

What Are Quoems?: Emergent Meta-Poems for the Social Age

[Lynn Conway](#) Nov. 20, 2016 [v 12/30/16]

The ‘[Quoem](#)’ is a techno-social literary-mechanism for compact meta-storytelling in the emerging [Social Age](#). It enables the artistic-composition of personalized multi-dimensional space/time encodings of complex unfolding techno-social contexts. It does so by exploiting sequences of quotes by people whose lives and words have impacted the quoem’s author . . . and which, taken in sequence, convey framings of the relevant social-emotional-dynamics of emergent events unfolded during readings of the quoem.

Quoems might at first glance appear to be free-verse poems. However, the inclusion of each included-quote’s author’s name and informational weblink(s) gives-away that they are more than poems (i.e., are meta poetic) . . . [say more about personal impact and context connections with authors . . . and about the ongoing, deepening exploration of a quoem that readers can engage in . . . and about how authors can \(as they mature and increasingly reflect\) embed unique quotes of their own \(words that they’d like to be remembered by\) into their quoems, so as to reveal their own life’s intertwining with the unfolding threads of the \(sub\)cultures they are embedded in. TBD](#)

I accidentally stumbled into innovating and evolving small quoems in 2013, during a major revision to [my homepage](#) . . . [document how this happened/unfolded by linking to successive versions of that evolving homepage in the Internet Archive from 2013-2015 . . . TBD.](#)

Having been fascinated by [Kurt Vonnegut’s](#) concept of the “[Shapes of Stories](#)” (see video), I began visualizing how various personally-meaningful quotes could be assembled and intertwined to “shape complex yet-coherent meta-stories” from personal points of view that containing embedded linkages into labyrinths of [relevant personalized techno-social-dynamical-history](#) (i.e., individual trajectories through techno-social space-time). See these links to evolving quoems in my current homepage for examples of how they can work: [Proquoem](#); [Adventuring](#); [Memoirs](#); [DoingDemos](#); [Mementos](#); [Epiquoem](#).

As you might imagine, quoems provide an opening for generating emotionally-moving, highly-empowering (esp. upon deeper ongoing study), yet compactly-encoded communications that intertwine both the “techno” (i.e., material) and the “social” (i.e., living human) dimensions of emergent human culture . . . by drawing upon, honoring, and adding-to the impactful quotes passed down to us by memorable people whose increasingly historically-reconstructable life-stories are ever-more-easily accessible and socially-relatable-to.

Quoems also hint at ways to cybernetically externally-mechanize (materialize) and socially-visualize (simulate and share) “[the shapes of such stories](#)” . . . and thus find ways to ever-more-compactly encode and evolve them . . . while ever-more-deeply exploring and measuring the roles of shaped-storytellings in the underlying memetic initiations, propagations, selections and social maintenances of aggregated-labyrinths of human culture. [More TBD](#)

I gave my first public “[Quoetry Reading](#)” on November 9, 2016, as part of [my convocation remarks](#) to the graduating students while receiving an honorary doctorate at the [University of Victoria](#) . . . [add more context and links as available . . . TBD.](#) It would be exciting to see some talented poets begin exploring this medium and sharing [avant-garde](#) exemplars of their works with the wider community of poets and writers.

Keywords/phrases: Quoem, literary mechanism, shapes of stories, Kurt Vonnegut, materialize, socially-visualize, evolution, history, culture, space-time, memetics, cybernetics, techno-social dynamics, emotion-propagation, social age, art generation.

http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/Memoirs/Quoems/What_Are_Quoems.pdf