

## SMIRC 2018 Presentation

## "Comrades in the Commons: Creating an Organizational Culture Conducive to Open Source Development"

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#scholcommies

1. Repository developer
2. Socialism and open source have a lot in common
  - a. Definitions
    - i. Comrade: looking in an emotional way, not political, to think about fair treatment/community living means: friend or ally
      1. Benefit, has connotation of labor/equality
    - ii. Commons: public resources, e.g. parks, knowledge, wikis, open software
      1. Can be both items and the infrastructure.
      2. Affected by licensing.
        - a. Licensing for both credit and control
    - iii. Open Source Software: access to code for development and reuse.
      1. Modified by policies, systems, skills, resources, service expectations,
      2. Open source software lacks vendor support, but there is an opportunity for community support
    - iv. Organizational Culture: collective values of an org.
      1. E.g. innovation, frugality, diversity
      2. Often found in mission statements or values
      3. Can be good, but also could be negative (greed, lies, fraud)
3. What does it all mean?
  - a. We would like to expand the information commons and how we manage and think about it.
    - i. Success is driven by org culture that desires the success and works collegially across institutions/other barriers
    - ii. Ownership of process.
    - iii. Marxism can be an interesting lens through which to see open projects.
      1. E.g. Islandora Committee calls are democratic, consensus based, communal direction to projects
4. How can we measure these aspects in a culture or organization?
  - a. A range of attitudes between acceptance => minimal ownership => ownership and innovation
  - b. Primary difference: who bears the ultimate responsibility for outcomes?
    - i. More personal impact or pride from innovations to services

- c. Best case is users who enthusiastically bear the burden of quality.
- d. Buy a solution or hire a solution.
  - i. Both have trade-offs and benefits
  - ii. A person may be more expensive, but they have more possibility.
    - 1. Shared ownership needs structure
      - a. E.g. owner is the face of a service, engineer is the magician behind the curtain
    - 2. Shared ownership needs structure
      - a. What is a service? what are your policies?
    - 3. UX can either be an advantage or disadvantage
      - a. Know your skill sets.
      - b. Plan UX testing into the process
  - iii. Dirty secret of IR: no one cares if it is beautiful, as they are searching on google scholar and not on your site. As long as it is indexed, the service works. If an item is not indexed, it might as well not exist.
- e. System performance is your problem. Both good and bad, web outages, server speed, staying on top of updates,
  - i. Need good sysadmins to run local projects well.
    - 1. Or to outsource well
- f. Staff involvement
  - i. Continue to foster collective involvement, care for your internal and external comrades.
    - 1. Be a good neighbor and communicator.

Questions:

1. People can be very protective of their roles, how can a manager and colleague help change that culture for more collaborative work.
  - a. It could be ego or ease of work, a little territorial, but farming that out to users (although it takes time) ask the user. Then it is not a dispute between co-workers.
    - i. Ask those other users to make a system better for non-librarians (and prob librarians, too)
2. Collective ownership of content? How does trust play into it?
  - a. Culture helps, buy-in of colleagues to work together-- but still clear responsibilities for each worker.
  - b. Seek other's expertise
3. Administrator buy in?
  - a. They want a monument to our institution's glorious research.
  - b. But we also understand that there is a huge use outside of the institution for IR content