Scalar is an authoring and publishing platform that’s designed to make it easy for authors to write long-form scholarship online. The platform particularly facilitates work that engages visual materials. Scalar enables users to assemble media clips and images from multiple sources, including archives like Critical Commons (founded by panelist Steve Anderson), the Hemispheric Institute’s Digital Video Library, the Internet Archive, and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute’s Visual History Archive. These media elements can be juxtaposed with a scholar’s writing in a variety of ways, with minimal technical expertise required.

Scalar gives authors tools to structure essay- and book-length works in ways that take advantage of the unique capabilities of digital writing, including more recursive and non-linear formats. Content can be displayed in a variety of views, emphasizing the mutability of digital texts. The platform also supports collaborative authoring and rich commentary. Scalar is being developed in support of the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture by the team that created the Vectors journal (vectorsjournal.org). Programming and design is led by panelists Craig Dietrich and Erik Loyer.

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