Commonplace

#CommonplaceWrapped

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It's 2021 — indeed, a sneeze away from 2022 at this point — and if at least one of your Slack teams or Discord chats doesn't have a `#meme` channel and/or a `#music` channel, then it's your moral imperative to make one. Sure, you may think that memes are silly, that they're a tacky way for millennials to cope with the world by riffing obscure-yet-somehow-mainstream references, that they're a facet of current times you'd be happy to never see again. But memes are nothing new. First coined in the 1970's by the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, memes are a "cultural gene," such that human ideas, cultures, and customs replicate themselves in the media *de jour*. They travel from person to person, culture to culture, changing slightly each time, updated by us to serve a particular situation, and only the insightful (or incisive?) ones survive. Memes are decentralized cultural units of information, thus fit in perfectly within and help build our post-humanist digital knowledge production ecosystem (no, I will not be taking comments).

And since it's the end of the year, the big cultural meme for many is the [Spotify Wrapped](#), the fun musical gift from the music streaming app reminding you it's been collecting your data all year. But the people love it: finally we get to access our own information to learn about ourselves.¹

So in the spirit of memes and riffing/reusing content in a way that respects IP and tells all of us about, well, ourselves, we present to you a summary of *Commonplace* in 2021, `#CommonPlaceWrapped`.

Tip: click on the (!) in the images for the links to articles and Places!

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Commonplace is a pandemic- and digital-borne outlet, and our mission now is the same as it was in March 2020: bring together mission-aligned individuals, institutions, and organizations to contribute to the larger conversation about the many social implications of digital infrastructures (especially in how they apply to [open] scholarship). So it's comforting to see this range in both authorship and topic scope represented by the most read (measured by most clicked on within the past 12 months) articles. Moreover, each of these articles serve as a call to action to drive changes: feeling discomfort and resisting the past/current modes and instead reclaiming and laboring for and towards a different and envisioned future. Thank you

to the over 80 different authors who contributed this year! It wouldn't be the Commonplace without your thought-provoking discussions on such key ideas.

What were your favorite *Commonplace* articles this year?

Feel free to tag us at [@commonplace_kfg](#) with the article DOI and the Twitter hashtag #CommonplaceWrapped

Loving the Labels

Though labels are problematic, they persist because, deep down, we love them and perhaps even need them to make sense of our lives. We take quizzes to find out which Meyers-Briggs letters or enneagram number we are. We wear certain brands or band merch to showcase what we support or which music we like to listen to. Musical genres — really, genres of any kind — are a tricky subject, and categorizing certain artists under particular umbrellas can cause outrage. At least these top collections on *Commonplace* aren't as contentious and are more straightforward. Our "places" (or, collections) on *Commonplace* function in two ways: 1. to signal a kind of intention (ex: Dialogues = *here's an idea or question I'm posting about for broader discussion!*); 2. to signal a unifying theme, as has been the case for our new-ish series of series.

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Yes, the design is a *choice*, but we have to stick with the meme template however inaccessible the graphics and colors are, I don't make the rules.

We are really excited to see that readers are enjoying the series format that we continued and started this year! And we're definitely excited about the ones coming up in 2022. We would like to use the series spaces on *Commonplace* as a platform to open up and explore ideas about the emerging futures of digital publishing and community building, so [if you have topics or themes you want to probe, please let us know](#) and we'll see what futures we can envision together.

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That's a Mood

Something new this year for music listeners was getting an assigned “aura,” based on their music tastes. Surveying the KFG team to get a general sense of *Commonplace's* mood from their perspective, we got a range of “manifestos,” and “black beret caps,” to “boat loads of coffee.” Put together, our “reading aura” in 2021 was caffeinated and provocative .

My Reading Aura

My top music moods are caffeinated
and provocative

Commonplace

ICYMI

Even though many would rather forget the year 2020, we wanted to resurrect the “Ones That Got Away” Playlist: some bops that we think that you may have missed and deserve some attention and another read (or listen).

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Given the thoughtful content and forward-looking authors we’ve been grateful and lucky to work with this year, we can only hope that 2022 will continue to bring exciting conversations and communities on *Commonplace* that result in meaningful action — maybe even something [from you](#), dear reader?

Footnotes

1. Especially when we get to learn really how much we listened to 18th century sea chanties, living and going far beyond the [Wellerman TikTok memes](#). ↩