

Dr. Cheryl E. Ball | Fulbright Award #3294 (Norway, All Disciplines)

Project Summary

The Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO) has written a letter of support for my Fulbright application (award #3294, Norway). My project has three facets:

- (1) to implement the first scholarly multimedia journal outside of the U.S., at AHO,
- (2) to draft a reference book on starting a scholarly multimedia journal, and
- (3) to professionalize students and faculty in writing and editing scholarly multimedia.

My Expertise

For over a decade, I have been an editor of North America's longest-running, scholarly multimedia journal, *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, which is entering its 17th year of publication and is read in over 180 countries (see <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net>). Scholarly multimedia are Web-based texts (also called *webtexts*) designed by authors who use hypertext and multimedia to make scholarly arguments that can only be delivered on-screen (as opposed to traditional humanities and social science scholarship, which makes its argument primarily through written text and can be read in print). My own scholarship has focused on reading, writing, and teaching webtexts such as those that *Kairos* publishes, and my teaching philosophy, which I call an *editorial pedagogy*, is closely linked to my scholarly and editorial work. In this editorial pedagogy, I mentor *Kairos* authors and students through the recursive, developmental stages of composing and revising webtexts (or any new genre of text, for that matter) since most authors are new to this kind of scholarship. In 2012-13, I will have completed seven articles about editorial pedagogy and co-authored a book (with *Kairos*'s Senior Editor Douglas Eyman, one of my Fulbright recommenders) about the history and future of publishing scholarly multimedia.

Because of my scholarly and pedagogical expertise with webtexts, I am regularly asked to consult with new journals and presses who want to start similar publications in the U.S., where scholarly multimedia has become an expected area of research publication for some humanities and social science fields. It was my work with *Kairos* that first brought me to Norway and The Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO) in October 2009, when Professor Andrew Morrison invited me to speak at an intermedia seminar he was hosting. My working-class upbringing never afforded vacations to culturally diverse locations, so this solo trip to Oslo (and the three days traveling around Norway before the seminar started) gave me the opportunity to learn about cultures other than the few I had experienced in the U.S. My ability to culturally adapt stemmed from living in four radically different locations in the U.S. (the South, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Utah, the Midwest), where each geographic location has its own cultures and customs. But Norway instilled in me an immediate desire to travel to more places where English is not the first language, and yet it is spoken so fluently by Norwegians that I had little trouble adapting. The few minutes each day I tried to read menus in Norwegian or the frantic geography lesson in the unstaffed, pre-dawn train station (is Myrdal on the way to Bergen?!) taught me that I have *so* much more to learn about the world, its peoples, and their places; I believe my editorial pedagogy would not only help me learn more by listening and working with local communities of practice during this Fulbright project, but it would be a useful professional tool to share, particularly in global university settings where digital writing practices and the teaching of writing is becoming more prominent, as it has been in the United States for over a century. This Fulbright award would provide me the opportunity to conduct this exchange in more depth in Norway, specifically with the Oslo School of Architecture and Design and their Center for Design Research.

Why Norway?

In April 2012, Prof. Morrison invited me to consult on a grant during the 2012-13 academic year that would help AHO start a scholarly multimedia journal like *Kairos* the following year. I am eager to share my editorial expertise and not only consult this year but help AHO implement the journal during my Fulbright year. The idea for my project began in December 2010, when I was asked to come to AHO to serve as an opponent (e.g., first reader) for one of Prof. Morrison's PhD

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students. The student's work was based on his experience creating video prototypes for gesturally based navigation systems (such as swiping the screen of your iPhone to get to a new menu). At his dissertation defense, I asked the student how he would redesign his written dissertation into a webtext suitable for a journal like *Kairos*, where he could publish a piece that looked and functioned as a gestural interface instead of only linking to video samples. He answered hesitantly, not because he couldn't design such a thing, but because there are no journals in Europe that publish webtexts. After the student's defense, Prof. Morrison noted that the lack of webtext journals in Norway and elsewhere in Europe meant that scholarship has the most impact when written in a traditional style: print-like (printed or online PDFs), linear argumentation strategies, few images, and in English-speaking journals (as the scholarly lingua franca).

Online, international science journals already publish multimedia simulations such as 3D visualizations of large-scale data, videos of lab experiments, and animated re-creations of surgeries, but humanities and social science journals still publish relatively little multimedia content, although that number is on the rise in the U.S. and also somewhat in Australia. (This information is based on my anecdotal consulting experience. No research data exists to support this hypothesis, but such work would be part of my Fulbright.) Norway, on the other hand, has already been a thought-leader in this area of digital publishing for the humanities and social sciences by starting *FormAkademisk*, an online, international, peer-reviewed journal in design and design education based out of Oslo and Akershus University College and funded by the Norwegian Research Council. The journal promotes Scandinavian scholarship by publishing primarily in Norwegian, although other languages, including English, are also possible. Prof. Morrison (along with his student) has published in and been guest editor of this journal, which has included links to online videos. But *FormAkademisk* is not intended to be multimedia-based. Yet, if multimedia scholarship has the potential to improve scholarly communication across languages and between cultures—as multi- and translingual scholarship has already shown in writing studies (Horner, NeCamp, & Donohue, 2011)—then AHO's new multimedia journal could lead this international effort.

This makes The Oslo School for Architecture and Design a prime location to study the implementation of scholarly multimedia publishing, as I propose to do in my Fulbright project. The mission of AHO's Center for Design Research (DR), which opened in November 2011 and is directed by Prof. Morrison (see <http://www.designresearch.no/>), is an excellent match to my research goals: The Center's purpose is to promote practice-based research in experimental design processes, support and publish research in design inquiry (with a stated interest in digital publication), and to teach and professionalize students through interdisciplinary themes and approaches. Many of their stated themes (i.e., Cultures, Ecologies, Futures, Interactions, Systems, etc.) and approaches (i.e., Consultative, Critical, Discursive, Experimental, Generative, etc.) align with my editorial pedagogy. With Norway's emerging emphasis on PhD education, which in turn requires more scholarly production on the part of graduate students and faculty, my Fulbright project to assist with and study AHO's implementation of an experimental, scholarly, digital-media journal and to teach students to write webtexts fits seamlessly into the research and graduate educational missions of the Center for Design Research, AHO, and Norway.

Work Plan

I propose to spend 70% of my time in research and 30% in teaching. A nine-month, academic-year Fulbright in Norway will allow me the opportunity to

- Advise AHO on and study their implementation of an online journal (Aug. – Dec. 2013).
- Write the introduction (Fall 2013) and three chapters (Spring 2014) of a reference book on how to start an online media publication.
- Teach (Fall 2013) and mentor (all year) in support of AHO's pedagogical goals and travel to give workshops (Spring 2014) across Norway.
- Learn Norwegian and travel (on my own time) to learn more about the country.

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My CV proves that I am capable of completing this work in a year: I write prolifically, teach three writing-intensive classes a year, travel extensively for work, and maintain a heavy service load reviewing over 30 proposals a year for the Institutional Review Board and serving as the professionalization mentor for our department's 100+ graduate students, among other tasks.

Research Plan

My research plan contains two phases: (1) consulting on AHO's journal implementation and (2) writing a generalized reference book about online journal start-ups based on AHO's and others' journal implementations with which I have been involved. [I have consulted with start-up journals and presses including Computers & Composition Digital Press (with Utah State University Press), Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative (with University of Michigan Press), Syracuse University Press, *College Composition and Communication Online*, *Basic Writing e-Journal*, the *International Journal for Learning and Media*, and the *Journal of Information Technology and Pedagogy*, all of which have started publishing webtexts and scholarly multimedia books in the last four years.]

Phase One: Consulting with AHO will tentatively take place over the next 18 months, beginning during the 2012-13 academic year if AHO receives a major grant that will fund my visiting the school three times to help them form a business plan for the journal. If the grant is not awarded, we will consult online, via Skype (or similar), or focus on this initial step during my first weeks of the Fulbright. Building on the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition's (SPARC) *Manual for Planning the Launch of a Nonprofit Electronic Publishing Venture* (2002), which provides guidance for writing a business plan to start an online but print-like (PDF-based) journal, my consultation will include key questions for starting a digital media-based publication:

Before You Begin

- Who else has done journals on similar topics, or in similar media?
- What media is most conducive to the journal's mission?
- How will your journal build on what they've already done? (What's its mission?)
- What is its business model & how will it be economically sustainable?

People

- Who's on staff? How does their expertise match the journal's mission?
- Will the staff all be housed at AHO or distributed across several schools?
- Will the editorial staff include students, faculty, staff, or some combination? Others?
- Who's missing? What's the best way to hire (and pay) for mission or technology needs?
- How will you organize the editorial functions locally or at a distance?

Technologies

- What Internet technologies are you already familiar with?
- Do you have your own server, or will you need to host the site elsewhere?
- How will media-based submissions inform what technologies you will need to manage?
- What editorial systems do you have for your technological and media needs?
- What metadata will you need to gather to ensure preservation and future access?

The above questions require inquiry-based approaches that AHO already uses in its curriculum and research and will produce more in-depth questions with both short- and long-term answers, such as:

- what accessibility documents will you require for which media types and why?
- how does the mission of the journal relate to its technological needs, and who will make sure it's working?
- how will you train the editorial staff?; what technologies are available for training?; how will you plan for staff turn-over (as faculty move or retire and students graduate)?
- what submission, editorial, and production workflows will your technological and personnel choices allow for that will also match your journals' mission and vision
- and so on...

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Helping AHO answer these questions will form the foundation for the journal implementation, which will occur during the first-half of my Fulbright stay in Norway. I will assist Prof. Morrison, his colleagues, and students with locating hardware and software specific to scholarly multimedia journals and designing training documentation for their editorial workflows. My expertise in this area comes directly from a current project (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities) in which I worked with a team to build peer-review plug-ins specific to scholarly multimedia that we integrated into the open-source journal management system, Open Journal Systems (OJS). As part of this project, I wrote 200 pages of training materials in five months to teach student interns to mine metadata from *Kairos*'s webtext archives for preservation and search purposes within the OJS database. In addition, I centralized *Kairos*'s editorial procedures, including its production schedule, review process, and unique eight-stage copy- and design-editing process that I created in the mid-2000s to improve staff training. These documents are sought-after by digital media journal editors and were based on trial-and-error over the 17 years of the journal's existence. I constantly modify our procedures to include new technologies and genres in which authors want to write. I will use these documents and experiences to assist AHO with creating their own documentation so that they might be the first scholarly multimedia journal to have a sustainable, flexible work plan from the implementation stage, allowing the staff to be more effective and successful from the outset.

Phase Two: Research from the above implementation process (as well as my previous experience advising other journals) will form the basis for writing, during the second half of my Fulbright year, a reference guide on starting digital media publications. In the spirit of international collaboration and open access to scholarship, I plan on co-authoring the book with Professor Morrison, who is the lead investigator on the journal implementation project, as well as with *Kairos* Senior Editor Douglas Eyman, who has two decades of experience implementing new technologies into digital media journals. I will write the first drafts of all chapters, based on outcomes of the implementation questions listed in Phase One, and then will collaborate and revise with Morrison in person and Eyman online. We will also post the revised, in-progress book chapters for online feedback from digital scholarship and digital humanities colleagues across the globe and from faculty and students at AHO who work on the implementation.

The reference book will be written for a trade series like the Dummies™ guides, which use approachable language, accessible by academics and non-academics alike. (The jargon-free language also makes these books easily translated, further assisting with the international scope of this project.) Thus, the focus of the book will be slightly larger than only scholarly multimedia or webtext-based journals, but any new publishing venue that might include the use of media-based texts. The book will include several checklists with guiding questions for starting a digital media venue and will be modeled on a Best Practices for Online Journal Editors white paper I co-authored through the international Council of Editors of Learned Journals (see http://celj.org/editor_support). The prospectus for this book will be submitted to Wiley, publishers of the Dummies and other professional trade book series, by February 1, 2014, with a sample chapter.

Teaching Plan

I propose to teach Writing Webtexts for Publication to students in AHO's graduate programs during the Fall 2013 semester. (AHO has no undergraduate degrees, and graduate courses are taught in English.) The focus of this course would require students to transform one of their current design projects into a webtext for potential publication in a journal like *Kairos*, *FORMAkademisk*, or AHO's new journal. Whereas students at AHO often create *researched designs*—media-based texts such as prototypes, visualizations, or installations—that draw on their theoretical understandings of design and are based on substantive research about that design and its history, students don't often design research that *enacts* their theoretical understandings of scholarship *through* design, which is what webtexts do. Students would get first-hand experience composing

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webtexts under the tutelage of an editor-teacher expert in this area. An editorial-pedagogy-based teaching philosophy and syllabus are explained in the appended Teaching Materials.

I have extensive mentoring experience at the local and national levels and can also, based upon AHO's needs, mentor students in their theses and offer workshops to faculty and students about my editorial, pedagogical, scholarly, and professional expertise. I would also like to expand previously made connections at other Norwegian universities (Oslo and Bergen) by providing similar workshops, according to their needs, and would like to make contacts around the country, including Stavanger, Trondheim, Tromsø, and elsewhere. (It's a personal goal to visit Kirkenes, so I will work to set up academic connections along my travels north.) Workshop topics are also appended.

Benefits

By mentoring graduate students in a fast-growing area of webtext publication and helping by AHO implement an international, scholarly multimedia journal useful not only in Norway but across the globe (in providing a venue for designed research), I will benefit the host institution by helping them fulfill several recommendations made in the 2012 PhD evaluation report by the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education. Whether AHO has these specific needs is to be determined through conversation with them, but the report did indicate that newer and specialized schools (such as AHO) should include formal and informal mentoring for more

- internationally focused publications in humanities and social science fields (p. 97);
- professional development opportunities for PhD supervisors via "training" workshops, to assist in students' mentoring and time-to-completion records (p. 98); and
- "generic skills," including written communication and professionalization (p. 99).

In addition, by getting to know their graduate students, many of whom might need international experience as part of their degree programs, I can act as a U.S. liaison, arrange contacts at my and other institutions, and initiate faculty-student exchanges in Illinois State University's publishing, technical communication, or arts technology programs (among others). Plus, the direct experience I get in helping AHO implement this online journal and in teaching a "dream" graduate class in Norway will help me improve my teaching, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, in the studio-based publishing, writing, and technical communication classes I teach at ISU. Students here thrive on my bringing real-life experience into my teaching, and AHO will help provide that.

As a benefit to academic publishing (including university press and trade houses) as well as academic fields in the digital humanities—such as rhetoric, cultural studies, composition studies, technical communication, publishing, creative writing, literature, media studies, history, museum studies, library science and informatics, art, and design—the reference book borne out of this Fulbright project will help scholar-editors implement their own digital media journals and workflows. It could also help authors, since many of the best practices checklists will include considerations that authors make as they design webtexts for publication and preservation (such as long-term technical considerations). This book will bridge a gap between professional editorial work and the digital humanities. The benefit specifically to digital writing studies—the pre-eminent field for scholarly multimedia—includes promotion outside its US-centric disciplinary home and a reciprocal infusion of global composing strategies that I learn while studying the local and national conditions of scholarly production in Norway. This research will help me better accommodate international submissions to journals that are unintentionally US-centric in their author base, such as *Kairos*. I am looking forward to the studio classes, to see how AHOs are run and how I can adjust mine accordingly. As happened after my last visit to Norway—when I charged Dr. Karen Lunsford (one of my Fulbright recommenders and my liaison to University of Bergen) to edit an issue of *Kairos* on international multimodal composition—I expect my teaching and editorial work to be more inclusive regarding accessibility and diversity of cultures. And by learning (both versions of) Norwegian, I hope to embrace the local and national cultures and forge connections to schools in other areas of Norway to better my transcontinental research and editorial pedagogies.