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RE: Lab Founding Goals & Description

The Narrative Intelligence Lab draws from Columbia's expertise in literary theory, sociology of knowledge, linguistics, and computation to study how stories shape our personal and shared beliefs. Founded in 2025, the group is led by Dennis Yi Tenen, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in partnership with Moacir P. de Sá Pereira, Research Data Librarian, Columbia Libraries.

The lab's research activities emphasise at least these three distinct but related activities, vital for the health of contemporary culture and society:

1. Collective cognition: thinking, writing, and creating in groups.
2. Influence (text reuse, plagiarism, schematic and otherwise algorithmic and generative modes of cultural/epistemic production).
3. Group thought and communal storytelling including expert discourse, conspiracy theory, disinformation, and propaganda.

The "laboratory" aspect of the group's work signals (a) a concerted effort to move beyond the single authorship model in the humanities; (b) a preference for mixed methods, combining qualitative and quantitative modalities; and (c) an ethos of working together through regular in-person meetings, research task delegation, triage, and discussions.

These goals are achieved by the lab actively facilitating collaboration between faculty, graduate, and undergraduate researchers, focusing on specific publishable outcomes.

We recognize also that a significant barrier to collaboration lies in the relative lack of formal methodological training. Consequently, our activities include professional development through workshops and certificate programs for scholars at all stages of their career.

With sincere gratitude for your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Yi Tenen'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dennis Yi Tenen
Associate Professor
Department of English & Comparative Literature