



# Kracking Kafū

**Digitally Retelling Nagai Kafū's American Years  
and What I'm Learning from Doing It**

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# Background

- Increasing number of research and writing on libraries' and librarians' relationship with digital humanities (DH)  
(e.g. Keener 2015; Varner & Hswe 2016; Eberhart 2016)
- Recurring themes
  - Uncertainty and anxiety
  - Librarians as effective service providers, partners and/or collaborators for DH research
  - Playing on existing strength, and training and re-skilling

# Background

- Power imbalance in academic settings

(Muñoz 2012)

- Librarians as DHers

(Vandegrift and Varner 2013)

# Definitions

- **Digital Humanities:** “A nexus of fields within which scholars use computing technologies to investigate the kinds of questions that are traditional to the humanities”

(Fitzpatrick 2010, quoted in Keener 2015)

- **Digital Scholarship:** “The use of digital evidence and method, digital authoring, digital publishing, digital curation and preservation, and digital use and reuse of scholarship”

(Rumsey 2011, quoted in Keener 2015)

# Suibijin

<http://scalar.usc.edu/works/suibijin/index>

(Note to post-conference viewers: due to copyright restrictions on some of the embedded materials, the access to the above digital paper/presentation is currently limited to those who have an Scalar account and an invitation from the author. If you click on the link above, you will be prompted to sign up for Scalar, the platform on which I created the paper).

Scalar: <http://scalar.usc.edu/>

# What do you think?

A librarian's engagement with digital humanities/scholarship is driven by...

1. A technological question (What is the best platform for “remixing” openly available resources?)
2. A reference question (What are best sources of historical materials for digital projects?)
3. A scholarly question (Can we reimagine Nagai Kafū as a “Japanese-American” author?)
4. A professional question (How do we develop DH capabilities?)
5. All of the above

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# Technological

- What is the best platform for “remixing” openly available resources?

The screenshot shows the Omeka.net homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Omeka.net logo and links for Plans, Showcase, Help, News, and About. Below the navigation bar is a login section with fields for username and password, a "Remember Me?" checkbox, and a "Log In" button. The main heading reads "Your online exhibit is one click away". Below this, there is a sub-heading "Let Omeka.net host your collections, research, exhibits, and digital projects." and a prominent orange "Sign Up!" button. A video player is embedded at the bottom left, showing a video titled "What is Omeka.net?" with a play button and a "vimeo" logo. To the right of the video player, there is a "Latest News" section with the headline "Collaborate in class with" and a short paragraph of text.

## Ryuta's Fieldnote

The screenshot shows the Ryuta's Fieldnote website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, EDUCATION & WORKS, and BLOG. Below the navigation bar is a large image of several books with colorful spines. Below the image, there is a "Category Archives: Uncategorized" section. To the right of this section is a search bar with a "Search" button. Below the search bar, there are sections for "Recent Posts" and "Recent Comments". The "Recent Posts" section lists three posts: "Philadelphia (March 2014)", "DC (November 2013)", and "Montreal (May 2013)". The "Recent Comments" section is empty. Below the "Recent Posts" section, there is an "Archives" section with a list of dates: "April 2014", "December 2013", and "June 2013". At the bottom, there is a "Categories" section with a list of categories: "Uncategorized".

The screenshot shows the Scalar website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ANVC logo and the text "The Alliance for Networking Visual Culture". Below the navigation bar is a section titled "ABOUT SCALAR" with a large blue and green logo. To the right of the logo, there is a navigation menu with links for About Scalar, Showcase, Webinars, Forums, Get Involved, and a "Sign up" button. Below the "ABOUT SCALAR" section, there is a list of features: Overview, Annotations, Media support, Flexible structure, Web standards, Open API, Archive partners, Reader feedback, Custom styling, Built-in visualizations, Multiple authors, and Third party apps. To the right of this list, there is a section titled "Introducing Scalar. Born-digital, open source, media-rich scholarly publishing that's as easy as blogging." and a large video player showing a Scalar logo and a play button. The video player has a "vimeo" logo and a "HD" icon.



# Reference

- What are best sources of historical materials for digital projects?

## Local

- WUSTL University Archives
- Missouri History Museum
- State Historical Society of Missouri

## National

- Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)
- Library of Congress

## International

- Aozora Bunko
- National Diet Library Digital Collections
- JACAR: Japan Center for Asian Historical Records

# Scholarly

- Can we reimagine Nagai Kafū as a “Japanese-American” author?

# Professional

- How do we develop DH capabilities?

What if librarians are digital humanists, digital historians and/or digital scholars themselves?

# Examples

- **Robots Reading Vogue**  
(Lindsay King and Peter Leonard, Yale University)  
<http://dh.library.yale.edu/projects/vogue/>
- **Morningside Heights Digital History**  
(The Developing Librarian team, Columbia University)  
<https://mhdh.library.columbia.edu/>

# Thank you!

Questions, comments and suggestions to:

[rkomaki@wustl.edu](mailto:rkomaki@wustl.edu)

# Links (1)

"Hacking Haiku" project by Cheryl Crowley (Emory University)

<http://cfde.emory.edu/news-events/news/2015/september/cheryl-crowley.html>

Keener, Alix (2015) "The Arrival Fallacy: Collaborative Research Relationships in the Digital Humanities." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 9 (2).

<http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/9/2/000213/000213.html>

Varner, Stewart and Patricia Hswe (2016) "Special Report: Digital Humanities in Libraries." *American Libraries*, January 4, 2016.

<http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2016/01/04/special-report-digital-humanities-libraries/>

Eberhart, George M. (2016) "How Librarians and Faculty Use Digital Humanities." *American Libraries*, March 3, 2016.

<http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2016/03/03/how-librarians-and-faculty-use-digital-humanities/>

# Links (2)

Fitzpatrick, Kathleen (2010) "Reporting from the Digital Humanities 2010 Conference." *ProfHacker*, July 13, 2010.

<http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/reporting-from-the-digital-humanities-2010-conference/25473>

Rumsey, Abby Smith (2011) "New-Model Scholarly Communication: Road Map for Change." *Scholarly Communication Institute* 9.

<http://www.uvasci.org/institutes-2003-2011/SCI-9-Road-Map-for-Change.pdf>

Muñoz, Trevor (2012) "Digital humanities in the library isn't a service." August 19, 2012.

<http://trevormunoz.com/notebook/2012/08/19/doing-dh-in-the-library.html>

Vandegrift, Micah, and Stewart Varner (2013) "Evolving in Common: Creating Mutually Supportive Relationships between Libraries and the Digital Humanities." *Journal of Library Administration* 53 (1): 67-78.