



Universiteit  
Leiden

The Netherlands

## **Publishing in the digital humanities: the treacle of academic tradition**

Weel, A.H. van der; Praal, F.E.W.; Edmond, J.

### **Citation**

Weel, A. H. van der, & Praal, F. E. W. (2020). Publishing in the digital humanities: the treacle of academic tradition. In J. Edmond (Ed.), *Digital Technology and the Practices of Humanities Research* (pp. 21-48). Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. doi:10.11647/OBP.0192

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/138832>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



# Digital Technology and the Practices of Humanities Research

EDITED BY  
JENNIFER EDMOND



<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

© 2020 Jennifer Edmond. Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapters' authors.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the work; to adapt the work and to make commercial use of the work providing attribution is made to the author (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).

Attribution should include the following information:

Jennifer Edmond (ed.), *Digital Technology and the Practices of Humanities Research*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0192>

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0192#copyright>

Further details about CC BY licenses are available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Any digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0192#resources>

Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-839-6

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-840-2

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-841-9

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-842-6

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-843-3

ISBN Digital (XML): 978-1-78374-844-0

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0192

Cover image: photo by Nanda Green on Unsplash <https://unsplash.com/photos/BeVW HMXyww0>

Cover design: Anna Gatti

# 2. Publishing in the Digital Humanities

## The Treacle of the Academic Tradition

*Adriaan van der Weel and Fleur Praal*

---

Digital humanities (DH) scholars use novel digital tools and methods to help answer research questions that are difficult to handle without the aid of a computer. Sometimes, too, these new methods and digital tools profoundly reshape the very nature of the questions themselves. Moreover, the need for the continuing development of state-of-the-art technology adds a problem-solving dimension to the research.<sup>1</sup> Taken together, these characteristics justify the sense that DH is not just a divergent scholarly field, but even a disruptive one.<sup>2</sup> Given DH's

- 
- 1 The sociology of science aims to explain research and communication practices in particular academic fields by modelling their research objects, methods, and approaches (epistemology) in a multidimensional classification. DH can be said to diverge from more traditional humanist disciplines by accommodating greater external influences in research application, and by constituting a technology-driven research front. For a full exposition of such theories and classification models, see: Richard Whitley, *The Intellectual and Social Organization of the Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Tony Becher and Paul Trowler, *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Culture of Disciplines* (Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, 2001); Wolfgang Kaltenbrunner, 'Reflexive Inertia: Reinventing Scholarship through Digital Practices' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Leiden University, Leiden, 2015), <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/33061>
  - 2 We will refer to the various geographically distributed communities and methodological specialisms in DH as belonging to one disruptive movement, in comparison to the traditional research fields in the humanities. This by no means serves to argue that DH would be a homogeneous field: we are fully aware that beliefs and practices vary across language communities, subject domains, and

wide and eloquent conceptual support for the use of novel tools and approaches to humanist knowledge construction for all purposes, one would expect such a field to employ innovative communication practices as well. Indeed DH projects, probably to a greater extent than is the case in the more traditional humanities fields, are often communicated through databases, websites, datasets, software tools, online collections, and other informal means of making results public.<sup>3</sup> However, while DH is clearly taking on a pioneering role in experimenting with such new communication forms, there is a problem when it comes to their recognition as formal publications. Even where these new digital-born forms of research output may communicate knowledge that is just as valuable as that found in traditional print-based publications, they still do not achieve similar authority. They are not generally regarded by tenure committees and funding bodies as the equivalents of formal scholarly articles and books, and scholars do not rely on them as heavily or as frequently as on formal publications, or at least do not acknowledge it as confidently. In consequence, when all is told, DH *publication* practices — as distinct from communication practices at large — diverge less from mainstream practices than expected.

If the impact of experimentation in DH on publication habits remains limited, what are the factors that inhibit the field's disruptive potential? In this chapter, we want to explore the discrepancy between the novel communication opportunities offered by new types of scholarly output, and the strong adherence to traditional, formal publication habits that persist even in an innovative community of practice such as DH. We start by arguing that books and articles occupy their particular position because of four functions of formal publishing that are

---

disciplines. Nevertheless, the observation that DH groups share more ideologies and communication routines with each other than with the traditional humanities fields legitimises our comprehensive description of them as an inclusive community of practices, as does the fact that a diverse, international and interdisciplinary population of scholars identifies themselves as belonging to the DH community. See also: Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, 'What is Digital Humanities and What's It Doing in English Departments?', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 3–11, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0001>; Anabel Quan-Haase, Kim Martin, and Lori McCay-Peet, 'Networks of Digital Humanities Scholars: The Informational and Social Uses and Gratifications of Twitter', *Big Data & Society* (2015), 1–12 (pp. 1–2), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715589417>

3 See the comprehensive overview at <https://eadh.org/projects>

the — print-based — embodiment of fundamental academic values. DH cannot behave as if it were an island governed by its own laws. This explains why the acceptance of novel digital communication forms as authoritative scholarly output is much slower than technological innovation would justify, in academia in general, but even in a progressive and pioneering field as DH. Second, we will use this framework of the functions of publishing to analyse how the inherent properties of the new digital medium are beginning to challenge and destabilise paper-based conventions.

Is the adherence to convention in the DH community really as strong as we have suggested? In the following pages we will maintain the distinction we began to make at the outset between scholarly *communication* (the superordinate term, which includes all forms of communication and making public, both informally and through established publishers' channels), and the much smaller subclass of formal academic *publication*.<sup>4</sup> To begin with the former, we have already observed that the DH field is experimenting with a wide variety of means to disseminate research outcomes. However, even the communication habits of DH scholars are, perhaps, not as revolutionary as is sometimes claimed. Although it has, for instance, often been remarked that DH communities use Twitter intensively<sup>5</sup> — such observations have even been made by journalists attending DH conferences<sup>6</sup> — the scant analysis available has demonstrated that DH-Twitterers use the platform for discipline-relevant, research-related messages proportionally less than users from other fields.<sup>7</sup>

---

4 Fleur Praal and Adriaan van der Weel, 'Taming the Digital Wilds: How to Find Authority in a Digital Publication Paradigm', *TXT*, 4 (2016), 97–102 (pp. 97–98), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/42724/PraalvdWeel.pdf>

5 Martin Grandjean, 'A Social Network Analysis of Twitter: Mapping the Digital Humanities Community', *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 3.1 (2016), 1171458, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2016.1171458>

6 Kirschenbaum, 'What is Digital Humanities', 7–8. Kirschenbaum here puts observations by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed* in context.

7 Kim Holmberg and Mike Thelwall, 'Disciplinary Differences in Twitter Scholarly Communication', *Scientometrics*, 101.2 (2014), 1027–42, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-014-1229-3>. Holmberg and Thelwall identify a large group of DH-Twitterers who send more messages than the comparable user bases from other academic disciplines — but fewer than average of those messages indicate a clear link with scholarly activity. To our knowledge, there is no comparable research of a more recent date; Grandjean does not analyse tweet content, but focuses on the connections between users instead ('Social Network Analysis').

Especially where formal academic publication is concerned, DH practices turn out to be quite conventional. For example, it may well be true that DH engage in more intensive collaboration than the traditional humanities at large. However, this concerns, in particular, the pre-publication phases of research. Research projects often *require* collaboration, for example, because external technical expertise may need to be brought in, or because the creation of sufficiently large data sets requires the input of more than one person. However, when it comes to *publication*, explorative studies do not demonstrate a significantly increased occurrence of co-authored papers, and no increase in the average number of authors collaborating on book chapters.<sup>8</sup> In the meantime, the number of publications that attempt to define, explicate, and seek support for new research communication practices for DH is so large that it constitutes a veritable genre in its own right. Indeed the genre has often been cited as evidence of the reflexive tendency of the field.<sup>9</sup> Some argue that what makes the field of DH revolutionary in nature is its grounding in ‘online values’ that are fundamentally different to the norms of print.<sup>10</sup> Ironically, though, most of the publications in

- 
- 8 An analysis of Flemish humanities publications does not yield conclusive evidence; nor does a more recent analysis of two DH journals. Truyken L. B. Ossenblok, Frederik Verleysen, and Tim C. E. Engels, ‘Co-authorship of Journal Articles and Book Chapters in the Social Sciences and Humanities (2000–2010)’, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 65.5 (2014), 882–97, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23015>, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/asi.23015/abstract>; Julianne Nyhan and Oliver Duke Williams, ‘Joint and Multi-Authored Publication Patterns in the Digital Humanities’, *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 29.3 (2014), 387–99, <https://doi.org/10.1093/lc/fqu018>. We know of no other comparable research of a more recent date.
- 9 Kirschenbaum lists many of the formative texts; from him, we have also borrowed the notion of classifying this ongoing discourse as a genre. Kirschenbaum, ‘What is Digital Humanities’, 3.
- 10 Lorna M. Hughes, Panos Constantopoulos and Costis Dallas, ‘Digital Methods in the Humanities: Understanding and Describing their Use across the Disciplines’, in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), pp. 150–70, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118680605.ch11>. Attributing great idealism and revolutionary fervour to the field is perhaps tempting, but it might be more constructive to regard the abundance of reflection as typical of any emerging discipline. These texts are the record of a community’s attempts to modify the existing conventions of research and research communication. DH scholars’ uptake of new communication technologies perhaps challenges the monopoly of print, but this challenge is not exclusive to the DH field. Furthermore, the challenge does not by itself revolutionise communication habits, it merely reinforces the need for adjustments.

this genre appear in conventional academic publications: articles or book chapters.<sup>11</sup>

DH — rightly so — continues to subscribe to the argument that new communication types should be acknowledged as valuable contributions to the scholarly endeavour.<sup>12</sup> Why, then, is a DH revolution in publication practices not happening? Why do the publication habits of such a youthful and unruly field still remain firmly grounded in the print-based paradigm? This paradox warrants a dispassionate appraisal of the communication and publication issues that confront DH. To explain why formal publication is especially slow to change, despite ongoing shifts in scholarly communication in general, we first examine the framework of established functions of academic publishing, and then contrast this framework with the inherent properties of the novel digital communication and publication technologies. In doing this, we will adopt the perspective of the scholarly author as a primary stakeholder actively steering through the myriad of available options.

## The Functions of Scholarly Publishing in the Print Paradigm

In varying proportions, and depending on the discipline, monographs and articles in edited volumes and journals have come to constitute the narrow range of widely accepted formal academic publications. These are the designated text types of formal communication between peers in

- 
- 11 James P. Purdy and Joyce R. Walker, 'Valuing Digital Scholarship: Exploring the Changing Realities of Intellectual Work', *Profession* (2010), 177–95, <https://doi.org/10.1632/prof.2010.2010.1.177>; Lisa Spiro, "'This is Why We Fight': Defining the Values of the Digital Humanities', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 16–36, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0003>
  - 12 Bethany Nowviskie, 'Where Credit is Due: Preconditions for the Evaluation of Collaborative Digital Scholarship', *Profession* (2011), 169–81, <https://doi.org/10.1632/prof.2011.2011.1.169>; Jennifer Edmond, 'Collaboration and Infrastructure', in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), pp. 54–66, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118680605.ch4>; Smiljana Antonijević and Ellysa Stern Cahoy, 'Researcher as Bricoleur: Contextualizing Humanists' Digital Workflows', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 12.3 (2018), <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/12/3/000399/000399.html>

science and scholarship. A rich variety of other forms of communication exist in which academia has always created connections, discussed research findings, and generated new ideas — but they have been consistently branded as informal exchanges. As a result of the symbiotic development of print culture and the systemic values of scholarship over the course of four centuries, books and articles have been established as the gold standard of formal academic publication. Although these values are rarely made explicit, there is broad consensus that formal contributions to knowledge should be original; they should be made available for the academic community independent of authors' social standing; they should not serve any interest other than the furthering of knowledge; and they should be able to withstand systematic scrutiny.<sup>13</sup> Academics who uphold these norms can be esteemed for making valuable contributions to knowledge. Implicitly or explicitly, authors will seek to adhere to those values each time they communicate research results publicly. These values are enshrined in the four commonly identified functions of academic publishing: registration, certification, dissemination, and archiving.<sup>14</sup>

*Dissemination* is perhaps the most obvious goal, defined as the transfer of knowledge to others by 'making it public'. This does not happen indiscriminately; there is a strategic component to it. Both scholars and publishers strive to distribute texts among their optimal audience. Authors strategically select a venue for publication that ensures the widest possible distribution among the — often very small — group of experts they wish to target. Publishers filter the texts submitted to them on topicality and currency, and to suit the interest of a relevant and identifiable market to which they have — or seek to gain — access.

---

13 These are the values of Communalism, Universality, Disinterestedness, Originality, and Scepticism (CUDOS), first codified by Robert Merton and developed by John Ziman. Robert K. Merton, *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, ed. by Norman W. Storer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1973); John Ziman, *Real Science: What It Is and What It Means* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

14 H. E. Roosendaal and P. A. Th. M. Geurts, 'Forces and Functions in Scientific Communication: An Analysis of their Interplay', unpublished conference paper at *Cooperative Research Information Systems in Physics*, Oldenburg, Germany, 31 August–4 September 1997, [www.physik.uni-oldenburg.de/conferences/crisp97/roosendaal.html](http://www.physik.uni-oldenburg.de/conferences/crisp97/roosendaal.html); David C. Prosser, 'Researchers and Scholarly Communications: An Evolving Interdependency', in *The Future of Scholarly Communication*, ed. by Deborah Shorley and Michael Jubb (London: Facet, 2013), pp. 39–49, <https://doi.org/10.29085/9781856049610.005>

Second, publishing serves the function of *registration*: through publication, an author is acknowledged as the original discoverer, explicator, or analyst of the research object, and, in the humanist disciplines especially, also as the creator of the scholarly argument that describes the findings (i.e. the text that constitutes the publication itself). Published texts thus form the records of research, and demonstrate their originality as knowledge contributions. Engrained notions about authorship and the attendant esteem of 'being published', within and outside academia, stem from this registration function.

The esteem of authorship is also intimately connected with the function of *certification*. This is the legitimisation and crediting of the authors' claims through organised scrutiny during the process of publication. Editors and publishers filter submitted texts based on quality, topicality, and currency; the selected texts then go through a vetting process (and, often, subsequent rounds of revision) before they are published. This review mechanism is crucial to the way formal communication proceeds along the chain of stakeholders. Readers are aware that review happens, and select their reading based on assumptions about quality control; authors are aware that readers value scrutinised texts and, therefore, aim to publish in channels known for their rigour; and publishers depend on authors' and readers' awareness, to maintain their role as independent agents establishing credibility for scholarly communication.

*Archiving*, lastly, is the preservation of research within dependable systems to ensure that future generations of scholars will be able to build on existing knowledge. Libraries, with their book repositories and journal collections, grew to become publishing's chief archiving infrastructure. That their search and discovery systems are finely tuned to publication metadata forms an additional incentive for authors to publish a text formally, instead of only circulating it informally.

The system of scholarly publishing has come to rely squarely on the combination of these four different functions. Nevertheless, the different stakeholders in scholarly communication have diverging interests in the balance between those functions in every communicative instance. For example, 'a document that allows for a means of conferring reputation on a researcher may not be the same as a document that transmits the maximum amount of information'.<sup>15</sup>

---

15 Prosser, 'Researchers and Scholarly Communications', pp. 43–44.

Furthermore, we argue that even scholarly authors themselves, our primary stakeholders in this analysis, do not form a stable and homogeneous group. They demonstrate dynamic and contrasting mixes of priorities in their communication practices. They are aware — if perhaps only intuitively — of the functions of publishing. In general, this can be explained by the fact that all authors also act as scholarly readers, and therefore switch between these two roles and prioritisations.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, DH scholars are particularly prone to reflecting on their own practices as a direct extrapolation of their research topic, and they may be expected to provide more explicit reasoning for their choices.

Less visibly, this set of historically grown functions of publishing, in turn, largely depends on salient properties of the print medium. These properties constitute the technological and cultural frameworks in which academic publishing developed and that have come, over time, to be observed as a matter of course in the process of formal publication. They include, for instance, the assumption of the finality and fixity of the printed text, and its inherent duo-modality of text and images, but also 'the restriction to a predominantly textual format, only supplemented by the occasional use of graphs and charts or still images; the use of a rhetorically formal — even formulaic — and discipline-specific register; and adherence to a formalised and strictly methodical referencing practice'.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, academia — perhaps unintentionally — relies on the formal functions of scholarly publishing for inferring the value of a text. These formal functions in turn depend on largely implicit assumptions about the connection between the scholarly importance of a text and the properties of print.

---

16 For further observations on the varying — and even opposing — interests of the scholar-as-author and the scholar-as-reader, see the themed issue of *Against the Grain* on the future of the scholarly monograph, and in particular Adriaan van der Weel and Colleen Campbell, 'Perspectives on the Future of the Monograph', *Against the Grain*, 28.3 (June 2016), 1, 10, [http://www.against-the-grain.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ATG\\_v28-3.pdf](http://www.against-the-grain.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ATG_v28-3.pdf)

17 Praal and Van der Weel, 'Taming the Digital Wilds', p. 98.

## Transferring the Functions of Publishing to the Digital Medium

Compared with the established printed forms of publication (chiefly books and articles), the digital medium affords new, and in some cases, very different possibilities. These can be explained by a number of properties inherent in digital technology that together can be said to characterise the medium. Just as the printed book was fundamentally characterised by materiality and fixity, digital technology in its online form can be said to be characterised by immateriality and fluidity, two-way linking, machine-readability (i.e. searchability), and multimodality. These salient properties and their affordances have major repercussions also for academic publishing.<sup>18</sup> Some of the changes it has brought to textual dissemination can be easily observed; for instance, online creation, lossless copying, and digital dissemination of content have allowed a decrease in production and distribution costs, while increasing the speed of these processes. The architectural flatness of the Internet gave rise to Web 2.0 networks characterised by a new interactivity in which, moreover, all data types converge. However, the wider but not necessarily intentional implications of the digital medium's salient features manifest themselves fully only gradually in the social reception of the technology. In the case of scholarly communication and publication practices, the rise of open access — which is predicated on the salient feature of lossless copying at virtually zero incremental cost — is a current example. Just as occurred in the case of print, technological invention is thus followed by a much slower sociocultural process of discovery in which the new medium's properties begin to influence actual communication practices.

As new tools and methods are developed in an increasingly quick succession of innovations, the digital medium's properties continue to affect research practice. Similarly, the evolving affordances of the online environment shape scholarly authors' expectations about communication. In this process of discovery, authors conceptualise

---

18 For a more detailed discussion of the role of inherent salient properties of textual media, see Adriaan van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds: Towards a Digital Order of Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), especially Chapter 3, 'The Order of the Book', and Chapter 5, 'Salient Features of Digital Textuality'.

the audience's response to their messages; and, in their turn, readers' expectations are influenced by prior experience in similar communicative situations. The sociotechnical adoption of any technological innovation is thus a complex system in which recurrent feedback loops drive change. The adoption of the online medium for scholarly communication leads to very gradual, iterative shifts in the norms and values of academia. Since authors are likely to desire faster change than readers, they are also likely to experience greater frustration with this slowness.<sup>19</sup>

This acculturation process has only begun recently, and normative change cannot yet be clearly discerned. Rather, the possibilities of online communication are initially embraced by authors in order to adhere, as much as possible, to the established functions of publishing — even if they will increasingly point to imperfections inherent in the print paradigm. Authors who are keenly aware of the online affordances and are willing to experiment with digital communication, such as is typical in DH, may be considered a progressive influence, potentially accelerating the processes of change. The research evaluation systems that science policy relies on, such as the British Research Excellence Framework (REF), or the Dutch Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP), and their equivalents across the globe, on the other hand, *inherently* reflect existing practices and therefore reinforce established norms, and can thus be seen as conservative forces in the system. They make scholars conservatively opt for communication through acknowledged formal text types. However, as a result of the myopia with which these systems still connect books and articles with academic prestige and reward, they may also indirectly render academia more aware of the undesirable aspects of the dominance of formal publications in research, fuelling ongoing debates and experimental excursions.

The previous paragraphs have sketched the changing landscape of scholarly communication and publishing in broad strokes. In the following sections, we will engage in a structured exploration of current scholarly communication practices, situated within the established framework of the functions of publication as described above. Examples of emergent digital practices, as observed in the digital humanities or other directly relevant disciplines, point to conceptually shifting undercurrents in the value system of academia: today's online

---

19 See note 16 above.

experiments may come to be considered as the good scholarship practices of the future.

## Dissemination

With its near unlimited storage capacity, lossless copying, and low-cost options for file transfers, the digital medium has come to affect, directly and very visibly, the dissemination processes of formal publications, even if it has not fundamentally altered the traditional content types. In their current born-digital format — usually PDF, which mimics the lay-out of print — articles and books are indeed less costly to produce, and certainly much easier to copy and distribute widely. However, such formal publication formats, while being born digital, truly remain products of the print paradigm. Undergoing the exact same publication process as their print equivalents have long done, they continue to exhibit all four of the functions of publishing. For scholarly authors — our chief focus — the only change in the process is that the paper end-product might now be accompanied (or replaced) by a digital equivalent. Formal publications ‘gone digital’, therefore, are no more than a digital surrogate. They do not present an alternative to the traditional functions of publishing themselves, even though dissemination has become near-paperless.

To find evidence of real innovation caused by the shift in dissemination affordances, we should look beyond the immediate technological effects for signs of social change, which, as we have argued above, take longer to make their appearance. Although the formal content types of print culture still remain the standard for authors,<sup>20</sup> the traditional tools that facilitate dissemination — such as

---

20 Recent research suggests that humanities authors increasingly create non-traditional research output, such as websites and blogs (over sixty-five percent of authors create these), and datasets, visualisations, and digital collections (around thirty percent): Katrina Fenlon et al., ‘Humanities Scholars and Library-Based Digital Publishing: New Forms of Publications, New Audiences, New Publishing Roles’, *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 50.3 (2019), 159–82 (pp. 165–66), <https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.50.3.01>. The same survey indicates that humanities scholars still refrain from creating and citing online communication forms, because they feel that print is valued higher by peers and evaluation bodies, and because print-based publications ensure a more stable and durable record (Fenlon et al., ‘Humanities Scholars’, 161–62). Other research confirms that significantly fewer authors are

library catalogues and publishers' content marketing through well-known channels — increasingly get bypassed in favour of alternative online technologies. About thirty-five percent of humanities scholars report favouring Google Scholar as their starting point for literature research. This is a larger proportion than those who initially turn to national or international catalogues, and discipline-specific publishers' platforms such as JSTOR.<sup>21</sup> Besides formal publications, Google Scholar features reports, self-published texts, and citations in its search results, whereas publishers' platforms can only retrieve indexed formal publications. Although this is presumably not the initial reason why scholars have shifted to generic search engines, the fact that informal content types get exposed next to formal publications might help a gradual acceptance that they represent a certain value.

Besides generic search engines, scholarly communication networks are rising as popular instruments for content dissemination. The overwhelming majority of researchers maintain profiles on ResearchGate, Mendeley, or, preferred more widely in the arts and humanities, Academia.edu and their non-commercial counterpart, Humanities Commons (HCommons), using the platforms to disseminate their own works and access those of others.<sup>22</sup> These new technologies are no longer in the metadata-based, hierarchical content-ordering mould of the traditional dissemination services; rather, they successfully use the

---

inclined to recognise any other forms of communication as equal to traditional publications; blogs and contributions to online conversations, especially, are seen as less important than publications (by eighty-five percent of survey respondents). However, about half of the respondents value created software equally as highly as traditional publications'; this should be 'However, about half of the respondents value created software equally high [or: 'as highly'] as traditional publications: Christine Wolff, Alisa B. Rod, and Roger C. Schonfeld, *UK Survey of Academics 2015*, Ithaka S+R | Jisc | RLUK ([n.p.], 2016), esp. p. 44, fig. 24, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.282736>

- 21 Wolff, Rod, and Schonfeld, *UK Survey*, pp. 10–15. This report does not investigate the rationale for such behaviour; however, users' preference for generic keyword searches and a dislike of advanced search options may be cues: Max Kemman, Martijn Kleppe, and Stef Scagliola, 'Just Google It: Digital Research Practices of Humanities Scholars', in *Proceedings of the Digital Humanities Congress 2012*, ed. by Clare Mills, Michael Pidd, and Esther Ward (Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2014), <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/openbook/chapter/dhc2012-kemman>
- 22 Jeroen Bosman and Bianca Kramer, 'Swiss Army Knives of Scholarly Communication — ResearchGate, Academia, Mendeley and Others', Presentation for STM Innovations Seminar, London, 7 December 2016, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.4290428.v1>

online affordances of full-text access, hyperlinking between texts, and the subject tags that authors attach.

Moreover, these networks depend on the existing connections between individual scholars. As both authors and readers, academics create online links with one another, becoming followers and followed. This adds a social dimension to the existing dissemination function provided by market-making publishers, by allowing academics to distribute their work via their position in their own disciplinary networks.<sup>23</sup> Besides, or rather countering, the commercial generic platforms, DH scholars increasingly band together in scholarly social networks of their own devising, such as MLA Commons and HCommons.<sup>24</sup> Such close-knit disciplinary connectivity might allow online networks not only to complement the traditional publishers' dissemination services, but outright challenge it. Moreover, through the dissemination of content via social ties between DH scholars, the cohesion within the emergent discipline can be strengthened.<sup>25</sup>

The online environment's inherent properties of a flattened hierarchy and interactive networks also fundamentally affect the function of disseminating texts to different types of audiences. In itself, the notion that authors address specific audiences other than their direct peers is not at all new to the digital medium. Textbooks created for undergraduate students, for instance, are disseminated differently than monographs intended for peer specialists. Such differential targeting simply continues in the distribution of diversified

---

23 That Mendeley is owned by the RELX Group does not subtract from our argument. The publisher does not play a role in the dissemination processes on that platform, although it profits from its functions through data collection.

24 Kathleen Fitzpatrick, 'Academia, Not Edu', *Planned Obsolescence* (26 October 2015), <https://kfitz.info/academia-not-edu/>; MLA Commons, *An Online Community for MLA Members*, <http://mla.commonsonline.org/>; Humanities Commons, *Open Access, Open Source, Open to All*, <http://hcommons.org>

25 Cohesive disciplinary networks may help in the effective dissemination of papers, but they also pose the danger of generating more attention for work by eminent scholars (who have many 'followers') than for potentially equally valid work by lesser-known researchers. This Matthew effect (coined as such by Merton in 1968) might threaten adherence to the norm of universality, but since this is a phenomenon not exclusively connected to the functions of formal publication, we will not further engage with it here. See: Robert K. Merton, 'The Matthew Effect in Science', *Science*, 159.3810 (1968), 56–63, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.159.3810.56>; James A. Evans, 'Electronic Publication and the Narrowing of Science and Scholarship', *Science*, 321.5887 (2008), 395–99, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1150473>

products through online channels. Yet, besides these existing channels, online platforms have emerged where different interested audiences converge, and communication between them is facilitated. These platforms typically offer a variety of communication types, each with their own rhetoric and degree of complexity: tweets and event announcements appear amidst teaching materials and blog posts on Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC); peer review reports and journal articles feature beside available collaborators and project overviews on DHCommons.<sup>26</sup> This offers the potential to connect with multiple audiences in one environment, and might facilitate cross-dissemination between peers and professionals, including students and interested members of the general public — audiences that humanities scholars aim to address more than other academic disciplines,<sup>27</sup> and that research evaluation frameworks consider increasingly important.<sup>28</sup> The use of broad platforms to disseminate formal publications alongside other types of content intended for other audiences is thus an adaptation of the traditional function of dissemination, again complementary to continuing traditional processes, but with a formative potential for communication practices in DH.

## Registration

An extended functionality compared to the print-based tradition can also be observed in the process of registration. Not only has the online medium provided lossless copying at low incremental cost, and low-cost storage and distribution, it has also introduced the technology to accommodate scholarly communication products that were cumbersome or impossible to produce in print. Now, non-textual forms — such as moving images, sounds, or three-dimensional

---

26 HASTAC, <https://hastac.org>; DHCommons, <https://dhcommons.org> (link not active at time of publication).

27 Wolff, Rod, and Schonfeld, *UK Survey*, pp. 45–49, esp. fig. 27.

28 For an analysis of research evaluation frameworks' shift towards societal impact, consult: Steven Hill, 'Assessing (for) Impact: Future Assessment of the Societal Impact of Research', *Palgrave Communications*, 2 (2016), <https://www.nature.com/articles/palcomms201673>; and Teresa Penfield et al., 'Assessment, Evaluations, and Definitions of Research Impact: A Review', *Research Evaluation*, 23.1 (2014), 21–32, <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvt021>

objects — can be produced and distributed online in such a way that credit for them can be registered. Semi-textual materials not intended to be read linearly, such as software code and research data, can hardly be made suitable for publication in print, but the affordances of content access and links allow them to be communicated effectively online. Many disciplines, including DH, have witnessed the rise of a rich supply of research products like raw data sets, visualisations, and software, which can now be made available relatively affordably and easily.

The possibility of communicating images, software, and data alongside or as part of formal publications ('enhanced' forms of books and articles) challenges the exclusivity of that formal status resulting from registering authorship that was long reserved for published texts. Now that data, software, and visuals can be made public in their own right, the function of registration, in particular, seems in need of being extended to include 'makership' claims other than authorship in the current legal sense, and ownership claims over objects other than formal publications. Calls for such redefinitions are indeed heard from DH among other disciplines.<sup>29</sup> Besides voicing explicit requests for the reassessment of the notion of authorship, scholars have already begun to extend the definition quite naturally in practice by registering as creators of these new content types and acknowledging authorship of data sets and open source software. Even editable and reusable born-digital content can thus come with authorship claims similar to those of print, without necessarily attaching the same ownership claims as in the print paradigm.

The extension and redefinition of authorship and of the concept of registration of knowledge contributions in any form is thus already

---

29 Harriett Green, Angela Courtney, and Megan Senseney, 'Humanities Collaborations and Research Practices: Investigating New Modes of Collaborative Humanities Scholarship', *Proceedings of the Charleston Library Conference* (2016), <https://doi.org/10.5703/1288284316482>. For analysis from the digital humanities, see Nowviskie, 'Where Credit Is Due'; Kathleen Fitzpatrick, 'The Digital Future of Authorship: Rethinking Originality', *Culture Machine*, 12 (2011), <https://culturemachine.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/6-The-Digital-433-889-1-PB.pdf>. Similar considerations have been made in other research disciplines in earlier years: Blaise Cronin, 'Hyperauthorship: A Postmodern Perversion or Evidence of a Structural Shift in Scholarly Communication Practices?', *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 52.7 (2001), 558–69, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.1097>

taking place, but inevitably finds itself under ongoing assessment and comparison with conventional practice, where authorship registered with formal publications is already (relatively) clearly defined.<sup>30</sup> This is particularly explicit in DH, where there is strong advocacy for attaching value to the registration of work by web-designers, data-analysts, code compilers, and other people who are indispensable in the research process, but who would not be included in the traditional definition of an author.<sup>31</sup> DH scholars especially, more than traditional humanists, find themselves in different roles in the research process: as the principal theorist in their own project, but also beta-testing another's software, or contributing to, enriching or cleaning existing data. Some activities, such as creating an online edition, implicitly assign multiple roles to the scholarly author. The broad digital platforms that allow linking to multiple types of research products (Academia.edu, DHCommons) already facilitate registration in these different roles; and even traditional, print-based publishers are experimenting with mechanisms for acknowledging contributor roles other than authorship.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, registered broad experience and a variety of contributions enhance authors' positions in the social network, which

- 
- 30 We say 'relatively clear', because interpretations of authorship have always varied between the academic fields, as is demonstrated, for instance, by the many different customs for listing co-authorship and for the registration of editors and translators; see for instance: Jenny Fry et al., *Communicating Knowledge: How and Why UK Researchers Publish and Disseminate their Findings*, Research Information Network Report (London: The Research Information Network, 2009), pp. 24–27, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.214.8401&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- 31 Julia Flanders, 'Time, Labor, and "Alternate Careers" in Digital Humanities Knowledge Work', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2012), pp. 292–308, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0029>
- 32 CRediT, or 'Contributor Roles Taxonomy', is an initiative of the Wellcome Trust, MIT, Digital Science, and several other partners. The taxonomy has been developed with the assistance of CASRAI (Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration) and the National Information Standards Organization (NISO), and has to date been implemented in 'badges' that are in use by several publishers, mostly in STEM-fields. The taxonomy itself can be found at [http://dictionary.casrai.org/Contributor\\_Roles](http://dictionary.casrai.org/Contributor_Roles); for more information on the CRediT-project and implementations of the taxonomy, see: Liz Allen, 'Moving beyond Authorship: Recognizing the Contributions to Research', *BioMed Central Research in Progress Blog* (28 September 2015), <https://blogs.biomedcentral.com/bmcblog/2015/09/28/moving-beyond-authorship-recognizing-contributions-research/>; Amye Kenall, 'Putting Credit Back into the Hands of Researchers', (*GIGA*)*Blog* (28 September 2015), <http://gigasciencejournal.com/blog/putting-credit-hands-researchers/>

may facilitate dissemination, even if the work itself is not yet valorised in academic evaluation systems.

Although the aim to register all contributors' work is laudable, the intensive involvement of several types of specialists, in itself, is not new in research. Tasks like software compiling or 3D-modelling, at times fulfilled by DH scholars, are inherent in the innovations of the digital medium, but others, such as content design, index creation, and data presentation, resemble services to scholarship that in the print tradition would have been performed by publishing houses, or their freelancers or subcontractors. It should be noted that publishers have already used a function of registration for these services similar to the claims of the author: the publisher brands its products to enhance its reputation by showcasing the excellence of its services. In such instances, the function of registration does not actually change from implicit to explicit, but, as in the case of self-publishing, it shifts from the publisher to the less simply recognisable individual scholar.

One quite fundamental challenge for the function of registration remains: the question of what to register, precisely. Even if the adage that 'scholarship is never finished' was already current in the print age, the submission of a text for publication does, nevertheless, clearly mark the finalisation of a phase or a project. The published version of the text registers its knowledge claims in a finite, stable form. Authors can subsequently add to those claims, challenge them, or refute them in other publications — but the initial registration is not undone. Digital projects on the other hand may develop iteratively and continuously rather than in linear succession of distinct phases. Since online content can be altered or substituted completely following the implementation of newly available insights, online research communication often resembles taking a snapshot of a moving target. This easy adaptation has the advantage of the quick substitution of outdated knowledge — incidentally adding to the perception of increased speed in communication, and perhaps knowledge production itself. At the same time, it fundamentally challenges the function of registration in communication, as it alters the connection between scholars and their individual contributions that had been stabilised in print.<sup>33</sup>

---

33 The adaptable nature of digital objects points towards certain challenges in archiving as well, which will be addressed below in the section on 'Archiving'.

## Certification

The two traditional mechanisms for certification are pre-publication review and post-publication citations. Through highly selective filtering and strict quality control, publishers, with the help of academic editors, build their reputation in academia, and authors depend on that reputation to certify their contributions to knowledge.<sup>34</sup> Post-publication certification depends on being cited by peers, departing from the, not uncontested, premise that they will reference high-quality, relevant research only. The digital medium's inherently quantitative nature — the computer is a counting machine after all — has stimulated the use of citation metrics, which is now pervasive in research evaluation. But it has also generated an unprecedented array of complementary instruments of certification for authors. Download counts, page views, shares, likes, bookmarks, retweets, and Wikipedia mentions, to name just a few, offer potential proxies for perceived quality, all equally based on metrics. These 'alternative metrics' have become abundant in social scholarly networks and are increasingly implemented on publishers' platforms.<sup>35</sup>

Like the immediate changes in dissemination and registration, this shift in certification still departs from the existing standard, that is, formal publications. Alternative metrics — such as download counts and link shares — now extend to novel communication forms and even individuals, but have been primarily compiled for books and articles, and they complement rather than substitute existing certification

---

34 Survey results suggest that humanities scholars value selectivity more than academics from other disciplines, see for instance: Ross Housewright, Roger C. Schonfeld, and Kate Wulfson, *UK Survey of Academics 2012* (Ithaca S+R | Jisc | RLUK, 16 May 2013), pp. 70–72, [http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7644/mrdoc/pdf/7644\\_uk\\_survey\\_of\\_academics\\_2012.pdf](http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7644/mrdoc/pdf/7644_uk_survey_of_academics_2012.pdf), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.22526>. Scholars perceive publishers' reputations as important too, but the assumptions on which they build their intuitions remain curiously under-researched. One exploration is made by: Alesia Zuccala et al., 'Can We Rank Scholarly Book Publishers? A Bibliometric Experiment with the Field of History', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 66.7 (2015), 1333–47, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23267>. Another suggestion, based on the business operations of book-publishing, is offered by Rick Anderson, *Scholarly Communication: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 181–82.

35 Although platforms and publishers use in-house technology to compile metrics, many, among which Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, and Oxford University Press, use integrated widgets developed by the enterprise Altmetric, <https://altmetric.com>

mechanisms. However, considering that the premises on which the traditional proxies of certification rely are themselves contested, increasing use of alternative metrics should be approached at least as critically.<sup>36</sup> They might increase the danger of conflating popularity with authority. Bookmarking or downloading does not equal reading, while reading has never equalled approval, and even citation can indicate violent disagreement. As a direct consequence of the digital medium's salient properties — which cause the Internet's two-way traffic to be logged by default — and publishers' commercial incentives to feature alternative metrics prominently alongside publications, the ample availability of quantitative indicators thus destabilises traditional, much less visible certification.

For digital research results that are disseminated without the involvement of a traditional publisher, further new forms of certification are emerging. Comparable to the brand of the publisher, which signifies authority in print, web projects are stamped with logos of institutional and governmental funders and supporters that are likewise intended to indicate that the communicated research has undergone filtering and quality control. In DH, platforms like NINES and RIDE do not act as publishing venues, but imitate traditional certification by implementing traditional peer review procedures for digital objects aggregated from already existing, but unchecked sources.<sup>37</sup> Also, the uptake of instruments and technology by respected peers may attach value to them, since wide use is regarded as reflecting quality and impact. The DH community boasts many examples, of which the universal acknowledgement of TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) as the de facto standard for text encoding is probably the longest standing.<sup>38</sup>

---

36 Stefanie Haustein, Rodrigo Costas, and Vincent Larivière, 'Characterizing Social Media Metrics of Scholarly Papers: The Effect of Document Properties and Collaboration Patterns', *PLOS ONE*, 10.3 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0120495>; James Wilsdon et al., *Next-Generation Metrics: Responsible Metrics and Evaluation for Open Science*, Report of the European Commission Expert Group on Altmetrics (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017), pp. 12–13, <https://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/pdf/report.pdf>

37 NINES: *Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Electronic Scholarship*, <http://www.nines.org>; RIDE: *A Review Journal for Digital Editions and Resources* (IDE), <http://ride.i-d-e.de>

38 Lou Burnard, 'The Evolution of the Text Encoding Initiative: From Research Project to Research Infrastructure', *Journal of the Text Encoding Initiative*, 5 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.4000/jtei.811>. At the same time, the TEI also illustrates the registration

Alternative metrics, institutional endorsements through acknowledgement in evaluation systems, and wide uptake are all new forms of traditional types of certification. The importance that clearly attaches to them is evidence that quality control remains crucial in scholarly communication. Such evidence also comes from the rise of a new, fundamentally digital type of certification through networked interactions and iterative versioning. In traditional formal publishing, authors and readers are aware that quality control takes place, but they do not have access to the process: it is a 'black box'. DH is known for its early attempts at opening up this 'black box' of quality control, in one-off experiments such as with *Shakespeare Quarterly* in 2010, or implemented in novel procedures for all publications such as with MediaCommons Press.<sup>39</sup> By providing insight into peers' interactions with texts, open peer review thus, potentially, changes the function of certification: rather than the assertion *that* it has been done, the process of *how* it is done gains importance. These open review procedures still require the optimisation of efforts and gains, as the untimely termination of some experiments perhaps illustrates.<sup>40</sup> Yet, analysis of online engagement with texts is a promising rival to existing certification mechanisms.

## Archiving

A stable and dependable apparatus for archiving and retrieving novel communication forms is still lacking. Authors have never really cared greatly about the function of archiving. They have never been actively involved in the process but have traditionally been able to rely on the inherent property of print that multiple copies are distributed widely in a fixed material form, and on the corresponding existing infrastructures, such as library catalogues and publishers' archives. Yet

---

issue discussed earlier. Over time a long list of distinguished but often barely acknowledged scholars have made major contributions to the TEI guidelines.

39 Kathleen Fitzpatrick and Katherine Rowe, 'Keywords for Open Peer Review', *Logos*, 21.3/4 (2010), 133–41, <https://doi.org/10.1163/095796511X560024>; Media Commons Press, *Open Scholarship in Open Formats*, <http://mcpres.media-commons.org/>

40 For instance, DHThis, a platform based on a Slashdot-model of user engagement, was launched in 2014, but suspended in 2016 due to lack of interest. Adeline Koh, 'DHThis: An Experiment in Crowdsourcing Review in the Digital Humanities', *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, 4 (2014), <https://doi.org/10.7264/N3RX99C5>; Bethany Nowvickie argues in 'Where Credit is Due' for a refinement of the processes.

they ought, in their own interest, to take archiving more seriously. As explained above, the online affordances of converging modalities and virtually unlimited storage capacity have expanded authors' potential use of dissemination and registration functions. Besides traditional textual forms, presentations, data, and visuals can now be deposited, for instance, on YouTube or Figshare, and on stand-alone personal or project-based websites. However, this has introduced the problem of digital longevity. If solving this issue on an institutional or national level is already proving a major challenge, how can individual scholars be trusted to solve it satisfactorily? If scholars-as-readers are unsure if they can depend on stable references to such online materials, they may even refrain from citing them altogether.<sup>41</sup> This is not surprising considering that it has taken the traditional infrastructures of scholarly publishing centuries to develop their prized stability and predictability. The limitations of the archival function for novel forms of communication thus pose an immediate and urgent challenge for scholars from disciplines like the digital humanities, who take pride in generating and using them. Fortunately, publishers, libraries, and research funding bodies are increasingly accommodating the archiving of data besides formal publications, as the emerging data archiving policies and principles for fair use demonstrate.<sup>42</sup> These parties seem, from historical contingency, best equipped to generate such archiving functionalities, and authors should be actively involved in advocating their interests.

## Conclusions

The digital revolution changes the way knowledge is created, in the humanities as well. The way research results are communicated needs to change accordingly. The reality is that this change happens more slowly

---

41 Although acceptance seems to be growing slightly, researchers report citing far fewer online sources than articles and books. The authority of the cited documents seems to be the main motivation for this. Fry et al., *Communicating Knowledge*, pp. 28–29; see also Fry et al., *Communicating Knowledge* ('Supporting Paper 2: Report of Focus Group Findings', pp. 59–68); Fenlon et al., 'Humanities Scholars', pp. 161–63.

42 One promising example is Force11, an organically grown community of researchers, funders, publishers, and information management professionals that has issued the 'FAIR' principles for research data, which are being increasingly widely adopted. See: Force11.org, *The Fair Data Principles*, <https://www.force11.org/group/fairgroup/fairprinciples>

than many, especially those in the DH community, would like it to. Over the course of more than four centuries of print, all stakeholders involved in scholarly communication have come to adopt articles and books as the embodiment of all the relevant functions of formal publication: dissemination, registration, certification, and archiving. The established procedures for formal publication; the roles of authors, publishers and libraries in them; and the implicit assumptions about the relationships between these agents have become engrained in the culture of academia to such an extent that we tacitly and automatically rely on the authority of books and articles, instead of weighing the relative importance of each of the functions of publishing in every instance of communication. This can be summarised as the social contract of publishing.<sup>43</sup> Even though scholarly publishing is self-regulating, wherein scholars themselves can change the rules, changing the rules is a matter of patience. There are many partners who are bound by the social contract, and many more fields besides DH.

Even the DH field itself is far from homogeneous. Though there is no hard evidence to prove it, it may well be that, paradoxically, younger DH scholars, for example, experience the stranglehold of this social contract much more acutely than their more senior colleagues.<sup>44</sup> Their career prospects depend on compliance with the existing research evaluation requirements, whereas the communications practices of ‘tenured’ senior academics are less restricted (although they are not entirely free to do as they please either, as they must maintain the reputations they have built). If so, their conservativeness would act as one more social brake on the adoption of new scholarly communication practices.

Online technologies have expanded the possibilities for scholarly communication. In a much less direct way, they also challenge the existing social acknowledgement of the constellation of functions in formal publications. With so many new communication forms at their disposal, authors are prompted to consider the differences between

---

43 Peter Drucker theorised the social contract, although not for publishing. See also: Dan Cohen, ‘The Social Contract of Scholarly Publishing’, *DanCohen.org* (3 March 2010), <http://www.dancohen.org/2010/03/05/the-social-contract-of-scholarly-publishing/>

44 Nancy L. Maron, and Sarah Pickle, *Sustaining the Digital Humanities Host Institution Support beyond the Start-Up Phase* (New York: Ithaca S+R, 2014), pp. 15–16, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.22548>; David Nicholas et al., ‘So, are Early Career Researchers the Harbingers of Change?’, *Learned Publishing*, 32.3 (2019), 237–47, <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1232>

them, and remind themselves, on a more fundamental level, what functions research communication serves in general. In the research fields that study science and scholarship, this draws renewed attention to the values of good scholarship that authors, albeit largely implicitly and unwittingly, uphold by making their research public, regardless of the *form* of publication they choose.

It is precisely the intertwining of the values of scholarship and the functions of traditional publishing, and their ratification in research evaluation systems, that render scholarly communication capable of changing only slowly — even in a field that seems so perfectly suited for quick, disruptive, and radical change as DH. It may be as Kathleen Fitzpatrick has put it, that '[t]he particular contribution of the Digital Humanities [...] lies in the exploration of the difference that the digital can make to the kinds of work that we do, *as well as to the ways in which we communicate to one another*'.<sup>45</sup>

Many of the informal types of communication that used to be entirely private between the instigator and addressee (such as letters, faxes, and telephone calls, but even, for example, conference presentations) are now public by default as a direct consequence of the digital medium's salient properties. But being public does not equate with being published. Some of these new and informal forms of communication might, in due course, become elevated and distinguished with the title 'publication', if they demonstrably serve to uphold values of scholarship — either the traditional Mertonian ones or new ones yet to be established — and if both authors and audiences perceive their function as such. This process of the sociocultural recognition of the online medium's affordances takes time and effort. As we have seen, the DH field's innovative research methods inherently cause it to experiment with new and often initially informal forms of communication, because these serve the functions of publishing as the field intends them to be served. Moreover, the DH community has also shown itself to be good at reflecting on the value of new communication types, along with the necessary reflection on the field's own *raison d'être*. What remains necessary is building consensus about the value of any new practices that are adopted, and

---

45 Kathleen Fitzpatrick, 'The Humanities, Done Digitally', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 12–15 (p. 14, emphasis added), <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0002>

communicating the result to employers and funders. In the online environment, print-like forms might serve informal communication purposes, while innovative forms might fulfil the same functions as traditional formal publications. To come to an appreciation of good scholarship, in whatever form it may come, we will need a fundamental reconsideration of the traditional, print-based intertwining of form and function of publication. This requires a concerted effort — and time.

## Bibliography

- Allen, Liz, 'Moving beyond Authorship: Recognizing the Contributions to Research', *BioMed Central Research in Progress Blog* (28 September 2015), <https://blogs.biomedcentral.com/bmcblog/2015/09/28/moving-beyond-authorship-recognizing-contributions-research/>
- Anderson, Rick, *Scholarly Communication: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
- Antonijević, Smiljana, and Ellysa Stern Cahoy, 'Researcher as Bricoleur: Contextualizing Humanists' Digital Workflows', *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 12.3 (2018), <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/12/3/000399/000399.html>
- Becher, Tony, and Paul Trowler, *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Culture of Disciplines* (Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, 2001).
- Bosman, Jeroen, and Bianca Kramer, 'Swiss Army Knives of Scholarly Communication — ResearchGate, Academia, Mendeley and Others', Presentation for STM Innovations Seminar, London, 7 December 2016, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.4290428.v1>
- Burnard, Lou, 'The Evolution of the Text Encoding Initiative: From Research Project to Research Infrastructure', *Journal of the Text Encoding Initiative*, 5 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.4000/jtei.811>
- Cohen, Dan, 'The Social Contract of Scholarly Publishing', *DanCohen.org* (3 March 2010), <http://www.dancohen.org/2010/03/05/the-social-contract-of-scholarly-publishing/>
- Cronin, Blaise, 'Hyperauthorship: A Postmodern Perversion or Evidence of a Structural Shift in Scholarly Communication Practices?', *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 52.7 (2001), 558–69, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.1097>
- Edmond, Jennifer, 'Collaboration and Infrastructure', in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John

- Unsworth (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), pp. 54–66, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118680605.ch4>
- Evans, James A., 'Electronic Publication and the Narrowing of Science and Scholarship', *Science*, 321.5887 (2008), 395–99, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1150473>
- Fenlon, Katrina, et al., 'Humanities Scholars and Library-Based Digital Publishing: New Forms of Publications, New Audiences, New Publishing Roles', *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 50.3 (2019), 159–82, <https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.50.3.01>
- Fitzpatrick, Kathleen, 'Academia, Not Edu', *Planned Obsolescence* (26 October 2015), <https://kfitz.info/academia-not-edu/>
- 'The Digital Future of Authorship: Rethinking Originality', *Culture Machine*, 12 (2011), <https://culturemachine.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/6-The-Digital-433-889-1-PB.pdf>
- 'The Humanities, Done Digitally', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 12–15, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0002>
- Fitzpatrick, Kathleen, and Katherine Rowe, 'Keywords for Open Peer Review', *LOGOS*, 21.3/4 (2010), 133–41, <https://doi.org/10.1163/095796511X560024>
- Flanders, Julia, 'Time, Labor, and "Alternate Careers" in Digital Humanities Knowledge Work', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2012), pp. 292–308, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0029>
- Fry, Jenny, et al., *Communicating Knowledge: How and Why UK Researchers Publish and Disseminate their Findings*, Research Information Network Report (London: The Research Information Network, 2009), <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.214.8401&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Grandjean, Martin, 'A Social Network Analysis of Twitter: Mapping the Digital Humanities Community', *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 3.1 (2016), 1171458, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2016.1171458>
- Green, Harriet, Angela Courtney, and Megan Senseney, 'Humanities Collaborations and Research Practices: Investigating New Modes of Collaborative Humanities Scholarship', *Proceedings of the Charleston Library Conference* (2016), <https://doi.org/10.5703/1288284316482>
- Haustein, Stefanie, Rodrigo Costas, and Vincent Larivière, 'Characterizing Social Media Metrics of Scholarly Papers: The Effect of Document Properties and Collaboration Patterns', *PLOS ONE*, 10.3 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0120495>
- Hill, Steven, 'Assessing (for) Impact: Future Assessment of the Societal Impact of Research', *Palgrave Communications*, 2 (2016), <https://www.nature.com/articles/palcomms201673>

- Holmberg, Kim, and Mike Thelwall, 'Disciplinary Differences in Twitter Scholarly Communication', *Scientometrics*, 101.2 (2014), 1027–42, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-014-1229-3>
- Housewright, Ross, Roger C. Schonfeld, and Kate Wulfson, *UK Survey of Academics 2012*, Ithaca S+R | Jisc | RLUK ([n.p.], 2013), [http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7644/mrdoc/pdf/7644\\_uk\\_survey\\_of\\_academics\\_2012.pdf](http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7644/mrdoc/pdf/7644_uk_survey_of_academics_2012.pdf), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.22526>
- Hughes, Lorna, Panos Constantopoulos, and Costis Dallas, 'Digital Methods in the Humanities: Understanding and Describing their Use across the Disciplines', in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), pp. 150–70, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118680605.ch11>
- Kaltenbrunner, Wolfgang, 'Reflexive Inertia: Reinventing Scholarship through Digital Practices' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Leiden University, Leiden, 2015), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/33061>
- Kemman, Max, Martijn Kleppe, and Stef Scagliola, 'Just Google It: Digital Research Practices of Humanities Scholars', in *Proceedings of the Digital Humanities Congress 2012*, ed. by Clare Mills, Michael Pidd, and Esther Ward (Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2014), arXiv:1309.2434, <https://www.hrionline.ac.uk/openbook/chapter/dhc2012-kemman>
- Kenall, Amye, 'Putting Credit Back into the Hands of Researchers', (*GIGA*)*Blog* (28 September 2015), <http://gigasciencejournal.com/blog/putting-credit-hands-researchers/>
- Kirschenbaum, Matthew G., 'What is Digital Humanities and What's It Doing in English Departments?' in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 3–11, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0001>
- Koh, Adeline, 'DHThis: An Experiment in Crowdsourcing Review in the Digital Humanities', *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, 4 (2014), <https://doi.org/10.7264/N3RX99C5>
- Maron, Nancy L. and Sarah Pickle, *Sustaining the Digital Humanities Host Institution Support beyond the Start-Up Phase* (New York: Ithaca S+R, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.22548>
- Merton, Robert K., *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, ed. by Norman W. Storer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1973).
- 'The Matthew Effect in Science', *Science*, 159.3810 (1968), 56–63, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.159.3810.56>
- Nicholas, David, et al., 'So, are Early Career Researchers the Harbingers of Change?', *Learned Publishing*, 32.3 (2019), 237–47, <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1232>

- NINES: Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Electronic Scholarship*, <http://www.nines.org>
- Nowviskie, Bethany, 'Where Credit Is Due: Preconditions for the Evaluation of Collaborative Digital Scholarship', *Profession* (2011), 169–81, <https://doi.org/10.1632/prof.2011.2011.1.169>
- Nyhan, Julianne, and Oliver Duke Williams, 'Joint and Multi-Authored Publication Patterns in the Digital Humanities', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 29.3 (2014), 387–99, <https://doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqu018>
- Ossenblok, Truyen L. B., Frederik T. Verleysen, and Tim C. E. Engels, 'Co-authorship of Journal Articles and Book Chapters in the Social Sciences and Humanities (2000–2010)', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 65.5 (2014), 882–97, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23015>, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/asi.23015/abstract>
- Penfield, Teresa, et al., 'Assessment, Evaluations, and Definitions of Research Impact: A Review', *Research Evaluation*, 23.1 (2014), 21–32, <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvt021>
- Praal, Fleur, and Adriaan van der Weel, 'Taming the Digital Wilds: How to Find Authority in a Digital Publication Paradigm', *TXT*, 4 (2016), 97–102, <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/42724/PraalvdWeel.pdf>
- Prosser, David C., 'Researchers and Scholarly Communications: An Evolving Interdependency', in *The Future of Scholarly Communication*, ed. by Deborah Shorley and Michael Jubb (London: Facet, 2013), pp. 39–49, <https://doi.org/10.29085/9781856049610.005>
- Purdy, James P., and Joyce R. Walker, 'Valuing Digital Scholarship: Exploring the Changing Realities of Intellectual Work', *Profession* (2010), 177–95, <https://doi.org/10.1632/prof.2010.2010.1.177>
- Quan-Haase, Anabel, Kim Martin, and Lori McCay-Peet, 'Networks of Digital Humanities Scholars: The Informational and Social uses and Gratifications of Twitter', *Big Data & Society* (2015), pp. 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715589417>
- RIDE: A Review Journal for Digital Editions and Resources* (IDE), <http://ride.i-d-e.de>
- Roosendaal, H. E., and P. A. Th. M. Geurts, 'Forces and Functions in Scientific Communication: An analysis of their interplay', unpublished conference paper at Cooperative Research Information Systems in Physics, Oldenburg, Germany, 31 August–4 September 1997, <http://www.physik.uni-oldenburg.de/conferences/crisp97/roosendaal.html>
- Spiro, Lisa, "'This is Why We Fight": Defining the Values of the Digital Humanities', in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 16–36, <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677948.003.0003>

- Weel, Adriaan van der, *Changing Our Textual Minds: Towards a Digital Order of Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).
- Weel, Adriaan van der, and Colleen Campbell, 'Perspectives on the Future of the Monograph', *Against the Grain*, 28.3 (June 2016), 1, 10, [http://www.against-the-grain.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ATG\\_v28-3.pdf](http://www.against-the-grain.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ATG_v28-3.pdf)
- Whitley, Richard, *The Intellectual and Social Organization of the Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- Wilsdon, James, et al., *Next-generation Metrics: Responsible Metrics and Evaluation for Open Science*, Report of the European Commission Expert Group on Altmetrics (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017), <https://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/pdf/report.pdf>
- Wolff, Christine, Alisa B. Rod, and Roger C. Schonfeld, *UK Survey of Academics 2015*, Ithaca S+R | Jisc | RLUK ([n.p.], 2016), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.282736>
- Ziman, John, *Real Science: What It Is and What It Means* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Zuccala, Alesia, et al., 'Can we Rank Scholarly Book Publishers? A Bibliometric Experiment with the Field of History', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 66.7 (2015), 1333–47, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23267>