



Slow Week! An introduction

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Those who have followed Allegra's adventures from its creation in 2013 will probably remember that our initial motto was "Slow down!". Prior to launching the website, Allegra's Directors of Things and Stuff sat down together to write the manifesto that would set in stone the values based on which we strove to create a scholarly community of our own.

Here it is again:

More more more!



*This constant pressure to write more.
More of what?
Slogans, catch phrases?
Analysis for tid-bit quotations?
The same-old, same-old?
They want to stuff our brain
with indicators,
guidelines,
readily-chewed soundbites,
impact and
expected outcomes.
That is not stuff of real scholarship!
That is the stuff of auditing,
of successful annual reporting;
Signs of yielding to extra-academic pressures.
We reclaim the space
for the real pursuit
of unknown horizons,
Of reflection, philosophising
and mind-wandering
We want words, imagination, poetry!
Things impossible to report,
but only thus with real meaning.
But, like slow food,
REAL research takes time
to mature.
It needs tender love and caring;
A space to freely grow.
Less but more
of something
immeasurable
and only thus of true importance.*



Of course, the idea was not totally new or original. A number of academic ventures have focused on this theme for a while now, highlighting the permanent state of crisis in which the neoliberal university has been maintained for the past 30-40 years. This thematic week seeks to feature some of these reflections. We start with an excerpt of Barbara Seeber and Maggie Berg's book [*The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*](#) which came out at the University of Toronto Press this year. We then continue with a discussion originally initiated on the blog [Celeb Youth](#) following a series of seminars on the Slow University organized at Durham University in 2014. Heather Mendick questions the progressive aspect of the slow movement. Maggie O'Neill gives an overview of what the Slow University could look like. Ruth Mueller explores how the compulsion for speed in academia plays out in the lives of postdocs. The slow week spills over the next with a beautiful text written by Ghassan Hage on why academics should preserve their Ivory Tower. We conclude this thread with another initiative celebrating slowness: [The International Institute of Not Doing Much](#), which will provide you with good tips on how to lead 'a sophisticated life in the slow lane'.

If at the end of this thematic thread you find yourself still rushing after deadlines, we suggest to either [go fishing](#) or listen to our [deadline mash-up](#) in Allegra's Jukebox! Have a beautiful summer!