CHAPTER	17
TITLE	Sustaining Scholarly Efforts: The Challenge of Digital Media
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OVERVIEW	Increasingly, scholarship in English studies is dependent on the digital creation, exchange, interpretation, and manipulation of information, all processes that tend to demand collaborative authorship. Yet many scholars resist moves to accommodate new electronic forms of scholarship and collaborative work, fearing that work in the humanities may suffer irrevocably. In this chapter, we draw on our experience as scholars—two women, both senior, both in a relatively unconventional field within English studies, and one man versed in electronic forms of scholarship and part of a new group of scholars entering the profession. Our goal is to identify a small set of principles that describe what we consider to be a productive middle ground between the historically informed values of the humanities and the changes currently informing emerging information ecologies in digital environments.
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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES	Cynthia L. Selfe is Humanities Distinguished Professor in the Department of English at Ohio State University, and the co-editor, with Gail Hawisher, of *Computers and Composition: An International Journal*. In 1996, Selfe was recognized as an EDUCOM award winner for innovative computer use in higher education—the first woman and the first English teacher ever to receive this award. In 2000, Selfe, along with long-time collaborator Gail Hawisher, was presented with the Outstanding Technology Innovator award by the CCCC Committee on Computers. Selfe has served as the chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication and the chair of the College Section of the National Council of Teachers of English. Gail E. Hawisher is professor of English and founding director of the Center for Writing Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is widely published in digital media and literacy studies, and, co-edits, with Cynthia Selfe, the international journal *Computers and Composition*. Hawisher's publications include *Global Literacies and the World Wide Web* (Routledge, 2000) and *Passions, Pedagogies, and 21st Century Technologies* (Utah State University Press, 1999), which won the 2000 Distinguished Book Award at Computers and Writing. She and co-author, Cynthia Selfe, have also published the book-length study *Literate Lives in the Information Age* (Erlbaum, 2004), which uses life history interviews to look at how people of different generations have come to digital literacies, and, most recently, the coedited *Gaming Lives in the 21st Century: Literate Connections* (Palgrave, 2007). Current projects that she and Selfe are working on include *Transnational Literate Lives*, a multimodal book-length study that relies on video as a research, authoring, and presentation tool. In the past several years, Hawisher has been honored to receive from her department the Robert Schneider Award for Outstanding Teaching

	and Service (2000). Her university has also recognized her work with the Lynn M. Martin Award for Distinguished Women Faculty (2004), the Campuswide Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (2004), and the University Distinguished Teacher/Scholar Award (2005). Patrick W. Berry is a PhD candidate in the Center for Writing Studies and Department of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research concentrates on English teachers' literacy narratives as a family of genres to explore the intersections among literacy, personal experience, technology, and social class. His "Critical Remediation: Locating Eliza" appeared in *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* in 2007.
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Sustaining Scholarly Efforts: The Challenge of Digital Media

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Patrick W. Berry

Organizations and institutions, intellectual work and global communication, computer networks and electronic environments have all converged in the past decade or so. The changes have altered models of work and information in a range of sectors—many of which are increasingly dependent on the digital creation, exchange, interpretation, and manipulation of information. Among these changes are a growing recognition of the value of collaborative groups and their role in knowledge production (Nardi, Whittaker, & Schwartz, 2000); a new appreciation of sharing and building associations as powerful and underappreciated tools in information economies (Johnson-Eilola, 1995); an acknowledgment of new semiotic channels and modalities for conveying meaning (e.g., digital audio, video, animation, multimedia); and a focus on the efficacy of digital informational resources leveraged by peer production (Benkler, 2004).

Although these trends are increasingly visible and influential in a range of public, business, and governmental sectors, they have yet to fully permeate the humanities, or, more specifically, departments of English, with which we are most familiar.[1] Many of these academic units retain long-standing historical and cultural values that seem highly resistant to new forms of knowledge production, especially those situated within digital environments—among these, a value on the scholarly and research performance of individuals rather than teams; a value on conventional forms of information exchange, particularly printed books and journal articles; and a value on models of scholarly production tied to institutional capital in university presses and professional journals (MLA Task Force, 2007).

For those scholars who recognize the strengths of both *conventional* and *emerging* forms of knowledge production, this situation is becoming increasingly problematic to negotiate, especially for junior scholars working toward tenure. Indeed, the current situation presents senior scholars with an important ethical challenge: to establish an increasingly sustainable system of scholarly production in English departments—one that works both for scholars who want to retain traditional values of humanist scholarship and those who see needed changes in such values. Although some of this work can be undertaken by revising departmental guidelines for tenure and promotion (e.g., updating them to accommodate new electronic forms of scholarship and collaborative work) other approaches, for instance, may be more complex and may involve scholarly leadership that bridges the local, micro-level sites of departments, the medial-level institutional environments within which such departments function, and the macro-level national contexts that help shape our professional values.

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[1] Because many of our colleagues reside, if not in departments of English, in humanities programs, we specifically discuss these departments in this chapter. We intend, nevertheless, for our discussion to apply to those computers and writing colleagues who make their academic homes in other disciplinary units across the university.

In this chapter, we draw on our experiences as scholars—two women, both senior, both in a relatively unconventional field within English studies, both committed to collaborative work, and one man versed in the electronic forms of scholarship and part of a new group of scholars entering the profession. Our goal is to identify a small set of principles that describe what we consider to be a productive middle ground between the historically informed values of the humanities and the changes currently informing emerging information ecologies in digital environments. These principles also serve as guides to the kinds of scholarly leadership efforts that we mention above—efforts that seek to bridge micro, medial, and macro-levels of our professional work—and that help to establish increasingly sustainable systems of scholarly production for other scholars and for ourselves. In short form, these are as follows:

1. The profession of English can retain its traditional value on scholarship that is original, innovative, intellectual, and sustained, peer-reviewed and published, while acknowledging that scholarly fields, forms, and values change.

2. Scholarly models of production and form are not fixed. Rather, they are fluid—socially and technologically shaped and contingent. Contemporary scholarship, increasingly, is created, maintained, and circulated in a range of electronic environments that extend the intellectual reach of ideas and the development of academic fields and subfields.

3. Given electronic contexts, current scholarship can increasingly employ multiple semiotic modalities (words, still and moving images, video, audio) to convey meaning in increasingly effective and robust ways.

4. Social networks and collaborative scholarship, especially when they are informed by feminist values on sharing and connection, can multiply and leverage the innovative contributions of new scholarly projects. They can also help increase the sustainability of such projects.

These principles—heavily inflected by feminist values, emerging models of work in digital environments, and long-standing ideals in composition studies—have provided us a way of sustaining research and scholarly efforts over a period of decades. Importantly, informed by the work of Donna Haraway, we consider these principles partial, contingent, fluid, and situated. They are neither objective nor generalizable, but rather our own form of coyote knowledge that others may, or may not, choose to stitch into their professional lives—in various transformed, partial, and complex ways (Haraway, 1988).

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE MAKING AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATION

The backdrop for the intellectual work of this chapter is complex and woven from multiple and related contexts. In part, it has emerged from our location in an area of composition studies—computers and writing—that focuses on the study of information technologies and their use in literacy instruction and practices. From this position, for instance, we have followed a series of related trends in information production and exchange that have emerged from a converging set of technological changes and practices we mentioned above.

The multiplied power of peer collaboration, which has been a consistently valued practice in composition studies since the initial interest in social constructivism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bruffee, 1984), has enjoyed a similar emphasis within the corporate sector since the early phases of globalization in the 1980s, when U.S. businesses began to emulate the team-based practices of Japanese communication styles. In the 1990s, however, collaborative practices experienced even more rapid growth as new digital networks and digital work environments expanded in their international reach and importance. Moreover, personal social networks across workplaces continue to assume increasing importance. As Bonnie Nardi and her colleagues (2000) pointed out, personal networking is not necessarily new—it has been explicitly identified since 1940 to denote the cultivation of "useful others"—but what is new "is the intensity and absolute necessity of networking for practically everyone" (n.p.).

By the 1990s, and within ever-changing social, historical, and technological contexts, as Deborah Brandt (1995) pointed out, digital literacies were accumulating rapidly. Manuel Castells (1997) described a range of groups that had begun to assemble and communicate online—within digital networks that were contributing to the breakdown of conventional geopolitical borders and the rise of globalized politics. Within such environments, Castells described social groups that not only worked online—for emerging multinational corporations had to connect workers across conventional linguistic and cultural borders—but that also involved offline self-sponsored literacy activities related to new kinds of identity politics. Within digital environments, these social groups and networks formed interest groups; political action groups; and groups focused on feminist, racial, environmental, or religious issues. Also forming in such spaces were social groups focused around gaming, dating, genealogy, films, music, and other interests. Importantly, Castells noted that as people were exchanging ideas and work within and among such groups—and often taking action collectively—they were also involved in contesting, negotiating, and re-writing the new "social codes" under which societies would be "re-thought, and re-established" (p. 360) in the coming decades.

Communicative practices, it was clear, were beginning to change dramatically within globalized online environments where texts were, increasingly, crossing national borders, time zones, language groups, and geographic distances. As scholars from the New London Group (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kress, 1999; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) and others noted, people could no longer afford to think of texts in monolingual, monocultural, or monomodal terms. Within online globalized environments for composing and communication, texts needed to resist the limitations of a single symbolic system and its attendant conventions, taking increased advantage of multimodalities of expression: visual, aural, and kinesthetic elements, as well as alphabetic components. To increase their effectiveness, texts also had to become highly intertextual in terms of their resonance across media types.

By the beginning of the new century, digital environments had begun to spawn not only new forms of composing and communicating, but also new models of information design and production, maintenance and organization, delivery and circulation. Of particular interest for the purposes of this chapter are new practices of collaborative peer production that have resulted in the emergence and growth of social-networking phenomena like Wikipedia, YouTube, de.li.cious, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Flickr. Such projects depend on the personal contributions and investments by large and far-flung social networks of people who choose to come together to create online "commons" (Benkler, 2003) that are defined, variously, by an expanded freedom to shape involvement, including the timing, extent, and conditions of involvement; value as and to contributors; freedom from some of the constraints normally accepted as "necessary preconditions to functional markets," and by "more or less elaborate rules—some formal, some social conventional—governing the use of the resources" (Benkler, 2003, pp. 6–7).

THE CONTEXT OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS

If English departments and related programs in the humanities have yet to embrace fully many of these new patterns of information design, production, and exchange that have come to characterize globalized digital environments, they have, nevertheless, been fundamentally affected by these trends. The recent report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion (2007), for example, identified a related set of concerns in the profession—among them, increasing demands for scholarly productivity within universities engaged in a "prestige economy" (Chait, 2002, qtd. in MLA, 2007, p. 11); shrinking resources for humanities publishing, especially among university presses; and an almost single-minded focus on the scholarly monograph as the "gold standard" (p. 5) of academic excellence.

The "widespread anxiety" (p. 1) prompting the 2007 MLA report has considerable basis in fact. As the report acknowledges, over 62% of the departments responding to an MLA survey "reported that publication has increased in importance in tenure decisions over the last ten years" (p. 4), with 88.9% of the departments in Carnegie doctorate-granting, 44.4% in Carnegie master's, and 48% in Carnegie baccalaureate institutions ranking the "publication of a monograph as 'very important' or 'important' for tenure" (p. 4). In addition, 32.9% of all departments and 49.8% of departments in doctoral-granting institutions expect "progress toward the completion of a second book for tenure" (p. 4). A related value is placed on articles in refereed scholarly journals, which only 1.6% of departments characterized as "not important" (p. 5).

Fueling anxieties about such requirements, the report found, were several factors. First, the report noted the gradual but persistent decrease of funding for higher education, which has resulted in the "corporatization of the university" along "business models of efficiency and output" (MLA, 2007, p. 16). For university presses, the report points to the work of the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of Scholarly Publishing (2002) and Phil Pochada's statement that "these presses have increasingly been asked to operate as businesses that must cover their costs and had lost or sharply reduced their subsidies from the institution" (qtd. in MLA, p. 16). Presses have responded, in part, by "discontinuing publication in certain Humanities subjects altogether" or "reducing the humanities list," thus "narrowing... publishing possibilities, especially in fields viewed as marginal" (p. 16).

A second source of anxiety is the disconnect between the profession's increasing dependence on electronic scholarly resources and its lack of experience in evaluating such materials. Indeed, 4.8% of departments in doctoral-granting institutions report "no experience evaluating refereed articles in electronic formats" and 65.7% report "no experience evaluating monographs in electronic formats" (p. 5). While neglecting new electronic publications as a source for tenure, many in English departments have also come to see new digital networks and electronic forms as heralding the "end of… [the page's] influential reign. Old document forms and institutions—books, journals, and newspapers, on the one hand, publishers, and librarians, on the other, seem about to dissolve" (Brown & Duguid, 1996, p. 14).

A third source of concern is the recognition that faculty are working harder than ever. Referencing work by Jack Schuster and Martin Finklestein, the MLA report noted, "the weekly work effort of faculty members across institutional types increased from 40 hours per week in 1972 to 48.6 hours in 1998, and it increased most dramatically to 50.6 hours, at research universities where faculty have been subjected to both increasing instructional and research demands" (p. 14). We would argue that these statistics are especially alarming for junior faculty who struggle to establish a series of sustainable scholarly, teaching, and service practices.

PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

What strategies, then, might help senior scholars bridge the complex series of gaps between the new systems of digital knowledge production and the more historically informed values that shape departments of English—in ways that make scholarly effort sustainable for both senior and junior colleagues? In this section, we focus on three principles that have guided our thinking and scholarly efforts, and that may, or may not, work in modified ways for others. In explaining these principles, we focus on our situated experiences as scholars and on the tenets of feminist theory that have shaped our thinking. Once again, we offer important cautions to readers:

First, the story of how we identified these principles is, in part, a fiction necessitated by the context of this writing task, one composed by memory and, thus, highly susceptible to selective perception and editing. In short, these principles have emerged not fully formed, but in fits and starts, wrong turns and returns, revisions and rethinking, over time. Indeed, they are still emerging and changing.

Second, we do not consider these principles generalizable in their specifics; rather, their value, if they have any, rests in their ability to sketch the general topography of a third way, a middle ground between the historical values that continue to inform departments of English and the rapidly changing contexts for scholarship that provide exciting potential for new generations of scholars.

Finally, our intent in this chapter is to promote multiplicity, flexibility, and sustainability—in part by resisting the adoption of any single model, any single standard, or any single approach to scholarship, scholarly efforts, or scholarly careers.

Our hope, then, is that somewhere between the personal situatedness of experience and the explanatory power of theory, others might find ways to use and modify the principles we have identified; that others might articulate their own ways of working toward a sustainable and flexible set of approaches to scholarship; and that they might discover new ways of addressing the needs of both junior and senior faculty, recognizing the innovative contributions of colleagues with both conventional and unconventional approaches to knowledge production, exchange, and distribution.

Principle #1: The profession of English can retain its traditional value on scholarship that is original, innovative, intellectual and sustained, peer reviewed, and published, while acknowledging that scholarly fields, forms, and values change.

Change, we are convinced, produces less anxiety and less resistance when individuals and groups—both those who *support* change and those who are *resistant* to change—can focus on shared values. It is within the context of this middle, and more sustainable ground, that much of our work as journal and book series editors has proceeded over the past decades. For us, this understanding does not imply a reluctance to support and embrace change, especially of the kind inflected by feminist theory and practice. It has, however, allowed us to pursue change in ways that our colleagues and departments have accepted and supported, even in institutions often dominated by historically informed values on scholarly forms and productivity standards, and in a rapidly changing technological field that is also occasionally influenced by such values.

When we first began work in this field in the early 1980s, for example, few journals or presses specializing in English studies were willing to publish work on technology and fewer were willing to do so on a frequent basis. In the minds of many colleagues, this emerging field seemed antithetical to humanist values and scholarly traditions that focused primarily on historical and print-based texts. At the same time, English departments placed value on scholarship that was intellectually innovative and sustained, on refereed print publications, and on rising standards of productivity for scholarly projects. Our challenge, then, in response to such an environment, was to acknowledge the continuing value of published scholarship in print-based environments, while identifying peer review processes and social networks that could help us make such scholarly projects better, and more sustainable than relying on our own efforts alone. Four kinds of approaches grew out of these related realizations. The first approach we found to be of value—despite the prevailing academic value on single-authored scholarship in many departments of English—was a commitment to scholarly projects that involved collaboration and social networks. In part, this approach was made possible in the early 1980s by personal computers and the exchange of floppy disks, then later by digital networks and the exchange of email messages, and even later by the exchange and electronic editing of files (Hawisher & Selfe, 1998).

Using these particular technological tactics, we worked with colleagues across the country to edit an early set of anthologies that focused on issues of importance to the increasing numbers of teacher/scholars who were beginning to use and study information technologies in English composition classrooms (see Hawisher & LeBlanc, 1992; Hawisher & Selfe, 1991; Holdstein & Selfe, 1990; Selfe & Hilligoss, 1994). Authors in these anthologies focused on the best ways of integrating computer technology into humanist classrooms; the effects that such technology seemed to be having on the literacy practices and products of teachers and students; the need for professional development and departmental support; and our call to develop critical perspectives on technology. In completing these early co-edited book projects, we followed a commitment to collaborative scholarship that drew on the talents of multiple authors, but that were also refereed through the conventional peer review processes valued within English departments at that time. Importantly, for us, this work also involved building *intensional networks* (Brown & Duguid, 1996) of colleagues around the country who helped extend our personal interests in computers and writing more broadly and extensively, and who could be counted on to understand, appreciate, and formulate critical perspectives on our work. These intensional networks—that is, networks that grew out of intense and productive communication among individuals across boundaries—eventually took an international turn, with colleagues in Australia, Greece, Egypt, and Norway participating and extending the reach of emerging communities of practice (Wenger, 1998).

In a second social and scholarly effort, we began and edited a new print journal, *Computers and Composition*[2], which focused on the needs of teachers experimenting with technology in English composition classrooms. This journal, too, was made possible, in part, by the support of far-sighted departmental chairs and, in part, by a changing technological environment that put the power of design, layout, and production within our reach as scholars. Early issues of the journal were created on an IBM Selectric and duplicated; later editions were produced on

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[2] The original founders and editors of *Computers and Composition* were Kathleen Kiefer, Colorado State University, and Cynthia L. Selfe, Michigan Tech University. In 1988, Gail Hawisher, University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign, became co-editor of the journal with Cynthia Selfe. This collaborative continues to edit the journal at present, although the editorship is aided on a continual basis by talented graduate student associate editors at their respective institutions and a series of innovative guest editors who propose special issues, which are published regularly.

a personal computer using word-processing and page-layout software. As the journal developed, communication with authors and reviewers was conducted by email as well. As a scholarly project, *Computers and Composition* was both conventional and revolutionary. The print form of the journal and, as it developed, its reliance on accepted peer review processes and its eventual association with established scholarly presses (e.g., Ablex and Elsevier) acknowledged existing scholarly values in departments of English. At the same time, the journal's emphasis on computer use in composition studies, technological experimentation, and emerging forms of scholarship helped push the boundaries of the field in ways prized by colleagues who placed value on technological innovation. The journal further extended the intensional networks we had established around our scholarly efforts, drawing on the many talents of colleagues at other institutions who reviewed contributions, wrote articles, recruited authors, and read the journal's contents.

As we gained experience with various kinds of collaborative scholarly projects, accumulated the required cultural capital of published work, and extended the professional networks on which our work depended, we noted that other scholars in the emerging field of computers and writing had similar needs. To meet these needs, and to accommodate longer-sustained scholarly projects, we began a third major scholarly effort involving the editing of three different book series—the first with the National Council of Teachers of English, and the second and third with Ablex and Hampton Press, respectively. Like many of our projects, these series have incorporated both conventional and unconventional features. They have all recognized, for instance, existing and historical values on excellent, peer-reviewed scholarship in the form of printed books, and, importantly we believe, the role of the single-authored scholarly monograph. Several of the volumes published in the series, however, have also made room for the collaborative scholarship and edited collections that scholars entering the profession have used to establish their own scholarly identities and social networks (titles in print as of our writing of this chapter include Alexander, 2005; Alexander & Dickson, 2006; Allen, 2002; Blair & Takayoshi, 1999; Coogan, 1999; Crow, 2006; Grabill, 2007; Gruber, 2007; Hawisher, LeBlanc, Moran, & Selfe, 1996; Howard, 1997; Johnson-Eilola, 1999, 2005; Kalmbach, 1996; McKee & DeVoss, 2007; Palmquist, Keifer, Hartvigsen, & Goodlew, 1998; Porter, 1998; Rouzie, 2005; Samuels, 2006; C. Selfe, 2007; R. Selfe, 2005; Sloane, 2000; Snyder & Beavis, 2004; Sullivan & Porter, 1997; Takayoshi & Sullivan, 2007).

These series, too, have increasingly taken advantage of digital networks and electronic forms of exchanging information. Most of the authors involved, for example, wrote in digital environments, corresponded with us as editors and their colleagues via these networks, and focused their scholarship on the literacy practices characterizing such networks. A recent book in the Hampton series, moreover, includes a DVD that features student-made examples of digital video and audio compositions, and makes room for digital media formats within the conventional form of the book (Selfe, 2007).

A fourth project that we undertook to accommodate conventional academic values—and, to, at the same time, pursue a commitment to the changing forms of knowledge production in digital environments—involved identifying a series of national awards for print and, more recently, digital publications. These awards had, and still have, multiple goals. On one level, they are designed to acknowledge the academy's historical focus on scholarship characterized by innovation, reach, and intellectual excellence. On the other hand, they are designed to recognize the work of scholars struggling to publish in an emerging area within English studies. We began in 1990 with the annual Ellen Nold Award for the best article in computers and writing, along with the Hugh Burns Award for the best dissertation. In 1998, we introduced the *Computers and Composition* Distinguished Book Award, suggested by Johndan Johnson-Eilola, to recognize the book-length contributions that sustain scholarly projects within the field. In 2005, we added the Charles Moran Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Field, to recognize significant pioneering work that often goes unrecognized. Most recently, we have

begun awarding the Michelle Kendrick Prize for Digital Production/Scholarship. With this award, we are seeking to honor and call attention to new forms of scholarship, and new forms of digital production and exchange that graduate students and faculty members in digital media studies are finding of increasing interest.

Although these awards carry relatively modest prizes, their effect has been magnified by their national competitiveness, the involvement of respected scholars serving as judges, and the recognition of their import by members both within and outside the computers and writing community. As a result, these awards have added considerable weight to the profiles of ground-breaking individuals and their outstanding work. These awards have convinced us that when a community of knowledgeable scholars pays positive attention to outstanding work, others colleagues are prompted to do so as well.

Principle #2: Scholarly models of production are not fixed. Rather, they are fluid, and socially and technologically shaped and contingent. Scholarship, increasingly, is created, maintained, and circulated in a range of electronic environments that can be used to extend the intellectual reach of ideas and the development of academic fields and subfields.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the use of scholarly materials in digital forms had become commonplace for English faculty: electronic databases of digital materials (e.g., The Wilfred Owen Multimedia Digital Archive, Project Perseus, The Vergil Project at the University of Pennsylvania, the Rossetti Archive, The William Blake Archive), online journals (*Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy; Enculturation*; *Computers and Composition Online*), and digital tools for searching and finding information, conducting original scholarship, and composing (Google Scholar, HyperResearcher and InterClipper, Microsoft Word, Adobe Dreamweaver, Windows MovieMaker and Apple iMovie, among many others). It remained less common, however, for departments of English to value scholarship published in digital venues, using digital forms of collaborative production and adopting emerging digital formats.

In responding to this dynamic context, we attempted to balance conservative and not-so-conservative values in ways that seemed sustainable at the time and within the situated contexts of our academic lives. We continued to recognize the disparate models of scholarship in play at the time, as well as to recognize the profession's value on peer review and intellectual excellence in scholarly projects while taking advantage of changing digital environments to support new models of design, production, exchange, and circulation.

More specifically, during the 1990s, we initiated an online version of the print journal, which came to be called *Computers and Composition Online*. Various iterations of this journal, edited first by Keith Comer, then in Sweden, and Margaret Syverson, at the University of Texas, have been in existence since 1996. Sustaining this effort, however, has not always been easy, especially in the 1990s. As much as we believed that the profession was ready for online publication, academic departments still viewed electronic articles as less rigorous than their print counterparts, and authors were understandably cautious in publishing online. In 2002, however, when Kristine Blair, at Bowling Green State University, assumed the editorship, the journal began to focus on texts that could not be fully or adequately accommodated by print publications. These pieces included articles that featured video and audio content, hypermedia documents, and webbed text. Although we still worry about adequately preserving early issues of the journal, thanks to Blair's farsighted-leadership, *Computers and Composition Online* provides a valuable instantiation of arguments being articulated by scholars in the New London Group (among them Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kress, 1999, 2000; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996), who had begun to recognize the contributions that various semiotic modalities made to complex communication tasks and the inability of any one modality to fully convey meaning. To sustain the considerable effort associated with *Computers and Composition Online,* Blair, too, relied on tenets of feminist networking and

involvement: encouraging talented graduate students seeking editorial experience to participate on the journal's staff, weaving the journal and its operations into the institutional fabric of her university, and using her extensive personal networks to recruit outstanding scholarship and encourage scholars. Blair's key strength in this effort is her recognition that sustainability factors will continue to figure centrally in the rapidly changing technological landscape the journal inhabits. She understands, as do we, that sustainability is an ongoing concern, not a short term project. With Blair's always-conscientious attention to the journal, we continue to search for additional ways to ensure both the online journal's history and its future.

Establishing *Computers and Composition Online* gave new intellectual definition to the print journal and provided scholars and practitioners in the field another valuable venue for new forms of digital media scholarship[3], one that retained a value on peer review and excellence while accommodating new forms of academic projects responsive to the new communicative and scholarly forms created, exchanged, and circulated in extended electronic networks. *Computers and Composition Online*, for example, published a special issue on sound as a compositional space in fall 2006 (edited by Cheryl Ball, Illinois State University, and Byron Hawk, George Mason University) that included a range of sound files and examples that could not have been reproduced in a print format.

The rapid extension of digital networks was also having effects on the print journal, *Computers and Composition*, which continued to transform itself in response to changing and contingent digital contexts. When the journal was acquired first by Ablex in 1994 and then by Elsevier in 1999, for instance, its international reach became even more pronounced. Elsevier moved to a new electronic editing and delivery system in 2005, creating a new set of challenges and possibilities for the journal. As an Elsevier journal, for example, *Computers and Composition* was bundled into the publisher's ScienceDirect offerings, which were marketed to libraries as a consolidated group for a considerable subscription fee. This strategy—when coupled with increases in production costs and journal subscription costs experienced by other presses and journals—stretched already overtaxed library budgets in ways that have, at times, been painful to observe.

At the same time, however, the fact that the print journal was available in an electronic venue as well as in print meant that increasing numbers of libraries around the world had access to the information contained in the journal in a timely manner. As the journal became increasingly available online, for instance, subscriptions outside the United States rose dramatically, as did opportunities to encourage submissions from scholars in other countries. In 2007, for example, *Computers and Composition* was not only being read in more than 64 countries around the world, but also published special issues focusing on international contributions (edited by Taku Sugimoto at Chiba Institute of Technology, Japan) and on computer gaming (co-edited by Matthew Johnson, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and Pilar Lacasa, University of Alcalá, Spain). Elsevier's electronic delivery system also allowed subscribers to download individual articles from various journal issues, and thus provided scholars with another means of identifying the ways in which—and the extent to which—their work was being circulated and read, ensuring additional evidence for their tenure and promotion portfolios.

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[3] In this effort, we were inspired, in part, by three similar efforts: *Postmodern Culture*, first published online in 1990 and edited by John Unsworth and Eyal Amiran; *Kairos*: *A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, which published its first issue in 1996, edited by Mick Doherty, Elizabeth Pass, Michael Salvo, Jason Teague, Amy Hanson, Greg Siering, and Corey Wick; and, *Enculturation: An Electric Journal for Cultural Studies and Theory*, which published its first issue in 1997 under the editorial leadership of Byron Hawk and Thomas Rickert.

These new electronic environments, then, through various intensional networks, worked to accelerate the already-rapid spread of information and encouraged emerging disciplinary communities, such as computers and writing, to extend themselves over large distances (Brown & Duguid, 1996; Castells, 1997). Indeed, as John Brown and Paul Duguid pointed out, such communities are increasingly held together, at least in part, by digital networks that promote "documents circulating among members, keeping each other conscious of being a member and aware of what others are up to" (p. 4). There is every indication that this disciplinary networking, now occurring many years after Brown and Duguid's historic article, continues to grow and expand as scholarship moves more and more into digital contexts.

Principle #3: Social networks and collaborative scholarship—especially when informed by feminist values on sharing and connection—can multiply and leverage the innovation and contributions of new scholarly projects. They can also help increase the sustainability of such projects and the community at large.

Although social networks have grounded the collaborative projects we have undertaken with the journal, various book series, and edited collections, feminist perspectives also continue to inform our scholarly work. Our most recent co-authored book, *Literate Lives in the Information Age* (2004), provides an important example of how feminist values on connection and an ethics of care (Noddings, 1984) can contribute meaningfully to collaborative scholarship and function to sustain the projects and disciplinary community from which they emerge. The goal for this book project was to gather information about literate practices as they occurred in peoples' lives and, then, to analyze the information gathered within the larger contexts of the historical, political, economic, and ideological movements that had shaped these same people's lives. We were—and continue to be—interested not only in how people acquire and develop digital literacies but also in how we can do justice to participants' words while recounting their stories and, at the same time, holding ourselves accountable (Britzman, 2000). Following the lead of feminist scholars such as Caroline Brettell (1996), Patti Lather (2000), Deborah Britzman (2000), Shulamit Reinharz (1992), and Kamala Visweswaren (1994), we attempted to develop a research methodology that worked toward an ethical understanding of agency that honors all individuals involved in our study—a methodology that allowed us to write with and about those in our study in a manner that suits all parties.

With these concerns in mind, we invited participants to co-author their chapters with us to develop a feminist framework for doing such work and inviting truly collaborative processes between researchers and study participants. We were influenced in this decision by Caroline Brettell's (1996) collection *When They Read What We Write*, which presents a series of perspectives on studies like ours—anthropological projects, ethnographies, and life histories—and talks about the ways in which approaches to such writing have suffered from the limited and often modernist perspectives of academics and professional scholars who, as Schoen (1983) noted, still cling to an understanding of "the superior academic value of 'pure knowledge' inherited from the 'model of technical rationality' that has been influential in all American social sciences" (p. 27). In many respects, we see this attitude as a part of the conservative forces that authors in disciplines outside the humanities encounter and, which, as we've noted, tends to challenge models of scholarship that privilege collaborative authorship. As we thought through our research practices, we came to the conclusion, however, that co-authorship—as a refinement in method—would give participants more say in the politics of interpretation. When we turned to the participants, finally, and asked if they would be willing to co-author their chapters, the great majority of those whom we approached accepted, only a few preferring to maintain their anonymity and privacy.

Although we began our project with the intent to sample a representative group of people within the United States, we inevitably came in contact with those in other parts of the world

who had their own rich digital literacy stories to tell. Thus, what began as research focusing primarily on a network of participants from the United States quickly spun out into other projects that now include people from China, Taiwan, Nigeria, Egypt, Norway, and other countries (see Hawisher, Selfe, Guo, & Liu, 2006; Hawisher, Selfe, Coffield, & El-Wakil, 2006; Selfe, Hawisher, Lashore, & Song, 2006). This scholarship continues with recent presentations we have given at Australia's University of New South Wales and China's Peking University.In all this work, we have found that the more we engage in collaboration informed by feminist values between ourselves and among the many that contribute to the computers and writing community, the richer and more sustainable the scholarship becomes. These collaborative configurations tend to encourage, in addition, the circulation, exchange, and the social sharing of new knowledge in ways that exponentially increase the membership of disciplinary communities, encourage new collaborations among those who come together however briefly, and, ultimately, we hope, provide sustenance for a young, expanding field (Benkler, 2004; Johnson-Eilola, 1995).

These collaborative configurations are having a similar effect on another research project that grew out of our work with *Literate Lives in the Information Age* (2004). Recognizing that far too many literacy stories remained uncollected, unheard, and unappreciated, we began talking about the possibility of an archive to house the many digital literacy narratives that were yet to be told. When one of the authors moved to Ohio State University, the project began to take on a life of its own. Led by Cynthia Selfe, H. Lewis Ulman, and Richard Selfe, the Digital Archives of Literacy Narratives (DALN) project was designed to develop a searchable, public archive of literacy narratives—autobiographical recollections of how individuals acquired the ability to read and write; the conditions under which they did so; and what familial, educational, economic, technological, and historical influences have shaped their literate practices. Depending on the preferences of individual contributors, these literacy narratives may be written documents, video-taped recollections, or audio recordings. The DALN is available on the web, both for individuals to contribute their narratives and for scholars, educators, and literacy program workers to search and use, thus extending the reach of research possibilities.

To plan for the sustainability of the DALN, the Ohio State University team partnered with an established state-wide project—OhioLink's Digital Resource Commons, which is committed to maintaining electronic collections of information for educators across the State. This partnership leverages local efforts by taking advantage of an established technological infrastructure that will continue to support the DALN project in coming years. Most significantly, the project recognizes that although our continuing international research is important, today's new technologies allow—indeed demand—a much wider circulation of documents and other materials. In other words, DALN is responding to trends of informatization and globalization, and the ways these trends have converged in the 21st century to transform communication and literacy practices, which increasingly occur within and around globalized computer networks (Brandt 1995, 2001; Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998; Kress, 1999, 2003). Within this context, communicative practices and values have become increasingly international, cross-cultural, and digital; they have also, in many cases, become increasingly multimodal. In globalized computer environments, texts designed to carry meaning across geopolitical, linguistic, and cultural borders must take full advantage of not only words, but also of still images, video, animation, and audio (Selfe & Hawisher, 2004).

These changes in literacy practices and values are both dramatic in scope and far reaching in effect, and they pose enormous challenges for humanities scholars. The need to focus on new forms and practices of literacy and to provide an historical trace of literacy practices as they continue to migrate from print to digital environments, has become acute—for humanities scholars, librarians, historians, and educators among many others. Once fully implemented, the DALN will invite citizens of all ages, races, genders, and backgrounds to tell their literacy histories—using print, audio, or video—in response to a series of prompting questions and then to submit these narratives to a public, web-based archive, along with any literacy artifacts (e.g., poems, song lyrics, essays, photographs, video clips) that have a bearing on these stories. Because the archive's historical value will increase in direct proportion to the number of people who voluntarily contribute their literacy narratives, a series of DALN centers will be

set up at various locations to encourage a broad range of citizens to tell their stories about literacy, and to describe the literacy values and practices of their families, their peer groups, and their communities. As the archives expand, we hope to fund additional projects aimed at targeting specific groups of citizens whose stories are under-represented. The DALN project can best be compared to the Mass Observation project in Britain, which has been in existence since 1937. The Mass Observation project, like the DALN, has the goal of tracing the everyday literacy practices of ordinary people that often remain invisible in our culture— especially during times of dynamic change (Sheridan, Street, & Bloome, 2000).

Finally, as we write this chapter, we have very much on our minds the most recent of our projects, Computers and Composition Digital Press (CCDP), which is designed to address more thoroughly those problems in publication we have enumerated. CCDP has in place an impressive international editorial board of scholars and, with the help of good colleagues from Miami University, the Illinois Institute of Technology, as well as the University of Illinois and Ohio State University, we have begun to solicit ebook proposals like *Technological Ecologies and Sustainability* in which this chapter appears. Recognizing the dilemma that junior faculty face in finding publication venues for their digital media scholarship, CCDP is committed to publishing innovative, peer-reviewed ebooks and multimodal scholarly projects in an open-access, online venue. We seek digital academic publishing projects that have the same gravity as books, but not always necessarily the specific form of books. That is, the press will publish print texts in electronic form available for downloading, but we are also particularly interested in digital projects that cannot be printed on paper, yet have the same intellectual heft as a book. Most recently, Utah State University Press (USUP) has signed on to host the imprint of CCDP. The collaboration between Michael Spooner, the Director of USUP, and ourselves marks an attempt to institutionalize CCDP for the future. Unsurprisingly, we have also teamed up with the Institute for the Future of the Book, a group "investigating the evolution of intellectual discourse as it shifts from printed pages to networked screens." One of its major projects is developing the software *Sophie*, a media-rich program for everyday web authors that we hope will prove useful to CCDP authors.

The goal of the digital press is to honor the traditional academic values of rigorous peer review and intellectual excellence, but also to combine such work with a commitment to open access and innovative digital scholarship. For us, the digital press represents an important kind of scholarship and scholarly activism—an effort to circulate the best work of digital media scholars in a timely fashion and on a global scale made possible by digital distribution. We acknowledge that starting these projects has required an enormous amount of work and, even more important, that sustaining them remains the real challenge. To some extent, the long-term continuation of these projects will depend on luck and good timing, as such things always do. We hope that these factors will exert a relatively minor and manageable influence if we can focus on careful planning and the collective efforts of talented and committed people that make up our intensional networks.

The colleagues and graduate students with whom we have worked have made all the difference in providing the needed sustenance for the many projects in which we have been involved. Although we didn't set out to participate in Brown and Duguid's intensional networks, the extraordinary times in which we live, the technology-rich environments in which we work, and the generosity of colleagues in the expanding fields of literacy and technology studies have sustained us and the projects we have undertaken.

THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Certainly, it will not be our own limited efforts and projects that shape the profession's ongoing negotiation of stasis and change. As scholars, we work among a community of individuals,

with similar and different experiences and commitments, who will continue to define their own balancing points within departmental, institutional, and professional contexts. And these contexts, in turn, will continue to respond to—and shape—emerging practices in digital communication environments. Indeed, the MLA Task Force (2007) report, citing David Damrosch (1995) among others, noted that emerging technologies are already demanding our attention, creativity, and intellectual flexibility. The increasingly common practice of distributing dissertations in electronic formats, for instance, has already de-stabilized the historical understanding of the dissertation as a "protobook" (p. 67), creating both exciting possibilities and worrisome problems for junior scholars in departments of English. Similarly, changing digital venues for collaborative knowledge construction, exchange, and distribution, as well as emergent forms of multimodal scholarship, have already affected our professional understanding of scholarship in fundamental ways—both exciting and challenging.

Our goal, however, will be to continue our scholarly efforts, informed by feminist values and undertaken in ways sustainable within the contexts of our own lived experiences as scholars. For us, this means that we will continue to respect the judgment and input of colleagues who, as mentioned, maintain values on scholarly projects characterized by excellence, intellectual reach, and peer review. At the same time, however, we are also determined to push for change—to push our departments, our institutions, and our profession to recognize new forms of excellent digital scholarship; to push our tenure and promotion committees to understand the work of scholars exploring new digitally inspired ways of making meaning; to push ourselves to explore ways of producing, exchanging, and distributing ideas in digitally supported systems.

We believe that this balancing act demands ethically rigorous and sustainable forms of professional discipline within English departments. In this work, it would be dangerous to indulge either in unthinking digital boosterism or to succumb to defensive intellectual conservativism. If, for instance, we think it important to retain our historically informed value on scholarship that is original and innovative, smart and sustained, peer reviewed and published, we must also take on the responsibility of acknowledging that scholarly fields and forms change; and we must consider carefully how traditional values can be applied to emerging scholarly projects as well as conventional ones. Similarly, if we think it important to codify scholarly production standards in tenure and production documents, we must also be open to revising such documents on a regular basis so that they allow for a more "capacious conception of scholarship" (MLA Task Force, 2007, p. 5) that better accommodates the work of junior scholars breaking productive new intellectual ground. We cannot allow ourselves to be content with guidelines just because they worked for us at the historical moment of our own tenure.

And if we are intent on retaining our conventional scholarly values, we must also remain intellectually active in our thinking. We must commit ourselves to avoiding ossification by being receptive to multiple new forms of knowledge production and new genres of scholarship—considering, among others, those forms that employ multiple semiotic channels to make and convey meaning, and collaborative systems of knowledge production that have proven generative and useful to scholars within digital environments. Making our way in this middle territory—by whatever tactics we adopt and strategies we negotiate (de Certeau, 1984)—will not be easy but may yield and sustain digital scholarly efforts, and, if we are lucky, valuable new forms of intellectual work.

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