Opening the Gates: A New Model for Edition Production in a Time of Collaboration

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In the very early days of the world wide web, but well into a period in which our community understand the positive and transformative impact that computational technique has had on scholarly editing, Fortier reminded us that literary studies is and always has been focused on the study of texts regardless of interpretive theoretical predisposition. In digital literary studies, that textual focus manifests in a number of theories about the nature of the text in general and the electronic scholarly edition in particular, and has developed such that a basic typology of electronic scholarly editions is relatively straightforward to construct via the approach taken in handling textual materials.   Well into what is often called the age of Web 2.0, it is worth noting that prominent types of electronic scholarly editions were largely developed before the ubiquity of the world wide web that we now enjoy and do not accurately reflect its current academic engagement. Indeed, given that we have now entered a new phase in the *social* formation of the web, we can no longer ignore the influence of new networks and connections on the scholarly digital edition. Our understanding of the electronic scholarly edition requires reconsideration in light of the collaborative potential of current and emerging digital technologies; put another way, we need to extend our typology in light of new models of edition production that embrace social networking and its commensurate toolkit. We propose that, while the digital medium is most certainly a productive space in which to analyse editions (as proposed by Hans Walter Gabler), the social incarnation of the digital edition allows us to refocus our

systematic analysis of *texts*, thus furthering the reconfiguration of the hierarchy for reading both texts and editions.[i]

The Dynamic Text

Historically, the scholarly edition relied on the print medium and the expertise of a single authority or editor at its helm. One of the first models of the movement from the print to the electronic edition is typically referred to as the *dynamic text*. Its principles articulated most fully in the late 1980s, the dynamic text emphasises extant linguistic relationships; its historical roots are in word-based scholarly activities such as concordance creation and indexing, collocation and distribution, attribution and dating, rhyme and content analysis, while allowing the reader to engage with the text *dynamically* (Siemens, 'Text Analysis').

In practical terms, this model of the electronic edition is the combination of a properly encoded electronic text with text-retrieval and analysis software (Lancashire, 'Working with Texts'). What makes this type of edition *dynamic* is the way in which the computer facilitates a non-linear interaction with the text. In essence, the dynamic edition structures and treats the text as a database. This database structure allows the reader to draw a good deal of text-based information that is not as easily accessible to the reader of the same work in print. In addition to its disseminative and editorial flexibility, a chief benefit of this sort of edition is that it combines text with tools, speeding academic reading-related tasks. The dynamic text automates reading-related functions that would likely not be carried out without the assistance of the computer because of the expense in time involved. A *computer-assisted analysis* of the text and

a linear *reading* of it are acts that become closely affiliated and, potentially, equivalent.

The Hypertextual Edition[ii]

Seen by some as a technological manifestation of social theories of editing, the *hypertextual edition* exploits the ability of hypertextual organisation to facilitate a reader's interaction with the apparatus (textual, critical, and otherwise) that traditionally accompanies scholarly editions, and with relevant external textual and graphical resources, critical materials, and so forth (Faulhaber, 'Textual Criticism' 134 ff.) As with the dynamic text, all of the interactions facilitated by a hypertextual edition could be carried out, hypothetically, with a print edition; here, however, that edition would have to be supplemented by the resources (paper-based, audio, video) of an excellent library and considerable leg-work. For the scholarly editor, the scope of the hypertextual edition necessitates a careful consideration time, convenience and, further, access to materials.

What is hypothetically available to the reader in a research library, or group of libraries, is here made immediately available, encouraging use of the resources by the reader in a seamless fashion; as such, the hypertextual edition, like the dynamic text, also makes accessible dimensions of the text not normally or conveniently available to readers, but does so by providing immediate access to a different sort of material than that handled by the dynamic text. Moreover, as with the dynamic text, the hypertextual edition affords a type of intertextuality that produces a critical reader with a potentially more powerful grasp of that which is being read than one employing print resources alone. Lastly, because of the broad range of materials that can be incorporated therein, both because of the economy of data storage in the

electronic medium and the benefits of hypertextual navigation, the hypertextual edition can quite comfortably accommodate many 'types' of editions: documentary, genealogical, copy-text, multiple version, socially-based, eclectic, variorum, and so forth.

In his seminal discussion of the hypertextual edition, Faulhaber saw the hypertextual edition as having evolved from the dynamic text (see also Newman). In practice, however, hypertextual editions often relegate the principles of the dynamic edition to the background (if they are included at all),[iii] and instead emphasise the ability of hypertext to provide interaction with materials common to, or ideal for, print-based editions—albeit, with much greater ease-of-navigation and with the potential for interaction with a much larger body of material than that which typically accompanies a paper edition.

As such, the hypertextual edition is most often embraced for its employment of hypertext to emphasise relationships of textual and extra-textual natures, facilitating the reader's interaction with the text and materials related to it with an ease unknown even in the best of scholarly editions published in print; its historical roots are to be found in the apparatuses of scholarly editions and, in the best of examples, the variorum editions. The hypertextual edition, as well, facilitates a close affiliation of the acts of reading and analysis, by providing and assisting in the management of a significant amount of related material extra to the text of the edition itself; promoting such an affiliation of reading and analysis is in keeping with the goals of all scholarly editions, electronic and otherwise (Lavagnino) and the tools that a hypertextual edition can provide are significant (Cover).

The Dynamic Edition

Moving forward, the argument toward the dynamic edition is founded, first, in the observation that the two perspectives on the electronic scholarly edition, dynamic and hypertextual, should be united in practice as they are, seemingly, in theory so that the reader can take advantage of both dynamic interaction with the text *and* its related materials, and also reap the benefits of the fixed hypertextual links that typify the standard relation of materials we find in a scholarly edition. It is then augmented by the notion that even these types of editions, like their print counterparts in many ways, are objects that attempt to represent or fix at a single moment in time the work of an unfixed, ever-evolving—and thus dynamic—scholarly community engaged in the process of stockpiling scholarship, as Frye might note. Electronic editions that live up to the potential of the medium, especially in terms of the inclusivity that it allows, must also be *dynamic*; they must be able to navigate the contents of the edition in familiar ways, and also able to reflect and draw upon the growing, evolving, and unfixed stockpile of scholarship that relates to the matter of the edition.[iv]

The dynamic edition, of which there is not yet a exemplifying touchstone, is predicated on the possibility that the level of interaction one can enjoy with an electronic edition itself, if facilitated in the style of the dynamic text, can replace much of the interaction that one typically has with a text's accompanying materials via explicit hypertextual links in a hypertextual edition. The principles of computationally-facilitated interaction allowed by the dynamic text, which indexes and concords itself, are transferrable to the realm of textual apparatus and commentary as typically modeled in the hypertextual edition, and well beyond into all materials in the medium that relate to the matter of any edition. Such an edition has the ability, in effect, to annotate itself and provide its own apparatus, employing

sophisticated software to automate the process of formalising the associations we take for granted in current editions.

In this, we capitalize on a growing ability to manage, and to navigate, what is available in relation to our electronic scholarly editions in a dynamic and, more explicitly, *social* fashion. This navigation is rooted in humanistic assumptions of the relations that exist within and among texts; it rises out of an accepted understanding of intertextuality. A hypertext, which in its best definition is a 'multisequentially read text' (Landow) embraces such an understanding, and implementations of hypertextual structures rely on the fact that one instance of textual material has association with other instances; in short, such structures rely on the fact that intertextuality exists.[v]

Theoretical and Practical Conversations Pertinent to the Social Edition

The activities traditionally involved in humanities scholarship—what John Unsworth and other have referred to as scholarly primitives—have altered very little since the professionalization of academic study during the nineteenth century. Unsworth identifies seven scholarly primitives: discovering, annotating, comparing, referring, sampling, illustrating, and representing. Whether deliberately or not, makers of digital scholarly editions have modeled the functionality of these editions on traditional scholarly artefacts that facilitate these activities. Based on data gathered in a recent study of the reading strategies of expert or professional readers (Siemens, Leitch et al), and using scholarly primitives as a model for describing these sets of activities, we have developed a functional categorization for the strategies employed by expert readers that comprises four stages: Analysis, Synthesis, Communication, and Dissemination. These methods of engagement are both social in nature and reflect the

interrelated nature of these strategies: analysis and synthesis grow from communication that, in turn, affects dissemination.

With an understanding that an edition performs, 'the considered act of reproducing or altering texts' (Tanselle 10), the socialized text moves us towards a broader understanding of the text itself as an authorial and social entity;[vi] however, the traditional scholarly edition (whether in a print or digital medium) nonetheless follows a 'top-down' model that, in its interpretative and representational aspects, is static once published. Digital humanists have already questioned the genre of the database (Manovich), and spoken to the importance of providing both digital facsimiles and encoded source-texts (Ore 35). Shillingsburg (1998, 2006) and Dahlström (2004), among others, have suggested the possibility of a change in the structure of authority offered by the digital edition, especially in relation to the 'dynamic' nature of a digital text.[vii]

The traditional digital edition or archive uses computation to 'describe and express print-, visual-, and audio-based material in tagged and searchable electronic form' (Schriebman, Siemens and Unsworth). The teleological, codex-based model sees the editor as a single authority, a mediator between the text and the reader. The editorial entity determines and shapes what is important to the reader, focuses the editorial and analytical lens, and ultimately exerts immense control over reader engagement. While it is nothing new to interrogate the 'single authoritative text' (Shillingsburg 1986; 16), the social edition pushes the boundaries of authority further, shifting power from a single editor, who shapes the reading of any given text, to a group of readers whose interpretations themselves form a new method of making meaning out of the material.

The theoretical underpinnings of the social edition, as we articulate it, rely on an understanding of two particular ideas: multi-dimensional texts and 'communities of practice.' From McGann we adopt the following critical and theoretical points: (1) the recognition that scholars read what Barthes calls the 'plural text' by reading across dimensions and (2) a concern that 'digitization . . . situates the critical agent outside the field to be mapped and re-displayed' (McGann, 'Marking Texts' 206). McGann identifies a text's dimensions as *linguistic* (semantic and grammatical markers), *graphical/auditional* (textual materiality), *documentary* (descriptors tied to specific object: bibliography, paleography, provenance), *rhetorical* (categorization, ordering, arrangement), *semiotic* ('patterned relationships throughout the textual system' (214),[viii] and *social* (production and reception history) (213-15). These codes and dimensions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive but provide opportunities to read a text from different perspectives.

Of the six dimensions, digital texts to date have been most successful in mediating the first four but have had more limited success with the semiotic and social dimensions. This is not to say that current edition models do not address the semiotic dimension, which McGann describes as the 'patterned relationships throughout the textual system' (214) or include information about a text's production and reception history.[ix] In current models of digital editions, the problem is that we are not capturing the fluid state of a text's production and reception as it is remediated online. Where we see an opportunity to intervene is in extending these dimensions to include an ongoing interrogation of the social and semiotic life of the text. McGann's delineation of 'N-dimensions' offers a promising shift in paradigm, a shift, we would suggest, that points us directly to the construction of a specifically *social* edition that takes this fluidity into account. McGann writes that,

Traditional textual conditions facilitate textual study at an inner standing point because all the activities can be carried out — can be represented — in the same field space, typically, in a bibliographical field. Subject and object meet and interact in the same dimensional space — a situation that gets reified for us when we read books or write about them. Digital operations, however, introduce a new and more abstract space of relations into the study-field of textuality. This abstract space brings the possibility of new and in certain respects greater analytic power to the study of traditional texts. (McGann, 'Marking Texts' 205)

His proposed model affords a broadening of our conceptual understanding of the layers of reading; or, reading across dimensions.

Just as McGann suggests that computers may broaden our readings and analyses of books, we argue that the same principle of expansion applies when we study communities of practice established and expanded through new means of communication. The term 'communities of practice' refers to groups that form around a particular interest where individual members participate in collaborative activities. Active involvement in the group is key; through this involvement, group members 'develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems — in short a shared practice' (Wenger). Hoadley and Kilner identify knowledge-building communities as a particular kind of community of practice that '[takes] as an explicit goal the development of individual and collective understanding' (33). There is a growing movement with the digital humanities knowledge-building community to expand the community of practice to include public or citizen scholarship. Josh Greenberg, Director of Digital Strategy and Scholarship for the New York Public Library, identifies three models of citizen

scholarship: contributory, collaborative, and co-created. In each model, the traditional scholarly community of practice is extended to include public expertise while still valuing the experience, resources, and tools already in place. At the recent 'The Shape of Things to Come' symposium at the University of Virginia, Greg Crane highlighted a number of ways in which digital scholarship can be used to welcome participants from outside academia.

In expanding the community of practice, we cannot avoid challenging current notions of personal and institutional authority. The single-authored monograph has become both the gold ring and bête noire for those seeking tenure in the humanities. With its lack of a single, authoritative editor, the social edition may seem to some to be a freewheeling invitation to early-career stasis. It is important that while we are imagining the form the social edition will take that we also imagine how it will be received by our institutions. We are heartened by the work being done by the Modern Language Association's Committee on Information Technology in this area. Currently, their 'Short Guide to Evaluation of Digital Work' includes a section on best practices in 'enrichment' that reads '[i]n some cases enrichment can take the form of significant new scholarship organized as interpretative commentary or essay trajectories through the material. . . . Such interpretative curation is itself scholarly work that can be evaluated as a form of exhibit or essay.' The work of the 'editor' of the social edition is to make this kind of curation possible for members of the community of practice to undertake. By acting as a facilitator for community enrichment, the scholar or scholars heading up a social edition project must demonstrate considerable editorial skill in identifying possible avenues for interpretation and technological sensitivity in finding ways to make this kind of editing work.

Building on existing communities of practice and using the model of Web 2.0, we can harness the power of specifically *social* tools (see below), the majority of which move in some way towards combining digital social interaction and scholarly activities. Whether Web 2.0 and its products live up to their reputation as signs of a sea change in how we relate to each other electronically is up for debate. There is, however, a set of characteristics common to tools and user experiences we label '2.0': user- rather than creator-driven, incomplete rather than fixed, collective rather than individual, expansive rather than inclusive, open source rather than proprietary.[x] It is a step beyond the static webpage with user-added content but not the great leap forward (with the social and political connotation of that phrase intact) dreamed of by proponents of the semantic web.

How do we designate the Social Edition? Like the best hopes of Web 1.0, this type of edition dares to use new technology not to generate revenue but as an experiment in individual expression. We will grant it a .5 by accepting the risk of not knowing how users will respond. The Social Edition jumps to 2.0 by embracing the collective (but without losing sight of the individual) and accepting that no edition is ever truly complete. The use of standards-compliant expression (and an ongoing questioning of *whose* standards and *whose* expression) moves us beyond 2.0 to the future of information sharing.

To construct a social edition we must rely on earlier theories of editorial practice and disciplinary conventions to determine our source text and ultimately the digital representation of that text (Shillingsburg, Tanselle, McGann). But as a further step in 'socialization,' the paratext, rather than the text, becomes the focal point. We do not question authority in terms of the multiple variants of a manuscript, for example, but instead ask how readers have collective power to make meaning from

multiple texts. In a *social* edition, which builds on the already-collaborative

formations of digital humanities (Inman, Reed and Sands), textual interpretation is

almost wholly created and managed by a community of users through crowd-

sourcing. This social approach mirrors the move towards collective and collaborative

knowledge building as we see it emerge through Web 2.0 technologies and demands a

new authoritative structure that has a community of users as its foundation.

'Social Software'

Technological advances and the current trend of privileging social media has resulted

in an overabundance of interactive digital tools with which scholars may choose to

engage, and that might augment and enable scholarly communities of practice. These

tools (both scholarly and non-scholarly) facilitate the sharing of and interaction with

data, and offer new possibilities for community-driven scholarship. The majority of

these tools fall into the broad category of 'social software,' which is, notes Boyd,

'based on supporting the desire of individuals to affiliate, their desire to be pulled into

groups to achieve their personal goals.' Certain applications allow for a specific type

of 'social' engagement with digital objects, and they can be classified in multifarious

ways. An already established taxonomy divides social software into the following

categories: knowledge creation and sharing, media sharing, blogs, bibliographic and

bookmarking tools, aggregators, collaborative (scholarly) editing, massively multi-

player online games (MMOGs), peer to peer social networks, project management

software, and wide-scope content management systems. While it is useful to consider

social software within these broad categories, it may be more productive, here, to

organise them according to their use in relation to the *social* edition. This *functional*

taxonomy expands our understanding of the crucial features of these tools and the

ways in which they engender new modes of engagement with digital objects, such as (1) collaborative annotation, (2) folksonomy tagging, (3) user-derived content, (3) community bibliography, and (4) shared text analysis. What follows is a brief sketch of some of the current offerings in each category.

Collaborative Annotation

One of Unsworth's scholarly primitives, annotation, is crucial to scholarly editorial activities. While older models privilege the annotations of a single editor, social tools such as BioNotate (http://bionotate.sourceforge.net), Google Wave (http://wave.google.com), digress.it (http://digress.it; formerly CommentPress), Reframe it (http://reframeit.com), and Diigo (http://www.diigo.com) allow for community knowledge creation. These collaborative systems usually require the installation of a toolbar that allows for annotation 'layering' to promote 'the incremental growth of information as users review others' thoughts on a resource before adding their own' (*Educause*). Diigo, which markets itself as a 'group knowledge repository,' serves as a prime example here, as it comprises the key features of annotation: highlighting and markup (known as sticky notes), as well as searchable tags and bookmarks.

User-derived Content

Some online repositories allow for the creation of 'user-derived content,' or, the collection and management of fully-searchable 'exhibits' comprising multiple digital objects. The opportunity for collaborative knowledge building is most prevalent in sites that already contain large-scale collections, as the exhibits are by necessity limited by the scope of the material available. Some prime examples include the

Library of Congress's Flickr Stream
(http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress/), Inexhibit
(http://www.indexhibit.org/), and the *Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-
Century Electronic Scholarship* (NINES) Collex (http://www.nines.org).

Folksonomy Tagging

Collaborative or social tagging is 'the process by which many users add metadata in
the form of keywords to shared content' (Golder and Huberman). The term now most
often used to describe this type of user-generated cataloguing is 'folksonomy,' which
is defined as 'the result of personal free tagging of information and objects […] for
one's own retrieval. The tagging is done in a social environment (usually shared and
open to others). Folksonomy is created from the act of tagging by the person
consuming the information' (Vander Wal). The English Broadside Ballad Archive
(http://emc.english.ucsb.edu/ballad_project) uses a type of 'user-generated metadata'
(Mathes) to manage and catalogue images. Other applications that manage knowledge
using folksonomy include many media sharing sites such as Flickr (http://flickr.com;
see fig. 1), Twitter (http://twitter.com), bookmarking sites such as Del.icio.us, as well
as Diigo (see above).

Community Bibliography

Social Bibliographies relate closely to collaborative tagging and also participate in
knowledge creation. These tools allow users to collect and catalogue references and
resources using academic citations, folksonomy tagging, and link sharing. Some of
the most popular community bibliography tools include Zotero
(http://www.zotero.org), Digg (http://digg.com), reddit (http://www.reddit.com),

StumbleUpon (http://www.stumbleupon.com), Connotea (http://www.connotea.org), CiteULike (http://www.citeulike.org), and BibSonomy (http://www.bibsonomy.org). BibSonomy, for example, is a 'social bookmark and publication sharing system.' Twitter (http://www.twitter.com) has also allowed groups of users to share links and resources, especially within the digital humanities community.

Text-Analysis

Digital humanities textual analysis 'involves the application of algorithmically facilitated search, retrieval, and critical processes that, originating in humanities-based work, have been demonstrated to have application far beyond' (Schriebman, Siemens, and Unsworth). Examples include Voyeur's embedded widgets (http://voyeur.hermeneuti.ca), and Ivanhoe (http://patacriticism.org/ivanhoe), which allows for community analysis of literary texts. While many text analysis applications exist, the exploration of the *social* potential of these tools is still only in its nascent stages.

Modelling the *Social* Edition

With these tools at its centre, the social edition moves past the issue of authoritative or intentionalist approaches to the copy-text. It is process-driven, privileging interpretative changes based on multi-user-input. The text is fluid, agency is collective, and many users, rather than single editor, shape what is important and thus broaden the editorial lens. This expansive structure offers a new scholarly workflow and hermeneutical method that relies on dynamic knowledge building and privileges process over end result. A definitively social edition would employ tools such as transcription, user bookmarking, flagging, and commenting, links to contextual

material (especially for names and integration of bibliographic information), glossary functions, as well as full-screen reading ability (without mediation by tools). Collaborative annotation offers a particularly rich toolkit for the humanities scholar, and seems a prudent place to begin to envision the interactivity inherent within the social edition. The social edition is another type of social contract that decentres institutional models and allows for a new kind of 'scholarly discourse network' that eschews traditional institutional hierarchical structures and relies instead upon community.[xi]

And yet, despite Stephen Nichols's call to 'dismantle the silo model of digital scholarship,' many digital editions, like print editions, continue to exist as self-contained units that do not encourage interaction with other resources. Instead we would argue that the social edition grows from Greg Crane's exhortation: '[w]e need to shift from lone editorials and monumental editions to editors as … editors, who coordinate contributions from many sources and oversee living editions.' The movement toward social edition production has already begun, with projects such as EEBO interactions, 'a social networking resource for *Early English Books Online*' (http://eebo-interactions.chadwyck.com) and George Mason University's 'Crowdsourcing Documentary Transcription: an Open Source Tool,' which is described as 'an open source tool that would allow scholars to contribute document transcriptions and research notes to digital archival projects, using the Papers of the War Department as a test case.'[xii] These projects, among others, point to a growing need in the scholarly community to expand our knowledge communities using the social technologies at our disposal. With the understanding that we cannot prophesize the exact nature of the social edition at this current juncture, we do, however, wish to

reiterate the importance of seeing the scholarly text as a process, and the initial, primary editor as a facilitator, rather than progenitor, of knowledge creation.

Notes

[i] See Gabler (2010), as well as the entire *Literature Compass* special issue on 'Scholarly Editing in the Twenty-First Century' (7.2: 2010).

[ii] For a discussion of the hypertextual edition, see Robinson, Peter, and Hans Walter Gabler, eds. 'Introduction,' and Robinson, 'The One Text and the Many Texts.'

[iii] Lavagnino notes: 'it is striking how many proposals for hypertext editions fail to mention even the rather ordinary function of text searching . . . mundane as it is, it is one of the most valuable things that can be done with electronic texts.'

[iv] See also McGann, Ross, and Landow, 'Footnotes.'

[v] Such an edition embraces an electronic context and notion of inclusivity that Bush, Frye, Winder and Nelson have articulated; such an edition also requires that a significant amount of related scholarly material is available in electronic form.

[vi] The discussion that follows on the social *edition* naturally extends to the construction of a social 'archive' (Irvine, 2006; 184). Irvine has offered a productive way of understanding the socialized text:

> Instead of superseding current critical editions—whether in print or online—or privileging one version or editorial practice over others, these digital archives could potentially enfold any number of critical and non-critical editions into an indexed network in which each edition is experienced as a socialized text—that is, social objects embedded in an apparatus that bears witness to the history of the edition's production, trans- mission, and reception. (202-203)

[vii] Dahlström writes, 'the web edition turns into a large resource archive and editorial laboratory, and even more often into a more or less temporary interface to a changing, dynamic digital archive' (18).

[viii] The Semiotic dimension owe a lot to Barthes's Semantic and Symbolic Codes: elements of both contain connotative meaning - semantic are free-floating, extra-literary; symbolic are organized into systems (synthesis:antithesis, etc.)

[ix] We do not fault digital texts for struggling with the Semiotic dimension which, like Barthes's Semantic and Symbolic codes, more robustly resists marking than the other dimensions.

[x] For a more detailed discussion of Web 2.0, see O'Reilly, Tim, and O'Reilly, Tim and John Battelle.

[xi] See Fitzpatrick:

> Scholars operate in a range of conversations, from classroom conversations with students to conference conversations with colleagues; scholars need to have available to them not simply the library model of texts circulating amongst individual readers but also the coffee house model of public reading and debate. This interconnection of individual nodes into a collective fabric is, of course, the strength of the network, which not only physically binds individual machines but also has the ability to bring together the users of those machines, at their separate workstations, into one communal whole.

[xii] See Melissa Terras' excellent list of new collaborative projects.

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Abstract (250 words)

This working paper offers a new understanding of the historical underpinnings of the

scholarly and digital editions, and envisions the possibilities of the scholarly social

edition. It is generally accepted that there are several basic models for electronic

editions of a scholarly nature, each put forward before the advent of the world wide

web -- each demonstrating disparity within and among approaches in handling the text

that lies at their centre. Using Unsworth's scholarly primitives as a model for

describing the set of activities common to humanities scholars, we have developed a

functional definition for the strategies employed by expert readers: Analysis,

Synthesis, Communication, and Dissemination. New methods of engagement are both

social in nature and reflect the interrelated nature of these strategies: analysis and

synthesis grow from communication that, in turn, affects dissemination, and so forth.

Based on recent research concerning the reading strategies of expert or professional

readers, and the current state of digital humanities scholarship, the next step in the

development of the scholarly edition is one that reflects the importance of

collaboration, incorporates contributions by its readers, and where the editor acts as a

facilitator for user involvement rather than enjoying an unassailable final word. Our

model of the social edition points to new methods of engagement in digital literary

studies. The social edition embraces the collective (but without losing sight of the

individual) and accepts that no edition is ever truly complete.