defensible principle underlying the project or argument. While a defensive tone is rarely, if ever, persuasive, be prepared to defend your choices when you need to, explaining and clarifying why they are essential to maintaining the integrity of your project. Confidence in your project and the ability to hold the line and defend your choices are no less reassuring to your editor than is your willingness to go the extra step in revising your manuscript.

In the case of problematic counsel involving conflicting advice, misapprehension of central goals or mandates, or unrealistic expectations, you will need to consider additional steps. Try to recall the entire review process, including initial stages: advice from the editor or editorial team during developmental editing that you received before the peer review process was triggered, comments from the editorial board if the work in question involves an edited collection or proposal for a series of books, or comments by members of the editorial staff summarizing the peer reviewers’ feedback in their communications with you. Consider each of these elements of the peer review process in responding to the readers. Quote from formal and informal feedback, such as an email from the editor or editorial team, if appropriate, to demonstrate that you have taken into consideration every substantive comment offered during the aggregate process before arriving at your thoughtful response. Where the suggestions offered by the reviewers are mutually contradictory or contradict the editorial team at the journal, exert your judgment by reviewing the pros and cons of each, recalling your central goals, and considering the implications of accepting one or another conflicting suggestion before responding. Consult with an expert in the field if you are having trouble adjudicating the wisdom of contradictory suggestions. In the final instance, if you have done due diligence in working through the choices and have failed to come to a satisfactory resolution, consult
the editor, sharing your judgment of the implications of the choices available, and ask for a specific point of advice instead of abdicating responsibility for undertaking your own thoughtful assessment.

In the event that a reviewer has suspended expected norms of politeness, your ability to be gracious in your response will stand you in good stead, and there are ways to respond diplomatically but constructively. As you compose your response, correct misapprehensions gently. Offer clarification. Or suggest, as diplomatically as you can, that the second or third reviewer’s comments indicate an alternative apprehension of the project that is closer to your intent, should this be the case. Needless to say, resist the urge to offer a stinging rejoinder. Your responses—in whole or in part—may be sent to the reviewers, so it is vitally important that you not trivialize their concerns, even if you do not agree with them. Avoid speculating on the reader’s actual identity or their gender, age, race, and so on. Ad hominem attacks on the reader or reviewer have no place in a professional response—or indeed in the reviewer’s comments. If you feel compelled to get your outrage out of your system, generate a list of knee-jerk, unreflective responses that are for your eyes only, and then translate each scathing rebuttal into the kind of formal, professional, and thoughtful language and tone you wish the reviewer had used. Be sure to set these uncensored remarks aside; better yet, consign them to the trash before beginning your formal response as a professional and thoughtful academic. Most definitely resist the urge to broadcast your ripostes, however witty, on social media. There are forms of systemic bias in publishing, however, that do warrant public conversation, and it can be productive to raise these concerns in public forums and on social media in a thoughtful and informative manner.

Format

Be sure to begin your response by identifying the manuscript title and ID number if it is applicable. Include a few lines thanking the reviewers for their time and useful contributions. Express your appreciation. This gesture not only sets a positive tone for your response but also indicates your investment in the professionalism associated with the process of peer review, one that requires the time and commitment of reviewers as well as editors. Organize your responses using a recognizable rubric so that the editor or editorial team can process them with ease. It may be helpful to respond to each reviewer individually, addressing points of agreement between them and your response to their shared concerns in a preliminary paragraph. Within sections responding to each reviewer, organize by major and minor points. Respond thoroughly, overlooking no major comment or suggestion. Minor ones can be addressed together in a cluster without lengthy explanations. Resist the urge to litigate minor points at length, however irksome the comment or suggestion might be. Restate the reviewers’ concerns—in their own words, by using selective quotations, or in your own summary—before presenting your response. If the comment is confusing, preface your response with the phrase “As I understand it” to demonstrate your good-faith attempt to arrive at an understanding of the concern or suggestion. Acknowledge all helpful suggestions, and briefly explain how you intend to incorporate them into your revision process. When appropriate, cite sources in support of your response and with the goal of providing the editor or editorial team with necessary information about your decision-making process. Conclude your cover letter by thanking the editor for the opportunity to respond to the reviewers’ comments and by conveying your willingness to undertake further revisions if necessary. In addition to a cover letter, prepare a checklist of major changes you will make to the manuscript. Include this along with the resubmission once all the revisions are complete. Review the response before sending it to the editor. Finally, meet the deadline for responses and resubmission.
SERVING ON AN EDITORIAL BOARD OR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Anjali Prabhu

Why and How to Serve on an Editorial Board or Advisory Committee

It is indeed a professional honor to serve on the editorial board or advisory committee of a journal. Such an opportunity can be very rewarding, contributing to a scholar’s continued intellectual growth. Although it is not impossible for a younger scholar to be asked to serve in such a capacity, it is usually mid-career and senior scholars who are selected for this type of service. While the nomination process itself might vary, to be selected for such a position, the first thing a scholar might do is to amass experience publishing through the peer review process. Beyond demonstrated expertise, a journal looks for scholars who can deliver on time, who are active in their fields and not excessively narrow in their references and framing, and who can be endorsed by other scholars through the particular mechanisms the journal has in place. Serving an established journal in this manner offers the opportunity to be in contact with some of the best practitioners in your subfield or field when the journal is of a specialist nature. Serving a flagship generalist journal allows you not only to meet influential scholars in various fields but also to broaden your own perspective, keep up with the latest scholarship, and think of your own work in terms of a wide readership. No matter what the focus of the journal, interacting with accomplished peers as you discuss and evaluate scholarly work inevitably sharpens your own scholarship and ability to write clearly and convincingly. It alerts you more actively to the readership of your work. All in all, being part of a journal’s directive team brings immediate benefits to your scholarship while providing a significant form of service to the profession and endorsing your expertise and professionalism.

What Does It Entail?

There are a range of ways in which editors and presses involve editorial boards and advisory committees and, thus, varying levels of commitment that membership on a board or committee might entail. Therefore, it would be most helpful to ascertain the particular responsibilities and expectations you are taking on when such an appointment is on the horizon. Some boards and committees schedule regular in-person meetings a few times a year. These are the boards and committees where there is greatest involvement and intellectual excitement for members. Preparation for these meetings might be minimal and involve reviewing documents online, reviewing text for calls for special issues, and submitting or vetting names to replace members whose terms have ended. Or such preparation might be quite substantial and involve reviewing specific essays that have had controversial or contradicting reviews or reviewing all essays to make selections after specialists have reviewed them. Increasingly, these meetings occur virtually. Some editors might use their board or committee minimally, while some journals regard their boards or committees as a form of endorsement, when in reality they depend on a few members for the actual running of the journal. Getting information on the exact duties you...
should anticipate could be straightforward: the journal might have a written statement on these duties. In other cases, there may be a more informal way in which new members get acquainted with their duties. Speaking to the editor and to current and former members of the board or committee will ensure that you understand the task ahead when committing to membership on a journal’s board or committee.

Younger journals in particular might solicit contributions from board or committee members in the form of think pieces, editorials, reviews, or state-of-the-field essays to set the tone for prospective anonymous submissions and to fill the journal with high-quality work. While junior scholars might unequivocally benefit from these “extra” publications, such contributions are most often requested of recognized scholars, for whom, though such contributions might not hold the same significance as they do for younger scholars, they do also enhance visibility. For senior scholars, these opportunities might be hard to take advantage of, since typically these scholars are already burdened, beyond departmental demands, with external reviews of book manuscripts or journal articles on an ad hoc basis, tenure and promotion reviews, outside departmental reviews, and other such professional expectations. You would need to take a realistic view, when accepting such appointments, of your overall commitments during the term of appointment.

**How Does Your Service Count?**

As a member of the editorial board or advisory committee of an influential journal, you might, depending on the role of the board or committee in question, have a say in the types of questions the journal should consider important, the topics for special issues, the wording of calls for papers for such issues, and the names of invited contributors. Given the profile of most members of editorial boards and advisory committees—relatively senior scholars in a field—these appointments also afford the opportunity to provide anonymous mentorship to individual scholars and the possibility to make a mark on your discipline. That is, if you serve as an expert reviewer for essays or are part of a discussion of reviewed essays, you might provide substantial and even path-changing feedback to a young scholar whose essay is being considered. It is well known that peer review is often a difficult process, which can be doubly anonymous to the end—that is, the author does not ever know the reviewers, and the reviewers do not know the author (until and unless the piece is published)—or anonymous, when the author does not know the reviewer. This partly or entirely anonymous process differs from our traditional notion of mentorship, which involves a personal relationship between two professionals, one of whom is more established than the other. The tone of a highly critical review can demoralize a young person, undermining their confidence. Strong criticism need not be avoided, however, as long as it does not involve, for example, unkind speculation on the identity of the author or their motivation for taking a particular position. Helpful suggestions and pertinent readings the author might not have considered, along with validation of positive aspects of the essay, could go a long way in helping an author move forward with their research without compromising the critical function of a review.

With more and more opportunities to publish in collections and different venues that have a quicker turnaround time than that of many established journals, which might have more rigorous review processes, scholars at all stages of their careers are opting to submit their work to publications and repositories where it will face fewer hurdles and can appear more rapidly. Given that the opportunities for easier, faster publication are likely to keep growing, it is increasingly important that journals improve the culture of traditional peer review,
without dismantling the invaluable qualitative standards it offers, and showcase it as a way to receive valuable guidance for your scholarship. Editorial boards and advisory committees can make a significant contribution in this direction. If scholars at all stages of their careers sought out peer review for the simple purpose of getting excellent feedback, the range of work coming forward would automatically be even broader. This would allow all journals, not just established ones, to include other categories beyond the peer-reviewed essay and thereby expand the range of texts, and thus opportunities, for authors seeking venues for their work. In the humanities in particular, senior scholars seldom choose to subject themselves to the peer review that comes with submitting a journal article, often preferring to publish books and make contributions (such as commentaries, reviews, or other special interventions) to various collections in journals. Beyond funding and structural positioning, the most precious form of support for scholarly work—and one that becomes harder to get, especially as a scholar rises through the ranks—is systematic criticism. The difficulty of obtaining it has to do not simply with the fact that within your subfield there might not be numerous venues for your work or that identification within a field would turn out to be an issue as a certain scholar becomes associated with certain topics or materials but also with the fact that scholars in the humanities have other paths they can follow to gain recognition and validation in the profession. However, as a result, as senior scholars in the humanities continue to advance professionally, the academic system might present them with fewer and fewer opportunities to organically encounter systematic criticism of their work. The structure of validation in our fields is such that once you are tenured or certainly when you are promoted, particularly if you are influential in your field, peer review often becomes a thing of the past, although application for funding provides some of the same functions. Indeed, it is possible to find senior scholars in the humanities, unlike in the sciences, who have actually gone through minimal peer review themselves. The review process for books is somewhat different, and although it requires validation and review, book manuscripts cannot receive the same degree and quality of scrutiny by appropriate experts that articles do in the best peer review process. Advisory committees and editorial boards of journals thus perform an important function in our profession, one that could sharpen our scholarship even more extensively.

The opportunity to participate in academic writing in multiple ways that is offered through a position on an editorial board or advisory committee of a journal could allow you to make a serious impact on a field and on individuals’ scholarship. Serving on a journal’s directive team supports the future of scholarship in our fields by contributing to building a culture that would consolidate and expand the relevance (and appeal) of academic peer review. It could therefore affect the life of journals and the role of journals in our professional lives more broadly in addition to giving members on boards and committees the chance for intellectual and professional growth.
MANY ASPECTS of collaborative scholarship are discussed in this collection; however, features of collaboration not covered elsewhere in this collection also merit discussion: namely, the challenges and benefits that come with the differences between coauthors. We believe that for many people those differences can be generative, leading to greater intellectual stimulation and better writing. In this essay, we draw on our own experiences working together and with others and on recommendations from other collaborative teams. The first two sections deal with questions you should ask before committing to a collaborative project, whether that be collaborative research, writing, or scholarly editing. You may not have definitive answers before your work gets underway, and circumstances will inevitably change, but having considered the questions in advance and keeping them in mind as you work will help keep the project afloat. The third section focuses on things to do once the work is underway—the nuts and bolts of collaboration. The final section of this essay discusses strategies for dealing with changes and problems you may encounter during the collaboration. We recommend that you review this section before you start writing and consider how you might deal with these and other situations should they arise. Many successful collaborations have survived a variety of disruptions. We wrote our first collaborative project, *The Bedford Guide to Teaching Writing in the Disciplines*, while we were both on the job market. Halfway through drafting that manuscript, Sandra moved to a new position in a different state. Lacking the technologies we now take for granted, we exchanged chapters on CD-ROMs by way of FedEx and discussed revisions in phone calls for which we paid long-distance phone charges by the minute. Yet we made our deadline. We began developing many of the strategies we discuss here during that early 1993 project and have been honing them since, sometimes with other combinations of coauthors.

**Before Committing to a Collaborative Project**

*Why Write Together?*

The veteran coauthors Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford begin their article “Why Write . . . Together?” with a detailed list of their behavioral and intellectual differences, from how they drink their coffee to when and how they prefer to plan and draft their writing. The implied question—“Why would two such different people write together?”—is answered in the fond way they discuss what must at times be profoundly frustrating differences. All successful coauthors can generate such lists, and we are no exception. Those who decide to collaborate a second time do so because it is those very differences—in style, approach, perspective, background, and knowledge—that create a stronger, richer, deeper, and more nuanced project. You don’t have to start out as friends or as colleagues at the same institution or rank; you do have to respect each other enough to trust the
value of your differences and to be willing to change or compromise some of your ideas, and this applies to all team members if the group is large.

Write together because when you talk to each other you find yourselves responding to issues in the same way or expanding each other’s responses in ways you find stimulating. Write together because you both care about a particular topic. Because as a team you explored a similar question or gathered the same data. Write together because it will energize and motivate you and potentially teach you a lot.

**Why Write This Piece Together?**

If the idea of writing collaboratively appeals to you, the next step is to find a good project for collaboration. Not all topics will be equally interesting to you and your prospective coauthors, and even if they are, your schedules may not align to make collaboration on them possible. Ede and Lunsford publish separately as well as together. So do we. In contrast, the feminist critics Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have published almost exclusively together (although Gilbert has also published poetry and creative nonfiction on her own). You might find someone you’d like to write with sometimes, but it doesn’t have to be your next project or the one that’s been on your back burner for a while. And yet a stalled project often comes to life with a fresh perspective. We recommend developing a first project together, and, if that works, consider bringing your coauthor on to other projects. Or not. A collaboration is not a marriage. Some projects will need to be solo, while others will need to be collaborations with others. The conversation you need to have is why this project. What can each coauthor bring to it that none of you is able to do alone?

**Why—or Why Not—Write Together Now?**

A conversation about logistics can help determine whether this is the time to write together or whether it would be better to delay the project and write together at another, more opportune time. Review your current and upcoming projects, commitments, and responsibilities and sketch a timeline for this project, from planning to publication. Look at other essays in this section to get a sense of the tasks ahead of you if this is your first project. Other scholarly commitments, upcoming committee assignments, tenure or promotion, job searches, weddings, pregnancies, and child- or eldercare will not derail the project if you plan around them—all scholars, even the most productive, have lives outside academia. The trick is transparency and planning.

Another issue to consider is the value of collaboration at your institution. If you are pretenure at a research-intensive institution, you may need solo publications early in your career. Or you may be at an institution that values collaboration. Check with your department chair or relevant committees as you consider this question.

**What Might Go Wrong?**

We recommend that all potential coauthors read the section “Managing Author Relationships” carefully and talk through each issue candidly before they find themselves needing to address it. A careful analysis of these and other potential problems will make it much less likely that you will have to deal with them; and if you do, you will have conversations from when you were more levelheaded to look back on.
A Note about Power Dynamics

Whereas most issues of collaboration are best discussed directly, the issues arising from power dynamics need to be considered and treated carefully and may be the most important issues to consider. Junior faculty members or graduate students may achieve professional advancement by agreeing to collaborate on a project; senior faculty members may want to provide that opportunity, especially as deserving colleagues seek publishing opportunities and as editors of long-running textbooks look for new authors to take over. However, some senior faculty members may be looking for someone to do most of the work in return for the promise of advancement, and some junior faculty members and graduate students may want the advancement but not be willing or able to do the work even if it is divided equitably. In considering collaborations across professional levels, decide whether you are looking to provide or receive the kind of mentorship and direction offered in graduate school or whether you imagine a more equal partnership.

If you are a junior member of a collaborative team, gather as much information as you can about how your potential coauthor imagines the relationship. Consult a trusted mentor as you weigh the costs and benefits of the project. How will you react to doing more than what you consider to be your share of the work or about deferring to the ideas of your coauthor? What do you expect from your coauthor? If you are the senior member of the team, consider your motives for collaboration and also the extent of mentoring you are willing or able to do as part of it. How frustrated will you be with a writing partner who does not know how the publishing process works? How will you react to challenges to long-held beliefs and practices?

Before the Collaborative Project Begins

If you have determined that now is the time and place for collaboration, there are more questions to be answered before you get underway. Many of these are good questions to ask before launching any writing project. With collaborative work, however, addressing them early takes on added importance. When a collaboration is well underway is no time to discover that you don’t agree on issues such as those discussed in the following sections.

How Will You Handle Authorial Order?

We urge you to agree on authorial order before you start work. Doing so is a safeguard against ugly strife that can arise among the best of us and potentially derail or diminish the project once it is underway.

A common way to determine order of authorship in the humanities is to quantify the work. But quantity is slippery; a few sentences can be all it takes to transform a project, and prior publications on the topic also add context and insight. Also consider whose idea the project was initially, who brought it to fruition, and who will do the major drafting of the manuscript.

In the sciences, it is customary for the project leader to be listed first, even if that person did very little drafting or revision. This often occurs, too, when faculty members in any discipline publish collaboratively with students. Often the project leader or faculty member is also the best-known of the coauthors, so having that person’s name appear first can also catch the attention of potential publishers and readers.
In the humanities, sometimes, the person who stands to benefit most from being listed first is given first-author status. That person may be coming up for tenure or promotion or may teach at an institution where only first-author status counts. This is a delicate matter and should be considered carefully, especially if that person would not be listed first in other circumstances.

Some coauthors opt for alphabetical order. This is one way to resist a perceived institutional or disciplinary drive to quantify faculty members’ labor and cultural capital. It is also a system that, if adopted early in the collaboration, prevents changed circumstances and different balances of labor from creating hard feelings or constant renegotiations of authorial order. If you and your coauthors are producing multiple publications, you may want to take turns on authorial attribution in the sequence of your publications, which is what we do in our two-person collaborations. In most of our projects, our workload is about equal, although we often shift primary roles. By the time one of our works goes to publication, we typically can’t remember who drafted which passage; we have a “Rebecca-Sandra” voice that takes over everything we write. So alternating names seems a practical and ethical choice for us. A word of caution: some publishers ask authors to submit initial abstracts using a web interface, and we have found that once an account is started, changing authorial order can involve multiple layers of approval and frustration—another reason to finalize the decision of authorial order early on.

**What Working Relationship Do You Imagine?**

Once you have a potential project, you need to discuss the more delicate question of how you plan to work together. This will be determined by your personalities, status, and areas of expertise; however, unless you are close friends, only your respective areas of expertise will be obvious as you begin considering collaboration. Regardless of prior acquaintance or experience, this is a conversation we recommend for everyone on every project. No two projects are the same, so even if you have worked together before, it is helpful to have the conversation for each project rather than risk making any incorrect assumptions.

Will one person be in charge? Will all the coauthors have equal voice in the shape of the project? Will anyone have veto power? How will you handle disagreements? Navigating hierarchies is always complicated, especially when there are uneven power relations between coauthors—for instance, when one is a professor and another a graduate student, one a native speaker and another a nonnative speaker, one a senior faculty member and another a junior faculty member, when coauthors have a different status in the discipline, or even when their institutions have different reputations. Hierarchies also exist between colleagues and friends, even good friends, and it is better to talk them through before you start work, just as you would with a stranger. It is wiser to identify differences early and if necessary agree not to work together than it is to discover critical differences when the project is well underway, when those differences can imperil either the project or personal or professional relationships.

**How Will the Work Be Divided?**

This will to some extent be determined by the number of coauthors and the type of project you are undertaking. If there are several of you, you might divide the work into discrete sections of the manuscript, with one person or several people drafting each part independently. This is an efficient approach, but the intellectual benefit of collaboration comes when you read each other’s material and work together to revise and to develop a single voice. Failure to do that leads to something more like committee writing, which is rarely stylistically inviting.
Collaboration goes beyond drafting and writing to include the various administrative tasks associated with the project. We have learned—the hard way—the importance of listing all the necessary tasks and deciding who will do which. Some, like reviewing galleys, can and probably should be shared; others are better handled consistently by one person, with the others copied on correspondence, of course. Other essays in this section give a sense of specific tasks involved in publishing.

**How Will You Manage the Logistics of Working Together?**

Some writers still prefer to work side by side, traveling to each other’s homes during breaks or setting aside time to write at academic conventions. Such bursts of focused writing can be more productive than distance writing, which provides less accountability and is more easily interrupted. On the other hand, drafting separately allows each coauthor to write at different times, accommodating different writing habits, time zones, and schedules—and the complexities of other professional and personal responsibilities. Talking these options through before you commit to a collaborative project allows you to establish a reasonable timeline and to seek institutional support for any technology you might need.

Many other responsibilities need to be assigned, from the literature review to responding to reviewers to adherence to a publisher’s specified style sheet.

Even with only two authors, your collaboration needs an identified project manager, someone who’s good with schedules, deadlines, and the big picture and who can keep track of communication, distribution and completion of tasks, and deadlines. A plethora of software can help with project management and related communication. Large groups may find a closed communication network such as Slack to be a useful way to organize and share focused messages and ensure that threads do not get lost. Some use a shared Google Calendar to set work or meeting dates and deadlines. Others rely on some combination of email, text, WhatsApp, and direct messaging. The “keep it simple” philosophy that guides our own work was learned from participating in projects that included so many ways of communicating that we lived in fear of missed messages.

**What Is the Ideal Placement for This Publication?**

The question of where collaborative work should be published may need to be determined or revisited later in the project, but it is important to have an initial conversation about it. Is this project geared toward scholarly publication? Will it be used as a textbook? Is it aimed at the public? These are broad questions that are probably easily answered in the early stages of the project.

You also need to consider potentially more complex issues, such as these: Do you want royalties from the publication? If you are self-publishing, which Creative Commons license will you use? How dedicated are the coauthors to open-source publication? Will you publish in a venue where the authors must make financial contributions to the publication? Will you publish with a press that doesn’t make free online access available? Will you publish with a press known for setting prices far too high, thus making your work accessible only to those with money or access to a research library? With what urgency does each of you view the timetable to publication? If some coauthors are facing a job search or promotion decision, they may feel greater need for speed and thus want to choose the first willing publisher rather than hold out for the most prestigious one.
As the Collaborative Project Gets Underway

Publisher’s Requirements
If you have a publisher before you begin writing, or if you have a desired publisher or publication in mind, all the coauthors need to be clear about deadlines; manuscript format; the process of manuscript submission; limitations on images, tables, and figures; and other contractual details. All of these should be kept in mind by all coauthors as you draft. If the publisher wants MLA style and one coauthor is drafting in APA, it makes onerous work for the person who, before manuscript submission, must assure whole-manuscript adherence to the house style.

Deadlines
Know each other’s schedules, both quotidian and through the life of the project. Will one of you be traveling? Does one of you have commitments that will take you away from the project before it’s finished? How will you work around these things honestly? If one of you will be unavailable during a key aspect of the project, especially at the end, is the other willing to pick up the additional work? Or is this perhaps not the right time for you to enter into a collaboration?

Writing
Especially if they don’t already know each other well, coauthors need to expect and accept different styles of communication and different rhythms of work. For example, Sandra prefers to write into the night, while Rebecca is up and writing only a few hours after Sandra falls asleep. Our productive hours begin to overlap at mid-morning, so that is when we review each other’s work and come together virtually or in person to talk through issues or questions that arose in our solo-hours’ work. Sandra needs silence to write, while Rebecca prefers to write with carefully selected music. We try to accommodate each other’s routines or ideas about productivity while not gnarling our own routines and ideas. It is the very differences between coauthors that produce the best work.

We recommend that coauthors work hierarchically, with one person drafting and both (or all) revising together. It is in the conversations surrounding this revision that the magic of collaboration occurs and the coherence of the piece emerges. Knowledge is generated, expanded, transformed, and articulated in ways that no individual author could do alone. And in the best of cases, the energy of these conversations is transferred to the text, making it more engaging for readers. The downside is that most of the work of this kind of collaboration will be done after the draft is completed.

Other tasks are best completed synchronously. This applies especially to outlines and introductory materials. The progress may be slow, but if everyone agrees on a provisional draft, it is easier to then separate and work hierarchically. This synchronous work should also be allowed to slip into more general conversation at times, especially if the coauthors do not know each other well. When coauthors feel at ease with each other, they are better able to talk through concerns or propose revisions.
**Revising and Rewriting**

The revision stage adds so much to collaborative scholarly projects. If you don't know your coauthors well, or if your power relationships aren't balanced, revision may be a gradual process. It is always stressful to have others read and revise your work—something all coauthors should remember. Adding explanations for changes in marginal comments may help, but the revision and rewriting stages should include a lot of direct talk as well. And everyone needs to work to keep their egos tamed. Coauthors need to feel comfortable making radical revisions to each other's drafts, but in the process all manner of power relationships come into play. If there are only two of you, we suggest that you make a copy of the text in its current draft and then freely revise that copy. If you are working in a program such as *Google Docs*, the software saves each version of the text, so you won't have to make a preliminary copy.

Once a draft is complete, everyone should read it carefully without editing and then schedule time to talk (ideally face-to-face, but if not then in video chat so you can see each other and pay attention to body language and facial expression). Start by reviewing the direction the piece has taken, the ways the parts go together, and moments that seem particularly strong. Even longtime collaborators appreciate a little praise. Then discuss, and agree on, what needs to be added or cut and divide up the revision so each section gets at least one set of new eyes.

**Technology**

Over twenty-five years of long-distance collaboration on both essayistic writing and mixed-mode qualitative research, we've used a variety of technologies. Some were wonderful; some didn't work for us. We've learned to keep the technologies as simple as possible. *Google Docs* and *FaceTime* are our current go-to programs, allowing us to talk with each other and see each other while the two of us work simultaneously on a single version of a single document. When we asked colleagues on social media what they used for collaborative writing, we found Google Docs the overwhelming response there too. There was less agreement about how to talk while writing (which not everyone does). FaceTime helps the two of us approximate a face-to-face writing experience. Larger groups use *Zoom* or other commercial conferencing software that allows all participants to be seen in individual windows. Sandra is currently working successfully with a team of more than two dozen faculty members across a dozen countries using a combination of *Zoom* and *Google Docs*.

Before the project begins, test any unfamiliar technologies the team is planning to use. Most collaborative teams using image-processing, sound-recording, corpus-based, or statistical software wisely designate one or two members to assume technical responsibility, but we recommend that all coauthors feel comfortable using the selected software or that all are familiar enough with it to explain the method and output. This also applies to resulting data if they are reporting data-driven research. Everybody who will use selected software should practice in advance.

**Storage**

Storage is the one area that researchers generating large data sets, corpora, or multiple texts agree is a problem, and there seems to be no ideal solution on the horizon. You will need to decide where to store drafts, data, and PDFs of sources you gather. We used Sandra's institutional network until it ran out of space, then a commercial
web- and data-hosting service, and now Google Docs and Dropbox. For a multiauthor project we have underway, we use Sync and store screen-capture videos on YouTube. Technologies are constantly changing, but the trick to this aspect of successful collaboration is to find what works for your writing style and stick to that for the entire project. An index document can also be helpful, especially when it includes links to subdocuments and drafts.

**Talking**

One of the joys of collaborative writing is the ongoing conversations about the project. We have found it empowering to talk while we write, even though we’re seldom in the same place these days—sometimes not even on the same continent. For the production of this essay, we met at and after the MLA convention and worked together in person to brainstorm and draft an outline. We talked about what we wanted the essay to accomplish, and we talked to other coauthor teams to get ideas and cautionary advice.

This kind of talking keeps us collaborating. We might begin a conversation with few ideas or little focus, but we generally end it energized and ready to write. From all our previous collaboration, we’ve learned that even though the outline changes as the project develops, early outlining helps everybody see and agree on where the piece might go and how they might contribute to it. The actual writing of this essay occurred long-distance with some solo drafting, but mostly we were both online, on FaceTime, while we drafted in a shared Google Doc. Much of that time we weren’t even talking, but whenever a question or issue came up, we could pause and talk it through. The clatter of each other’s keyboards has become the soundtrack for our writing. And working simultaneously, virtually face-to-face, keeps each of us from wandering off to do the laundry, grade papers, or binge-watch TV.

**As the Collaborative Project Concludes**

**Communicating with Publishers and Submitting the Manuscript**

We recommend that only one member of the team communicate with the publisher while copying communications to the other members (unless there are reasons to proceed otherwise). The publisher needs to know who to write to, and they also need a crisp line of communication with that one person—not a variety of emails exchanged with a variety of coauthors. Whichever coauthor has the duty of communicating with the publisher should be the person who submits the finished manuscript.

**Final Editing and Citation Style**

One coauthor should take responsibility for the final editing of the manuscript before it goes to the publisher: line-editing the manuscript for grammatical correctness, cohesive style, correct punctuation, and similar concerns. Someone must also take responsibility for the manuscript’s adherence to the publisher’s specified style sheet. Logically, that will also be the person who aligns the citations with the bibliographic entries. Schedule these two tasks while allowing sufficient time for coauthors to review and revise the editing.
Responding to Reviewers, Determining What Changes to Make, and Coordinating Revisions

While most publishers try for a quick turnaround on reviews, the reviewers themselves aren’t always cooperative. Reviews come through the editor and back to the authors in their own good time, so it’s hard to anticipate when the postreview work can be done. Nevertheless, one person needs to be ready to take the lead on managing the revisions, even if that work arrives at a very inconvenient moment in the semester.

Page Proofs

Page proofs may look great at first glance, but authors usually find a number of things that need to be changed at this stage. Especially if the project involves a book-length manuscript, working with page proofs is a substantial job. Before those proofs arrive, know who will be responsible for going over them line by line.

Indexing

Another substantial job is indexing a book or an edited collection. An index is a boon to readers, making your book much more navigable and useful. However, many publishers require the authors to do this labor. Identify which members of your team will do this work.

Acknowledgments Section

Acknowledgments in collaborative projects can take a variety of forms. Usually a collaborative book has one set of acknowledgments for the combined team. Sometimes, though, collaborative authors choose to have a series of acknowledgments—a paragraph per person, for example—in which the authors acknowledge their individual supporters and loved ones.

Publicity Material, Front Matter, Cover Art, Font, and Style

Sometimes authors have a voice in issues such as publicity material, front matter, cover art, typeface, and citation style. Will all of you debate each one of these and abide by a majority vote, coin flip, or compromise? Will just one person be commissioned to make these decisions, and is everyone comfortable with that scenario?

Managing Author Relationships

Trust

In a successful collaboration, coauthors trust each other enough to devote time and intellectual labor to the project, and this is another place where talking—and listening—is essential. Disparate power relationships underlie most collaborative projects. One coauthor is a professor, and the others graduate students. One is well known for previous publications; the other is new to publishing. Five of the coauthors know each other well; the sixth is “new in town.” The list expands exponentially as issues of native language, race, class, disability and
ability, and gender come into play. Everyone on the team must work to create a space where power, voice, and representation are as well distributed as possible. Those holding the most power have the most responsibility for this, but there is no room for bystanders.

Make space for getting to know each other not just as scholars on a project but as whole people. When we began writing together, we were colleagues in the same department, but we didn’t know each other well. Now we live in different states, but we know each other’s pets, homes, families, and culinary preferences. We also know all the signs when someone is falling behind in her work on a project, and we know the best ways to intervene and support her, rather than just gripe about or at each other. It took us several decades to get here, but sensitivity to and respect for each other are both goals and benefits of collaboration.

Evolving Argument or Argument Not Supported by Data or Literature

As writing projects progress, they inevitably evolve, often in directions not imagined by the authors. Additional textual research or data may suggest an argument is no longer sustainable; or submissions for an edited collection may suggest a different organization or overarching narrative. When the coauthors or coeditors are in agreement, the project slips into the new direction or form, even if it takes significant conversation to get there. When the coauthors or coeditors have substantial disagreements—for example, about the interpretation of a text, the significance of data, or the quality of contributors’ chapter drafts—take the time to reach consensus or majority vote before proceeding.

Ownership

Sometimes a project will include unmarked collaboration by graduate students, librarians, or other colleagues. It is customary to acknowledge the assistance of the latter two, but with students it is sometimes more complicated. A research assistant should be thanked, but anyone who generates text that appears in the final version is an author and should be identified as such in the list of authors.

Ownership of material is complicated in other ways, especially when one or more members of the team have also published independently on the topic. Sometimes a collaborative article may contradict what one of the authors has written elsewhere. If it reflects a changed opinion, that might be noted in a footnote; if not, the team needs to find a solution that retains the integrity of the piece and the author in question. Disagreements happen and in many ways elevate a collaboration above solo authorship, because they challenge us to rethink or rearticulate beliefs. We two have had our share of disagreements, some quite energetic, but most ultimately generative.

Go into your collaboration knowing there may be disagreements, and some of them may be worth fighting over. So check your passive aggression at the door, fight fairly, and don’t be mean. Speak up. And listen. This is your project. But it is theirs too.

Evolving Roles

Collaborations work best when one coauthor is always ready to back up another. With all the life issues that can derail the best-laid plans, try to ensure that no aspect of the project—data management or literature review, for example—can be done by only one person. The more complex the project, the more each coauthor should have a potential understudy.
You may find, though, that a member of the collaborative team is simply not pulling their weight, for whatever reason. Don’t let this drag on indefinitely; address and remedy it as soon as possible.

**Changing Circumstances and Roles**

A number of issues may arise that put long-term pressure on the system you and your coauthors have set up. Someone may find themselves on the job market, starting a new position, moving to another institution, taking on new family responsibilities, or experiencing illness or injury. That person may be a key participant—the one who maintains the database and spreadsheets, the one crafting the first draft of the manuscript, or the one who is coding the visual data. Each of these scenarios is a game changer that has to be negotiated on its own terms. Yet we do have some strongly held general views on how to proceed. This advice applies at all times but becomes particularly important when the collaborative project hits an obstacle:

If you hide from your coauthors because you are feeling overwhelmed or guilty because you have missed a deadline, you’re endangering the project and potentially wasting their outlays of human or economic capital. So answer or at least acknowledge your project-related messages and emails. Check in to the project site regularly and responsibly. Answer questions people are asking you, or tell them when you will. If you’re feeling overwhelmed and can’t even manage this, don’t disappear from sight. Write to everybody and say you have to take a break.

And then get yourself back in the pack as fast as possible. Don’t let a forced absence lead you to drop out of the project or just blow off your coauthors. Keep the absence as confined as possible. And no matter what, keep checking the project site and answering messages, even if that’s all you’re doing.

Equally important, no matter how frustrating it can be, all coauthors need to cut each other some slack. Be cognizant of the fact that the person who meets all the deadlines may be experiencing fewer personal distractions than the one who does not. Even if you don’t know what is going on, believe the coauthor who needs a break. Maintaining respect for each other is essential.

**More Serious Interpersonal Issues**

Some problems are not situational but personal, and usually they are less surprising in hindsight than at the time they occur. Interpersonal problems may arise as a result of a specific event, a misunderstanding, or a gradually emerging pattern of behavior that eventually becomes untenable. The problem might initially seem insignificant or par for the course, and you may be able to address it with the help of others on the team or in your professional network; however, sometimes it is best for your mental and physical health to walk away from a project, whether you make a public exit or find an excuse that keeps it private.

Pay attention to any discomfort you start to feel about working with your coauthors, and, equally important, pay attention to discomfort you or others in the team may be causing. If you hear an apparently offhand comment that disrespects a coauthor or a group with which that person identifies, don’t just let it go. Take the speaker aside and suggest a more respectful behavior, and check in with the person who may have felt disrespected. Too often those of us with one or more privileges of race, gender, class, age, ability, nationality, language, or status are unaware of the microaggressions others face every day. Collaboration is more successful
when we pay attention to the experiences of those with whom we write—an attentiveness that should inform all aspects of our lives.

While microaggressions and passive-aggressive behavior often occur in plain sight, too often, offensive behavior does not take place in front of witnesses, and even when it does, coauthors may not always recognize problematic interactions. Don’t knowingly put yourself in an unnecessarily stressful or risky situation—and don’t remain in a toxic or dangerous collaboration. If you have discussed exit strategies before the project began, you may need to revisit them. If you feel you can’t communicate with your coauthor or group, seek professional support or simply withdraw. A contract may need to be renegotiated. Bridges may be burned. If you are a junior member of the team, you may prefer to document your experience, ask others to corroborate it, and walk away. These situations may be rare, but they are probably much less rare than we might like to think.

When a coauthor drops out of the project completely, you may be faced with a range of decisions, from changing authorial order to renegotiating the distribution of royalties in your contract. Both tact and candor will serve you well as you navigate these waters. We are ourselves long-standing practitioners and advocates of collaborative research and writing. Over the years we have collaborated with dozens of other scholars, more successfully at some times than at others. We have learned to respect and account for the challenges and the benefits of collaboration and for the work that goes into making collaboration successful.

**Recommended Reading**


As the nature of academic publishing has changed in the face of new technologies, and as publishers continue to look for ways to make book publishing (and, in particular, the scholarly monograph) widely discoverable and financially sustainable, the journal article has acquired greater status in the humanities, playing an important role throughout a scholar’s career: it is increasingly the first port of call for early-career scholars and often a useful platform for introducing new ideas for established scholars.\(^1\) But whether to turn your dissertation or ongoing research project into a series of articles instead of investing in a monograph that will take a longer time to complete and publish is perhaps the first major decision you have to make as a scholar. It is not an easy one. The various fields and subfields in the humanities tend to assess the weight of scholarship in different ways. The MLA’s 2007 recommendations that “the fields represented by the MLA would be better served if the monographic book were not so broadly required or considered the gold standard for tenure and promotion” and “that journal publication should continue to be a primary venue for the advancement of knowledge” for those fields notwithstanding (“Report” 26), there are fields such as English and other modern languages where the monograph is still considered the major piece of scholarship in tenure and promotion decisions.\(^2\)

In a world where electronic publishing has led to the proliferation of publication platforms hosting various journals alongside one another, it is important for you to understand that journals, even those on the same website, serve different purposes and reach different audiences. For example, generalist journals, which are sponsored by professional societies, are available to members across periods, subfields, and genres and come to be identified with particular disciplines. However, in many disciplines there will be specialist journals directed at specific subfields and even topics. Not all journals are considered equal. In fact, in journal-centered fields, publication outlets are often ranked, and a few top-tier journals function as the gold standard in the evaluations for professional achievement including tenure and promotion. In some disciplines, the selectivity of the journal—the percentage of articles it publishes each year—is seen as a measure of value. More importantly, institutions make distinctions between refereed and nonrefereed journals—that is, between those that publish articles only after they have gone through a rigorous peer review process and those that are vetted solely by editors or members of the editorial board. While the substance and quality of an article are certainly important, the journal in which it appears, the audience it reaches, and the impact it has will have significant bearing on the evaluation of one’s professional achievement.

If you are a beginning scholar, you might be asking yourself why you should send your article to one journal instead of another. How does one know which journal is central to a field or subfield when they all claim to be interested in the same period, genre, or author? And how do you decide which of these journals is going to be an effective tool for disseminating your scholarship while helping advance your career and intellectual standing? Which one is likely to provide supportive feedback? Which journal is most likely to advance your own thinking and scholarship? Like many other things in academia, one learns through observation, asking questions, speaking with one’s peers, and paying attention to how journal publishing responds to a changing profession. You

Simon Gikandi is the Robert Schirmer Professor and department chair of English at Princeton University and a former editor of PMLA.
should take every opportunity to develop a good sense of the general culture and process of academic journal publishing. Browsing in the periodicals section of your library, attending book exhibitions at conferences, signing up for eTOC (“electronic table of contents”) alerts for journals you regularly read, and attending sessions with journal editors at conferences are good ways of understanding what might seem, from a distance, to be a mystical process.

**Understanding Journals**

Scholarly journals in the humanities tend to be guided by a basic set of principles. They are outlets for publishing or disseminating new research in their field and for providing original interpretation of new findings and research. They are also committed to accuracy, academic integrity, and the highest qualities of scholarship, typically employing various forms of peer review to ensure that these values and qualities are upheld. The most common form of publication is the long scholarly article, but many journals also publish other types of writing, including book reviews, review essays, bibliographic notes, discussion forums, conference proceedings, and bibliographies. It is not unusual for journals to have different sections for each of these categories. For example, in addition to regular articles, *PMLA* publishes material in the features Criticism in Translation, Little-Known Documents, and Theories and Methodologies, all considered central to the scholarly mission of the journal. Another journal, *Modernism/Modernity*, publishes book reviews and hosts an online-only feature on the publisher’s website.

Scholarly journals have different policies on how the various features proceed through the review and publication process. *PMLA*, for example, subjects all submissions of regular articles to a form of anonymous peer review by at least two reviewers. As the journal’s website notes, “Articles recommended by these readers are then sent to the members of the Editorial Board, who meet periodically with the editor to make final decisions. Until a final decision is reached, the author’s name is not made known to readers, to members of the Editorial Board, or to the editor.” Proposals for essay clusters in the special features Theories and Methodologies and The Changing Profession can be solicited by the editor or sent in by MLA members through an annual call for proposals, ensuring that members “have a voice in shaping the editorial direction of the journal”; all proposals are reviewed by the editor and editorial board (“Submitting Manuscripts”).

Almost all journals clearly state their editorial policy in the journal itself or on its website. Whereas *PMLA*, as a generalist journal of a large and heterogeneous association, welcomes essays of interest to “those concerned with the study of language and literature” and is open to “a variety of topics . . . and to all scholarly methods and theoretical perspectives” (“Submitting Manuscripts”), some journals limit their scope to a particular period, method, or language. In addition to a statement of editorial policy, journals provide you with information about submission requirements, the criteria for decision-making, policies about ethical issues like avoiding conflicts of interest, the author’s responsibility to obtain permission to use third-party material that does not fall within fair-use guidelines, and information about where the journal is indexed. But where and how does one find out about a journal’s special initiatives? Sometimes journals send out announcements for special issues, which often have guest editors. These announcements may be in the journal itself, on the websites of the publisher or sponsoring professional society, or on electronic discussion lists. In addition, journal editors can commission certain
types of submissions, such as book review essays. Again, it is important for you to have a sense of the common practices in the journals to which you are thinking of submitting your work. Knowing who the editor and the editorial staff of a journal are will help you get a sense of how the publication sees itself in your field. This information will usually be available on the journal’s masthead or website. Some journals may also list editors for specific sections, such as the book review editor or the editor of an online-only component of the journal. Here you will find contact information for submissions, questions, and so on. If the journal has one editor, this is the person who has oversight over the journal and its policies and direction.

Although journals are run by their editors, they have editorial or advisory boards, editorial consultants, or even an editorial collective. Quite often these terms are used interchangeably to refer to a group of scholars who provide a supervisory—and, in some instances, fiduciary—oversight over the journal, setting its editorial direction and facilitating the publication process. The size of an editorial board varies from a half dozen to two or three dozen, and some editorial boards are more active than others. Some journals use the services of their editorial board as the need arises; others mandate their active involvement in the submission and review process (see Prabhu’s essay in this collection for more on editorial board service). In addition to editorial boards, many journals may have an advisory committee made up of experts from relevant fields and subfields. These members are regularly called on to read articles or to recommend reviewers.

Most scholarly journals in the humanities are housed in, or sponsored by, an organization or institution. This may be a scholarly society, research institute, university, library, museum, foundation, or in some cases a government agency or nongovernmental organization. It is not unusual for journals that are independent of sponsoring organizations to depend on institutions for funding and other support. Even those journals that are able to support their operations with revenue from library subscriptions and advertising are increasingly seeking partnerships with larger publishers to expand their reach and modes of access and to recognize operational efficiencies and thus cost savings as the market for scholarly journal publishing increasingly consolidates. A journal might have an editorial office in one university or institution and a business relationship with a different university press or academic publisher that oversees printing, distribution, and marketing and sales. A journal’s publishing partner can be a good indicator of its range.

Another thing you may consider as you decide to submit work to a journal is how readers get access to the journal. Is its circulation restricted to members of a scholarly society? Are articles available through a paywalled database that readers would access through institutional or individual subscriptions? Is the journal entirely open access and therefore freely available online without any subscription or login—and, if so, is it easily discoverable in search engines and indexed by services like Google Scholar? If it’s a paywalled journal, does it make new issues open access for a period of time or supply authors with share links so they can post their article on social media or share it with colleagues? As you imagine the audience for your work, you may want to consider how a particular journal would help you reach that audience.

### Scholarly Articles

Before you submit your article, you need to understand the general characteristics of a journal article and the different kinds of platforms in which it is published. You also need to think carefully about the kind of work
that is suited to a journal article as opposed to another format, like a monograph or op-ed. While your article will probably come out of your research—a dissertation or a book in progress, for example—an article is not merely an excerpt from a larger piece of writing but a genre with its own identity. As Eric Hayot notes in *The Elements of Academic Style*, journal articles are shorter than book chapters, use fewer examples, and cover less material (85), but they have longer introductions (97). An article is expected to be complete in itself, despite space constraints; its research must be both comprehensive and compressed within a clearly defined format. Whatever its subject and method, a journal article must have a self-contained and original argument, engage coherently with scholarly issues in a clearly defined field, and be presented in a clear and coherent form in a standard language.

Given the diversity of journals, there is no universal structure for a journal article or a blueprint that one can follow, but you can learn much from looking at articles published in journals of interest. Examining published articles will also give you a sense of the tone of the journal, its theoretical approaches, and its methodology. Above all, familiarizing yourself with the structure of a journal will provide you with insights into its audience. As Hayot notes, writing well “begins with knowing who, and what, you are writing for” and the specific context in which writing takes place (37). The acceptance of your article is going to depend on the norms that govern a particular journal, its ability to speak to its mission and audience. For this reason, Hayot suggests, you, as an academic writer, need to understand “the intellectual habits and patterns of thought of the journal or press with which you hope to publish” and the “general scholarly norms . . . that surround it” (37). You want to send your article to a journal that publishes articles in the mode that matches your work.

Scholarly norms are not always visible, but there are a few things that are considered essential to having your journal article published or, as Wendy Laura Belcher puts it, common reasons articles are rejected. In *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks*, Belcher notes that articles are rejected for both general and specific reasons: an article will likely be rejected because it does not fit the institutional context of the journal, is aimed at an audience that is too narrow or too broad, or does not exhibit scholarly engagement (69). Articles are rejected because they simply do not have at least three elements that distinguish scholarly articles from writing in other forums such as magazines—originality, a solid argument, and an appropriate structure. In order to be published, your article must be judged to contribute new knowledge to its field or to significantly reorient existing knowledge through rethinking or reinterpretation of existing materials (Weller 50). The originality of your article will often depend on the argument you make and its clear articulation.

Scholars of publishing and journal editors alike agree that one of the most common problems with submitted articles, to quote Gary Olson, is “a failure on the part of authors to express their thesis clearly and early in the article” (qtd. in Belcher 82). Belcher has made the valid claim that “the main reason why editors and reviewers reject articles is because authors do not have an argument or do not state it early and clearly” (82). Hayot is not convinced that a thesis or argument needs to come early in the article (he prefers the use of “anticipation, surprise, and suspense” [99]), but he, too, is convinced that a strong argument is essential to engaging the reader (90). Still, inexperienced writers are not always aware of what constitutes an argument or what makes certain arguments stronger than others.
A good argument starts with a broad thesis, defined by Gordon Harvey in his influential “Brief Guide to the Elements of the Academic Essay” as

your main insight or idea about a text or topic, and the main proposition that your essay demonstrates. It should be true but arguable (not obviously or patently true, but one alternative among several), be limited enough in scope to be argued in a short composition and with available evidence, and get to the heart of the text or topic being analyzed (not be peripheral). It should be stated early in some form and at some point recast sharply (not just be implied), and it should govern the whole essay (not disappear in places). (2)

The thesis is, however, just the starting point of an argument. The goal of a good journal article is to “persuade someone by engaging their doubts and providing evidence to overcome those doubts . . . to persuade a reader to believe in something” (Belcher 82). Good writing starts with the recognition that you are writing for a reader and that the reader is what Hayot calls “the home of your ideas”: “Writing is a performance that happens in the intersection between your work and the reader’s experience of it” (48).

As you decide which part of your work should be submitted to a journal or reflect on a set of ideas that could become a journal article, keep in mind that your work will be subjected to some form of peer review, that it will be read by leading experts in your field, and (if accepted) that it will be circulated in your field. You should avoid the temptation to submit work that was praised elsewhere. The paper you wrote for your seminar or presented at a conference panel could have worked well with those who read or heard it, but it does not mean it will work in a journal without considerable revision. Turning a conference presentation or seminar paper into a publishable article is a self-conscious process of revision during which you will rethink your argument, make the necessary structural changes, and recalibrate the presentation of your argument to foreground its main points and underscore its contribution to the field.

To turn a successful conference presentation or seminar paper into a strong journal article, you need to address several things. You have to imagine an audience for the article that goes beyond your colleagues, students, or teachers. As Belcher notes, this audience must not be too narrow or too broad but somewhere in between (69). You want an article that will interest as many readers as possible within a field or subfield, but not one that is dumbed down. You also want to rethink the structure of your article and to consider the relation of its different parts to one another and to the overall orchestration of your argument. If you have already identified the journal that seems to be the best home for your article, consider it to be a template for important components such as the introduction, the mode of presenting evidence, and what Hayot calls the “structural rhythm” of the writing (81). A key component of this structural rhythm is the tone you adopt in your article and your ability to sustain an authoritative voice.

**Book Reviews**

There are scholarly journals that devote considerable space to book reviews. In most cases, book reviews are solicited from authors who have been recommended by the editorial board, but if you would like to review a particular title, you should contact the editor or book review editor of the journal to see whether they are interested. In your inquiry, you should inform the editor or review editor of your field of expertise, your
qualifications, and why you think the book should be reviewed. Quite often, publishers of scholarly books send review copies to editors of journals in specific disciplines or subdisciplines in the humanities. Editors select the books they think are most relevant to the field, deal with new and significant issues, or are generating debates in the field and then assign them to reviewers. Some journals also carry a list of books received, and if you see a book you would like to review on the list, you can ask the editors if they are interested in a full review. Keep in mind that book reviews tend to have a short word count (750–1,000 words) and to follow a specific format including ordering information and, in electronic publications, a purchasing link with a discount code.

Review Essays and Review of Research

Review essays are extended reviews of books, often with a common theme. Like book reviews, these essays contain information on all the books reviewed, but they give their authors greater space for discussion. This means that the review essay is longer, sometimes as long as the journal article, and its author has the scope to move beyond the specific titles under review and to connect them to larger debates in the field and even compare them to previous works. Editors of journals often use the review essay as an opportunity to explore the state of the field. Recent books on a major author or topic are used to examine the changing nature of the field and to highlight the most significant issues in the field or subfield. Similarly, reviews of research describe and evaluate recent work in a field over a long period of time, highlighting trends and transformations and establishing a framework for future work.

Depending on their specialization, journals publish research review essays that provide a general overview of selected topics of research literature through critical and descriptive essays. Most journals solicit review essays for specific issues, but some may send out calls for review essays. There are also journals that are exclusively devoted to book reviews or reviews of research. If you want to contribute a review essay or a review of research, you should contact the editors with specific titles for review and, when applicable, a broad topic or rubric for a possible discussion.

Selecting a Journal

As I noted at the outset, the success of your article depends on one major factor—locating the right journal. But how do you go about finding which journal is right for your work? Word of mouth or online discussion forums can give you a sense of journals in a particular area. Reference works and bibliographies and directories of periodicals contain practical information on journals—the MLA Directory of Periodicals, for example, gives information on over six thousand journals in the fields of literature, literary theory, language and linguistics, composition, and the history of the book. Entries in the directory include details reported by the publisher on editorial policies, contact information, submission requirements, modes of publication (print or electronic), subscription information, and useful statistics on the number of manuscripts submitted and accepted each year and the time from submission to acceptance and publication. For international references Ulrich’s Periodicals Directory provides comprehensive and authoritative information on periodicals published throughout the world.

Digital tools for finding suitable journals to submit your article to are becoming increasingly common. For example, large publishers like Sage, Taylor and Francis, and Wiley have online “journal suggester” tools (all
Currently in beta) that recommend journals (among those they publish) based on an article’s abstract, title, keywords, or some combination of these elements. Given the large corpus of STEM journals published by these companies, however, the value of these tools for humanities and social sciences journals—and whether publishers more focused on humanities and social science journals, like Oxford, Cambridge, Duke, and Johns Hopkins, adopt such tools—will be something to keep an eye on. In the sciences, some tools exist on platforms that aggregate journals from various publishers—for example, the Journal/Author Name Estimator (JANE) searches across the PubMed database to recommend journals to authors. Attempts to aggregate data across all journal publishers are nascent (one such example, launched by a company called Research Square, is JournalGuide at journalguide.com). Time is sure to tell how widely these tools will be made available and whether scholars will adopt them (and in what fields).

In thinking about the journal that might provide the best home for your work, it is useful to try to identify the typology of your article—does it fall clearly into a type or prototype? Hayot provides several general types of scholarly work that you will find useful in classifying your research: archival, critical, biographical or historical, aesthetic, documentary, and linguistic (116–18). With the exception of general journals, most periodicals are clearly identified with these types. If a publication describes itself as a journal of literary history, it is unlikely to publish a work in aesthetics or linguistics. If a publication is devoted to the works of one author, period, or geographic area, it has already set up limits on what it will publish. But keep in mind that these prototypes undergo subtle transformations over time. Journals devoted to literary history have evolved as the notion of what constitutes historical work has changed, and journals devoted to particular periods such as Victorian or modern have expanded their temporal range.

There are a few other pragmatic issues to consider before you submit your journal article: you will need to understand the journal’s review process and the time it takes for your article to be reviewed and published. This information will help you assess your situation: Are you under pressure to publish in order to meet a tenure and promotion deadline? Does the journal you are interested in have a record of publishing on time, or does it seem to have a serious backlog? Does it have a peer review policy—usually the most important criterion considered by tenure and promotion committees? If you hold a tenured or tenure-track position, does your institution consider impact in its consideration of publications for tenure and promotion? If so, you may want to learn more about how your institution assesses impact; for instance, it may rely on impact factors or other metrics.5

**Submitting a Manuscript to a Journal**

Once you’ve identified a journal you’d like to submit your work to, consult the information and instructions on the process of submitting a manuscript to find out, for example, how many copies you will need to submit, the length and style of the article, and the form and mode of submission. You should make sure you have complied with other requirements of the journal that you have selected: Does the journal require that you be a member of its sponsoring organization before you can submit your article? Does the journal require anonymous review? If so, your name should appear on a separate page of the manuscript or in a separate section in an online portal. Make sure that there is nothing in the text of the article or the metadata that might identify you as the author, and avoid self-reference or reference to your own work. If you have to cite yourself, do so in the third person.
Most of this information is provided in the editorial policy or on the home page of a journal. The guidelines for submitting manuscripts to *PMLA*, for example, address author anonymity, length, originality, exclusive submission, language, scope, and quality (“Submitting Manuscripts”). Paying close attention to the information provided in a journal’s guidelines on submission will save you time and trouble. Most journals, for example, publish their style guidelines online and ask you to follow them or direct you to a published style manual. In addition to making sure that you maintain author anonymity and that no version of your article has been published elsewhere (originality is the key to scholarly writing), you need to ensure that you do not violate the journal’s policy regarding simultaneous submissions. If you do not find a requirement of exclusive submission in a journal’s editorial policy, it is prudent to ask the editor about one, since most peer-reviewed journals prefer exclusive submission. Where simultaneous submission is permitted, you should let the editor of each journal you’re submitting to know which other journals you’ve submitted to. This is an area where there should not be any surprises.

When your article is ready to be submitted, there are some basic guidelines to follow. Your article should be addressed to the journal’s editor or managing editor. The name and contact information of the editor can be found in the front pages of the journal or on its website. Here, too, you will find information on the format and mechanism of submission; most journals now use submission software like *Scholar One* or *Editorial Manager*, but some may request that you email the article file. Unless the instructions specify otherwise, your article should be accompanied by a cover letter providing basic information including your name, address, email address, and full title of the article. You should also use the cover letter to call attention to special features, such as illustrations, and to anticipate some issues that might come up down the line, such as permissions for copyrighted work. If you anticipate traveling during the review process, it is useful to provide an email address that you will be checking regularly so that the journal can contact you if necessary. As you prepare to send off your manuscript, keep in mind that journals are very specific about requirements for submission and that practices vary and keep on changing, so you should check to make sure your information is up-to-date. Before you send off the manuscript, make sure you keep a copy in a secure drive that is organized to ensure version control and to which you have easy access.

If the journal you are submitting your article to uses electronic editorial management software, you should pay careful attention to the requirements for electronic submissions and follow the template or guidelines provided by the publisher. Editorial management software requires that you first register for a portal, acquire a digital identifier, and log in to submit your article. In this form of submission, it is imperative to prepare your manuscript according to the instructions provided by the journal or publisher to make sure that your work is accepted by the system for review. These instructions will specify the format of the manuscript (*Microsoft Word* and *LaTeX* files are some common documentation preparation software systems) and, if necessary, directions for converting your file into a PDF document. There will also be guidelines on how to upload video or audio files. Once uploaded, your manuscript will be put through either a preliminary review or a peer review process and may be run through plagiarism-detection software. If your submission is successful, you will get an acknowledgment.
Evaluation of the Manuscript

The review of material for both print and web journals tends to follow similar lines. Once your article arrives at the editorial office of the journal or is uploaded on the portal, it undergoes a preliminary in-house review by members of the editorial staff. The editor of the journal or a designated assistant will ascertain whether your article is suitable for the journal and follows the established formatting guidelines. If your article meets the eligibility criteria, it will be sent through the journal’s review process—in the case of peer-reviewed journals (or sections of them), it will typically be sent to consultant readers, usually specialists in their fields or subfields. The readers will also be sent a review form in which they will be asked to comment on your article.

There is no standard review form, but in general editors ask reviewers to respond to the following questions, which you should always keep in mind as you organize your article: What is the importance of the subject or topic of the article? What is its contribution to its field of scholarship? Is the argument well-organized, clear, coherent, and valid? Are the quality and quantity of research accurate and adequate? Is the writing, or mode of presentation, of high quality? The reviewers are asked to make a recommendation by checking one of the following categories: recommended for publication without reservations or with minor revisions; not recommended for publication without substantial revisions; not recommended for publication. As you reflect on the peer review process, remember that consultant readers do not make decisions on whether to publish your article or not—they just provide recommendations to editors and editorial boards. These recommendations do, however, guide the editor, the editorial board, and members of the editorial staff in making their decisions.

After reviewing the readers’ reports, the editor or editorial board will decide whether to accept your article, reject it, or send it back for revision and resubmission. If your article has been accepted, then all you need to worry about are the final procedures discussed in the section that follows. The nonacceptance of your article might feel disheartening at first, but keep in mind that the rejection of your work by one journal does not mean your work is without merit. Use the comments of the consultants and those of the board members to address the issues that might have led to the rejection of your article, and revise your work in fruitful ways for other venues. And if your article was rejected because it was deemed not appropriate for the journal you submitted it to, then think of other journals that might be better fits.

Conditional acceptances and invitations to revise and resubmit can lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding and hence need to be considered carefully. If your article has been accepted pending revisions, you will receive a letter from the editor or a member of the editorial staff with the invitation to revise and return your article by a specific date, often a few weeks before the next meeting of the editorial board. The letter will outline the proposals for revision made by members of the editorial board. The first and most important step is to make sure that you have a proper understanding of the nature of the invitation to revise: Are the revisions suggestions or a precondition for the publication of your article? Will the revised article be sent out to one or two of the original consultants, to a new group of peer reviewers, or just to the editor and editorial board? You need to clarify these matters with the editor of the journal. You also need to be certain that you are comfortable with the required revisions—do they maintain and enhance your argument, or are they pushing your work in a totally different direction? (See Bahri’s essay on responding to peer review in this collection for further discussion of this topic.)
Revisions often improve the quality of an article, but this does not mean that you should acquiesce to requests that go against your intellectual claims or goals. You will probably find that the suggested revisions enhance your argument and that you can accept most of the requests for revision and reject a few. If you do not agree with most of the revisions requested, let the editor know, in as much detail as possible, what your objections are, and suggest an alternative plan for revision. If the editor does not accept this plan, or if the position of the editorial board is firm, then you can send your article to another journal. If you have decided to accept most of the revisions, let the editor know, again in writing, what you plan to do. At this time also confirm that you are able or unable to submit the article by the stipulated deadline.

A request to revise and resubmit is different from the request for revisions discussed above. It contains no guarantee that your article will be accepted once you have revised it according to the recommendations from reviewers or the editorial board. Practices vary on how journals treat revised and resubmitted work. Some journals give editors the authority to determine whether a resubmitted article has met the criteria for revision and to decide whether to publish it. Others require a revised article to be sent back to at least one of the original consultants or back to the full editorial board to determine whether it should be published. Sometimes an article that has been revised and resubmitted has to be put through another round of reviews—that is, your revised article may be read by a different set of consultants and be reviewed by a changed editorial board. In weighing your decision to revise and resubmit an article, you need to carefully consider the individual journal’s policies and practices. Once you have decided to accept the invitation to revise and resubmit, make sure you understand the nature of the required revisions. An invitation to revise and resubmit does not usually come with a deadline, but it would be useful to inform the editor of a specific revision plan. Once you resubmit the article, make sure you remind the editor of its previous history with the journal.

When you first submit your article for review, you will receive a letter of acknowledgment informing you of the process and timeline for review. There is no standard timeline set for review, which often depends on the availability of consultants. You should, however, expect to hear from the journal in about two or three months; if you haven’t heard from the editor or a member of the editorial staff after four months, you should write to inquire about the fate of your work. In journals where the review process involves an editorial board that meets a few scheduled times a year, the process might take longer. Most editorial teams will stick to the agreed-upon review timetable, and, when there are delays, they will inform you. But if there are considerable delays in the review process and the journal is not able to make a decision within a period of four to six months, and you and the editor cannot agree on a timetable, you are free to withdraw your article and send it to another journal after informing the editor.

Acceptance of a Manuscript

The best outcome is the acceptance of your article for publication. News of this can come as soon as the reports from consultants are in or after a meeting of a journal’s editorial board. At this time you will receive a letter from the editor informing you of the good news; requests or suggestions for revision, if any; and any relevant deadlines. Even if no revisions are required, it is important to give your article a final look to make sure that there are no errors, to ensure that your work is still up-to-date, and to make improvements in the presentation of your argument. At this point the deadlines set by the editor are extremely important since publishers work
with strict schedules. Make sure that you follow any editorial guidelines provided to you, including the form the final manuscript should take, its mode of presentation, and extra materials such as abstracts and illustrations. At this stage you will also be required to submit a completed and signed publication contract. When reviewing an author agreement, you will want to note the rights you retain and what permissions you grant to the publication. Some publishers will allow you to retain the copyright, while others will ask you to transfer the copyright (the right to copy and reproduce the work, distribute the work, prepare derivative works based on the work, and publicly display and perform the work) to them.

Typical items common to journal contracts will include the duration of the contract (typically the life of the copyright and any renewals or extensions of it), your affirmation that you have obtained permission from copyright holders to use any materials (like images) that don’t fall under fair use, and a section on warranties and indemnities. In the warranties and indemnities section, the author is typically asked to warrant that the work is original, that the author is the sole author (or has obtained permission for any copyrighted material included in the article) and has full power to make the agreement, that the work was not published previously, and that it is not the subject of any other publishing agreement. In addition, the author is asked to warrant that the work violates neither the law nor the rights of third parties with respect to copyright infringement, libel, and invasion of privacy and publicity rights. Some agreements allow you to share certain versions of the article (such as the version of the manuscript submitted) in certain kinds of openly available platforms (such as your institution’s repository). Many publishers make their journal contract templates available online. If you have questions about negotiating or making sense of an author agreement, a librarian—especially a scholarly communication librarian—can be a good resource. Your article will be given a final in-house review to make sure that it has complied with the journal’s format, and then it will be handed over to the production department.

NOTES

1. Some recent publication models for books take their cues from the digital subscription model of journal publishing. For example, MIT Press’s online books platform MIT Press Direct launched a program called Direct to Open (direct.mit.edu/books/pages/direct-to-open), whereby all new titles are published on the platform and libraries can “subscribe” to “open” them (Smalley). This builds on the model conceived by the journal publisher Annual Reviews (Michael). For more on this and related models, see Hinchliffe; Cocks.

2. The 2007 MLA report states that “88.9% of departments in Carnegie Doctorate-granting, 44.4% in Carnegie Master’s, and 48% in Carnegie Baccalaureate institutions . . . rank publication of a monograph ‘very important’ or ‘important’ for tenure. The status of the monograph as a gold standard is confirmed by the expectation in almost one-third of all departments surveyed (32.9%) of progress toward completion of a second book for tenure. This expectation is even higher in doctorate-granting institutions, where 49.8% of departments now demand progress toward a second book” (“Report” 10).

3. While peer review is sometimes invoked as the defining feature of scholarly publishing, as Aileen Fyfe has shown, the practice of scholarly review more generally has a long history that is anything but monolithic. Fyfe notes that in the nineteenth century learned societies adopted a model of assessment that relied both on reports by individual peers and on “a committee decision-making process to balance against possible accusations of bias or favouritism” (much like the process still in place at many societies today). It was not until the 1970s, however, that the term peer review was used more narrowly to mean “a form of review of competence by others in the same occupation” (Fyfe).
4. The trend toward consolidation has been said to have begun in the 1950s (Resnick and Belluz). Book publishing has seen the same trend accelerate recently, in part, it is argued, because of Amazon (Foer).

5. The following library guides provide more information about impact factors and other research metrics:

   “Research Metrics,” Oregon State University Libraries (guides.library.oregonstate.edu/metrics)
   “Bibliometrics and Altmetrics,” UNLV University Libraries (guides.library.unlv.edu/c.php?g=644455&cp=4515125)
   “Scholarly Research Impact Metrics,” American University (subjectguides.library.american.edu/c.php?g=175335&p=1153992)
   “Research Impact and Citation Analysis: Journal Impact Metrics,” Penn Libraries (guides.library.upenn.edu/bibliometrics/journalimpact)
   “Introduction to Impact Factor and Other Research Metrics,” University of Illinois Library (guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=621441&cp=4328608)

   The suitability of using impact factors in the humanities has been questioned even by large companies who specialize in analytics. The HuMetricsHSS team has actively sought alternatives to metrics like impact factors, developing what they call a “values-enacted’ approach” that “requires scholars and institutions to engage in structured conversations about their values so they are able to put them into intentional practice in the research and pedagogy” (“About”).

   6. While an overview of copyright and exceptions to it is beyond the scope of this introduction, see the following resources for more information:

   US Copyright Office, “What Is Copyright?” (www.copyright.gov/what-is-copyright/)
   Cornell University Library, Copyright Information Center, “Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States” (copyright.cornell.edu/publicdomain)
   Association of University Presses, Ask UP, “How Can I Learn More about Rights and Permissions?” (ask.up.hcommons.org/how-can-i-learn-more-about-copyright/)
   Association of University Presses, “Permissions FAQ” (aupresses.org/permissions-faq/)
   Harry Ransom Center and University of Reading Library, WATCH: Writers Artists and Their Copyright Holders (norman.hrc.utexas.edu/watch/)
   Columbia University Libraries, Copyright Advisory Services, “Fair Use Checklist” (copyright.columbia.edu/basics/fair-use/fair-use-checklist.html)
   Kevin Smith, “Who Do You Work for, Faculty Author?,” Duke University Libraries (blogs.library.duke.edu/scholcomm/2012/01/25/who-do-you-work-for-faculty-author/)

   7. One such example can be found on Cambridge University Press’s site (www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/5de2fa476f6537a00ac8c45/TAM-08-ExLTP-Proprietor-Standard.pdf).

WORKS CITED

“About.” HuMetricsHSS, 2022, humetricshss.org/about/.


As a department chair, I find myself often in the position of giving advice to colleagues on publishing, professional growth, and career trajectories. As a scholar who has been around in the profession for a few decades, I am regularly approached by junior colleagues in my fields (anglophone African literature, postcolonial studies), for advice on publication outlets and book series and sometimes with a request for a book blurb. As someone who reviews manuscripts for academic presses, I have seen my share of manuscripts that need to be extensively overhauled and others that need just a few cosmetic touches. As an author, I have had to ask myself at various points in my career what kind of author (and indeed scholar) I wanted to be and how best to position myself to be that kind of author and scholar. All along the way, I have actively discussed these issues with scholars who were senior to me, with peers at around the same stage in their careers, with acquisitions editors, with scholars in fields completely different from my own, and with administrators such as chairs, deans, and provosts. If there is one plea I would make to beginning scholars, it is this: be very conscious about your relationship to your own writing and about your personal desires, goals, and timelines, and be fully aware of how those fit with the demands that may be placed on you depending on your institutional situation. An untenured assistant professor coming up for tenure in a couple of years in a department that requires a scholarly monograph faces different challenges than a full professor with two books who is working on a third. They are each situated differently from their colleagues on the lecturer track or in adjunct positions, who most likely are not being evaluated on their research productivity but may well be equally motivated to publish a monograph because they are passionate about sharing their work with readers.

All this is to say that while my assignment in this essay is to provide practical guidance on publishing scholarly monographs, the most important practical advice I would offer is this: discuss your publication plans and goals with as many key individuals as you can. The most useful advice you will receive will come from those who best understand your particular situation. Always consult with mentors, with chairs, with editors, and with senior colleagues in your own field and be sure to exchange notes with your peers. You will receive tips, suggestions, leads, cautions, reminders, friendly nudges, referrals, and so many other things that no advice column can really give you. This is not to say that there aren’t excellent sources out there to read as you write your manuscript and try to place it with a publisher. I will recommend two: Eric Hayot’s *The Elements of Academic Style: Writing for the Humanities* (Columbia UP, 2014) and William Germano’s *Getting It Published: A Guide for Scholars and Anyone Else Serious about Serious Books* (U of Chicago P, 2016 [3rd ed.]). The former considers every aspect of academic writing in the humanities, from sentence structure to the structure of the book as a whole. The latter describes the world of academic publishing from the point of view of an editor—addressing everything from how to select the press that is the best match for your book to the art of writing proposals to responding to reviewer reports, making revisions, and marketing and publicity.

As I mentioned earlier, what may be good and appropriate advice for someone at an early career stage may not work for those further along in their careers. When I meet with untenured colleagues who are on the tenure track, for example, I emphasize the importance of adhering to timelines and taking steps to meet deadlines. I
help them think through the kind of presses that they might want to approach for their particular project and help frame those choices with my own sense of the norms and expectations at our own institution. Norms and expectations vary from institution to institution (and they may change over time as well), so it is critical for those on the tenure track to consult with chairs and senior faculty members in their own departments even as they have conversations with those in their field at large. Sometimes it is the chairs and senior faculty members who need the educating—if a scholar works in a field for which the best and most appropriate press is one that their senior colleagues don’t immediately have on their radar, then preparing the groundwork for that conversation is all the more important. Next, I suggest that they prepare for the long, arduous review process by thinking in advance about the aspects of the book’s production most likely to cause delays. Being aware of the limits of fair use and securing the necessary permissions for the reproduction of images, song lyrics, and poems well in advance of publication are critical. Some of the questions to ask are the following: Will I need to secure permissions for quoting these lines of poetry? Do I need to get institutional-review-board approval for my project if it includes human subjects research? Will publishers balk at the number of illustrations I want to include in my book? Might I be able to pare down the number of illustrations to the bare minimum? Are my images in the format that the press requires for publication? Many a project (and many a tenure case) has been hampered by such encumbrances.

While the pressures of tenure force a certain amount of structure and planning in the writing of first monographs, those who have achieved tenure often struggle to have a clear sense of the trajectory ahead. Indeed, in most cases there are no clear guideposts since at most institutions there are no set timetables for future promotions. After I crossed the tenure line earlier in my career, I found myself, like many others, unsure how best to chart the course ahead. I knew that I would have to work on a second monograph to reach the rank of full professor. But how long would it take? How long should it take? I was asking these questions immediately post-tenure even as other, administrative opportunities with possibilities of program building and collaborative work presented themselves to me—opportunities that were frankly too well-suited to my interests and tastes to set aside.

I return here to my mantra. Each person’s situation is different, and there are no right or wrong career trajectories. In my own case, I decided that if my first book was my tenure book, then my next one would be the ten-year one. I told myself that I wanted to spend more time working on my second book. I really wanted to let us grow together and mature together, and I hoped that, as with any good and healthy relationship, the many years of companionship through good times and bad, through writer’s blocks and intense writing periods, would result in a happy outcome. Two separate years of fellowship support—one toward the beginning of the project and one toward the end—were crucial to offsetting the many years in between when I served as an administrator. In those years, I continued to take on editorial projects, continued to publish articles in journals, continued to network in professional associations—in other words, I continued to be an active scholar even while researching, teaching, and thinking through the arguments that were central to the concerns of the book. When the book was finally published, I was happy with the outcome and, thankfully, so were most of its readers.

It is good for scholars who have recently achieved tenure to envision their future career trajectory. Despite the star system that emerged with real force in the eighties and nineties, when star status was directly related to research productivity, there are other ways to mold a career that is generative and possibly even generous, that attempts to give (students, colleagues, institutions) as much as it receives. Don’t get me wrong—there is nothing
inherently wrong about wanting to be a productive researcher and wanting to be recognized for it. But when professional accomplishments become formulaic, they can often keep you from growing in new ways. I once had the honor of hosting a very senior scholar whose work I admire. This prolific author of monographs confessed to me over dinner (I couldn’t quite tell whether it was a boast or a genuine feeling of frustration), “You know, books?—those are easy. I’ve written so many I can almost write them while asleep. I need a new mode to work in and I’m really having trouble finding that mode.” It took me a while to process that remark (I was at the very beginning of my second book project), but I finally decided that despite the attractions of celebrity, I wanted to spare myself a similar scenario in the future. So I settled into a sense that for me, some sort of career planning was in order when it came to publishing. Never did I want to develop the level of ease that would allow me to write a book in my sleep. I wanted each of my books (however few or many I was to write) to bring joy, satisfaction, and even occasional frustration.

My point, then, is that while the pragmatics and mechanics of the publishing of monographs are undoubtedly important, attention to scholarly self-fashioning and to the reception of one’s work is crucial as well. A second instance comes to mind. Once again, I was hosting an established scholar with a national profile who was as much at ease publishing with academic presses as writing in widely circulated newspapers. While introducing them before their lecture, I began by reminding the audience of what most of them already knew—the many accomplishments of our speaker in areas typically at a remove from each other and not commonly pursued within the arc of a single career. I noted enthusiastically that we were about to be treated to yet another new area that the title of the talk suggested the speaker was about to enter. Alas, I then went one step further. (In retrospect, I see that this was surely a performance that was a boast.) I went on to predict the exact line of reasoning that our speaker would likely take on the topic given everything that I had read of their work before. A smiling speaker soon began to grimace, and the first thing they said at the podium (and then at various points in their lecture) was how unfair it was of me to have stolen their thunder! I, of course, had thought of it as a gesture (despite the performative boast) of admiration—they read it, instead, as a declaration that their argument was utterly predictable. The incident, however, was educational—over time it forced me to ask myself, Which do I value more (in myself and in the scholarship of others), predictability or surprise? Is it better to have one’s career overwhelmingly marked and punctuated by one major part of one’s scholarly offerings or to receive more dispersed (and yet engaged) readings over one’s entire career trajectory? This is not something that an author and scholar can necessarily control, but it is helpful to be aware of as you shape your publishing trajectory.

At the same time, it is good to be aware that as important as scholarly self-fashioning is, your publication trajectory will be affected not only by your own decisions but also by external circumstances. Those of us whose research itineraries have been hamstrung by the closure of archives and research sites because of the COVID-19 pandemic need no reminder of this. We are all too painfully aware of the impact of external circumstances. But there are less dramatic ways in which your scholarship might be affected—namely, by miscommunications and delays. I know, for instance, of one junior scholar who was invited by a member of the faculty board of a prominent press to submit their manuscript to the press. The scholar, clearly excited by the prospect, approached the acquisitions editor at the press, explaining that the faculty member had encouraged them to submit their manuscript to the press. Several months after submitting their manuscript, the scholar, who had been optimistic about the prospect of publication, checked in with the editor to ask about readers’ reports. As it turned out, the press had decided not to pursue the project, had never sent the manuscript out, and had not clearly
communicated this with the scholar. While such instances are, let’s hope, rare, they do happen. Was this a case of a miscommunication between the editor and the author? Was the manuscript deemed weak by the editor, or was it not a good fit for the press? Was it perhaps an internal political matter between the editor and the faculty member of the press’s board who, it seems, had been regularly inviting scholars to submit to the press? Was it instead a matter of an initial miscommunication between the senior faculty member on the board and the junior colleague, whereby the senior faculty member’s general encouragement of the untenured colleague to submit a manuscript was read by the latter as an implicit endorsement of the project? Regardless of what the glitch was in this case, it is important to be aware that miscommunications and delays do take place. Clear and open communications, with agreed-upon expectations and timelines on the part of both the author and the press, are crucial to avoiding them.

I have spoken to the tempo of each project and its relation to your position in your career trajectory as well as to the importance of figuring out what kind of scholar and author you might want to be, in terms of scholarly self-fashioning and of the reception of your work. Indeed, as your career matures, you’ll find that you have to learn to negotiate and renegotiate how others read your work. Here I don’t mean whether your book gets good reviews or negative reviews, though that can certainly affect your ongoing work. I mean weighing carefully the potential impact, both positive and negative, of taking new paths and going in directions you have never gone in before. I still on occasion get asked to contribute to fields of scholarship in which I published my first few scholarly articles even though I moved far away from those fields many years ago. It can be awkward to turn down those invitations. If you move too far from the primary community of scholars and readers in the field in which you established yourself in the early stages of your career, you may have to work hard to actively find new scholarly friends, new scholarly interlocutors, and new scholarly spaces where you can develop your work. Some find this exhilarating, others exhausting. The same is true with scholarly methods. If your first book, written with an eye toward tenure deadlines, was based primarily on published materials available through the library, you may find yourself posttenure wanting to write a book based on visits to archives and manuscript collections. Again, while this may mean you need more time to research and write the book, the new methods and sources may well inspire in you a passion for this different kind of scholarly method. There are no normative trajectories here; if there seem to be, I would argue that they are artificial. The key at every stage is to get to know what works best for you and to understand both the constraints and the possibilities under which you work. Being explicit about these to yourself and to those most invested in your work will go a long way in helping you mold the scholarly trajectory you want.
“TRANSLATION HAS been an indispensable component of intellectual exchange and development throughout recorded history.” This opening sentence from the MLA statement “Evaluating Translations as Scholarship: Guidelines for Peer Review” calls attention to the fundamental place of translation practices in intellectual and scholarly work. Translation has always been central to the work of researchers and teachers in the humanities and remains so today, whether scholars translate texts or read and teach texts in translation. Knowledge is not confined within the borders of any one language, and no scholar has the capacity to learn and appreciate the finer nuances of concepts in all the myriad languages of the world. For teachers, translated texts enable the world of intellectual thought to come alive in the classroom, which may well conduct its work in one spoken language but needs to access thinking and the expression of experience from other spaces and peoples if students and teachers wish to avoid the limitations and prejudices of monolingual thought. Yet, texts do change when transferred between languages; all scholars must understand that a translation is no mere copy, and they must be able to read critically and creatively in translation. In today’s ever more tightly connected world, the capacity to translate and, perhaps more important, the critical awareness of what is lost and found in and through translation—the understanding of how translation transforms its object to produce something new in each instance—are vital skills that all globally minded students and scholars must cultivate. The intellectual work of the translator lies in thinking through these problems during the practice of translation.

Translation enjoys a diverse and vibrant life in the academy. This essay aims to explore the many dimensions of that life while also raising some questions for the budding scholar-translator to think about as they embark on a translation project. There are many reasons why scholars might undertake a translation-focused scholarly project, depending on their goals and situation in the different realms of scholarship where translation flourishes. Experts on translation are increasingly being recruited to teach in translation studies, area studies, comparative and world literature, and language programs. Creative writing programs are increasingly creating streams in literary translation, while specialized masters degrees in literary translation are offered by several universities. Area studies and foreign language departments often offer translation courses, and even English departments are turning their attention anew to translation, partly to cater to the demand from their multilingual
students. With the coalescence of translation theory into an expanding field known as translation studies, which has its own journals, publications, and specialized areas, the historical and theoretical study of translation practices has increasingly gained recognition as an area of humanities scholarship. Meanwhile, the pedagogical advantages of translation as practice for second language learners are being recognized in humanities programs. In the publishing world, the relatively low percentage of published literary translations in the United States is increasing, and although the publication of nonfiction translation trails woefully behind that of its literary counterpart, readers and publishers are beginning to realize that reading only anglophone scholarship limits understanding of the world in an increasingly global age. As for community, translators and translation studies scholars come together in organizations such as the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) or in forums at the MLA. For any scholar wishing to incorporate a translation project into their portfolio, these institutions offer vital support.

The 2011 MLA statement provides guidelines for peer reviewers of translations and argues the fundamental importance of translation as a form of scholarship (“Evaluating”). That such a statement seemed necessary and is still useful today reflects the fact that the commonplace notion of translation as producing a mere secondhand copy, somehow inferior to a more authentic, “original” text, still yields unlikely influence over the ways in which translation is sometimes evaluated in the academy. The mistaken hierarchy between translated and original text can lead to the marginalization of translation and translators. Aspiring scholar-translators need to be aware of this tendency, but they should not allow it to constrain their imagination of their own work and its potential. Translation is the site for the creation of new knowledge; the translator sometimes needs to advocate more strongly for this obvious fact than do scholars in other fields. Recognizing this new knowledge through the reading and evaluation of translations takes some training, and the MLA statement attempts to clarify some of the elements of the translation that might be usefully highlighted when one is advocating for a translation project as a work of scholarship in the academic realm. We would advise all prospective scholar-translators to read the statement themselves; here we introduce issues to bear in mind when you undertake a translation project in a scholarly career.

**Translation and Scholarship**

Where do the boundaries lie between translation and scholarship? Common sense tells us that translation is in some way proximate or equivalent to the primary literary text, while scholarship functions as discourse, “running to and fro” (*discursus*) the literary text through acts of reasoning and analysis that imply distance. Yet certain forms of translation, for instance heavily annotated translations, blur this boundary. In the spirit of Jorge Luis Borges’s famous resistance to the idea of a definitive text and to the “superstition that translations are inferior” (1136)—a refusal to distinguish between the value of originals and translations—we might go so far as to say that scholarship, or literary analysis and interpretation, is itself a form of translation, a copy of a copy. One could similarly argue that translation is a form of interpretation, as “Evaluating Translations as Scholarship” acknowledges: “Every translation is an interpretation; each one begins with a critical reading, then expands and ultimately embodies that reading.” In theory, then, the boundary between translation and scholarship can be difficult to locate.
However, to educational institutions the distinction is in many cases clear. Literary translations rarely stand as the primary basis for tenure, and they may count for very little in the review of a dossier for promotion or in annual performance reviews. As a result, scholars must be aware of this limit to the value of time-consuming literary translation, particularly prior to tenure, and focus their efforts on meeting the standards established by their discipline and departments, whether this means publishing an array of articles in peer-reviewed journals or a single-authored scholarly monograph. Nevertheless, there are also strategies for countering any impression that a translation project might be somehow supplemental, rather than central, to your scholarly career. In addition to having innate value as an intellectual exercise, literary translation can contribute to scholarly endeavors in a number of ways. First, and perhaps especially for those working in undertranslated languages, translation can provide a corpus of literary texts on which to build your scholarship and your teaching profile. Translating the novel that forms the primary source material for your scholarly monograph, for instance, can help make that monograph more accessible to an English-language readership. Readers are more likely to engage with the theoretical or historical ideas presented in your research article if they can also access some of the materials that led you to conceive of those ideas in the first place. Thus, linking your translation with your scholarship through the selection of texts you translate contributes to the creation of scholarly exchange and community. At the same time, your own scholarly specialization may be created or broadened through translation as your translation project leads you to forge new ideas and connections.

Translations can help form a link between your research and your teaching. As more language departments offer courses on literature in translation and as the popularity of world literature as a scholarly field continues to grow, translations expand the scope of materials available in the classroom. They allow you to explore with your students texts that have already been the focus of your own research and can help you think through future projects as well. Translators in the academy may be more free to choose which texts to translate than freelance translators are, and this opportunity should be embraced to the extent that it furthers scholarly endeavors and helps you craft your career trajectory. Translation can help you establish and expand your area of scholarly expertise and enhance your visibility in the field. It can also help you take your intellectual concerns into a wider public realm with an audience augmented by readers of translated literature.

At the same time, as “Evaluating Translations as Scholarship” notes, for such translation to count toward tenure and promotion, it must make sense to colleagues in your department, to your university, and to your field. What was involved in producing the translation? What strategies or methods were used? Who is the expected readership, and how does the translation fit within your larger scholarly project? To what extent is the translation a significant contribution to scholarship more broadly in or beyond your field? A powerful way to attest to the scholarly nature of your translation practice is to write about it. Peer-reviewed journals such as *Translation Review* and *Translation Studies* accept articles that discuss the process of translation, examine its history and politics, and compare different strategies and problems encountered by translators. More broad-based academic journals are also open to articles that incorporate insights gained through the practice and study of translation.

Despite the institutional bias against translation as a viable form of scholarship in the tenure and promotion process, attending to these questions and making your work as a translator coherent to your colleagues at the university and across the field can make available literary texts that form a significant basis for your own work and a bridge to those in other areas and fields.
Setting to Work

This leads us to some practical matters. The selection of a text to translate is a moment of opportunity as much as it is a commitment of time and intellectual energy. Ideally a text selected for translation will fill a need, whether this be related to your scholarly and pedagogical interests, a publisher’s interest, or simply your own aesthetic and writerly enjoyment. Consider who might be the readers of your translation and who might be the publishing vehicle for the final version. These two questions will also affect the final shape that your project takes. An annotated translation with a critical introduction published at a university or academic association’s press will be easier to pass by your department’s promotion committee, but a crisp, footnote-free translation of a challenging contemporary novel that might appeal to a nonacademic market might be better placed with independent presses specializing in translations. Some independent presses enjoy excellent reputations for bringing quality translations into the public realm, and publishing with them enhances your own reputation as a translator. Commercial presses might take your translation to the broadest market, but they might also demand editorial involvement to an extent you find problematic. Translators need to decide what kind of translation they want to produce and attempt to find it the home and form that best brings it to the reader’s attention. Finally, you may not be interested in producing a whole volume, in which case there are many journals—both academic and literary—that publish different genres, ranging from the Criticism in Translation series in *PMLA* to the various literary genres represented in journals such as *World Literature Today* or *Asymptote*.

Once you have found a piece that you are interested in translating, look into its copyright situation before investing too much time in your work. Unless the work is in the public domain, you will need to obtain permission to publish your translation. The period of time that must elapse before works enter the public domain differs across countries, and you will need to investigate the situation in both the original country of publication and in the country in which you plan to publish your translation. The rights to a work published in another language may belong with the publisher in its original language or with the author or the author’s estate (if the author is deceased), or they may have been delegated to a literary agent. A good place to start if you are uncertain is with the publisher of the original text. ALTA’s guide “The Proposal for a Book-Length Translation,” available on their website, offers helpful information on how to procure rights (“ALTA Guides”).

While many translations are labors of love, there are also ways to attract funding for projects. If you are working on a commercial translation, PEN America’s Translation Committee provides useful information on rates and recommended contract practices (pen.org/current-members/translator-resources/). In addition to payment and depending on the project, translators also have access to funding from various foundations and government agencies. Highly competitive grants, such as the National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellowships (open only to United States citizens) and the PEN/Heim Translation Fund grants (open to citizens of all countries and to translations from all languages into English), not only provide funds but also hold their own prestige, which you might be able to scale up for professional purposes or attracting a publisher. In addition, many foreign governments and foundations offer funding dedicated to certain languages, such as the Literature Translation Institute of Korea, the Japan Foundation, and the Icelandic Literature Center. Once you have embarked on your project, you might want to take advantage of residency fellowships, such as those offered by the Banff International Literary Translation Centre. These not only provide you with dedicated time to work on your
project, they also connect you to a wider world of both established and beginning translators. Many new projects and other opportunities emerge from the connections made at such residencies.

You have selected a dynamite work to translate, one that your students are going to love, and have come up with a translation that has attracted rave reviews in *Publishers Weekly, Booklist, Kirkus Reviews*, and, ideally, *Choice* (which specializes in reviews of academic publications). Now you have to make prospective readers aware of its existence. Apart from assigning the translation to your students, you have several options at your disposal. A good publisher will likely have had you fill out a detailed marketing questionnaire, but even so, ensure that your publisher’s publicity person has on hand your database listing which media to have review copies sent to, which of your colleagues should be invited to examine the book, who in your professional and personal network should receive direct announcements, and which bookstores besides your university bookstore should be stocking the book. You will want your local municipal library (the more branches the better) to have several copies of the book in circulation, and you will want the book editor of your local newspaper to receive the good news. You will also want to get your vocal cords limbered up for the public introduction of and reading from your translation. A good place to start if you have an institutional affiliation is at your home school, with a book sale organized by your institution’s bookstore. Major bookstores throughout North America have extensive programs of author readings, as do public libraries in localities large and small. Media in the source-language community may wish to interview you to find out how you became capable of conveying the delights of a literature written in such a difficult language into living, breathing English. If you are fortunate enough to publish with a press that offers only literature in translation, such as Two Lines Press, you may find events arranged for you in far-flung locales where literature in translation is being celebrated. Finally, be sure to nominate your published work for any translation prizes out there—these may be language-specific, association membership-specific, or even open to yet-to-be published work.

National literary translation associations, such as ALTA, offer resources to help you navigate the process of managing a translation project. Check out their websites or, even better, attend their annual conferences, where you will meet fellow translators in addition to prospective publishers and academics sympathetic to the scholar-translator’s situation. You might even consider presenting a conference paper or giving a talk about your work, an experience that will give you added opportunity to think through the public and intellectual stakes of your translation work as well as attest to its scholarly viability at your own institution. In general, you will want to familiarize yourself both with the field of translation associated with your own specific language expertise and with the community of literary translators writ large.

**Translation and Teaching**

Finally, translating brings intellectual and pedagogical benefits as a practice in and of itself, and not just in terms of the final products it creates. Shifting our focus to translation as a practice and process encourages translators to incorporate translation into their larger plan to develop and manage a scholarly career. This means not only translating works that we might want to teach in a world literature course but also incorporating translation practice and its awareness into our classes. Initiating translation projects for students in upper levels of foreign language courses, holding translation workshops in individual classes or on the wider campus, and making students aware of the meaning of reading in translation even when they are only reading in one
language—these are some examples of how we might translate, teach translation, and also make those practices pedagogically valuable for our students.

Translation is fundamentally a form of reading and writing. It offers the opportunity to hone the reading and writing skills that are fundamental to any humanities education. Furthermore, it allows this to happen in different languages and for students to reflect on what it means for words, knowledge, and subjectivities to pass between languages. For some instructors, teaching a literature course using translated texts might feel like a missed opportunity, as they fret about what is lost in translation—regional sayings and inflections, patterns of speech that reveal the nature of characters, witty wordplay that may increase one’s knowledge of two or more languages, or perhaps socioculturally meaningful or timely nuances that speakers of that language would appreciate. Unpacking some of these features in class might feel like belaboring a joke, which is, of course, no longer funny once it has been explained. And yet to believe that we lose none of these elements when we teach texts in their original language to students who supposedly understand that language perfectly is nothing less than fantastic. One of the biggest lessons translation can teach us is the impossibility of perfect linguistic mastery, which is important for all students to understand in an increasingly global world.

Once foreign language learners have reached a certain level of competency, having them translate some texts themselves can help them explore the nuances of their new language in finer detail. Translation develops students’ close reading and editing skills as well as their skills of research as they are forced to understand contexts and histories of which they may have no prior knowledge. They will undoubtedly not only improve their facility in their new language but also polish their writing skills in the language into which they are translating. The translator faces many decisions and is forced to weigh carefully the precise shade of meaning of words and phrases they choose over others in order to try to find some equivalency for what they have read. All these activities and exercises are vital to humanities projects and independent, critical thinking. Because translation provides such practical writing training, teaching translation into English in a multilingual classroom offers students for whom English is a second or third language a fun way to begin manipulating words and expressing artistry in their new language.

Teaching literature in translation can promote foreign language learning, but teachers should try to avoid reinforcing the expectation that the entire world functions in English in this age of English linguistic dominance. Explaining a word or a phrase in a text, and discussing in class how it is translated from the original, offers a fascinating glimpse into different languages and cultures, which many students find intriguing and a stimulus to attempting to learn an additional language. The process may also lead both teachers and students to consider the particularities of English as a language or, more specifically, of English as just another language. The ability to gain this distance from one’s native tongue and, ironically, thus acquire a deeper appreciation for it is another benefit of translating and of reading foreign literature in translation. Even for a class taught entirely in English, the process of translation should be introduced and noted—for example, through reading multiple translations of the same text or even through playing with Google Translate.

Through the humanities we gain exposure to the world outside our immediate selves and environments. Translations are vital in this context, because readers, scholars, teachers, and students benefit tremendously from the specific kinds of new knowledge that translations and the practice of translation create. To see the world and its multifaceted issues, peoples, and cultures and to experience for oneself the difficulties of expressing oneself in different languages—these are skills that will hopefully lead all of us to live compassionate and
productive futures as world citizens. Once understood in this way, the translation project becomes central to a scholarly career.

WORKS CITED


CHALLENGING CAPITALIST-OPPRESSIVE SYSTEMS IN ACADEMIA: NEW PROJECTS WITH ITERATIVE, CRITICAL DESIGN, AND COLLABORATIVE MODELS

Sylvia Fernández Quintanilla

Academia has been ideologically linked to capitalism, making us believe that the best way to succeed is to keep producing without stopping. That faster is better, that things must always turn out perfectly, and that everything must have an economic benefit. This ideology prevents people of color at academic institutions, specifically graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, or junior faculty members in the humanities, from advancing their work in digital humanities or collaborating with nonacademic community members, and it prevents others from expanding the kind of work they do or could approach. Projects informed by de-postcolonial digital humanities provide an opportunity to make an impact through collaborative learning processes, to commit to social justice work, and to resist capitalism’s imperative to be productive, specifically by remaining focused on achieving the objectives of the project little by little, respecting the needs and interests of the team members involved, and listening carefully to the public or publics for whom the project is created. Borderlands Archives Cartography, Torn Apart / Separados, and United Fronteras are projects that emerged from a personal commitment to create academic, community-driven, and social justice work that can intervene in the colonial and capitalist digital cultural record. The models, designs, and practices followed in these projects “offer the promise of a more expansive humanities that takes advantage of the technological means of digital knowledge production to create space for underrepresented communities to populate the digital cultural record with their own stories” (Risam 9). In this essay, I highlight how digital projects can challenge oppressive systems inside and outside academia when the team is engaged and participates in ethical procedures of data collection and in critical project design.

The processes and results of building digital resources can make visible and accessible ways of understanding humanity in geopolitical regions, such as the Mexico–United States border, through the incorporation of digital technologies with archival sources, public records, and digitally born materials from both sides of this border region. Likewise, the development and management of these three projects reflect some outcomes and challenges experienced when cocreating, collaborating, coordinating, and managing to sustain independent projects as humanities scholars in positions such as graduate student, postdoctoral researcher, and junior faculty member while at the same time working together with people of color who are early-career, mid-career, and senior faculty members and members of Latinx communities across borders.

In this essay, I go over the process of collective learning in the development and management of digital projects that are not affiliated with a particular institution, were not created as part of an assignment or fellowship, and exist without the primary goal of requesting or fulfilling grant requirements. These types of projects...
encompass what Roopika Risam describes when she calls for a micro digital humanities approach, one that works to “validate scholarly output that does not require digital humanities centers, big data, large datasets, and access to high-performance computing” (143). Within these micro digital humanities approaches is an iterative design of projects that make critical interventions, go over ethical data-collection processes, create collaborations that resist academic hierarchies, navigate institutional relationships in different parts of the world with formal or informal agreements, deal with best ownership decisions according to teammates’ interests and needs, and share the work with various audiences. This sharing is done with the intention of getting feedback in order to transcend theoretical outcomes and move to practical impacts and transformations in connection with communities in- and outside academia. The following projects propose decolonial approaches that engage in postcolonial micro digital humanities to center local and transnational knowledges and practices.

Iterative Project Design and Collaboration across Institutions

In this first case study, the key themes and tensions of the iterative, critical project design are based on how the creators as graduate students worked across institutions to navigate accessibility policies and copyright issues to incorporate archival material in digital platforms. This section focuses on the role of institutions, financial support, getting credit for the project, and agreements about the ownership of a project when it is created and sustained by Latinx graduate students. The Borderlands Archives Cartography project emerged in a coffee shop one afternoon in 2017, when two PhD students from the University of Houston, Maira Álvarez and Sylvia Fernández, were discussing what to do in order to intervene in the toxic and xenophobic narrative that the president of the United States, Donald Trump, was creating against communities on the Mexico–United States border (migrants, border residents, Latinx communities, and other communities of people of color). Since both Álvarez and Fernández were studying Latinx and border literature, they thought about incorporating the journalistic production of the border region to create a database and then moving forward to a digital cartographic representation, one that could depict the border they have experienced, not the one represented in Trump’s imperialist rhetoric.

The project, which focused only on newspapers produced on the United States–Mexico border between 1808 and 1930, started with a simple database, using an Excel spreadsheet, that included metadata of periodicals from the United States border. To identify newspapers on both sides of the border, the creators conducted research in collections and archives of public and private libraries located in the United States and Mexico. The search was not easy. Álvarez and Fernández had to find ways of accessing these primary sources without traveling, because of lack of funds and graduate-ABD responsibilities, and many of the newspapers required membership access or were under general categories, such as periodicals from Mexico or from the United States and their respective states. Also, much of this material is in microfilm and some of it is still not digitized or categorized. To extract the data they needed for their database, the creators started contacting (by way of Facebook, email, or phone) archivists, librarians, scholars, and community members who were working with the identified collections and archives, asking them about any records they could provide.

Álvarez and Fernández faced the challenge of identifying and gathering transnational data for a digital project. Because this work was not tied to a particular institution, the creators, as graduate students, challenged policies that required an institution or a professor to endorse any type of agreement. This made it difficult to move forward and create partnerships or collaborative initiatives to work with these archives. At that point, the
The creators of Borderlands Archives Cartography defined more clearly what the research would be—a database that locates, maps, and makes accessible newspapers’ metadata from the United States–Mexico border from colonial times to the mid–twentieth century, a digital transborder archive for academic and nonacademic publics. The development of the project involved defining what the United States–Mexico border was by creating protocols based on the history of this region while taking into account the Mexican and United States perspectives, gathering multilingual data from historical sources and gentrified sites that could work in a digital map as well as other visualization platforms, creating a digital map to showcase the publishing location of periodicals and the geopolitical transitions of this region from colonial times to the 1930s with the current division line, making open-source pedagogical material related to the newspapers, and building a website to make the project accessible to various publics.

The management and development of this project involved the labor of two graduate students who did this work separately from their academic responsibilities, since it was neither part of their dissertations nor a fellowship or class requirement. These students dedicated time to learn and work on each step of the project. This involved learning on the fly to create metadata of monolingual and multilingual (English, Spanish, and French) newspapers from the various periodical collections and archives identified in the United States and Mexico; familiarizing themselves with the technical skills required to use CARTO, a geospatial analysis platform, in order to create Borderlands Archives Cartography’s digital map; and building a website, using WIX, a cloud-based website builder that includes web hosting and design services, to share the newspapers’ data, map, pedagogical material, and a crowdsourcing database along with some additional resources and bibliographic material that contextualizes the archival sources of the transborder digital archive.

To receive feedback on the project, Álvarez and Fernández presented the project on social media and at conferences and discussed it with academics, archivists, digital humanists, and members of different nonacademic communities such as museums, cultural centers, and nonprofit organizations. This made it possible for Borderlands Archives Cartography’s map to evolve through the use of decolonial and postcolonial practices with the aim of visualizing a fluid border that has connected its geographic territory and communities through social, cultural, economic, and political interactions. By considering the suggestions provided by people interested in the project, as well as experts in mapping, digital humanities, border, and archival studies, Álvarez and Fernández were able to change the map in order to avoid a colonial representation of the United States–Mexico border from a Global North perspective. The creators chose a map with no geopolitical lines and adapted it to the project’s data to emphasize the historical border transitions and binational relations of newspapers, included direct links to the archives and collections where the newspapers were hosted, and provided detailed protocols, documentation, and instructions to help users understand the main concepts of the project, so that they could interact in a critical manner with the map and participate in the crowdsourced database. The project continues to evolve while resisting the limitations of the colonial violence present in the archive and institutions, demonstrating how working through an interdisciplinary collaborative approach allowed the creators to build a transnational digital project that could be useful in different disciplines and be accessible to and approachable by nonacademic publics across borders.

Developing and managing a digital project for the first time and as graduate students led to a range of encounters with professors, librarians, and staff members from various institutions. Álvarez and Fernández had to collaborate across institutions in and outside the United States in order to access the archival material held in different repositories. They learned how to forge agreements with libraries and institutions in Mexico and the
United States that gave them access to the newspapers and allowed them to incorporate the data they gathered into *Borderlands Archives Cartography*’s map. This included learning how copyrights and institutional policies function in relation to digital projects. The steep learning curve Álvarez and Fernández encountered demonstrates how scholars in digital humanities need help to better understand how to form collaborations and partnerships with project creators when they are students or independent scholars and want to access archival material and integrate it into public and digital work.

Issues of ownership and project management also arose during the development and management of *Borderlands Archives Cartography*. Sometimes, professors and institutions support students’ scholarship and respect students’ work by allowing students to take projects with them when they move institutions and take the projects to the next level. Other times, however, professors and institutions implement policies and strategies to control the project, with the intention of pushing the creators aside and taking ownership of the project. This involves not advising students correctly considering the students’ research success or not providing them with some financial support so that the institution can own and control the project. These scenarios are important to highlight, since students are in vulnerable positions and in some cases are not familiar with institutional policies. In some cases students as the creators of the projects have the right to not leave their work in the center or university where they started developing their project, since they will graduate and move to another university, where they can continue working on their project. That said, it is important that student creators are aware of and proactive about their intellectual property—they may want to discuss at the outset how intellectual property and copyright may be handled and look into relevant institutional policies or copyright law—to have clear parameters of how to move forward and avoid any type of conflict.  

Overall, the creation, development, and management of *Borderlands Archives Cartography* has been gratifying. The project, although it does not currently have any financial support, is still active and is being sustained by its creators. *Borderlands Archives Cartography* has led to many conversations and initiatives with other humanities departments, libraries, museums, and graduate and independent scholars, who continue developing analog and digital knowledge that pushes toward the facilitation and creation of transnational spaces for misrepresented communities. This can be accomplished by providing space for communities across borders to represent themselves with their own stories through collaboration among graduate students and through the use of archives, maps, and de-postcolonial digital practices.

**Ethical Decisions in Digital Projects**

The *Torn Apart / Separados* project presents another model for collaboration and for critical project design. This case study goes over the key themes and tensions of an iterative, critical project design that emerged from a mobilized collaboration that intervened in a political and historical transnational immigration moment. Thus, it is a model of nonhierarchical interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical data collection, creation of argumentative and counternarrative visualizations, and the call for academic credit for emotional and community-based labor. In the first half of 2018, the government of President Donald Trump decreed a “zero tolerance” immigration policy and immigration incarceration system intended to ramp up criminal prosecution of undocumented immigrant families entering the United States, specifically asylum seekers from Central American countries. In April 2018, the US attorney general, Jeff Sessions, announced the implementation of a control system that separated immigrant families on their arrival to the country, detaining adults and children separately in...
different detention centers around the United States, or that pushed them out of the country through deportation. This policy, together with other immigration policies, such as Executive Orders 13769 and 13780, called for immediate intervention by academics, activists, and (immigrant) citizens.\(^3\)

Throughout this time, the information that circulated about the scenarios resulting from these policies was constantly changing. A series of sensationalist reports used sound recordings of children crying (Grinberg and Lynch) or moving images, such as a mother carrying her child while running away alongside the border wall (Shwayder). Reports such as these show how capitalism takes advantage of these vulnerable situations and uses media to make sensational news distributed in different digital platforms that end up creating colonial representations of victimization and dehumanization and distracting and distorting the actual problem with the United States immigration system. Public information is not neutral. Distributed in different ways and on various platforms, messages can inform, or they can lead to confusion or misinterpretation and can perpetuate the invisibilities of certain agents or parts of the scenario, eventually leading to the complete erasure of reality.

In June 2018, Alex Gil, together with Manan Ahmed, began thinking about how to intervene in the scenarios resulting from the immigration policies using the skills they had gained as digital and humanities scholars. The creators of *Borderlands Archives Cartography*, Álvarez and Fernández, were contacted on Twitter and invited to be part of a team that would work together to visualize the geography of Donald Trump’s “zero tolerance” immigration policy in 2018 and immigration incarceration in the United States in general. Together, a digital project was created that aggregates and cross-references publicly available data to draw attention to the landscapes, families, and communities riven by the massive web of immigrant detention in the United States. For four and a half months, a group of academics, librarians, and graduate students from different institutions who felt the responsibility to intervene developed *Torn Apart / Separados*, a mobilized digital humanities project that disrupted the colonial ways information was being presented about the separation of families by immigration policies.\(^4\) The project, which includes two volumes, used public records to create visualizations that narrate the ongoing national crisis caused by the inhumane practices of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection—detention, family separation, and deportation—as well as by the economic system motivating immigration policies. The initial team worked on volumes 1 and 2; after the first volume the team passed on the model of *Torn Apart / Separados* to other people interested in contributing to new volumes. For instance, for volume 2, the initial team gathered at the 2018 Digital Humanities Conference in Mexico City and shared its complex data sets with other scholars and librarians interested in the project. This enabled group activities that resulted in feedback and other contributions to the exciting practical methods as well as some ideas about how to move forward. After these two volumes, the project has an open invitation for anyone who would like to replicate this model with other subject matter or who would like to take on the mantle of rapidly deployed ICE research for new volumes.

Through its collaborative efforts and visualizations using public records, *Torn Apart / Separados* reveals how the “border crisis” is not specific to the Mexico–United States border region but can be found in almost all United States territories. The project shows how academics, librarians, and graduate students can work together using their research skills, personal and academic knowledges, digital humanities tools, and minimal computing methods to capture and document the historic memory of one of the most vexing problems of immigration in United States history. *Torn Apart / Separados* exposes a total immigration mechanism of control funded by the government for the benefit of certain political and corporate representatives, as demonstrated in volume 2. *Torn Apart / Separados*’s results were made digitally available and publicly accessible in English, Spanish, and French.
During the development and management of this digital project, in both volumes, team members learned many things that countered the individualistic ways some scholars have worked for many years. The work of this project was made possible through these scholars’ commitment to fostering social justice changes in and outside academia. Each of the team members comes from a different academic background and institution and occupies a different position; however, these differences were no reason to emphasize hierarchies, knowledges, or skills. On the contrary, contributors’ differences paved the way for collaboration and generated a form of respect, whereby each of the team members was in charge of a particular item based on their expertise and was then willing to listen, learn, and help in areas where they had less or no experience. For instance, demonstrating the ethical and important details emphasized in the work, this digital project at first was going to be titled *The Border Crisis*. This is a problematic name, since it reproduces the rhetoric that the president was using as well as the media’s misrepresentation of the border region and its communities. Fernández, as a member of the team who was born and still lives on the border, proposed changing the title, and through conversation in the teams’ *Telegram* group, the members agreed to name the project *Torn Apart / Separados*, which was a more accurate title that emphasized the real-life scenarios that the project was working to represent through visualizations. The project used *Telegram*, a cloud-based mobile and desktop messaging app, because it focuses on security and speed, providing end-to-end encrypted video calling, file sharing, and several other features, to better communicate throughout the process, since all team members were located in different parts of the United States.

In addition, each member of the project, in their place of residence, presented the work at their home institution as well as at events in and outside academia. The project was circulated through each team member’s social media networks, and there were some interviews and presentations given to reporters and activists in the United States, Mexico, and some other parts of Latin America. In this way, the digital project transmitted a message of solidarity and commitment to social justice by showing what is possible when a group of scholars get together to learn, rather than impose, ways to intervene in the systems of violence that perpetuate colonized representations of current situations.

The impact that *Torn Apart / Separados* had on each of its members and contributors was huge, on personal, academic, and community levels, since this collaboration involved learning how to put theory into praxis through various models of pedagogies, collaborations, and ethical decisions. At the same time, this digital humanities project challenges institutional priorities that continue to foment individual and competitive practices rather than collaborative and human-centered engagement across borders. What changes are needed to continue pushing toward the creation of this type of social justice work? How can people in superior positions in academia find ways to value, not in an empathetic way, but in a supportive manner, the emotional labor and time spent on this type of public and digital humanities work? As *Torn Apart / Separados* enters the list of independent and autonomous projects built without any financial support, it is crucial to find methods to value and give the right credit to graduate students, professors on the tenure track, and librarians in order to help them fulfill their scholarship requirements. These changes can affect the humanities in a positive way, making it possible to motivate more scholars (professors, students, and librarians), activists, and nonacademic people to become involved in mobilized social justice projects with nonhierarchical models of work.
Community Partnerships and Ethical Data Gathering

Like Borderlands Archives Cartography and Torn Apart / Separados, United Fronteras offers lessons about iterative, critical project design; collaborative methods; ethical data collection; and ownership and labor credit. It is a digital project developed in 2019 with the goal of intervening in a digital cultural record that often represents the borderlands through colonial, imperialist, and capitalist lenses. The goal of this project was to combine the use of digital technologies with humanities research methods, de-postcolonial and feminist practices, and minimal computing. The digital cultural record of the borderlands has been saturated with materials and content that tell a one-sided story. For example, many materials portray the Mexico–United States border as a region filled with violence, isolated spaces, and separation between good and evil. At the same time, digital technologies have been leveraged by governmental institutions to create a state of constant surveillance and militarization on both sides of the border.

For this reason, United Fronteras identifies, documents, and visualizes, through different modes and registries, digitally born material and digital projects from the borderlands in order to highlight the various ways that historical realities, past and present sociopolitical conditions, ecosystems, and the local experiences of border regions are being showcased, imagined, and explored. The project proposes and creates transborder digital cultural records and establishes a digital memory of the borderlands, at the same time creating a community of (digital) humanists who are learning the skills needed to create interdisciplinary digital work that replaces the colonial and capitalist violence currently dominating the documented record of these regions.

In its first phase, the project is focusing on the United States–Mexico border, from precolonial times to the twenty-first century. The team is composed of scholars (graduate students, independent scholars, and early- and mid-career faculty members) from different countries and is mentored by two experts in digital humanities and minimal computing. The members are mostly women who are border natives or who have experienced the borderlands through their lived experiences with (im)migration procedures or in their research or teaching. Not everyone on the team has a background in digital humanities or digital technologies skills, but, throughout the process of creation, each member has learned digital humanities practices and digital tools while working collaboratively, in an interdisciplinary way.

United Fronteras has developed a management model in which each of the team members’ goals and priorities are respected and whereby each team member can use their knowledge and skills in the project while also sharing and learning from others. These efforts resulted in a bilingual project with different digital elements that were developed at different stages. First, all team members were in charge of identifying projects from the Mexico–United States borderlands. There was an open call for contributions, and a bilingual database was created to document all borderland projects that were gathered. Later, some team members consulted with different project creators to see if they were open to being listed and included in the United Fronteras database and to verify that they approved of the metadata gathered for their projects. Following this ethical approval process, some team members modified the data according to the instructions provided by the project creators and then used this data to create a digital directory using WAX, a minimal computing project for producing digital exhibitions focused on longevity, low costs, and flexibility. Other team members worked with one of the mentors on the digital directory, and the rest of the team was in charge of writing the narrative and bilingual documentation to provide context for this digital resource. This same workflow was used to coordinate a virtual
symposium about the project and to host a data-thon that will help finalize the Mexico–United States borderland phase of the project. Throughout this process, the team has learned to leverage various workflows and tools in order to create digital resources that can be used as pedagogical material, documentation models, and digital humanities directories that can be more stable in the digital cultural record and accessible in different parts of the world while also providing a digital representation of the Mexico–United States borderland through multiple existing histories from both sides of the border.

*United Fronteras* is also an independent and autonomous project, made up of a team of scholars at various stages of their careers and in different locations, for whom the study and representation of the borderland is of utmost importance. *United Fronteras* is not attached to any single institution, since, as Amy Earhart explains, “central to the work with any historically marginalized group is an understanding of the cultural construction of ownership, leading to an equitable partnership that positions the control of materials within the community, rather than within the academy” (373) because of the material and counterhistories the project holds and because much of this material belongs to independent scholars and/or to the community in Mexico and the United States.

Moreover, the project operates under fluid work structures, thus respecting the priorities and time commitments of each member of the team. The project also remains disaffiliated in order to give each team member the opportunity to make use of the project and their involvement within their own contexts, without having to navigate institutional politics that can limit, control, or endanger the team’s work ethic when working with scholars and independent scholars across borders.

Since *United Fronteras* engages with borderland regions in the Global North and Global South and with contexts that involve multiple, complex, and intersectional representations and ideologies, it is not merely a theoretical or analytical project but a practical work that documents with digital technologies borderland materials and that highlights a “digital cultural record that puts social justice at its center in order to reshape the dynamics of cultural power and to reclaim for individuals and communities the humanity that is routinely denied by the forces that produce oppression” (Risam 144). Through this structure, *United Fronteras*, instead of just engaging in the production of a perfect and finalized digital project, has been doing the following:

- building a community of scholars and nonacademic members that have dialogues and exchanges of knowledge on how to approach digital material and projects about the border region through digital spaces such as Zoom meetings, online events, and Twitter posts;
- proposing a pedagogical model by empowering the team to learn critically how and what kind of digital technologies to use when creating digital resources in regards to the borderlands; and
- establishing activist-oriented workflows that are grounded in transnational and intersectional feminist values and local practices from both or multiples sides of the borderlands with the intention to intervene in the capitalist-oppressive systems in academia.

As Earhart remarks, “[I]ntersectional feminism provides the greatest guidance to ethical approaches to digital humanities” (370). Thus, this approach remains grounded in the work of feminists of color who demonstrate how to build communal and transnational bridges between our own people and with others around the world (Moraga xvii). *United Fronteras* is pushing toward digital humanities approaches that enable interdisciplinary exchange, opening paths for nonexperts to contribute and for the formation of new solidarities among humanities
scholars, librarians, digital humanities scholars, and community members from the United States, Mexico, and other parts of Latin America.

In academia today, departments, libraries, programs, centers, or scholars approach digital humanities in their grants for funding opportunities with the aim to fix or intervene in the colonial violence present in the creation and representations of underrepresented communities and are being successfully supported by federal or private agencies or foundations. Nevertheless it is important to pay close attention to the past and present workflows found in micro digital humanities projects created by people of color in and outside academia in order to validate these processes and look for forms to make them sustainable. This means that while these case studies are not supported by institutions, they are more than ever pushing toward new interdisciplinary and transnational communities, resources, tools, practices, methods, and workflows that feature the representation of humanity through our own stories. The key themes of these three micro digital humanities projects exemplified some elements that can be used to challenge or uphold systems of oppression that have restrained students, professors, and independent scholars from expressing their own stories and knowledge freely. De–postcolonial digital humanities can provide spaces, platforms, and tools to liberate ideas, emotions, experiences, stories, and knowledge through collaboration and digital productions.

At the same time, because of the colonized and capitalist system that influences our everyday institutions and societies, many of these digital projects are not being valued, because they are too political, in development, or not merely academic, nor are they being given the right support, since the structure that serves as a model for this kind of work goes against the hierarchical ways academia works. It is important to challenge the way institutions are giving credit and granting financial support to digital humanities projects, since not all projects want to or should be tied to an institution. Similarly, there are scenarios where those who have the power and position to apply to research opportunities or grants are getting the ideas from these micro digital humanities projects without considering the past and present labor, thus following a capitalist model by oppressing and pushing to the margins those in vulnerable positions within academia, whose labor created projects that work toward social justice.

With this in mind, it is important to end by emphasizing how the creation, development, and management of these social justice micro digital humanities projects propose a model to reshape the way to do research and teach about humanities on the United States–Mexico border and its related themes, specifically by committing to doing ethical work that can have both local and global impact. These projects have given graduate students, humanities scholars, and early- and mid-career academics the opportunity to meet and learn from amazing scholars and community members who are committed to doing social justice work and to preserving humanity in academia and in the world. The development and management of digital projects centered in iterative, critical design; ethical collaboration processes; and postcolonial and feminist practices among scholars and community members enables the creation of digital transnational bridges. Those involved in such projects intervene in the colonial digital cultural record and the capitalist academic system and advocate for social justice issues that push toward collective work that forms new communities, with solidarity values and resistance and resilience objectives.

NOTES

1. To learn more about these three projects, visit Borderlands Archives Cartography, Torn Apart / Separados, and United Fronteras.
2. For institutional policies on citing student work, see “Reusing” and “Student Works.” See also “Student Collaborators’ Bill of Rights.”
3. Executive Order 13769, signed on 27 January 2017 by President Donald Trump, was entitled “Protecting the Nation from Terrorist Entry into the United States by Foreign Nationals,” labeled the “Muslim ban” by critics, and commonly referred to as the “Trump travel ban.” Executive Order 13769 lowered the number of refugees to be admitted into the United States in 2017 to 50,000, suspended the US Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days, suspended the entry of Syrian refugees indefinitely, directed some cabinet secretaries to suspend entry of those whose countries did not meet adjudication standards under United States immigration law for ninety days, and included exceptions on a case-by-case basis. The Department of Homeland Security listed these countries as Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. More than seven hundred travelers were detained, and up to sixty thousand visas were “provisionally revoked” (“Executive Order 13769”). Executive Order 13780, titled “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States,” was signed by President Trump on 6 March 2017. It placed limits on travel to the United States by nationals of several countries and barred entry for all refugees who did not possess either a visa or valid travel documents. This executive order—sometimes called “Travel Ban 2.0”—revoked and replaced Executive Order 13769 (“Executive Order 13780”).
4. For the complete Torn Apart / Separados team and contributors, see “Credits.”

WORKS CITED


Earhart, Amy E. “Can We Trust the University? Digital Humanities Collaborations with Historically Exploited Cultural Communities.” Bodies of Information: Intersectional Feminism and Digital Humanities, edited by Elizabeth Losh and Jacqueline Wernimont, U of Minnesota P, 2018, pp. 369–90.


“Reusing Student Work.” Emory University Scholarly Communications Office, Emory U, 2021, sco.library.emory.edu/copyright/classroom/reusing.html.


“Student Works.” Copyright, U of California, copyright.universityofcalifornia.edu/ownership/student-works.html.

Torn Apart / Separados. 2018, xmethod.columbia.edu/torn-apart/volume/2/.

United Fronteras. 2020, unitedfronteras.github.io.