From: Dennis Yi Tenen
Subject: Memo 002: Lab Co-authorship by the Numbers
Date: November 19, 2026

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Dear Friends,

What does it take to become a co-author? Our lab is dedicated to the empirical study of collective storytelling by collective means. We can therefore use good statistical insight to also study ourselves, with an eye toward establishing fair and transparent practices of labor attribution.

A survey of our recent projects should give you a rough sense of what it takes to bring a project from brainstorm to publication. For example, the "Fast Fiction" short paper submitted to Computational Humanities Research in 2026 logs roughly 580 commits over the course of 22 days, spread over four months. This translates to somewhere between 125 and 155 hours of active work "at the keyboard" and roughly twice that in the reading, archival, and administrative work away from the computer. The Syndicate and Pulp Fiction Reuse projects are on track to hit similar metrics as they mature.

These figures should give you a good sense of what it takes to participate fully in scholarly publication. An equal co-author is expected to contribute half of the labor. It would be reasonable to expect third or fourth authors to contribute fractionally less, though still meaningfully so.

Because we work and think together often, our contributions are pooled in small but important ways, in which we challenge and inspire each other. For this reason, I propose for most of our "lab" papers to be authored with the Narrative Intelligence Lab in the role of the last co-author, with individual fractional contributors named and listed by role according to the CRediT taxonomy.

But where do we draw the line between footnote and headline credit? A rule of thumb might be to prioritize support for colleagues recently entering graduate school or the job market, who might most benefit from establishing a scholarly track record of publication.

Outside professional considerations, we might agree that participation in the low double digits (let's say less than 30 total logged hours in the case of "Fast Fiction," give or take) would fall into the collective acknowledgement category, and anything above begins to approach named authorship.

These thoughts finally highlight the importance of logging our work transparently, through GitHub and git commits. The lab's AI harness is also set up to keep a daily research log automatically. If you aren't familiar with these tools yet, please reach out to schedule a training session with me or one of our leads.

Meanwhile remember this simple tenet: Make your labor visible! And to make your labor visible, get into the habit of keeping careful records—logbooks or diaries to better document our journey together. The CHR paper is due tonight, at "23:59 Anywhere on Earth." See you there.



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