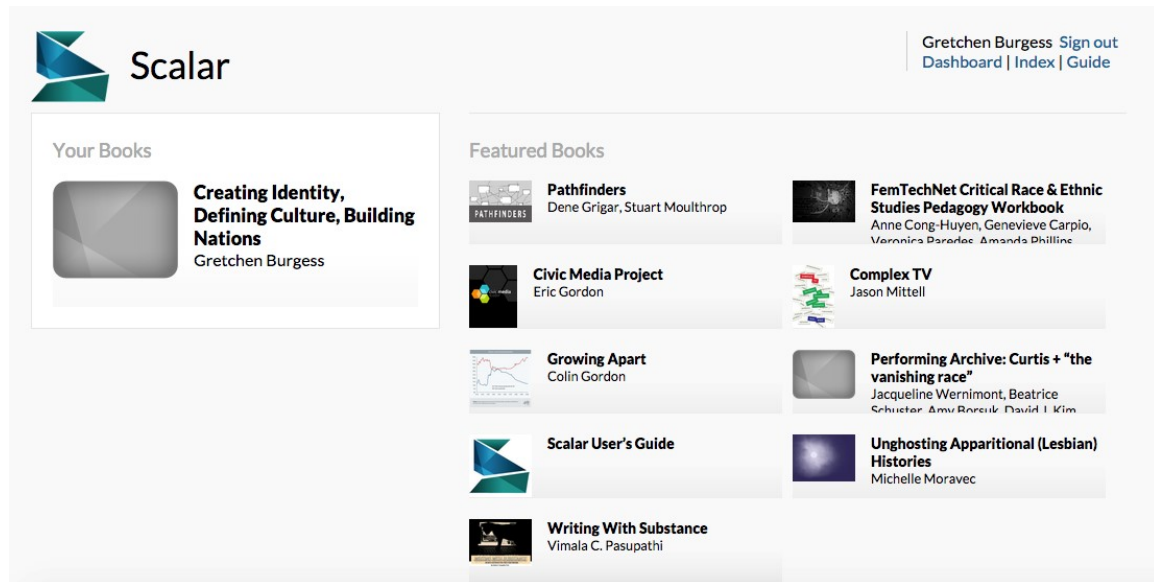As the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture describes it, Scalar is "born digital, open source, media-rich scholarly publishing that's as easy as blogging." It is a tool designed for publishing academic work that combines the ease and convenience of publishing online through platforms like WordPress and the look and feel in many ways of a downloadable e-book, from the look of the page to the inclusion of table of content-like menu. Put blogging and e-books together and you have something that is interactive, hypertextual, navigable, professional, and easily shareable.

Scalar has a pretty good Getting Started guide, as well as instructions for more specific/advanced features, but all of that involves clicking around to different pages to try to find the information you're looking for. This is a condensed setup guide that will show you around Scalar's basic features.

The main components of a Scalar book/project include: **Pages**, **Media**, **Paths**, **Tags**, and **Annotations**.

- **Pages** holds your text (like creating a Post in WordPress), but **Pages** also holds **Media**, **Paths**, **Tags**, and **Annotations**.
    - Each of these components has its own URL.
- **Media** can be embedded from importing files from their affiliated archives (Internet Archive, Critical Commons, and more), other archives (which they refer to Prezi, Soundcloud, Vimeo, and Youtube), internet files, local media files.
- **Paths** are an order series of **Pages**. This is how you want your reader to experience the book/project.
- **Tags** are nonlinear markers/categorization, which will be useful to create Visualizations of the overall Scalar project to tie in and connect the main themes in each **Page**.
- **Annotations** is the ability to comment the media objects imported/embedded: video, images, audio, and text. **Paths**, **Tags**, and **Annotations** help create relationships.
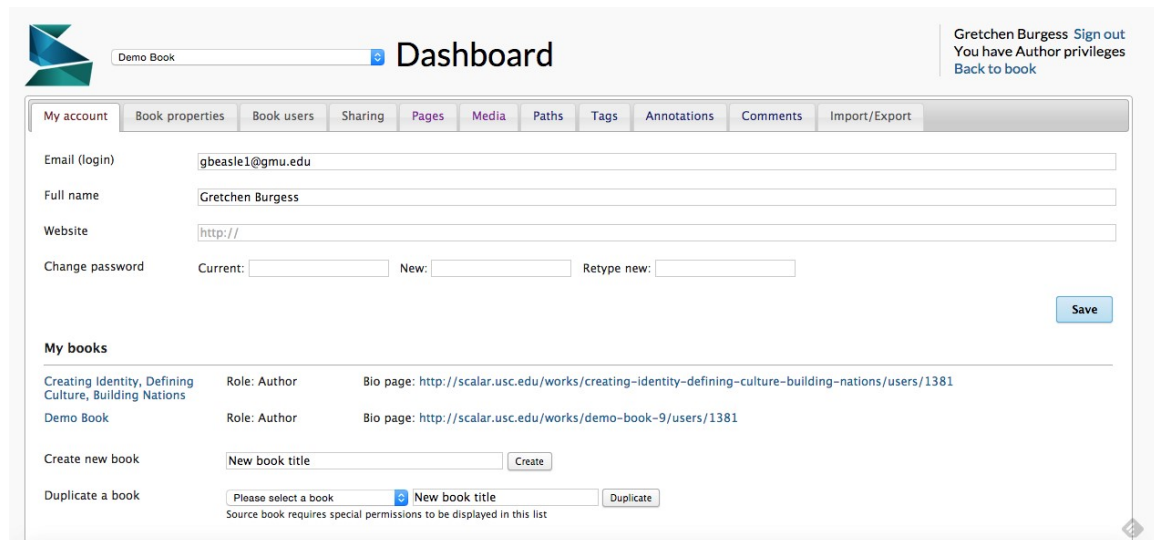
Once you sign-in, you should be taken to a page that looks like the one below. This is called the *Index*. Here you can see your books (if you entered a title on the registration page, it should show up here), as well as some featured books. We want to get to the *Dashboard*, so click that link it the upper right hand corner.

The *Dashboard* is the hub for making larger scale edits (like the look of your book), as well as creating new books, approving comments, etc.

Let's go ahead and create a new book. If you entered a title on the registration page, you can skip this step. On the "**My account**" tab, look at the bottom of the page under "My books." Enter a title where it says "**Create new book**" and click the "**create**" button. You should receive a confirmation that your book was created, and your title should appear under "**My books**." Go ahead and click on the book you just created and the name of the book should appear at the top of the screen.

If you click over to the "**Book properties**" tab, you have some options for customizing the look of your book. There are seven built-in themes to choose from, as well as the options to upload a background image, a thumbnail image, and customize with CSS and/or Javascript.

In the "**Book users**" tab, you can easily add, edit, or remove Scalar users to the book, making it easy to collaborate. Note: you will not be able to add someone until they have created a Scalar account, and right now there isn't an invite to join option or anything like that either.
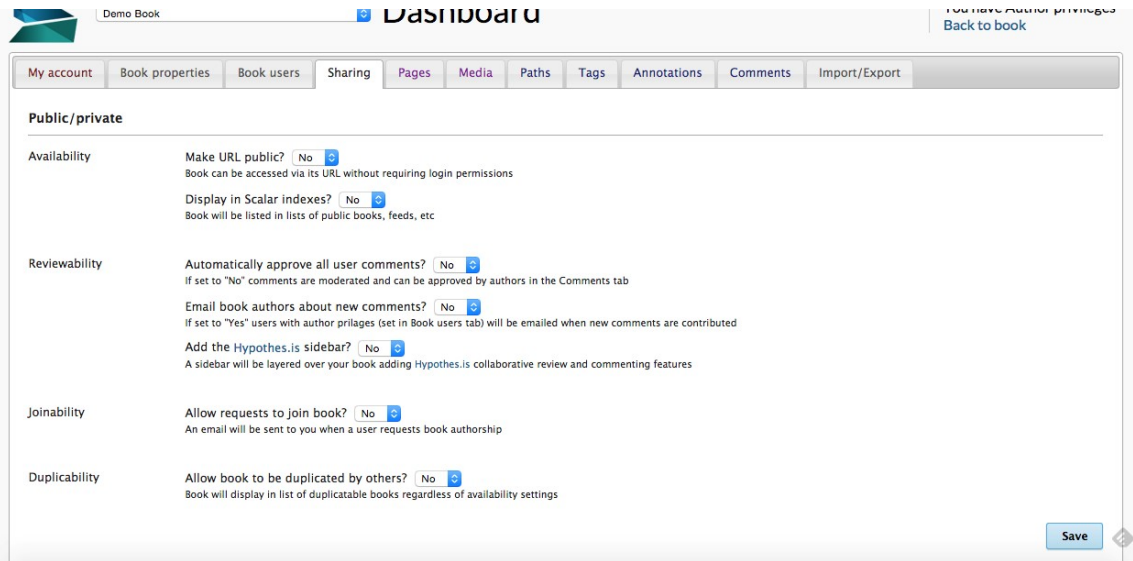
Under the tab "**Sharing**", you can choose whether to make the URL public and indexed by Scalar, whether to allow other Scalar users to duplicate your book, enter publisher info, add menu items, and select the scope of your publication, be it a book, article, or project.


While you are in the Dashboard, there is always an option in the upper right hand corner under your name that says "**Back to book**." Let's click that now. As you can see below, other than the title, there isn't anything in my book at the moment. (I have picked the "Gloss" theme.)
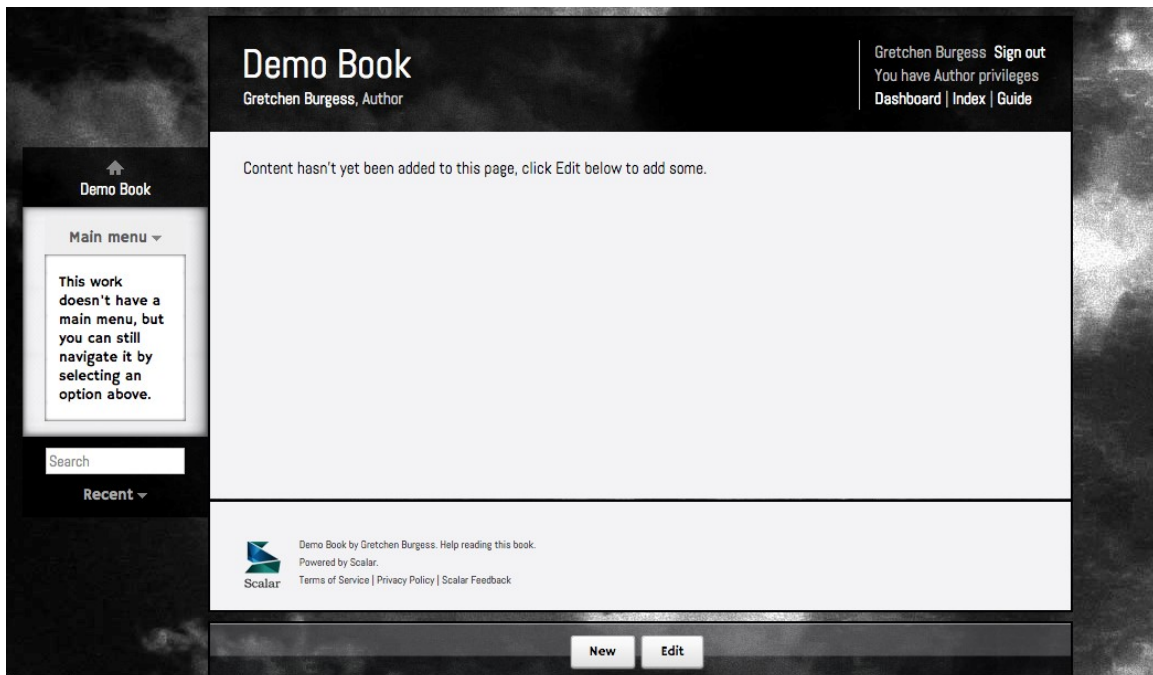
When we click the "**Edit**" button at the bottom of the screen, we're taken to what looks like a basic word processor, not unlike the page where you write a new blog post in Wordpress. You can enter a title for the page, a description of the content on that page, and your text.
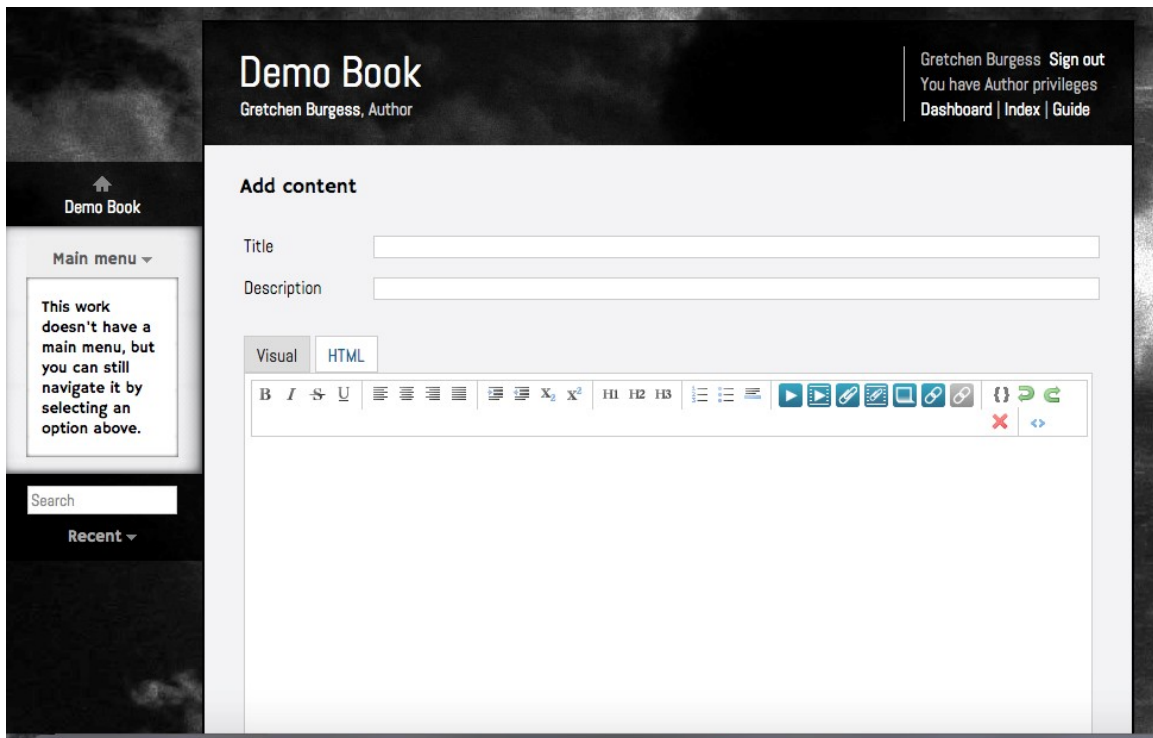
At the bottom of the edit page, you have some options for the view, relationship, style, and metadata. We're not going to go into this, but you can play around with these different options or find more information about them here.
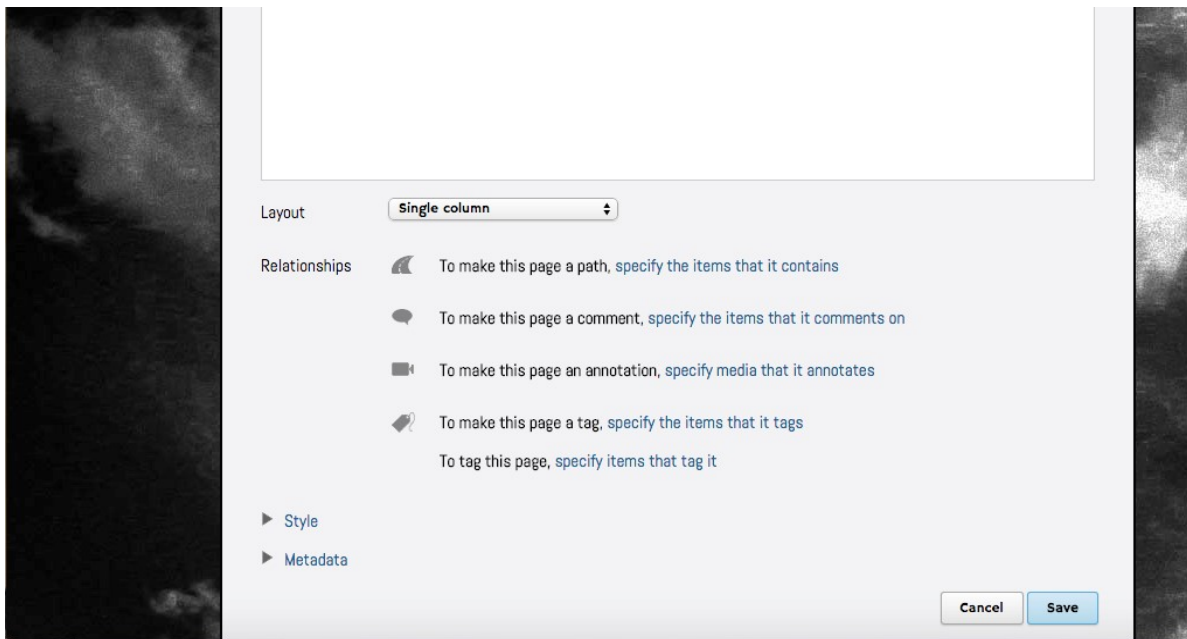
When we click "save," we are taken back to the view of the page, so we can see how it looks as formatted.

Demo Book
Gretchen Burgess, Author

Demo Book

Main menu ▾

This work doesn't have a main menu, but you can still navigate it by selecting an option above.

Search

View ▾   Recent ▾

CFP: Dressing Global Bodies: Clothing Cultures, Politics and Economies in Globalizing Eras, c. 1600s-1900s

7-9 July 2016, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

Co-Organized with the Pasold Research Fund, UK

Website: dressingglobalbodies.com

The clothes on our backs are intimately connected with bodily experiences, cultural, social and gender portrayals, as well as the economies of fashioning and re-fashioning across place and time. Garments reflect the priorities of local and international economies, collective and personal inclinations, religious norms and conversions. These materialities are shaped by global flows of cloth and beads, furs, ready-made and second-hand apparel, in dynamic processes of fashion exchange. Dress is a charged cultural instrument, as evident in colonial and decolonization processes, social and political agendas, animated by cross-cultural and commercial flows, industrial and institutional innovations.

This international conference will showcase new historical research on the centrality of dress in global, colonial and post-colonial engagements, emphasizing entangled histories, comparative and cross-cultural analyses. This scholarship redefines national and collective communities, in the practice of fashion and the dynamics of re-fashioning and re-use, from the seventeenth through the twentieth century.

To create a new page, simply click the "**New**" button at the bottom of the page. This will take you to the same page the edit button did, but will create a separate page from the one you are currently on.

- **Dana Leibsohn**, Priscilla Paine Van der Poel Professor of Art, Department of Art, Smith College. She will address colonial practice, cross-cultural influences in the dress of colonial Spanish America.

Principal Organizers:

Beverly Lemire, Professor & Henry Marshall Tory Chair, Department of History & Classics, University of Alberta

Giorgio Riello, Professor, Department of History and Director, Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Warwick

💬 Comment on this page

Version 1 of this page, updated 17 July 2015.
Demo Book by Gretchen Burgess. Help reading this book.
Powered by Scalar.
Terms of Service | Privacy Policy | Scalar Feedback

Scalar

New   Edit   Hide

If we want to add media to a page, we have a few options. If we click the dropdown menu on the left and select "**Import**" we can see the different types of media we can include. Accessing the media is pretty simple, though the process for including media files in pages is a little tricky.
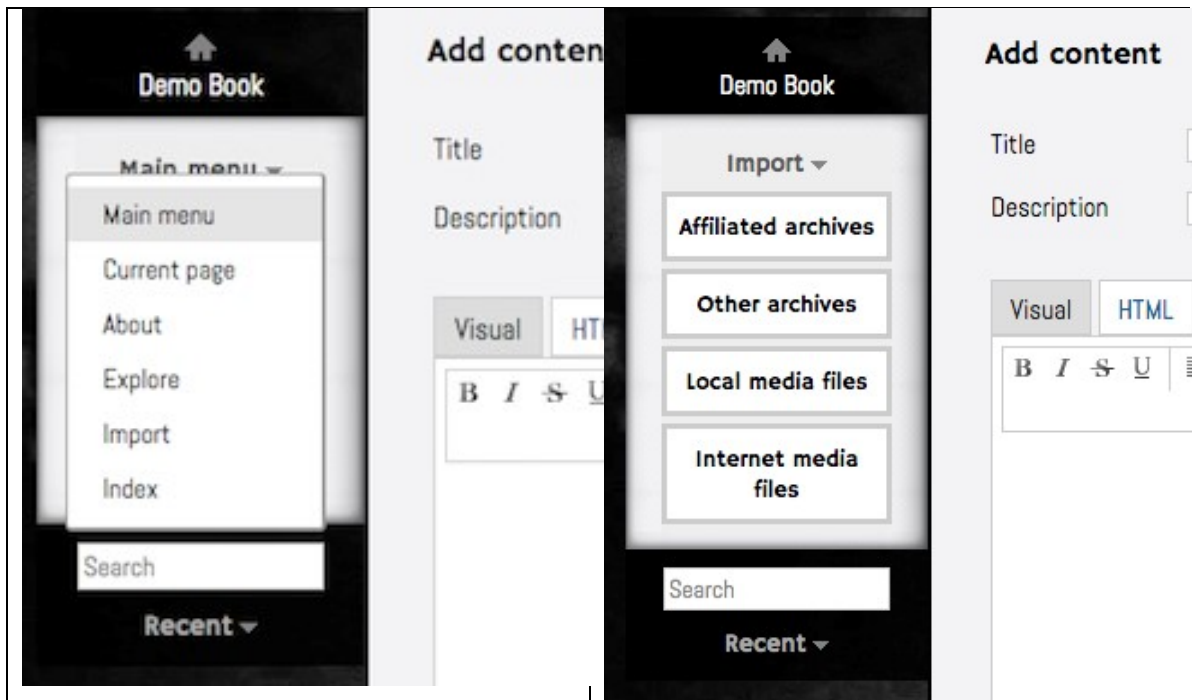

I selected the "**Internet media files**" option, which takes you to a familiar edit page. Put in your title, URL, and description.
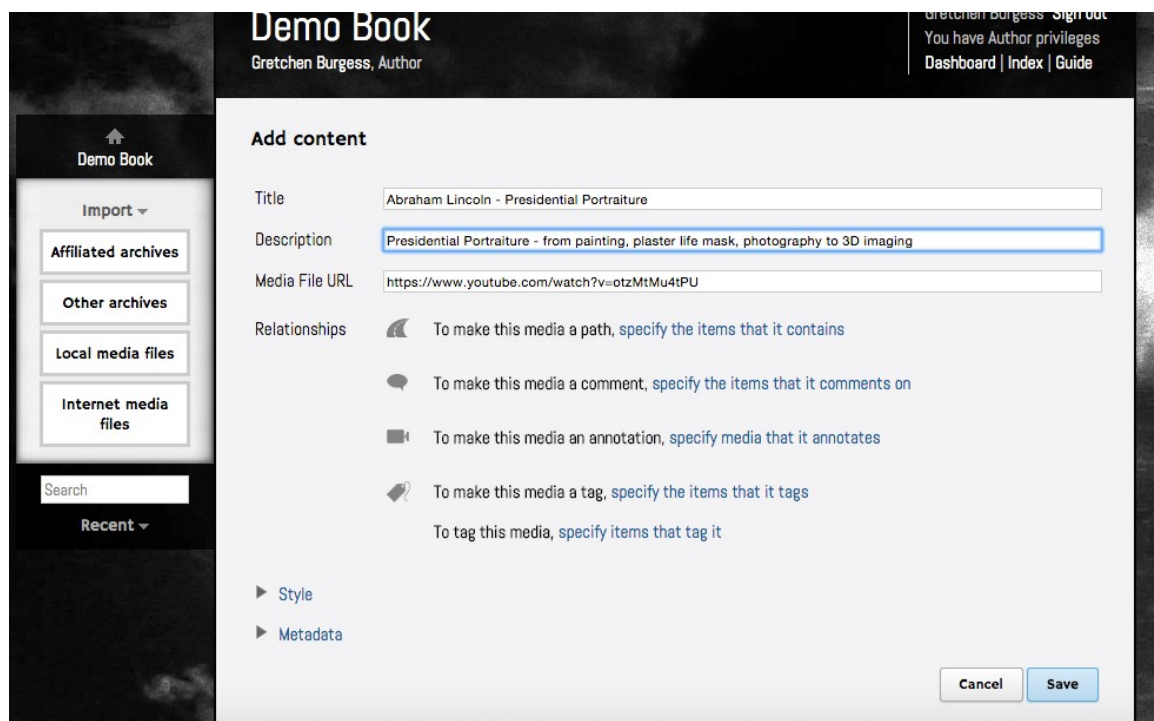

When we click save we can see the video on the page, but it's not on a page. I'll go back to my Chapter One page by clicking the "**Recent**" dropdown in the left hand navigation bar and selecting the page. Then click "**Edit.**"

At the top of the textbox, we have several options for importing media, depending on how you want it to be displayed. I'll choose the second option this time, which says "**add inline Scalar media file**" when you hover over it with your mouse.
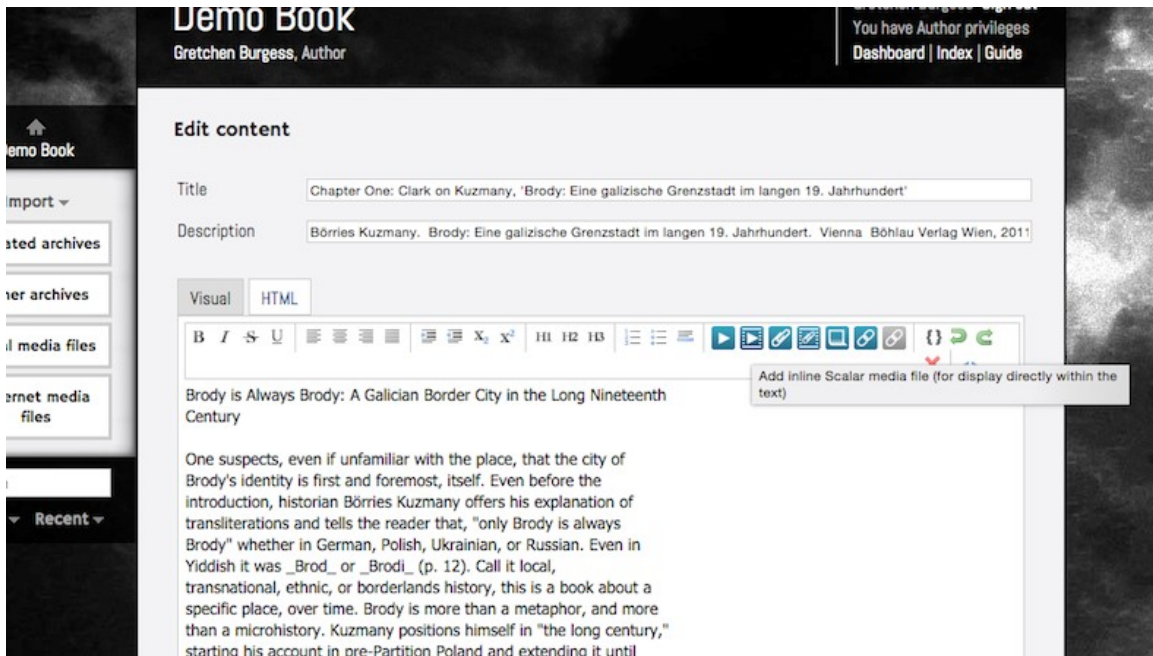
A box pops up, and we can see the video I previously uploaded. When I click on it, it is automatically added to my page wherever I left the cursor.
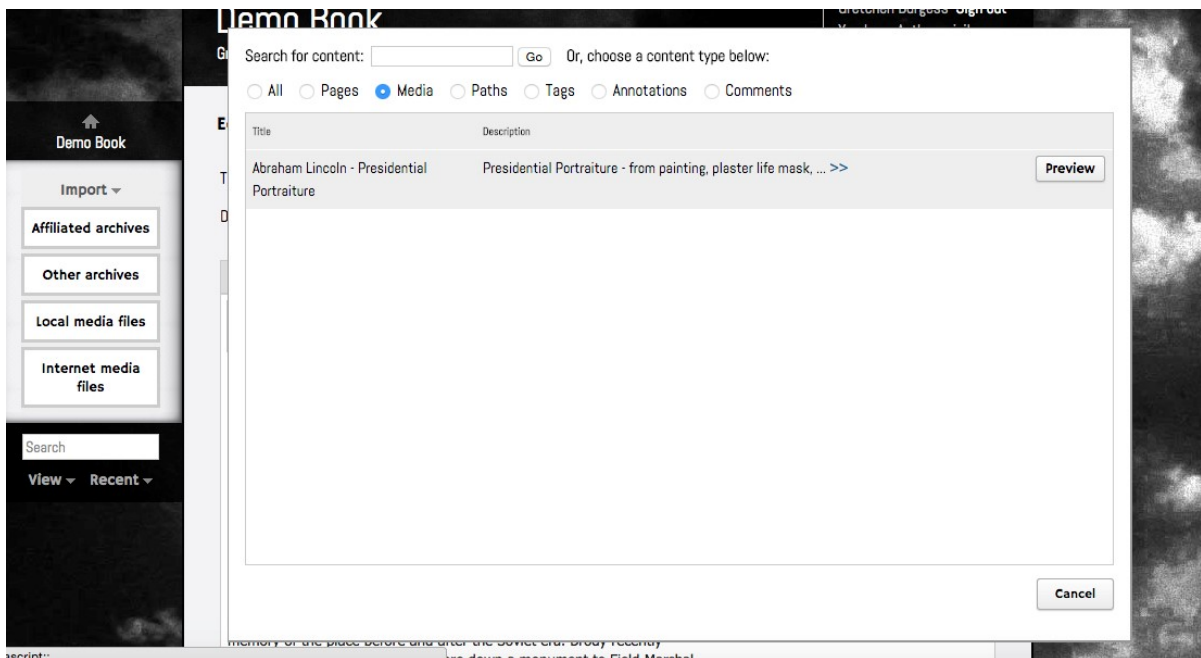
In the *edit* menu the video will simply show up as a grey box, but when you click *save*, it will show up properly in the view menu.

So now that we have a couple of pages, let's go back to the *Dashboard* by clicking on its link in the upper right hand corner of the screen. Click on the "**Book properties**" tab and scroll to the bottom. Click on "**add menu item**."

I'm going to click on "CFP: Dressing Global..." and then click "**add menu item**" again and click on "Chapter One: Clark on...". Hit "**Continue**".
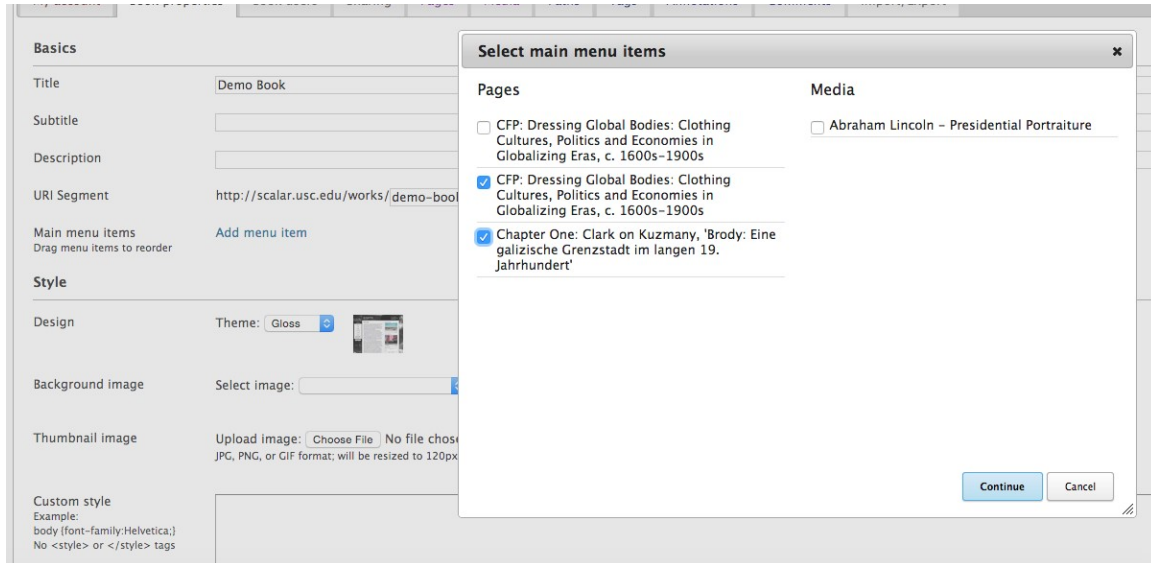
I can now see my two menu items I just added in numbered order on the "Book properties" page. If you want to change the order, simply drag and drop the menu items.
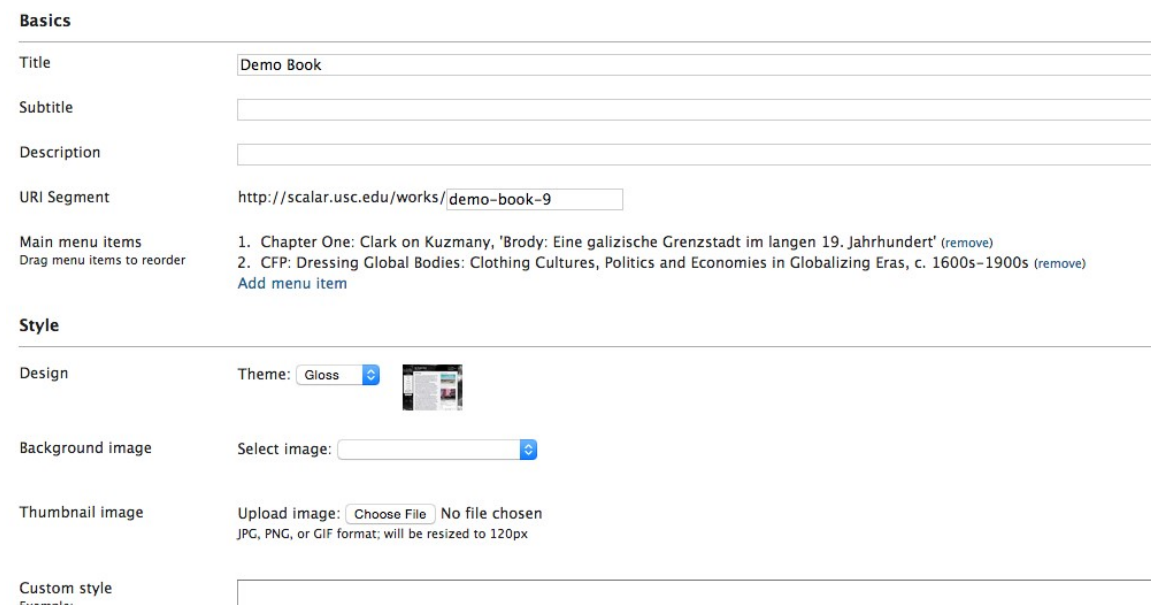
Click the blue "**Save**" button at the bottom of the page and then click "**Back to book**" in the upper right hand corner (scroll all the way up). Now you should see your menu items you just added in that left hand navigation bar when it's on the *main menu* option.

Scalar automatically puts in an "**About**" and "**Explore**" navigation option. In the "**About**," you have *Works Cited* and *Acknowledgments*, and you can edit these just like any other pages.

In "**Explore**" you have the option to view all of the tags in your book, as well as a *visualization* option, with different options for visuals related to elements of the book like pages, media, tags, comments, etc.

When you are happy with your book, go back into the "**Book properties**" tab in the *Dashboard* and make your URL public!

Scalar has a bunch of little customization options for the whole book, each page, the media, etc. that we haven't even touched in this tutorial, so feel free to play around and explore those options. Overall, this is a great tool to explore if you are looking to publish academic work to the web!