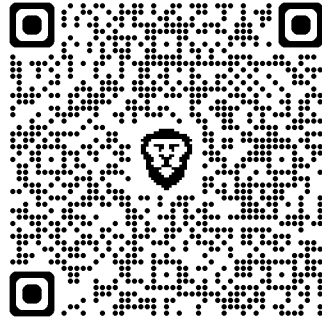# Web Publishing
with Scalar

July 15, 2023

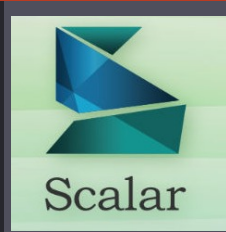Alice McGrath | Senior Digital Scholarship Specialist

Overview

1. Introduction to Scalar
2. Scalar editing basics
3. Finding and adding media
4. Editing and customizing pages
5. Organizing and linking content

Introduction to Scalar

What is Scalar?

- An open-source content management system for digital exhibitions and books

- Simple, no-code interface that enables collaborative authoring

- Embed and import media (rather than uploading)

- Media metadata & annotation features

- Cool options for assembling content: maps, timelines, visualizations & networks
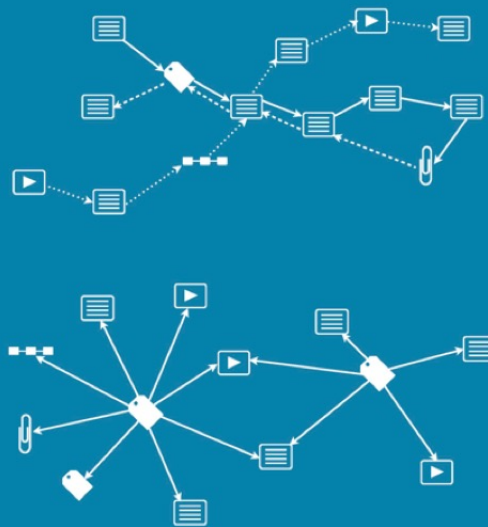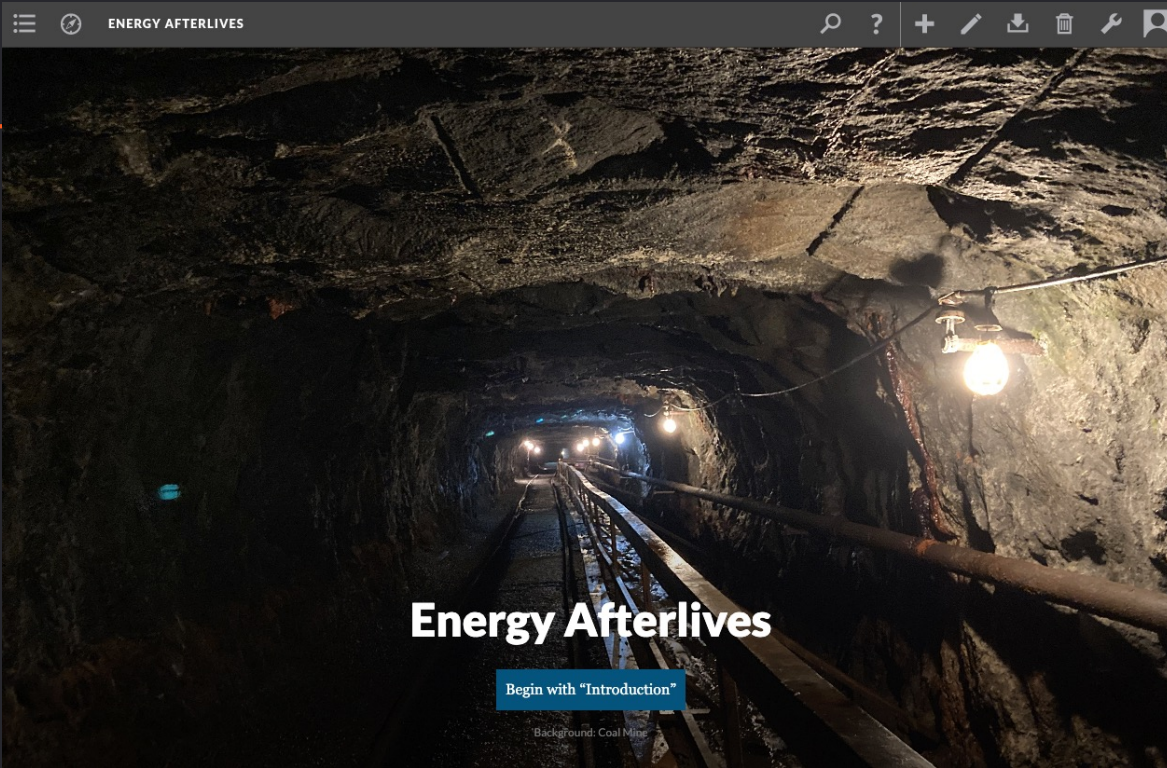
Diagrams by Erik Loyer, courtesy of Scalar tea

Examples of Scalar Projects

Collecting Culture and Natural History

Sean Keenan (BMC '20)

Crime or Punishment

José Vergara & RUSS B237 (Fall 2021)

Energy Afterlives

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The Scalar navigation menu

User-created table of contents and index of project content

Links to Scalar documentation, recently viewed pages

Add a new page

Edit current page

Import media

Delete page

Access dashboard

User profile

Scalar Editing Basics

Creating & editing pages

1. Use the New icon to create a new page, or the pencil icon to edit the page you are on

2. Give it a title and a description

3. Use the WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor to draft

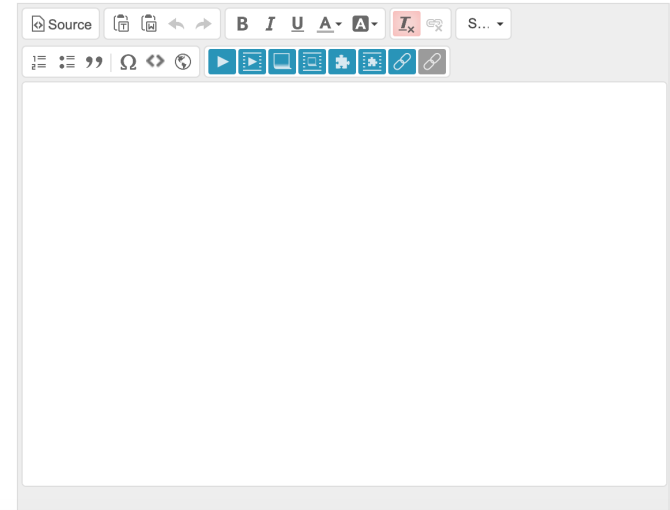4. 'Save and view' to preview the page

Title

Scalar

Description

Diagram by Erik Loyer, courtesy of Scalar team.

Adding media items

- Use the 'Import' item to add a new media file
- Navigate to "Files and URLs"
  - Link to media elsewhere: "link to media files"
  - Upload your own media: "upload media files"
- Give your media a title and a brief description
- Add metadata to describe where it is and show where it came from

Metadata = data about data

Scalar Tips

- Can't find content you've added? Use 'Index' and 'Recent'

- Save your pages early and often

- If you copy/paste from another program:
  - Use "Paste plain text" or "Paste from Word" to avoid weird formatting issues
  - Use the "Source" button to see the formatting as HTML

- Bookmark the Scalar book: Energy Afterlives so you can log in easily
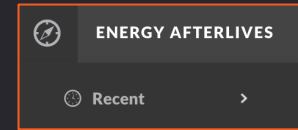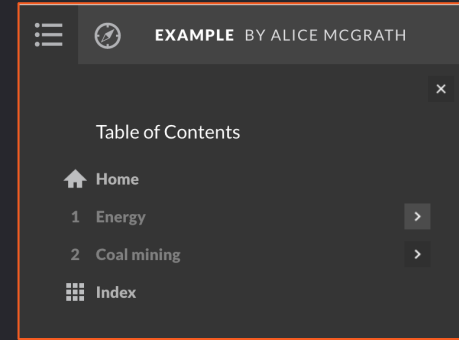
Registering for this Scalar instance

1. Navigate to the Scalar site for this class:
   http://jvergara.digital.brynmawr.edu/scalarexhibitions/con

2. Click on "Register" in the top right corner

3. Use the registration key: co.l o1l nUcl34r

4. Use your BMC email

5. Create a unique, memorable password and keep it in a safe place

See also: https://askathena.brynmawr.edu/help/domain-of-ones-own-scalar

Creating a new Scalar book

- Log in to Scalar
- Navigate to "Dashboard"
- My account → Create new book
- The title will appear under "My books"—use the link to navigate to the home page of your project
- The pencil icon will allow you to edit the current page

Your turn!

1. Register and/or login to this Scalar site
2. Create a new book to practice using Scalar
3. Edit your home page
4. Save and view the result

Adding Media & Metadata

Adding media items

- Ways to add media
  - Using the URL of an image hosted on another website (must end with an image file extension such as .jpg, .png)
  - Using media importer tools (Internet Archive, YouTube)
  - Uploading an image file
- Use the 'Import' item to add a new media file
- Give the file a title and a brief description
- Add metadata to describe where it is and show where it came from

Metadata = data about data

Adding an image that's already online

- Import media -> Files & URLs -> link to media files
- Make sure the URL ends with an image file extension such as .jpg, .png)
- For example: this photo of damaged oil drums at the Exxon refinery from the National Archives (via Wikimedia Commons)

Image URL:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/32/A_MOUNTAIN_OF_DAMAGED_OIL_DRUMS_NEAR_THE_EXXON_REFINERY_-_NARA_-_546000_%28cropped%29.jpg

Media settings

Layout | Relationships 5 | Styling | Properties | Metadata
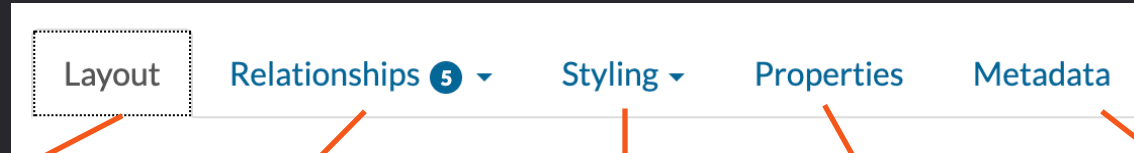
| How your item will display – with or without metadata | How this object relates to others (including path, tag, or annotation connections) | Thumbnail: specify an image url for the media item's thumbnail | Visibility (hidden or visible to book viewers) and content type | Add information about what the item is and where it comes from |

Scalar metadata fields

Field name	What it should contain
dcterms:source	Site or resource where you found the image
dcterms:date	The object's creation date (specific numerical date)
dcterms:temporal	Associated time period
Iptc:byline	The creator of the object or image
dcterms:spatial	Geographic location associated with the object (geocoordinates)
dcterms:coverage	Geographic area/location
dcterms:license	Rights information for the item (i.e. Creative Commons license)

What else can you add as a media item?

- Videos
- Sound files
- Data visualizations & maps
- Other web pages

Your turn: add media!

1. Find an image or video on <u>Wikimedia Commons</u>
   1. Locate the media file URL (hint: click "use this file on the web")
   2. Look at the attribution & licensing information
   3. Save the item URL in case you need to look up the metadata later
2. Import it into Scalar:
   Media importer > Files and URLs > Link to media files
3. Add a title, a description, and some metadata (including 'source')

Creating & editing pages

Creating & editing pages

1. Use the New icon to create a new page, or the pencil icon to edit the page you are on

2. Give it a title and a description

3. Use the WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor to draft

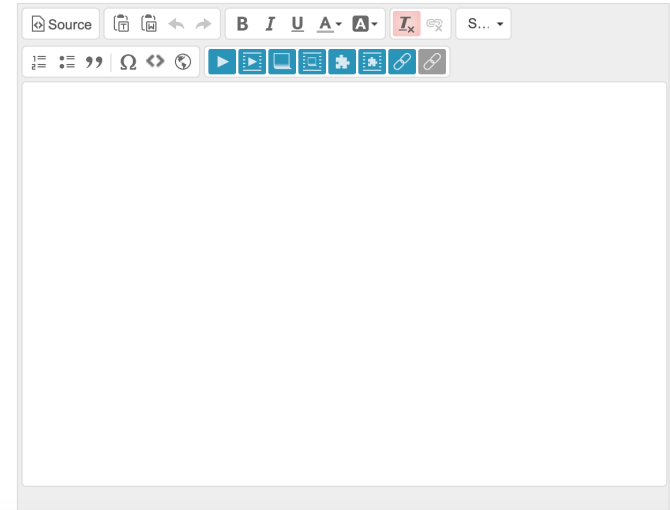4. 'Save and view' to preview the page

Title

Scalar

Description

Diagram by Erik Loyer, courtesy of Scalar team.

Embedding media in a page

Media link	In-line media link	Scalar note	Widget/inline widget
Creates a thumbnail and caption of relevant media in the margin (attached to text)	Displays media in the body of the text on its own line	A link from text to another scalar page whose text will appear in a pop-up window (designed for footnotes)	Visualization options and layouts for excerpting scalar pages

See examples here

Customizing pages
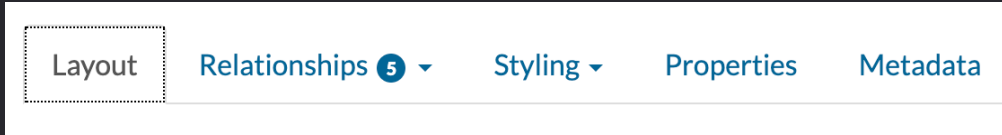
- **Layout**: how you want your page to look
- **Relationships**: links to other pages or media items (paths & tags)
- **Styling**: key images, background images custom css/javascript
- **Properties**: visibility, content type, url
- **Metadata**: data about your page

Embedding external resources

- For resources that cannot be added as media (3D models, etc.), you can embed them by creating an iFrame on a page

- If this doesn't work, try using source code mode and copying and pasting the embed code into the text editor

Adding a key image to a page

- Under the **Styling** tab, you can select an image from your media files to display in the Image Header or Image Splash Layouts

- You can also add a **Thumbnail**, a **Background Image**, or custom **CSS** to style your page

Page layout options

Visually compelling layouts

- **Book splash** – designed for a 'cover' image or title page (other content will not display)

- **Splash** – designed for section headers or the beginning of a path (full-screen image with a navigation button)

- **Image header** – large splash image with regular page content

The Styling tab allows you to customize the background and key image for the page

Your turn: create pages!

Customize your new book!

1. Create a new page and give it a title and description
2. Add text content (need some text? Try <u>Lit Ipsum</u>)
3. Add some media resources to the page (hint: to access a list of all your media, navigate to the "Content" or "Media" tab on your dashboard
4. Experiment with layouts, decorative images, and more
5. To preview your page, click "save and preview", then use the pencil icon to return to the editing interface

Organizing content

Ways to organize content

Paths – sequential list of pages and items

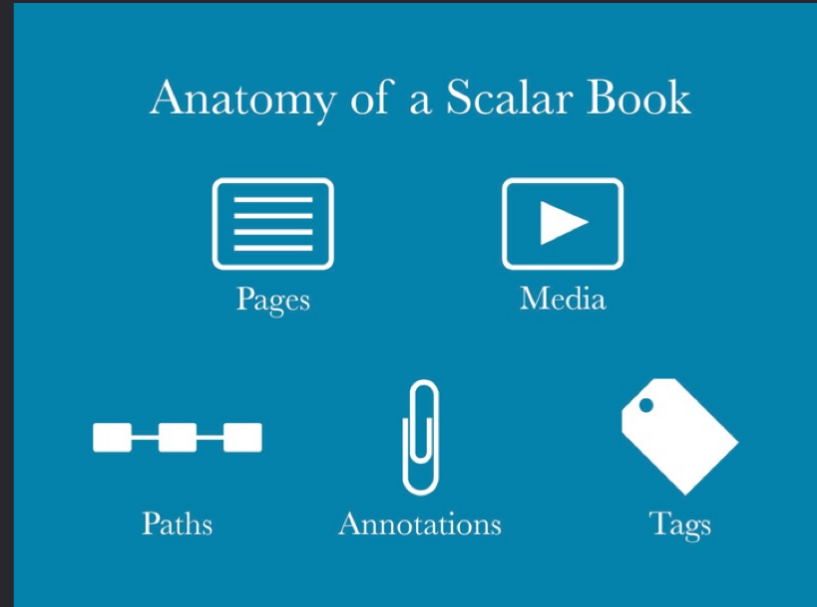**Tags** – non-sequential category of pages

Annotations – an item that comments on another item

Anatomy of a Scalar Book

Pages

Media

Paths

Annotations

Tags

Creating paths

1. Create a new page and add content.
2. Under "Relationships" select "Path"
3. Select all the items (pages, media, annotations, tags, other paths) you want on that path in the order you want them to appear
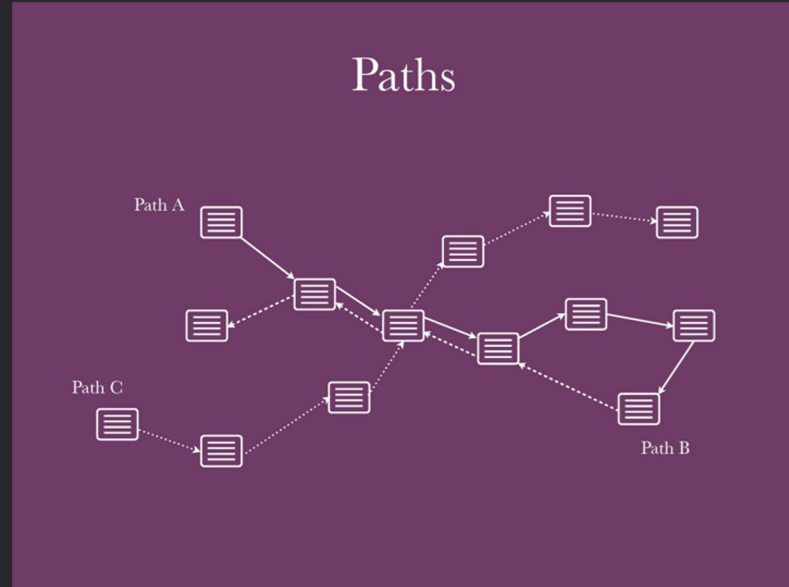4. Determine the destination after the path is finished

Diagram by Erik Loyer, courtesy of Scalar team.

Tagging pages

1. Edit the item you want to tag
2. Navigate to **Relationships > Tags**
3. Select "choose the items that tag it"
4. Apply an existing tag:
5. Your tagged item will be listed at the bottom of the 'tag' page

Adding an annotation to media

1. Access your media from the 'index' or 'dashboard'
2. Navigate to the file and use the Annotate icon
3. You can create timed annotations for videos and audio and draw areas to annotate on an image

Example of an annotation page

Your turn: organize your content!

- Create 2 or more new pages

- Link your pages using paths, tags, or annotations

- Add media and widgets

- Experiment with layouts and styling

Resources & Tips

Using images on the web

- Always be careful about whose content you put on website: only use resources you have the right to use.

- Cite your media! Include attribution of the photographer, the source, and the license information

- Look for material in the public domain or using a <u>Creative Commons</u> license that enables reuse.

- Assume images are in copyright unless they say otherwise

Resources for finding copyright-free or copyright–light media

Site	Licensing information
Wikimedia Commons	User contributed media without known copyright
Creative Commons Search	You can search by license type
Unsplash, Pexels, Pixabay	Professional-quality stock photos that are free to use with attribution
Museum and library collections	Institutions such as the Library of Congress, The Met, The Getty, and more have collections of resources in the public domain
Internet Archive	Has licensing information and special importer for Scalar

Best practices for public-facing research

Copyright

Do not publish copyrighted material—find licensing information for images and media you use and make sure you have permission.

Credit & attribution

Always credit the source of media and data that you use, including museums and libraries holding primary source material, and individual creators if relevant.

Accessibility

Use alternative text, high-contrast fonts, and heading structures to make your content accessible to users with disabilities.

Design & Style

Think about your audience: try to make the presentation eye catching and easy to understand. Information should be organized in a logical manner.

Privacy & Permission

Never publish a person's photo, name, or any personal information without their consent. Make sure all collaborators are represented the way they wish.

Reviewing

Have someone view and interact with your content (preferably on different devices) and build in time to fix any issues.

Domain of One's Own: web publishing @BMC

If you are interested in pursuing your own web publishing projects (using Scalar or other tools) check out our free webhosting service: digital.brynmawr.edu
See also:

- Documentation for Domain of One's Own webhosting
- Installing applications on DoOO
- Intro to using Scalar on DoOO
- Managing applications on DoOO

THANKS!

ANY QUESTIONS?

You can find me at:

amcgrath1@brynmawr.edu

Get help with Scalar

Ask LITS

- Drop by **Digital Scholarship Office Hours: Fridays 1-3 PM** in Carpenter
- Email the helpdesk (help@brynmawr.edu) and your question will get to Alice or another colleague who supports Scalar
- Schedule a meeting through the EAST Calendly page

Scalar Documentation

- Scalar Guide
- http://scalar.usc.edu/works/guide2/working-with-media
- http://scalar.usc.edu/works/guide2/working-with-content

Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Scalar diagrams: Eric Layer for the Scalar team