Top Posts of 2015: Social Media and Digital Scholarship

An antidote to futility: Why academics (and students) should take blogging / social media seriously

Blogs are now an established part of the chattersphere/public conversation, especially in international development circles, but **Duncan Green** *finds academic take-up lacking. Here he outlines the major arguments for taking blogging and social media seriously. It doesn't need to become another onerous time-commitment. Reading a blog should be like listening to the person talk, but with links.*

Using Twitter as a data source: An overview of current social media research tools

The popularity of social media sites and the ease at which its data is available means these platforms are increasingly becoming primary sources for social research. **Wasim Ahmed** *presents a quick look at some of the tools available to social scientists for analysing social media data and also reflects on the limitations of the platforms and the methods used for this type of research.*

Scholarly communities face crucial social challenges in maintaining digital networks that can sustain participation.

If we are going to take full advantage of the affordances that digital networks provide—facilitating forms of scholarly communication from those as seemingly simple as the tweet to those as complex as the journal article, the monograph, and their born-digital descendants— **Kathleen Fitzpatrick** *argues we must focus as much on the social challenges that these networks raise as we do on the technical or financial challenges.*

101 Innovations in Scholarly Communication: How researchers are getting to grip with the myriad of new tools.

There has been a surge of new scholarly communication tools in recent years. But how are researchers incorporating these tools into their research workflows? **Jeroen Bosman** *and* **Bianca Kramer** *are conducting a global survey to investigate the choices researchers are making and why. Insights from these surveys will be valuable for libraries, research support, funders, but also for researchers themselves.*

The importance of informed consent in social media research

Informed consent is important in large-scale social media research to protect the privacy, autonomy, and control of social media users. **Ilka Gleibs** *argues for an approach to consent that fosters contextual integrity where adequate protection for privacy is tied to specific contexts. Rather than prescribing universal rules for what is public (a Facebook page, or Twitter feed) and what is private, contextual integrity builds from within the normative bounds of a given context and illustrates why researchers must attend to the context in information flows and its use when thinking about research ethics.*

What does Academia_edu's success mean for Open Access? The data-driven world of search engines and social networking

With over 36 million visitors each month, the massive popularity of Academia.edu is uncontested. But posting on Academia.edu is far from being ethically and politically equivalent to using an institutional open access repository, argues **Gary Hall**. *Academia.edu's financial rationale rests on exploiting the data flows generated by the academics who use the platform. The open access movement is in danger of being outflanked, if not rendered irrelevant by centralised entities like Academia.edu who can capture, analyse and exploit extremely large amounts of data.*

The Organized Mind: How to better structure our time in the age of social media and constant distraction.

The information age is drowning us in a deluge of data, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate facts from pseudo-facts, objective from biased sources, and at the same time, we're all being asked to do more at home and at work. **Daniel Levitin** *reviews the cognitive neuroscience of attention and memory, presents the differences between mind-wandering mode and task-focused mode and offers advice for how to boost creativity and limit exhausting brain-shifting distractions.*

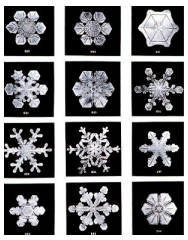
The radical potential of the Digital Humanities: The most challenging computing problem is the interrogation of power

Digital humanities is a discipline that defines itself around the melding of traditional theories and new digital possibilities and offers a rich source of inspiration and reflection for the wider academic community. **Miriam Posner** *recently gave a keynote on the discipline's contested relationship with the social construction of data and its profoundly ideological nature. The digital humanities, and the wider scholarly community, face a crucial choice – we can accept the datasets inherited and constructed by powerful institutions, reproducing existing social inequalities, or we can scrutinize data, rip it apart, rebuild it, re-imagine it, and perhaps build something entirely different.*

Permission to tweet? The underlying principles of good science communication are all about sharing.

Terry Wheeler *was at the 100th annual conference of the Ecological Society of America last week. Alongside community shifts towards openness, the rise of Twitter has led to a huge shift in the way science is shared. But with little explanation from the organisers, a confusing opt-in policy for live-tweeting was implemented. Social media is one of the most powerful tools scientists have to explain what we do and why it matters. We should be doing more, not less, to make sure the great science gets out.*

When is the best time to post on social media? Analysis of 100+ million posts suggests there is no single answer.



Nemanja Spasojevic, **Adithya Rao**, **Zhisheng Li**, *and* **Prantik Bhattacharyya** *share findings from their large-scale analysis of user behaviour on social networks. Every network has a unique audience with unique reaction patterns, and as such, each network has a "snowflake"-like schedule for ideal response and engagement. City-based or network-based schedules may be better than posting at random times, but these rigid schedules do not account for the unique composition of a specific user's audience, and therefore are not as effective as personalized schedules.*