

Katharine E Herman. What is Open if not Open Access? Tracing a Genealogy of “Open” in Anthropology. A Master’s Paper Proposal for the M.S. in L.S. degree. November, 2020. 100 pages. Advisor: Jennifer Solomon.

“Open” has necessarily shifted in meaning since emerging from the open source movement to open access, which introduces the possibility for a more flexible understanding of what qualifies as open. Since the advent of open access in the context of academic publishing, “OA” itself has become commodified and narrowed to almost singularly refer to “a freely accessible PDF” despite a rich and varied history of experimental projects. Tracing the many affinities and differences among such experimental projects offers a new history, and potentially a new future, for the open access movement. From an alternative genealogy, I hope to generate new foci for later open access projects in anthropology through a more expansive concept of open.

Headings:

Open access publishing

Information commons

Scholarly publishing

Qualitative research

WHAT IS OPEN IF NOT OPEN ACCESS?
TRACING A GENEALOGY OF “OPEN” IN ANTHROPOLOGY.

by
Katharine E. Herman

A Master’s paper proposal submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

November 2020

Approved by

Jennifer Solomon

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Literature Review..... | 5 |
| Another short history of Open Access | 5 |
| Open access operationalized in a for-profit context | 7 |
| Open access movement in anthropology | 12 |
| Experimental and varied origins of OA | 15 |
| Research Questions and Hypotheses | 17 |
| Methodology | 18 |
| I. A formal history of open access in anthropology..... | 21 |
| The promise of digital publishing and all that came with it | 22 |
| Anthrosource..... | 25 |
| A new partnership with Wiley-Blackwell..... | 34 |
| Parallel conversations, in a more hospitable environment..... | 39 |
| Finding consensus outside of the AAA | 44 |
| A new ecosystem in the shadow of the AAA | 45 |
| A journal apart, HAU’s bid for establishing legitimacy | 48 |
| The periphery working toward the core..... | 50 |

| | |
|---|----|
| A second agreement with Wiley-Blackwell (2013-2017) | 53 |
| <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> goes OA..... | 54 |
| <i>Open Anthropology</i> , a “public” journal | 55 |
| Two steps forward, one step back..... | 56 |
| Formalization and institutionalization of OA | 58 |
| The third agreement with Wiley-Blackwell..... | 61 |
| II. Tracing backward..... | 62 |
| First thread: In/of/around the Rice Circle | 64 |
| Open as Collaboration..... | 65 |
| Open systems | 68 |
| Structuring for Open | 69 |
| George E. Marcus | 70 |
| Second thread: Opening Authority | 72 |
| Open Prototyping..... | 74 |
| Opening the Contemporary..... | 75 |
| Paul Rabinow | 78 |
| Third thread..... | 80 |
| The Open Anthropology Collective..... | 81 |
| Prickly Pear Press | 84 |
| Conclusion[s] | 86 |
| References..... | 88 |

Introduction

Since the early aughts, “open” has come to denote accessibility, especially in terms of scholarship that uses digital infrastructure to enable free access over the internet. When viewed contextually, “open” has necessarily shifted in meaning along with the developing digital infrastructures that enable it. Since the advent of open access in the context of academic publishing, “OA” itself has become commodified and narrowed to almost singularly refer to “a freely accessible PDF,” fitting neatly into the market logic that prevails in spaces dominated by the neoliberal university, which likes to assign a value to something even when “making it free.” This price tag on open access (whether it be quantified through author processing charges (APCs), subventions, etc.) then undercuts a varied history of attempts at experimenting with scholarly publishing through open access from the 1990s/early 2000s.

To refocus this history would be to redress this prioritization of access over the openness that defined a far broader array of experiments. Though it might not provide a comprehensive narrative, tracing the many relations among such experimental projects offers a new history, and potentially a new future, for the open access movement. From an alternative genealogy, I argue, a different narrative of openness is apparent; one generative of the same expansive, on-going conversation that is referenced, yet rarely defined. Through this project I hope to better outline how an open access community has

formed through these various practices and experiments; ever-expansive and yet building cumulatively, bit by bit.

I'll begin with a more formal history of open access in anthropology between 2004 and 2020, to trace back to projects, individuals, and ideas that could be read as precursors to the ecosystem of open access projects that now populate anthropology. By the late aughts a new public sphere in anthropology was growing among a series of new blogs, but still had clear material limitations. These blogs were, by nature, available online "free," yet considering who had ready access to a personal computer, accessibility was still a far-off goal. Tracing back a bit further, the same individuals active in the new digital arena had also been a part of earlier projects experimenting with the form and function of scholarly publication in diverse ways. When taken into consideration, these projects complicate the fairly simple narrative of open only in relation to open access. What I want to offer is not a comprehensive or legible history, but tracing a few trails, connected at a few junctures that begin to form a partial genealogy. In connecting some of the more prominent open access projects of today with their antecedents, it is difficult to see how these various projects trace their inspiration back to the serials crisis, or even to the digital revolution that enabled all this far flung imagination of what the internet could do. I argue that the ideas that motivated these projects have deeper roots in anthropology as a discipline - after all, it is not only the technological capacity that provides the principles that structure these motivations, but the context in which they were generated.

Literature Review

Another short history of Open Access

Open access (OA) can be an exceedingly difficult conversation to enter into, much less maintain your bearings once inside a maze of jargon and accrued knowledge, often with interlocutors that seem entirely immersed in a separate world, fluent in references to past projects and the intricate structure of each. Navigating these many conversations is made more difficult by the many levels on which these conversations are had. For some, open access is just one of many developments in scholarly communication, requiring fluency in new terminology and understanding of the mechanics of how it “gets done.” For others open access remains an expansive proposition that could change not only the means of scholarly communication, but also what is meant by, and what can be expected of, scholarship.

In assessing how a conceptual movement developed into a community of practice, it is important to first consider the context in which it formed. Two anthropologists in particular, Biella Coleman and Chris Kelty, have done extensive ethnographic research on the interrelated worlds of open source and free software communities, from which, it is often agreed, the open access movement as it pertains to academic publishing emerged (Coleman and Hill 2004; Kelty 2008b). From their work there are a few salient points that help frame “what we talk about when we talk about open access.” First, and perhaps foremost, it is important to acknowledge that “open” is not is not a simple concept in the

least. It is a succinct descriptor that can be operationalized to describe most anything. When used as shorthand, it carries with it a variety of political, social, philosophical implications that are often interpreted in a variety of ways. Open functions as an ideal more than anything else and therefore cannot simply be engaged with as a set of technical requirements, articulated as a mandate, or even objectively achieved. Over the last few decades, a multitude of individuals and institutions have appealed to or operationalized open in too many ways to ever usefully pin down in a definitive history.

It is precisely because of this expansive set of propositions that the open source and free software communities were generative ground that facilitated other large communities of practice such as the copyleft movement or the information commons movement.¹ Many individuals and institutions alike interact with this rich history and, in doing so, cocreate their own definitions and conceptualizations of open in a way that often seems to iteratively rewrite, or reinvent, the origins of the movement. This then brings us to Chris Kelty's assertion that the free software movement is most usefully considered what he calls a "recursive public" which is just as concerned with the material and practical means of its community as it is with the political and conceptual dimensions of the community's cohesion (Kelty 2008b: 3). Because of this, the operationalization of the ideal of "open" is just as defining as the broader conceptual agreements that underpin it. For Kelty, this is a unique way of looking at a group of practitioners that materially enable the kind of system they want to bring about, but it also means that the concept of "open" changes every time it is operationalized in a new way by new actors or a new

¹ As noted by Biella Coleman and Ben Hill, "spearheaded by Lawrence Lessig (1999; 2001; Creative Commons) and David Bollier (2002; Public Knowledge), explicitly points to FOSS [free and open source software] as its inspiration" (2004: 7).

model that appeals to such a lineage. My intent in offering “another” history of open access is not to synthesize or supersede any of the many (and far more readily esteemed) histories written on open access, but to demonstrate that all these many histories that are appealed to are productive in their own ways.

Open access operationalized in a for-profit context

An equally popular narrative of open access would indicate that the initial generative moment of the open access movement was the Big Deal and the mounting price of serials for libraries, often indexed at the early 2000s and referred to as the “serials crisis.” At this imagined tipping point in scholarly communication, the structure of the paywall was adopted from mainstream journalism and the profit margins of the Big Five, for-profit publishers continued to grow (Swist and Magee 2018). At a certain point, the narrative continues, publishers and scholars alike had to take a stand and offer an alternative. However, the situation was much as Biella Coleman described in her work on IBM’s integration of free software rhetoric into their operations (2004) – the flexibility of open allowed even for-profit institutions to appeal to the same arguments that were intended to confront their control over academic publishing. The last five years or so especially have seen a growing number of open access plans from for-profit publishers,² all claiming to have properly assessed what making something free costs; or, more accurately, the imagined loss in revenue due to making something freely accessible. The result of this calculus is that OA is approached as a cost that must be mediated.

² Elsevier’s read and publish agreements, for instance.

If “open” is then, in some contexts, in the service of unambiguously for-profit enterprises (that open access was formalized in direct opposition to), how should we approach what, or who, open is “for” in these contexts? While free content in and of itself is a significant step toward what is envisioned by this community, it is a bit like a form without content. Scholarly works can be made freely available easily enough – after all, it is the same content, just with a different apparatus for its dissemination – but the new form of open access has been figured as a commodity in and of itself, even with its own going rate. Open access has slowly, but resolutely, been drawn into a profit-seeking logic wherein most OA projects that publishers, libraries, and scholars interact with today have grown out of the publishing model as it was, and therefore do little to trouble the assumptions on which it is built. This is largely due to the immense inertia the monopoly of the for-profit academic publishers exerts, which has been well documented.³ This degree of control allows the for-profit publishers to not only set the terms under which most academic publishing operates, but also the definitions and shared language used to engage with those operations. Conversations had among open access advocates are permeated by capitalist metaphors and neoliberal shorthand, obscuring, or sometimes wholesale overriding, their intended arguments.⁴

This was perhaps most apparent when the largest for-profit publishers each responded to a call to make research available in the early days of the COVID-19 crisis. It at first appeared that the publishers were acting in deference to the very arguments that have been made by the OA movement for years: that the academic work they publish is

³ Perhaps most notably, the “Inequality in Knowledge Production: The Integration of Academic Infrastructure by Big Publishers” by Posada and Chen in 2018.

⁴ Cf. Kember 2014; Tewell et al. 2019.

not only important, but vital - that it is crucial that work funded by governments should be made publicly available particularly in consideration of public health, etc. But upon closer examination this consonance between the stated reasons for “opening up access” and the arguments made by OA advocates indicates exactly why this maneuver was so very effective at deflecting criticism at a critical juncture. By selectively adopting widely shared sentiments about the importance of the research and data they controlled, the for-profit publishers were able to frame the conversation around “free content for sake of a global health emergency” in such a way that they were able reinforce their centrality in scholarly publishing and further insinuate themselves as a good faith actor in a broader shift toward open access.⁵ The way in which the crisis at hand was framed in turn framed the solution: when access is made equivalent to availability – ensuring that content is made available in PDF form via the publishers’ websites – the question is already narrowed to “opening a gate” in order to enable access rather using “open” more broadly as a guiding principle to question these now de facto methods and mechanisms of publication.

The letter calling upon publishers for their cooperation explicitly stated the solution – that publishers make available through established channels all the articles and

⁵ This framing is apparent both in the initial call to scholarly publishers (<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/covid19-open-access-letter.pdf>) as well as in the responses from Wiley-Blackwell (<https://newsroom.wiley.com/press-releases/press-release-details/2020/Wiley-Offers-Free-Access-to-Support-Educators-Researchers--Professionals-Amid-Growing-COVID-19-Impact/default.aspx>), Elsevier (<https://www.elsevier.com/about/press-releases/corporate/elsevier-gives-full-access-to-its-content-on-its-covid-19-information-center-for-pubmed-central-and-other-public-health-databases-to-accelerate-fight-against-coronavirus>), Taylor and Francis (<https://taylorandfrancis.com/coronavirus/>), Springer (<https://www.springernature.com/gp/researchers/campaigns/coronavirus>), and Sage (<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/press/sage-publishing-statement-on-the-covid-19-pandemic>).

data deemed vital during the crisis. It goes without saying that none of the statements made by the Big Five publishers gestured to the fact that they had kept hundreds if not thousands of articles on pandemics and viruses behind paywalls for decades, ensuring that research was only possible through institutions with massive amounts of funding, further exacerbating global health disparities. None of the statements mentioned that the heavily guarded system of paywalls and subscription plans that has been elaborated over the past few decades were created despite many public health crises and ongoing calls for information to be shared beyond institutions of higher education (see fn 5). Their argument instead hinged on the idea that information becomes vital at a certain moment – a moment of crisis – after which, it reverts back to a form intended to generate profit. Further they wouldn't go so far as to state this vital work is a public good in such a moment of crisis; they would instead choose to position themselves as the provider of that vital information, and in turn further emphasize their role in managing and controlling that information. In the end, whenever these publishers determine an “end” to this crisis, what remains is the consensus that the work is [1] vital and [2] theirs. It is important to remember that all that work – the many articles and datasets that are entirely, objectively vital despite any agreed upon timeline of the crisis currently in front of us – all that work was produced in the same system that limited its circulation, and it will return to that closed system at the conclusion of the crisis. In fact, some of the publishers have already announced end dates despite little indication that the crisis has alleviated.

The academic publishing system as a whole was therefore strengthened by articulating a solution that did not redress the issue, but offered a necessary valve,

knowing full well that the pressure from maintaining the system as it is under such duress would actually result in the failure of the system (as some understandably expected⁶). The idea that COVID-19 presented a public health crisis unlike any other further supplements the idea that the system was fine as it was, except when rocked by the unforeseen parameters of a pandemic. There was a brief moment where it seemed as though the information that was needed was freely given, but it still bears attention that it was *given*. Thousands of articles and an immense quantity of research was offered – not by the academics who produced it, but by the publishers who commoditized it. This rationale is, at its root, incoherent, but does still manage to reaffirm and reproduce the justification for an increasingly for-profit publishing system as is. The crisis that COVID-19 posed in relation to the availability of academic research is a completely ordinary failure of a primarily for-profit industry; completely ordinary in that it was wholly understood already – by every demand for government-funded research to be opened, every claim that academic knowledge is inherently vital. What the for-profit publishers were able to do was delimit the circumstances under which their guarded articles could be made available. This demonstrated the resilience of the system – not a good faith acknowledgement of the problem at hand, but a means to address it without ceding more ground than necessary. Temporary, free access in time of an emergency is not open access, but instead demonstrates that the for-profit publishers have slowly, and more or less in concert, nudged our definition of open access to be anchored in the concept of a “freely available PDF,” linking their for-profit system to an imagined open access ideal.

⁶ <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-03-03/covid-19-open-science>

These are the “false premises” that have crept into open access conversations through the involvement of for-profit actors,⁷ and that have reshaped the trajectory of the open access movement as a whole.

Open access movement in anthropology

These tensions are evident in anthropology’s own, relatively short, history with open access. Anthropologists engaged in fieldwork with comparable communities (such as Kelty and Coleman who were already mentioned, as well as Alberto Corsín Jiménez who worked with free culture and open source prototyping in Spain), transferred to a new object of analysis, their own discipline, and became the primary advocates for open access in anthropology. When first approaching the question of open access in anthropology (at least through a US/UK-centric lens), the short history would identify the agreement between the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and Wiley-Blackwell in 2008 as a formative moment. From there, you could attempt a detailed bibliography of the many open discussions and briefings on the back and forth surrounding this agreement and the slow progress of open access advocacy in the fallout thereof. Blogs and essays and articles abound in both the journal *Cultural Anthropology* and the blogsite Savage Minds⁸ in the years since the AAA first made an agreement with

⁷ “So much of the discussion of open access is held on false premises and these false premises serve someone – they basically serve the legacy publishers, but they also serve the institutions, the universities – the corporate universities.” Vincent van Gerven Oei https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgqKLf4Zg_E&feature=youtu.be (34:20-34:42)

⁸ Now Anthrodendum, <https://anthrodendum.org/>.

Wiley-Blackwell, and the conversation has continued and grown through these channels in the ten years since. This formal history is rehearsed in the first half of this project.

What is clear about these conversations, however, is that they largely revolve around open access in terms of a service that could be offered by one of the largest for-profit publishing companies - the conversation was had largely on their terms. As the shift from scholarly societies self-publishing and disseminating the work of their members to agreements with for-profit publishers had already occurred, the question of open access was already shifted to how a business model could be modified (primarily, how revenue from subscriptions to society journals would be replaced). This framing greatly delimited what was considered constructive engagement within this context and debate largely centered on profit and loss assessments; however, through the years following, one journal (*Cultural Anthropology*) was allowed to go open as an experiment and has become the focal point of open access in anthropology since.

Just as open access cannot be considered an end in itself, *Cultural Anthropology's* shift to open access in 2014 was not the end - it was quite clearly a generative beginning. Since its transition, *CA* has hosted an increasing number of notable, innovative means of communicating and engaging with current scholarship. In 2016, *CA* launched Sound + Vision, offering multimedia capacities overlaid on the more traditional article format. Today there are podcasts, virtual conferences, and several different forms of conversation maintained through the website alone. Beyond available formats, it is the way in which engagement with the journal is open to anyone with access to the site. Social media interaction and open engagement are encouraged - and without the typical editorial

vetting and delayed publication as society journals used to work. All of these demonstrable effects of “going open” are laudable in and of themselves, but what is perhaps more moving in the broader scope of the open access movement is that the success of *CA*’s shift moved the needle on far more entrenched issues in the uptake of open access models: namely, prestige. Anthropology is, perhaps, one of the disciplines best situated to recognize publishing as an intrinsically social and performative practice. While concerns were voiced for the anticipated loss of prestige when open access was first proposed, those concerns are now readily dismissed given the ever-broadening scope and reach of the journal. As Dominic Boyer, coeditor of the journal from 2015 to 2018, noted in an interview, going OA took *CA* from a North American journal to a global journal (Boyer, quoted in Vieira and Kipphut-Smith 2019: 55); not only a more diverse public, but a public capacious enough to offer a broader scope and relevance to the journal as a whole. Importantly, Boyer also noted that this story did not begin in 2008. From its establishment in 1986, *CA* was oriented toward the innovative and experimental following founding editor George E. Marcus’ own orientation to the field. Marcus was not only the founding editor of *CA*, but also the coeditor of *Writing Culture* (1986), a volume which time and again is mentioned in narrative arcs of formative moments in anthropology.

At this point, it is likely clear that these many projects have a recurring cast, potentially even a discernible community of practice with its own genealogical history. However, the intention of this project is not to increasingly move backward, but to reopen discussion of possibilities in the present. This genealogy may not present a neat, linear progress toward a succinct “answer” for open access in anthropology, or even provide

concrete steps forward, but the attempts have created a body of knowledge that can be mined for inspiration. Such projects may not always be centered on explicitly on openness, but it is useful to attune these questions to an ever-broadening scope and evolving impetus to follow where openness leads. Some ideas mentioned in one context are only actualized years later in the course of a completely different project; for instance, the Open Access Cooperative proposed virtual conferences years before the Society for Cultural Anthropology (and its journal, *CA*) followed through with the Displacements conference in 2018.⁹ *CA* is certainly a high note in this genealogy, but even its most avid supporters are already noting it is not sustainable in isolation - the journal needs an ecology of open publishing projects to survive (Boyer, quoted in Vieira and Kipphut-Smith 2019: 55). Such an ecology could be populated by the many and varied experiments that appeared in the reflective writings of individuals deeply engaged with these questions through the past few decades.

Experimental and varied origins of OA

This narrative that “begins” in the early aughts is in stark contrast to what is a genealogy of open access projects that envisioned a different model for open publishing altogether. To refocus on this history would be to redress this prioritization of access over the openness that defined a far broader array of experiments. There are still many of those impassioned individuals, who are cathected to a form of open that is not wholly defined by making publications freely accessible. These are conversations that have developed

⁹ <https://displacements.jhu.edu/>

over decades of experimentation, trial and error, and sometimes, rarely, a Pollyannic plan that came to fruition. Though it might not provide such a neat narrative, tracing the many relations among such experimental projects offers a new history, and potentially a new future, for the open access movement.

Central to this developing conversation is the question of genealogy - where did these projects come from? Where were the seeds planted? As Samuel Moore and Rebekka Kiesewetter have demonstrated (Moore 2019; Kiesewetter 2020), tracing the chronological developments of these open access ventures does not align with this tidy narrative of offsetting costs – instead, one finds rich histories of scholars (not publishers) experimenting with the form, audience, and effect of their work. Importantly these pilots, these attempts, were not made in isolation. Each proposition for a new mode of scholarship was made in conversation, in relation to other propositions made before it. It is in these sets of relations that the community cohered around openness, rather than open access itself, is made clear.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

1. How might tracing a genealogy of past OA ventures in anthropology generate new foci for later OA projects in the field?
2. What commonalities run through a genealogy of past OA ventures in anthropology, and what do those commonalities suggest about projects that make a meaningful contribution to the field?
3. What would be gained by the current open access movement through a more expansive concept of open?

For the purposes of this study, I will use “open access” according to Peter Suber’s definition (2012): “Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions.” I will use “open” more broadly to refer to projects and initiatives that sought to address one or more of the goals of the open access movement, though not as defined as Suber. I will use “open access movement” broadly to capture projects that have taken up the principles of open access.

Methodology

I have built a genealogy of past open access projects in anthropology through a research study, which focused on individuals who have shaped the understanding of open in public conversations in the discipline.¹⁰ Through this genealogy I will demonstrate how a more capacious understanding of open will better serve as a guide for the establishment of new projects. Focusing on open as a contested concept will allow me to focus on the affinities, differences, and potentially even contradictions within these projects and the individuals who established them.

Open access is one form of a broader proposition of openness in scholarship, which has been a recurrent thread in several ongoing conversations in scholarly publishing, including:

1. Circulation (barriers to access, accessible media files)
2. Form (writing style, methods)
3. Engagement (seeking feedback, iterative development)
4. Accountability (transparency of business practices, ethical relationships)

The concept of openness is already entangled in all of these interrelated issues and considerations concurrently, and, conceptually at least, it would be difficult to determine

¹⁰ I have previously been part of one such project (HAU) and am now currently in yet another job in a developing open access project (Libraria) with many of the same actors, so a significant portion of this project will be reflexive and draw upon my own experience in framing my research.

any kind of beginning or end to these discussions. Because of this, I have chosen to focus on individuals – scholars who have wrestled with these questions throughout their careers and who have therefore generated a fair amount of reflexive writings on how they came engaged in these discussions and projects. As this project deals not only with scholarship, but how scholarship is done, I look not only to the written statements of these individuals but also how, where, and with whom they publish, who they are in conversation with, and who they cite.

I primarily collected data through available existing documentation of past open access projects and reflective essays and articles regarding open access of the individuals behind them. The benefits of digging through remaining online ephemera from these projects are the surprising moments of reflection and honesty I've found in personal writing on past projects. I've found all the blog posts and half-broken sites to be a very rich archive that always points in a new direction. However, this also indicates a clear limitation – this method will never be comprehensive or exhaustive and it will always be limited by what remained rather than what was present online (or otherwise in circulation) while these projects were up and running.

Most of my research has effectively worked through citation hopping – gradually moving back over the years to see what projects were influenced by what predecessors. Inevitably this method narrows to the most institutionalized or legible projects – as my research at this point has already shown, that means primarily white, male actors at R1 institutions in the United States or the UK. This says something about the methodology, but also makes clear how open access, or experimentation in publishing, is only rewarded or recognized narrowly through projects that are automatically valued more (because of

prestige, because of institutional privilege, gatekeeping, etc.). This lends an important perspective to my work and helps introduce why a more capacious understanding of open – beyond the narrowly identified “open access publication” – would be generative. There are, of course, a significant number of individuals whose work with open access and experimental publishing more broadly is not legible within the frame or search parameters I’ve set out. This would then necessitate that I use my research to actively question where these boundaries might be opened again for a more expansive and generative conversation beyond the overwhelmingly white halls of anthropology departments in R1 institutions through the nineties and early aughts.

My sampling of projects will necessarily be limited because I am not able to isolate a comprehensive list of all OA projects within anthropology over the set period of time. Instead I will be tracing projects backward from current projects, which will necessarily bias my findings. I’ve also actively limited my scope to projects within anthropology. While this will be used to include and/or exclude potential projects from my analysis, I will be conscientious not to use this criterion to re-double consequences of not adhering to norms or expectations of prestige, which beset anthropology in particular. Further, although this is a bit de facto for the field, I’ve limited the scope of this project to English-language projects. While, ideally, I would be able to integrate discussion of non-English-language projects — of which there are many that are generative of new ways of conceiving a new genealogy of “open” — I have to recognize both the material constraints of completing this project and my own lack of language capacity outside of English.

I. A formal history of open access in anthropology

While all necessary tools for enabling open access were on hand since 1994,¹¹ the proposition of open access took far longer to coalesce into a shared vision for how scholars might engage with this new capacity within anthropology. Instead, in all the years since, those conversations were repeatedly derailed by narratives that dismissed open access as a bad business model. It was not only the large, for-profit publishers who would dismiss open access as bad business, but scholarly societies as well. The early aughts were characterized by a number of scholarly societies aligning their publishing programs to for-profit publishing models under increasing duress to extract revenue from their publications. This alignment of for-profit publishers and revenue-strapped scholarly societies was perhaps not difficult to foresee in conjunction with the increasing neoliberalization of academia over the same years, but it did necessitate a significant shift in how scholarly societies narrated their role to their respective memberships. Examining the discussion of the many rationales as to why the American Anthropological Association (AAA) chose to move into a partnership with Wiley-Blackwell is instructive as to how scholarly societies established their priorities and how members articulated their expectations of their societies.

¹¹ “In 1992 all the pieces for a successful transition to a world where the literature was electronic, globally accessible, standardized, and easily findable were in place. There have arguably been no major technological advances since around 1994 that were necessary for open access to be possible. It has been 25 years since open access was a technological problem. It turns out of course that open access is not a technological problem, even if it was, in some ways, enabled by technology [...] In fact, what stood in the way of an all-digital, globally-accessible scholarly literature were the very people in whom we placed our trust to communicate our literature to us: the journal publishers. Quietly, over the preceding decades, we had handed over control of our publications and our publishing ecosystem to a small handful of very large, multinational corporations.” (Kelty 2016 [21:28- 22:30])

In 2003, the AAA's executive director, Bill Davis, penned one of his first formal comments to the anthropological community admonishing the bad business of open access, and setting the talking points that would be reused for years to come. Davis contributed a note to the discipline's newsletter, *Anthropology News*, stating concern that "small nonprofit publishers might be forced to adopt the PLoS publishing model, which remains unproven and may be financially unsustainable, yet would radically change the world of research and scholarly publishing" (Davis 2003: 67). The PLoS model to which he refers is one of the more significant pushes to open up federally-funded scholarly work, utilizing the significant availability of resources and funds in the STEM community to launch open access through an author pays model.¹² As Davis' comments reflect, he did not greet this proposition as an assertion to ensuring scholarly work is seen as a public good, but instead as a threat to the sizable revenue stream of scholarly societies and small society publishers. By emphasizing that these calls originated in other domains, Davis made clear that such pressure for open access was external to the AAA and its membership.

The promise of digital publishing and all that came with it

When the digital revolution arrived in the 1990s, the AAA saw itself not only as a scholarly society, but as a small publisher as well. The AAA's Director of Publications,

¹² During the early aughts there were a few attempts at federal mandates that followed calls from the STEM community to "open up" research that had been federally funded through depositing articles in a federal repository, PubMed. While these mandates had by and large been intended for the STEM community (anthropologists wouldn't be affected by the legislation mandating open access for work funded by the NIH), the logic of the proposal still enveloped fields in the humanities and social sciences which relied on federal funding from other entities, though the publishing landscape did differ.

Susan Skomal, detailed their publication program both in terms of quantity of publications and the apparatus needed to manage them:

“By 2000, the association was producing 20 peer-reviewed journals, 7 newsletters and bulletins, and 4 book series, plus an annual guide to departments, the annual meeting program, and abstracts. The association’s staff grew to provide a full range of management and production services, including copyediting, typesetting, advertising, and marketing, as well as fulfillment and accounting. This effort had become so important to the association that, by 2004, 42% of its budget was devoted to sustaining the publications program.” (Skomal 2005: 1)

At the time, owning and operating all member publications was not only typical of a scholarly society, but often considered one of its primary functions, as disseminating the work of their members was often repeated in scholarly society mission statements. By the time the AAA publication program grew to the extent it had in the mid-aughts, it was clear a significant shift was coming. Digitization was a loaded proposition in the early aughts; in many ways, the questions provoked by digitization and open access prompted more questions about the business model of scholarly societies than had ever been the topic of discipline-wide conversation before.

As previously mentioned, the first to begin conceptualizing what the digital might mean for anthropology were those anthropologists whose fieldsites were deeply engaged with open source, free software, and open access communities. P Kerim Friedman, then a PhD candidate in anthropology at Temple University, wrote a short commentary in *Anthropology News* positing open access as an ethical corrective to the “the system of barriers that serve to protect revenue [...] at the expense of accessibility” citing the subscription models and embargo periods that controlled most of the AAA’s publications at the time (2004: 14). Friedman’s argument had two dimensions: on one hand he was positioning more equitable access as an answer to ethical issues that had long plagued

anthropology (a sentiment which had a long history in the field), while on the other, his references to Lawrence Lessig and wiki pages demonstrated that he was trying to apply open source precedents as new domains for anthropology. Sharing the same page in *Anthropology News*, Chris Kelty, then an assistant professor at Rice University, cited the potential federal mandate and questioned whether there might not be a reason to mandate the same for privately-funded research. Calling upon the AAA to develop a formal policy, Kelty pushed open access as a best practice that should be engaged with by scholarly societies and funders alike, encouraging both institutional and personal responsibility (2004b: 15).

Both essentially ethical propositions seemed to fall flat as the Association had already grown reliant on the revenue derived from their publishing program.¹³ In 2005, Skomal's overview of how the AAA approached the potential of digital publication depicted a far different set of priorities. Skomal described the slow, but steady, decline of institutional subscriptions in tandem with the ebb of membership revenue as an ever increasing burden on the Association's budget.¹⁴ This pinch prompted enough concern to delimit just how much of a utopic conversation could be had in the early aughts. Though the mission statement of the AAA, like many other scholarly societies, did characterize the role of the Association as a means for member work to be published and circulated,

¹³ Though it is important to emphasize at this point the AAA was reliant on the *revenue* from their publishing program so as to break even, or near it, which is a very different motivation from attempting to extract a *net profit* from these same publications, which would be the motivation of later decisions.

¹⁴ "Revenue from institutional subscriptions—the single most important source of income—had declined on an average of 3–4 % per year since 1996. Although a relatively benign loss in a single year, cumulatively the trend translates into a 21–28% decline over six years. Moreover, following a 20-year period of steady increase in association membership—income that had long subsidized the cost of publication—membership dues began to level off and no longer increased sufficiently to offset publication expenses" (Skomal 2005: 1).

the revenue generated by those publications had also become, in a sense, the business model of the AAA. As that model had already shown some cracks, the digitization of print resources seemed to be the promising new revenue stream the AAA needed, and therefore couldn't be allowed to go "freely."

Anthrosource

Digitization enabled the AAA to commodify the decades of publications that had already been published. The first outlines of this solution appeared a few years prior when, in May 2002, the Andrew Mellon Foundation provided a planning grant for a potential digital portal for the nearly two dozen anthropology journals shepherded by the AAA: AnthroSource. The Steering Committee for this project - comprised primarily of "anthropologist librarians" (Skomal 2005: 242) as well as information science and publishing professionals¹⁵ - were working in conjunction with the American Library Association's identification of "scholarly portals," or portals customized by university libraries, as a "top tech trend" in 1999.¹⁶ As the Head Librarian of the George and Mary Foster Anthropology Library at UC Berkeley, Suzanne Calpestri's leadership of the AnthroSource Steering Committee demonstrated the centrality of librarians and information science academics in the development of AnthroSource as a librarian-

¹⁵ Members of the AnthroSource Steering Committee at the point of its inaugural meeting in 2004 were Suzanne Calpestri (Chair), Leslie K W Chan, Patricia Kay Galloway, Hugh Jarvis, Wade Kotter, Robert Leopold, Ed Liebow, Norma Mendoza-Denton, Bonnie Nardi, Susi Skomal, Rebecca Simon and Lorie VanOlst (Calpestri and Nardi 2004: 9). By 2005, Nancy Fried Foster, Melissa Cefkin, and Alex Golub were added. As Skomal emphasized, the ASSC "a permanent steering committee composed of librarians, archivists, technologists, association members with expertise in areas such as research and scholarly communications, as well as AAA staff and a representative from the university press" (Skomal 2005: 4).

¹⁶ <http://www.ala.org/ala/lita/litaresources/toptechrends/midwinter1999.htm>

designed model for digitizing and making accessible the many years of AAA's publications.

By the end of 2003, the Mellon Foundation further funded the project over \$756,000 in order to make AnthroSource a reality. The necessity of a scholar's portal was framed in much the same way as the broader open access movement in scholarly communications: the steep annual increase in serial subscriptions necessitated an alternative strategy for enabling access to research (Calpestri and Nardi 2004: 9). In 2004, this meant "a transition from print to an electronic format as the primary mode of access, and moving production editing and publishing processes from AAA to the University of California Press" (Calpestri and Nardi 2004: 9). A new agreement with the University of California Press (UCP) enabled the complete outsourcing of the AAA's many publishing tasks (copyediting, typesetting, advertising, marketing, and distribution) as well as establishing a new non-profit partner that shared many of the same priorities held by the librarian-led AnthroSource Steering Committee. AnthroSource and a new partnership with the UCP (2002-2007)¹⁷ were two sides of the same decision to find a publishing model that prioritized finding partners with shared values.

The design of AnthroSource was originally based on user testing undertaken by Bonnie Nardi, then an associate professor in information science at University of

¹⁷ "Rather than invest further in an operation still too small to generate economies of scale, AAA decided to seek a partnership with a like-minded nonprofit publisher. [...] The University of California (UC) Press impressed AAA with a business model flexible enough to adapt quickly to changing technological demands, but also, to AAA's delight, the press had independently targeted development of their anthropology collection in their latest long-range plan. AAA began working with UC Press in September 2003, and by April of the following year, had transferred production of AAA's 10 biggest journals to the press's system. Within one year of the partnership, UC Press had increased their staff by one third to accommodate the expansion." (Skomal 2005:4).

California-Irvine, and her undergraduate students (alternatively described as ethnographic research on the imagined user base). Nardi and her students concluded that “anthropologists desire a portal that provides greater context for interpreting anthropological materials, an assessment of credibility of sources, and a place to build community” (Nardi et al. 2004). Users wanted the ease and functionality of Google with the criteria and curated content of an academic database, which is, of course, no small feat. The prospect of a “portal” provided the hypothetical space for, as Nardi et al. described, “an opportunity to supply additional context about publications so that readers have a greater appreciation for how a publication fits into the larger scholarly community, and to help separating the wheat from the chaff on the Internet” (2004). At this point, the distance between a simple repository¹⁸ and the imagined “scholarly portal” only grew. Anthropologists not only wanted access to all of the AAA’s digitized publications, but also “area and regional literature,” articles from journals in other fields across the humanities and social sciences, and grey literature. Expectations for new capacities grew alongside these demands for expanded content: users wanted multimedia files and job postings and community interaction - like a listserv, but better. The list grew so as to make AnthroSource “a one-stop Internet spot” to meet all needs of the imagined anthropologist in the field (Nardi et al. 2004). With customizable fonts.¹⁹

¹⁸ In the early aughts, institutional repositories were fairly new on the scene, enabled by lower online storage costs which made managing significant amounts of scholarly publications, data, etc. in a digital form realistic for a number of institutions. MIT’s DSpace was also recently funded by the Mellon Foundation at that point, and it was clear that significant amounts of resources and funding could be directed to give university-based infrastructure a chance (Lynch 2003: 1-2).

¹⁹ Though far-ranging, these expectations fit easily within the vast new horizon that digital publishing online seemed to promise. While these recommendations were not wholly feasible, it also prompted the kind of creativity that led to significant changes in the dissemination of scholarly work - one listed recommendation noted the potential benefit of “the posting of works-in-progress” which is a stone’s throw away from advocating a preprint server (Nardi et al. 2004).

While AnthroSource was not able to deliver on all the fever dreams of a digital anthropologist's utopia that it inspired, it did vastly improve subscribing anthropologists' access to materials previously only accessible in print.²⁰ For this reason, it was often vaunted as enabling access to research while still in the "field," playing into the often heavy-handed caricatures of anthropologists in remote locales, far from the comforts of their research libraries. This imaginary also neatly aligned with one of anthropology's guiding *raison d'être*: preserving legacy material before it's lost. As salvage ethnography had once been the unifying call of the discipline to gather and preserve all one could before it was lost to history, so too was AnthroSource to function as preserving the shared history of the discipline. Both the form and logic of AnthroSource was tailor-made to its context: it provided a certain kind of access to content that held value specifically within anthropology departments that subscribed to it.

In capitalizing on that value, AnthroSource was intended to provide a new financial model for the sustainability of the AAA as a whole, but did little to provoke reconsideration of the AAA's role in disseminating its publications to its imagined public. The AAA's understanding of what audiences it was responsible for was fairly well-fixed by the early aughts. The first Mellon grant for the development of AnthroSource was not solely about the benefits of a scholarly electronic portal, it was itself a business proposition about reducing costs - not altering the model (Skomal 2005: 2). Something had shifted, it was no longer assumed that the role of the AAA as a

²⁰ "Documents are full text, delivered in PDF+. Legacy content (going back 100 years) for AAA's 29 publications through 2003 will be available on AnthroSource for the 2005 subscription year. This is a significant change for scholars seeking searchable documents, since JSTOR has a seven-year window for the AAA's publications (i.e., the last seven years are not online at any given time)." (Nardi et al. 2004)

scholarly society was to subsidize the publication and dissemination of the work of its members; instead, it was the AAA's responsibility to turn its publications into a realistic business model.

In the subsequent years, announcements and commentary on the development of this portal cohered in the pages of the AAA's newsletter, *Anthropology News*. One celebrated the electronic access "from the field" and focused primarily on how digital access empowered the anthropological researcher to follow flights of fancy while immersed in fieldwork (Busch 2005). Another gently poked fun at the obstacles established by the subscription model; Ferguson's essay (2005) speculated how one of anthropology's storied forefathers, Bronislaw Malinowski, might have needed to "sidestep one of the important gatekeeping devices of commodity-rights in the digital age" in order to gain access (via a borrowed username and password from his buddy, E.B. Tylor). Though tongue-in-cheek, Ferguson's essay resonated with growing frustrations with the new resource. As much as the AAA had intended to emphasize accessibility, the realities of access were a little trickier when an institutional login or unique username and password were required. This repeated friction of finding a point of access not only undermined the primary selling point of AnthroSource, but also served to call attention to all those who wouldn't have the necessary credentials to log in.²¹ While today nearly all academic online resources have been gated for quite some time, this had

²¹ Credentials refer to both the actual username and password necessary, as well as the affiliation to an institution of higher education that could afford access to a discipline-specific resource like AnthroSource. To the dismay of AAA leadership in the coming years, this was not many.

not been the case in the early aughts.²² For all the benefits of the digital revolution that AnthroSource capitalized on, it was noticeably limiting rather than enabling participation and engagement with the AAA's publications. Alex Golub's assessment (2005) of AnthroSource as an asocial, limited, and centralized missed opportunity foreshadowed a turn in the later aughts to a more social version of scholarly communication for anthropology, and the shift toward scholarly blogs. Though open access was only a single line in his essay on AnthroSource, Golub drew a clear connection between ease of access and utility of the platform as a whole. While critical, his comments resulted in Golub being added to the AnthroSource Steering Committee, though that appointment proved short-lived.

In 2006, earlier proposals for mandates resulted in the Federal Research Publication Access Act (FRPAA), which called for federal "open access" repositories to be created to gather all academic work that was, at least in part, funded by taxpayer dollars via research grants (following a six-month moving wall). The Association of American Publishers quickly created a lobbying coalition opposed to FRPAA called the Partnership for Research Integrity in Science and Medicine, or PRISM, which the AAA joined, alongside for-profit publishers like Elsevier and Wiley.²³ The AAA's opposition to the bill demonstrated in many ways that lines had already been drawn and the once small society publisher had aligned their interests with that of the quickly conglomerating for-profit publishers. Their stated reasoning, that a mandate to deposit scholarly work

²² As mentioned in the literature review, it was only in the early aughts that newspapers had begun to derive revenue by erecting paywalls online, providing the model later adopted across for-profit academic publishers and database vendors.

²³ There is an excellent footnote (fn2) in Kelty, Fischer, et al. (2008) detailing the role PRISM in (attempting to) derail open access in 2006.

(even unpaginated, unedited manuscript pages) would undermine the traditional academic journal system, depicted journal articles as content that could be commoditized through the for-profit model. When the AnthroSource Steering Committee published a letter in support of FRPAA, the AAA dismissed the Steering Committee in favor of a new working group (AWG).²⁴ By the fall of 2006, the AWG was able to steer AnthroSource without any further entanglement with the proposition of open access. The AAA Committee on the Future of Print and Electronic Publishing (CFPEP) was established shortly thereafter in late 2006, bringing together the AnthroSource Working Group and a few voices from the Steering Committee (Hugh Jarvis and Melissa Cefkin).²⁵ From the recommendations of the group it appears within the first year they successfully pushed back against the individual profit plans for each journal (as Skomal [2005] described), and instead pushed for a portfolio principle, which instituted a collective cost, collective revenue system.²⁶ This principle is often cited as a means to protect the smaller subsection publications that always ran at a deficit, necessitating that the revenue of the four profitable journals (*American Anthropologist*, *American Ethnologist*, *Cultural Anthropology*, and *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*) to

²⁴ The AnthroSource Working Group (AWP) included Mac Marshall (Chair), John Bowen, Liz Brumfiel, Don Brenneis, Virginia Dominguez, Fred Gleach, Alan Goodman, Rosemary Joyce, Frank Proschan, and Alisse Waterston. Notably, there was no overlap between the AWP and its predecessor, the ASSC.

²⁵ Membership: Alisse Waterston (chair), Rosemary Joyce, Carol Greenhouse, Melissa Cefkin, Lee Baker, Hugh Jarvis, Michael Fischer, and (the lone librarian) Myra Appel. This served to separate the pro-open access voices in the Steering Committee from AnthroSource.

²⁶ “Among our first acts was to develop the “portfolio principle” that affirms commitment to the diverse collective of AAA publications—the smaller, more vulnerable and historically underrepresented sections and their publications, and the contributions and requirements of the larger, more mainstream publications. The ‘portfolio principle’ means that those publications that drive subscriptions and bring in revenue get their cost needs met, and at the same time they help sustain and bring in vanguard voices which, by virtue of being part of AnthroSource, add value to the package. In the context of market-state dynamics, the “portfolio principle” allows us to think and act collectively to support one another.” (Waterston 2009: 21).

sustain the entire AAA portfolio. While this portfolio principle did serve to somewhat maintain the AAA's claims that their priority was publishing quality scholarship, regardless of its potential to generate revenue, the shift in tone was still palpable.

Later in the spring of 2007, Alex Golub took to *Anthropology News* again to point out this turn to profit/loss logic, skewering the narrowed vision:

“If you think that making money by giving away content is a bad idea, you should see what happens when the AAA tries to make money selling it [...] far from being a tough-minded and practical alternative to the supposed idealism of open access, the pay-for-content model has never been particularly successful as a business strategy. The AAA only exacerbates the problem by applying a business model that was only marginally successful in the paper space to the new world of digital publishing, where it works even worse.” (Golub 2007: 6-7)

Stacy Lathrop, an *Anthropology News* editor, responded to Golub's piece much like Bill Davis in 2003, by raising the specter of the PLoS/author pays model as the only realistic form of open access worth engaging rhetorically with.

In the past five years, the AAA's decisions regarding their publications were resolutely tied to guarding the revenue that could be derived from the journals as commodities and open access was seen as little else than an ethical proposition that wasted potential revenue. The digital capacity to collect, manage, and archive turned the impetus to commoditize a new digital form and AnthroSource became a subscription-based warehouse of the discipline's recent history. While ongoing discussions highlighted potential expansion and the ever-present speculation of what benefits hosted audio and video files could bestow on the discipline (e.g., Fischer 2008, Waterston 2009), interest and involvement in expanding the project waned. In 2005, Skomal had already signaled the business model of AnthroSource was not profitable as once imagined. While

the model sought additional revenue from library budgets to supplement membership dues, access to the AAA's published materials was one of the primary motivations for membership, and when libraries began paying for access, individual membership dues slowed. This in turn caused the AAA to elaborate available member services.²⁷ Additionally, since AnthroSource provided access to all AAA publications, section membership (previously necessary from section-specific publications) also declined.²⁸ As neither the revenue from member subscriptions (on the decline since the late eighties), nor the library subscriptions proved to be enough, both were seen to undercut the other.

In September 2006, AAA President Alan Goodman published an announcement and a plea. In order to address criticism that AnthroSource's model was in opposition to open access, Goodman announced that the AAA board had moved to provide AnthroSource to tribal colleges and universities in the US, Canadian First Nation and Arctic colleges, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the US, and a series of institutions in "less developed countries" for free.²⁹ This news foregrounded the fact that far fewer libraries had opted in as subscribers to AnthroSource than was anticipated: "As of June [of 2006], less than 22% of graduate degree-granting institutions had a paid subscription to AnthroSource and, even more shocking, less than 3% of undergraduate institutions have joined" (Goodman 2006: 63). Goodman followed with a

²⁷ "AAA is also considering the development of additional member services such as discussion forums, author services, and repository functions for use in conjunction with AnthroSource. (Skomal 2005: 4)

²⁸ This was foreseen in the early planning stages of AnthroSource as evidenced by notes in the Annual Report of the Committee on Scientific Communication in 2003, but evidently not addressed (Bowen 2004: 4).

²⁹ "Less developed countries" was later defined as countries determined by the World Bank to fall in Tier 1 or 2 (low or lower-middle income countries).

plea that, in order to support this philanthropic effort of providing free access to institutions determined to be in need, the readers of *Anthropology News* (an audience defined, by and large, by being dues paying members of the AAA) to reach out to their libraries to ensure that they become subscribers in short order. This plea made clear what had only been implied by the AnthroSource revenue model - that the AAA was expecting subscriptions both from individuals and from the institutions that employed them, double-dipping from a limited pool of prospective subscribers. Following such a statement from the Association's president, the recent search for a new funding partner seemed fated to result in a for-profit partnership.

A new partnership with Wiley-Blackwell

Following a brief, and not entirely transparent call for bids,³⁰ the resulting arrangement with Wiley-Blackwell would last for five years, including not only the publication and distribution of twenty-two of the AAA's journals, but also the management of AnthroSource. The agreement also concretized the portfolio principle that was put forth by the CFPEP, pooling the cost and revenue of all twenty-two publications (Ferguson, Liebow, Schmid 2010: 23). In further support of the portfolio principle, revenue allocated to each publication's section within the Association was not tied to their profit, allowing each section enough funds to operate without leaning on their publication to be profit-driven. However, while the AAA structured the agreement as much as they could to limit the profit-seeking imperative from affecting how each section managed their journal, on

³⁰ Most AAA members were only made aware of the bid process after Wiley-Blackwell had been selected and the partnership was announced by Goodman and Davis in *Anthropology News* (2007: 67).

the whole the logic of the arrangement with Wiley-Blackwell was structured on using the profit-seeking model to lift the AAA further from the red.³¹ The arrangement not only assumed Wiley's profit-seeking motive would benefit the AAA, but, despite the AAA's resistance, further tied the for-profit model to the AAA's structure.

In Goodman's annual presidential review of 2007, he again cited the lack of library adoption of Anthrosource, dismissed the society's relationship with the University of California Press (UCP) as "more of a contractual relationship than a partnership," and frames the new arrangement with Wiley-Blackwell as a pragmatic necessity (Goodman 2008: 21). Later comments from AAA leadership clarified that the agreement was predicated primarily on the hope that Wiley-Blackwell's elaborate distribution services could surface more subscribing individuals and institutions than either the AAA or UCP were able to surface. While the arrangement with UCP was later described as a "fee-for-service agreement" (Merry and Liebow 2008: 19), the new arrangement with Wiley-Blackwell as a "partnership" tying both partners into sharing risk and reward. Portions of the agreement with Wiley-Blackwell also served to respond to calls for open access. In 2010, the Executive Board agreed to "un-gate" access to issues of *American Anthropologist* published before 1975, in effect introducing a 35-year embargo on free access to the flagship journal of the discipline. While conciliatory, it was a small gesture that served to forestall further discussion of open access.

³¹ "Under the new profit-sharing agreement, Wiley-Blackwell will manage both revenues and expenditures for the association's publications program and share some of the risk and reward associated with it. Excess revenues over expenditures will be shared annually on a 60% (AAA)/40% (W-B) basis. The agreement provides for a guaranteed minimum income to AAA over each of the next five years" (Davis and Goodman 2007: 67).

In early 2008, another *Anthropology News* “In Focus” section compiled commentary on the new publishing agreement with Wiley-Blackwell, including pieces by Michelle Cefkin, previously of the AnthroSource Steering Committee and a current member of the CFPEP. As Cefkin points out, the logic behind these models was that these publications were no longer a service of the AAA, but the production of a commodity that could financially support the association (Cefkin 2008: 8-9). Comparatively, a service model, focused on subsidizing the publication and dissemination of scholarship might lend itself more easily to the calls for open access. In the same section, Kelty writes, “the publication issue and the governance and sustainability issues facing AAA are one and the same” and that membership fees should be decoupled from the publishing service of the AAA. Kelty’s assertion that it was not only the failing publishing model that warranted an overhaul meant that membership, and the relationship between individual anthropologists and their association, must be justified in ways other than access to published materials (Kelty 2008a: 9).

By this point the conversation on open access seemed to be resolutely drowned out by discussion of the AAA’s finances - at least within AAA circuits. In the 2008 issues of *Anthropology News* there were two items further explaining the financial model of the AAA and justifying the centrality of the publication revenue to that model. In September, Davis followed up with yet another appeal to pragmatism (2008) - this time citing his role in a National Humanities Alliance (NHA) Task Force on Open Access and Scholarly Communication, which had, for the previous 18 months, assessed the potential for open access models piloted in the STEM sphere for the humanities. This project was then further supported by the Mellon Foundation which awarded \$50,000 for the preliminary

research generated among the AAA and eight other scholarly societies to result in a formal report. When later publicized in 2009 (and formalized in a journal article in 2010), this report provided numbers to Davis' pattern of assertions that open access was only feasible for the STEM fields, and could not adapt to the realities of publishing in the social sciences and humanities (Waltham 2010). Citing little to no positive precedent, or "experimentation" in the humanities publishing programs, the report stated succinctly:

"Using actual business information from their association publishers for each of the years 2005, 2006, and 2007, these findings clarify that for this sample of journals, an OA business model based only on revenue from the research article author or producer would not be sufficient to sustain these journals" (Waltham 2010: 257).

Or, as Bill Davis had put it, "the worst fears of scholarly society publishers that free, open access availability of journal content will pull the rug out from under the financial structure of their publishing programs" (Davis 2008: 55). For Davis, and others who thought the feasibility of open access could only be tested in comparison to traditional publishing models, this was the resolute, quantifiable proof that open access could not provide a suitable business model to the AAA.

However, it worth noting that the AnthroSource/for-profit partnership model had not fared well in its first couple years either. Citing the lack of library subscriptions by 2009, the AAA further elaborated the subscription model, hoping to incentivize some level of subscription for libraries (as well as incentivizing subscription to Wiley-Blackwell content).

"The Executive Board approved a plan that, beginning in 2009, will offer library subscribers and consortia a choice of individual titles, the whole "bundle" of AnthroSource publications, or a Wiley-Blackwell collection (which include our titles). We approved a 7% increase in the subscription price of individual titles, and we will offer AnthroSource at a 20% discount from the sum of the list prices of the journals included." (Merry and Liebow 2008: 19)

From Merry and Liebow's item it was clear that Wiley-Blackwell's interest had been effectively entangled - not only were the marginal profits generated through voluntary peer review and editorships contributing to a gross profit margin of 67.9% for Wiley-Blackwell's 2008 fiscal year, but the AAA was actively shaping their subscription plan to loop in the for-profit publisher's package - conveniently bundling both the content and interest of both parties.

In 2009, Oona Schmid, the AAA's new Director of Publications, wrote an interesting invitation to further dialogue about the AAA's publishing model, simultaneously dismissing interest in open access as "some external forces urge the Association to embrace a free access model" (Schmid 2009: 19). While free access is not open access, her comment did serve to emphasize how open access was intentionally equated with the assumption of zero subscription revenue, eschewing all other propositions of the open access movement. Schmid spent the rest of the article articulating a series of dubious strawman models that would hypothetically be proposed: soliciting advertising, relying on grants and donations, increasing member subscriptions, and the oft-recurring "author-pays" model. Piggybacking on the NHA report, Schmid again cited an outlandish \$9,994 author subsidy needed per article (Schmid 2009: 19, citing Waltham 2009), though she then clarified with numbers tailored to the AAA. Each of the six AAA journals used as examples had a calculated cost between \$4,865.40 and \$6,960.10 per article,³² which was an unimaginable burden to the average anthropologist

³² It also bears mention that these numbers are specific to the journal because they are intended to counterbalance the revenue generated from the subscriptions of these journals. Schmid had doubtlessly chosen these top revenue-generating journals as examples since their projected APC would be the highest.

wanting to publish in their discipline's flagship journal (Schmid 2009: 20).

After roundly dismissing the feasibility of an open access model, Schmid's piece did state that the Wiley-Blackwell arrangement had met the AAA's expectation for increased distribution, doubling the circulation of journals by 2009 (Schmid 2009: 20).

Parallel conversations, in a more hospitable environment

While the lion's share of open access conversations in anthropology in the early aughts seemed to concern the AAA's publication program as a whole, the same years saw a proliferation of scholarly blogs - both personal and group-run. Following the first contract with Wiley-Blackwell, it was clear that the AAA would not be at the vanguard of reimagining a digitized model premised on open access. Conversations regarding open access in *Anthropology News* slowed as more lively debates began to cohere in the growing ecosystem of scholarly blogs. In the early aughts, a small number of recurring names founded a series of blogs and online forums to discuss anthropology - both in terms of sharing work and in terms of discussing how the profession ought to engage with the newly available capacities of digital communication. Golub, then an adjunct professor at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, was at the nexus of a series of such projects. *Savage Minds*³³ began as a collaborative project by Golub, Kelty, Friedman, and Dustin Wax in 2005. With a significant overlap in collaborators, Open Access

This kind of calculation was not in keeping with the portfolio principle, which would have calculated a single APC for any AAA publication.

³³ Now Anthrodendum (<https://anthrodendum.org/>), the original site is still up and running as an archive of earlier content (<https://savigeminds.org/>).

Anthropology³⁴ was the project of Golub, Kelty, Friedman, Eric Kansa, Jason Baird Jackson, Wade Kotter, and Kambiz Kamrani in 2006.

In addition to these collaborative projects, nearly everyone involved had their own personal blog. Friedman had been blogging since 2001 at his personal blog, Keywords.³⁵ Kansa ran his own blog, Digging Digitally³⁶ as part of the Digital Data Interest Group of the Society of Applied Anthropologists. Jackson had recently moved his own blog from Google Pages in 2007, later called Shreds and Patches.³⁷ Kamrani founded Four Stone Hearth³⁸ in 2006, which sought to engage all four of the traditionally recognized subdisciplines in anthropology through convening short pieces by anthropologists with varied specialties periodically in a “blog carnival.” There were also significant blogs outside of this network (or perhaps inside the same network and connected in other ways) such as: Maximilian Forte’s Open Anthropology,³⁹ started in 2007 (later renamed Zero Anthropology), John Postill’s Culture Matters⁴⁰ in 2006, Kevin Karpiak’s Anthropoliteia⁴¹ in 2009, and Somatosphere,⁴² which was founded by Eugene Raikhel in 2008 and soon became a more collaborative project.

These blogs - run on Google Pages or WordPress, or any one of the other website building tools that made blogging accessible in the early aughts - provided the building blocks for a growing number of conversations online, and the beginning of an ecosystem

³⁴ Accessible through the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine: <http://blog.openaccessanthropology.org/>

³⁵ <http://keywords.oxus.net/>

³⁶ <https://alexandriaarchive.org/blog/>

³⁷ <https://jasonbairdjackson.com/>

³⁸ Accessible through the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine: <http://www.fourstonehearth.net/>

³⁹ <http://openanthropology.org/>

⁴⁰ <https://culturematters.wordpress.com/>

⁴¹ <https://anthropoliteia.net/>

⁴² <http://somatosphere.net/>

of conversations outside of the Association's publication. *Savage Minds* in particular proved to be a locus for many conversations about open access. In the later aughts, *Savage Minds* introduced something particular into anthropological conversations. While most anthropological debate typically moved slowly through journal articles or journal moderated forums, *Savage Minds* became a recognized locus for a more responsive back-and-forth, enabled by its online presence. As later described by its founders:

“At its best, the medium combines the individual eloquence of a well constructed op-ed piece and the immediacy and dynamism of a mailing-list conversation. They are not a replacement for journals or conferences, but they do provide a healthy dose of hotel lobby and water cooler conversation—something most anthropologists crave in the 11 months between professional meetings [...] a network gives blog contributors and readers a strong sense of participating in an ongoing, reflective and organized public sphere. Like all public spheres, it is messy, and the welter of cross-citation and dialogue grows quickly” (Friedman, Golub, Kelty 2008: 22).

With this new form of engagement, *Savage Minds* brought recognition to new forms of scholarship proliferating online, and by 2006, *Savage Minds* was listed as one of *Nature's* top 20 science blogs. The success of *Savage Minds* was not only due to the new digital capacities of online blogs, but also due to the growing interest in co-creating a mode of sociality for scholars online.

By the late aughts this new public sphere was growing, but still had clear material limitations. These blogs were, by nature, available online “free,” yet considering who had ready access to a personal computer with a connection to the internet still greatly narrows the pool of who was online visiting and engaging in these online forums. It brings to mind anthropologist Robert Kemper's comments on the early days of online engagement with bulletin board systems:

“In 1982, to aid my work as program chair of the 1983 International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, I installed in my home office an ADDS R-100 CRT terminal, a 1200 baud Racal-Vadic modem and a Racal-Vadic Dataphone. A three month lease cost me \$300.00. In that same year, I acquired a Diablo 630 printer for \$2,098.95, and I spent \$3,529.32 to acquire an Apple II+ microcomputer with two 5-1/4” disk drives, a monochrome 12” monitor, and an extra 16 kilobytes of memory—to bring the total system memory up to the maximum of 64 KB. At the end of that year, I bought a Micromodem II 1200 baud modem for \$337.31.” (Kemper 2008: 7)

While by the mid-aughts the digital revolution had made personal computers and internet connections far more accessible, there was necessarily a material limitation on who was able to access this relatively insular online community. In 2008, *Savage Minds* boasted over 1,000 subscribers (Friedman, Golub, Kelty 2008), but in line with Pew research (Perrin and Duggan 2015), internet access (not to mention a doctorate in anthropology) in the aughts were strongly correlated with race and education level. This community of blogs had doubtlessly provided an infrastructure for new, ungated conversations in anthropology, but the internet alone could not provide the means to build a new public sphere, not even one just expansive enough for all anthropologists.

As previously discussed in the literature review, every new iteration of an open access project appealed to the amorphous principles of “open” and “access” in their own way. It is also fair to say that there is still no singular, utopian version of open access that completely levels all obstacles to access - material, infrastructural, or otherwise - nor does it seem reasonable to assume one is feasible. Still, it is instructive to consider the changing shape of access in these different contexts. For the AAA, focusing on access meant providing access to publications that had lived primarily in print, inaccessible in terms of ease of access for an increasingly digital research space. *AnthroSource* was intentionally a project built around enabling access, yet there was no need to project

access further than dues paying members. For the open access advocates among these blogs, focusing on access meant broadening access to more readers, opening up the conversation itself to their participation and commentary. Open access advocates had certainly, repeatedly raised concerns about enabling access to AAA publications beyond the dues-paying members, but the envisioned “public” of the online digital realm was still a far cry from “everyone.” Outside of the AAA, the imagined community of readers to which scholarly blogs and networks were appealing seemed to fling wide the gates for participation and engagement, but the material realities of internet access undercut these claims to a new public sphere. Available, for free, online became the simplest operating definition for open access by the late aughts, though it was far from utopian itself. At this point, both imagined audiences were, by and large, white males who already had both their PhDs and an affiliation to a university in hand.

Despite these limitations, the proposal for open access in anthropology was always an open-ended proposition to realign the priorities of the group at hand, whether that be the AAA or anthropologists more broadly defined. Open access wouldn't be so easily “accomplished” as such, but it could have provided a roadmap to ensure that equitable access would be the rule of thumb against which each publication or communication channel was assessed. By the late aughts, it was fairly clear that the hope of establishing an open access principle within the context of the AAA's corpus of publications and readership no longer had much legs. For the small group of anthropologists (Kelty, Golub, and others) who had come together around this goal, the task was then to articulate what open access could mean for the anthropological community in the coming years, and how to enable those hopes.

Finding consensus outside of the AAA

In 2008, several anthropologists, “whose research and experience have given them special insight into recent changes in the ways scholarship is produced and shared” collaboratively wrote an article for *Cultural Anthropology* articulating the many dimensions of what open access could mean for a scholarly community. The article, “Anthropology in and of Circulation,”⁴³ was formatted as an informal conversation among colleagues. Far from the myopic “free access” narrative that provided the necessary foil for the AAA’s pragmatic rebukes of open access, this conversation demonstrated a broader consideration of open access - one that directly engaged with the proposed ethical commitments of a scholarly society to its members, and found value in openness itself to improve the work of anthropology methodologically. Importantly, this conversation foreshadowed the many intersecting priorities and disagreements that would constitute the open access community through the late aughts and for years to come. In particular, the conversation highlighted the tension between establishing new standards for open access publications and allowing room for experimentation; by the end of the conversation, consensus seemed to settle on resisting homogenization and the pursuit of one standard model: “there are a number of ways we can think about this continuum of access and distribution without being locked into one model” (Kelty, Fischer, et al. 2008: 572).

⁴³ The title of the article was in reference to George E. Marcus’ earlier article “Ethnography in/of the World System” (1995) - an influential article which will be discussed later as an important precursor to these conversations.

Pulling in reference to the shadow library⁴⁴ thrill of the later aughts, the group proposes (perhaps less than half jokingly) a shadow AnthroSource realizing all the far flung hopes of a “one-stop shop” for socializing, theorizing, and professionalizing the discipline, but through an ecosystem model that would enable context-driven decision making and facilitate the kind of experimentation that would bring more sustainable models to the fore. In the context of a proliferation of open projects and pursuits, there seemed to be a more nuanced and context-specific engagement with open access, following correctives like Christen’s cautions about buying into the “‘information wants to be free’ paradigm—one that fetishizes ‘access’ as an all or nothing proposition” (Kelty, Fischer, et al. 2008: 564).⁴⁵ Largely because of the work of these individuals, by 2008 there was already a teeming ecosystem of scholarly blogs and online networks demonstrating the interest in a more active online anthropological community. But in conjunction with the toolbox of ideas and concepts from the open source, free software, and open access movements, this ecosystem had expanded beyond blogs to open access journals, open data initiatives, and more.

A new ecosystem in the shadow of the AAA

In 1987, eminent Swedish anthropologist, Ulf Hannerz had composed a review of what he referred to as the “samizdat” of anthropological knowledge, or alternatively,

⁴⁴ A shadow library exists “in the shadow” of large, institutional libraries, newly enabled by the online digital world and, by and large, cobbled together by crowdsourced piracy (Liang 2012).

⁴⁵ Christen later published an article, “Does Information Really Want to be Free? Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Question of Openness” that further grounded her observations in connection with the Mukurtu Archive (2012).

anthropology's "other press." In highlighting the contribution of relatively small or narrowly-focused publications (typically those published within a university's anthropology department), Hannerz demonstrated that there had always been a teeming ecosystem of fairly esoteric publications that sustained a variety of conversations outside of the strong, centralized core of the discipline. In many ways, the degree to which the AAA centralized and curated "relevant" conversations in its flagship journals encouraged it. However, Hannerz did note that these smaller publications measured themselves according to the standards of the more established and prestigious publications, and missed opportunities to make their own unique mark:

"The major journals of anthropology, like most academic journals, tend to have very standardized types of contents; usually only articles reporting on theoretical or empirical research results, book reviews, and scientific correspondence. Is the 'other press' any different? In large part, we can see, it is not. This is only to be expected, insofar as it plays the part of socializing students into professionalism. The message here is that writing and publishing is serious business, something that has to conform to definite standards. Yet there are exceptions, and one could wish that the little journals would lend themselves more to a play with ideas and genres." (Hannerz 1987: 218)

In the late aughts, a new ecosystem of open projects, uniquely encouraged to experiment on a new digital terrain, demonstrated what "play" might mean for a new cohort of anthropology publications and projects.

The first open access journal "proper"⁴⁶ surfaced in 2007. Notably, it had an interview with George E. Marcus, an eminent anthropologist whose influence will be observed in later attempts to trace a prehistory of open access (the second part of analysis in this paper), though unfortunately its first issue was also its last. The first issue of

⁴⁶ I'm defining this only for the sake of pointing out it was the first publication in the form of a scholarly journal to call itself open access rather than be de facto accessible by virtue of being online.

Radical Anthropology also appeared in the same year, but without any direct claims to open access, so much as just being available online for free (with a small cost for a mailed print copy). When the AAA journal *Museum Anthropology* could not itself go open access, Jason Baird Jackson, its editor, oversaw the establishment of its online, open access parallel *Museum Anthropology Review*, established by the Mathers Museum of World Cultures in 2006. The use of open infrastructure also enabled a series of projects, beginning in 2007 including Open Context, an open data project for archaeology run by Eric Kansa (who had previously been active in *Savage Minds* and the anthropology blog community) and the Mukurtu Archive in Australia, which was the collaboration of two anthropologists, Kim Christen (a coauthor of the 2008 collaborative article) and Craig Dietrich, with Warumungu community members.

New open projects began snowballing until, as the coauthors of the collaborative article in 2008 (Kelty, Fischer, et al. 2008) noted, there was a discernible ecosystem of open projects, all piecemeal realizing the far-ranging hopes for AnthroSource. Though it wasn't centrally structured, or supported, a growing mass of open projects cohered around new digital possibilities for engagement with both the subject and form of the field. But as these interrelated projects demonstrated what play and experimentation could mean for the broader ecosystem of anthropology publications, they also struggled with a clear lack of prestige and legitimacy that older publications, particularly tied to the AAA and other legacy institutions, had in spades. Outside the centralized network of established anthropology journals, these projects stayed on the periphery.

A journal apart, HAU's bid for establishing legitimacy

Amidst a growing community of open projects, there was one journal intent on standing apart. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* was launched in 2011 with lofty aspirations to swiftly establish itself as both a “general-scope” and “high-end” journal - one who would go toe to toe with the AAA's flagship journals (as well as those deemed competitive across the pond, like the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*). The primary impetus of the journal as an intellectual project was, as founding editors Giovanni da Col and David Graeber articulated in their first editorial note, “to revive the theoretical potential of all ethnographic insight, wherever it is brought to bear, to bring it back to its leading role in generating new knowledge” (2011: vii). This intellectual project was clearly grounded in both the intellectual tradition, and prestige, of the Chicago and Cambridge anthropology departments. The “partial list of ancestors and affines” listed in the acknowledgements is articulated as an intellectual lineage, including several giants (living and passed) of the field primarily in the same Chicago and Cambridge circles.

HAU's open access model followed the oft-repeated call that libraries should pay to publish research, not to purchase access, that was later formalized in the subscribe-to-open models first reflected (in anthropology at least) in conversations had among John Willinsky, Giovanni da Col and Alberto Corsín Jiménez. Rather than restricting access as a means to generate revenue, the value (and therefore the source) of revenue needed to be realigned with where the added value was actually created - in the scholarly engagement of editing and peer review. HAU organized its increasing number of supporting departments and libraries in its own Network of Ethnographic Theory (HAU-N.E.T.).

This collection of institutions supporting HAU, in addition to a very intimidating editorial board, served to supplement HAU's relatively short history with the strength of institutional support - both in funding and in prestige.

HAU's adaptation of open access was interesting in a few ways. The intellectual project of the journal and its book series was intertwined with the push to broaden the relevance of anthropology: "to return anthropology to its original and distinctive conceptual wealth—to critical concepts we bring from the field, whether exotic or urban—and thereby, to return ethnography not only to the forefront of theoretical developments in the discipline, but by doing so, making anthropology itself relevant again far beyond its own borders" (da Col and Graeber 2011: viii). HAU focused on the translation of French, Italian, and other European scholars across the humanities (particularly linguistics and philosophy) to revitalize the anthropological canon for the benefit of English-only readers. In addition to these translations, both in monograph and its journal, HAU would consistently publish long lectures and other public domain texts, bringing anthropological forefathers back into circulation and conversation.

While the new digital capacities of the past twenty years had been considered a valuable opportunity by most in the open access space, HAU's editors cautioned against the quick and easy accumulation of PDFs, and thumbed their nose at accessible writing (or as they called it, "intellectual accessibility"). In sum, as the new editors put it:

"Organizationally, HAU's was conceived out of feeling that the discipline was suffering the domination of commercial publishing and that the pursuit of human knowledge was being severely damaged by the extraction of shamelessly priced subscriptions in a time when most scholars are operating under severe financial constraints. Intellectually, it developed out of a sense of frustration with the lack of original insights arising from the discipline, and the resulting sense that anthropology was, at least in terms of its relation to other fields of scholarship, committing a kind of intellectual suicide." (da Col and Graeber 2011: ix)

Here a diatribe against the commercialization of scholarly communication is evident, though not necessarily for the same reasons that united the growing community of open access publications. That final line did serve to stir some contention. While da Col and Graeber bemoaned the lack of status and resented that too often the Chicagoan and Cambridge canon had been consigned to the Eurocentric, imperialist dustbin, they didn't seek company of the upstart open access blogs of the previous decade, but instead reached further back into the history of the discipline to publications like *L'Homme* (the storied journal of French structuralism) as peers. The first editorial note was quite reductionist and dismissive⁴⁷ but the gamble on legitimacy did pay off. In the subsequent years HAU did carve out a significant audience and succeeded in leaving a mark on the discipline as a whole.

The periphery working toward the core

There were a few ways that the new ecosystem of open access projects established connections with the centralized, prestigious journals - the most evident being the growing support for open access among AAA journal editors. Though the AAA itself was not predisposed to entertain further speculation about open access, its journal editors began to make their opinions clear through editorial notes, bridging the gap between the scholarly blogs and the discipline's flagship publications. In 2010, both *Cultural*

⁴⁷ The coldest indictment of contemporary anthropological dialogue perhaps being, "The fact that it usually reduces academics to the embarrassing situation of considering themselves hip for recycling French theorists from the period of roughly 1968 to 1983, in fact, exactly the period of what we now call 'Classic Rock' (in other words, for reading the intellectual equivalents of Fleetwood Mac and Led Zeppelin) seems to go almost completely unnoticed" (da Col and Graeber 2011: xii).

Anthropology (CA) and *American Anthropologist (AA)*, two of the four largest anthropology journals, were steered by pro-open access editors. As Tom Boellstorff pointed out in his reflection on five years at the editor of *AA*, the work of editorship is often overlooked (2012b: 567), and especially during the late aughts, editing an AAA journal required an increasing amount of awareness of the academic publishing ecosystem as a whole - editors gained a significant amount of new working knowledge and skills of the publishing landscape, and, for some, this proved to move them closer into the open access camp.

In 2010 Boellstorff, along with Barbara Rose Johnston (whom he appointed as the inaugural public anthropology editor) envisioned an annual review of public anthropology as a means to recognize and engage public anthropology projects, such as the blogs, as contributions to the discipline. Boellstorff cited this annual review as one of two programmatic decisions he made, in addition to his conscientious decision to maintain the *AA* as a generalist journal, occupying a specific position as a flagship journal of the discipline. However, it is important to note that Boellstorff's concept of a generalist journal was uniquely interdisciplinary *within* anthropology's four subfields. Instead of encouraging authors to explicitly locate themselves within one of the four subfields and then speak *across* the differences traditionally established among them, he encouraged authors to state their work without such gestures to emphasize difference between the subfields. His intentional emphasis on public anthropology further "destabilized the four-field orthodoxy" of the discipline (2012b: 568). As Boellstorff identified, these were intentional decisions that linked conceptual understandings of the discipline to the manner in which they are called to be part of a community through the

Association and its publications. As he noted, “Journals do not just meet the needs of preexisting scholarly communities; they conjure into being forms of scholarly community (2012b: 568). Through what he referred to as “transnationalizing” anthropology, Boellstorff addressed the increasing prominence of the AAA as the de facto anthropological society for the global anthropological community through small structural changes: not requiring a fee to submit from nonmembers and internationalizing the editorial board. These small structural adjustments proved to be a significant step forward as both *AA* and *CA* continue to orient themselves to a global audience of anthropologists.

As *CA*'s editors from 2005 to 2010, Kim and Mike Fortun had pushed for open access for years - both credited Jason Baird Jackson and Chris Kelty for bringing them into open access advocacy (Fortun and Fortun 2015). The Fortuns' interest was not only in open access, but open access as one dimension of a broader interest in experimental publishing and keeping the journal open to new forms of academic writing, very much in keeping with the journal's founding editor, George E. Marcus' interest in the potential for the digital as a site for experimentation, the Fortuns noted that both *CA*'s “signature” openness and experimentalism informed their editorial decisions (Fortun and Fortun 2015: 365). Under their editorial leadership, as the managing editor Ali Kenner explained: “Cultural Anthropology Online's aim is part pedagogical, part ethnographic, and partly aimed toward a public anthropology. It is designed as a publicly accessible archive of ethnographic materials that helps users engage with the timely and politically important work that anthropologists do” (2014: 272).

Everything that “CA Online” became was only in small part open access. By the time it officially became open access in 2014, its success was rooted not in open access alone, but in experimentation with form and building from blueprints of other successful projects, like the collaboration with Golub to create ShareCA on the model the Mana’o collection at the University of Hawaii (Kenner 2014: 282). After their five-year stint as the coeditors of *CA*, the Fortuns helped establish the Open Folklore project in 2011. Launched between the American Folklore Society and the Indiana - Bloomington Libraries, Open Folklore used open source infrastructure (Drupal and OJS) to store and share primary resource materials for anthropologists, ethnographers, and folklorists, in some ways structured on the promise of data enabling a broader-based analysis than ever possible before. In 2010, Anne Alison and Charlie Piot of Duke’s anthropology department took the helm of *CA*, the section journal of the Society for Cultural Anthropology that had slowly risen to a generalist, flagship status under the leadership of the Fortuns, and was now uniquely positioned as a leading publication.

A second agreement with Wiley-Blackwell (2013-2017)

The years following the first agreement with Wiley-Blackwell demonstrated that, while open access would not be established from the core outward, there was good reason to believe that enough open access projects could, in tandem, create an ecosystem of engaged communities across the discipline, motivated by an increasing core number of anthropologists turned experimental publishers across the many outlets of the discipline. In the context of a “shadow” ecosystem, open access as a proposition was far more open

to experimentation and play than it would have been under the weight of financially supporting the AAA.

Cultural Anthropology goes OA

In 2012, the AAA put out a call to sections to have a journal transition to open access for the duration of the 2013-2017 Wiley-Blackwell agreement as a test case.⁴⁸ The Society for Cultural Anthropology duly created a task force on open access to assess its feasibility, and by the first issue in 2014, the President of the Society for Cultural Anthropology announced that *CA* had been named that test case (Weiss 2014). However surprising this turn of events, *CA*'s transition to open access was hard fought, and due largely to sustained effort of its leadership for nearly a decade prior. Under the Fortuns' leadership, *CA* eschewed moving to Wiley's ScholarOne system and instead invested time and resources into an OJS instance with support from the SCA board (Fortun and Fortun 2014: 362). In the next few years, with the assistance of the first managing editor, Ali Kenner, they continued to elaborate culanth.org with multimedia files and new modes of engagement like interviews and podcasts.⁴⁹ In many ways, it was fulfilling hopes that had been articulated for a new "portal" in AnthroSource, but enabled by an open source infrastructure. By 2014, under the editorial leadership of Alison and Piot and the management of Tim Elfenbein, these piecemeal efforts to independence had provided the

⁴⁸ As noted by Tim Elfenbien, the managing editor of *CA* at the time, "it was the Crow report and survey by the Committee on the Future of Print and Electronic Publishing that finally provided the impetus for the AAA to look for a test case" (2014: 289). Raym Crow was a scholarly publishing consultant whose work and influence reappear consistently throughout scholarly publishing in this era.

⁴⁹ Kenner provided an excellent in-depth consideration of the "long-term socio-technical work that made it possible for *CA* to go gold OA" in the special issue of *CA* on open access (Kenner 2014).

basis of an alternative infrastructure that was vital to what became a massive new infrastructure cobbled together between inhouse work and vendors - after all, the transition wasn't only in making *CA* an open access publication, but in making the SCA a publisher (Elfenbein 2014). Notably, this also marked a return to library partnerships - *CA* now relied on Duke Libraries to host their OJS instance and the technical support that went with it.

Open Anthropology, a “public” journal

Allowing *Cultural Anthropology* to go open access was not the only significant concession to open access in the 2013 Wiley-Blackwell agreement. The AAA also negotiated for their first “public” journal. The *Open Anthropology* journal, by all measures, was an interesting proposition. Hosted on the AAA's own website, *Open Anthropology* was a constructed nexus for small amounts of open access materials to be collected on one webpage. As the “first digital-only, public journal of the American Anthropological Association,” it aimed to bring the broader public into conversation around themes that would benefit from the expert knowledge of professional anthropologists. Its editorial board, constituted by one editor representing each of the AAA's participating sections,⁵⁰ provided content according to the proscribed theme, which would be available online for “at least six months.” This selective dive into what had been digitized and hosted on AnthroSource was a different vein of access - one that

⁵⁰ In the context of the *Open Anthropology* journal, these participating sections each functioned as a perspective weighing on the given topic. The participating sections included the American Ethnological Society, the Archaeology Division, the Association for Feminist Anthropology, the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology, the Association of Black Anthropologists, the Central States Anthropological Society, etc.

the AAA was far more amenable to: enabling digital access to publications already published.⁵¹ Much like the logic of embargos, once a certain period had passed for profit to be derived from limited access, it was fair game to “open” to the public. However, despite the two new open ventures under the AAA’s aegis, the Association did not allow the section journal, *Anthropology of Work*, to go open access at the same time, despite the best efforts of its editors.

Two steps forward, one step back

While the 2013 agreement did seem to signal a newfound openness to finding new models for digital publication, the AAA was still working to shore up a business model that would place the burden of balancing the budget on section journals. In November 2013, the AAA Executive Board, following the guidance of the CFPEP, adopted a series of changes to further push toward a “sustainable” publishing program. In announcing these changes, Schmid characterized the past dozen years or so as a transition period from an entirely print publishing program to one that was “fully digital” or “Journals 3.0,” citing technology as the lever that enabled greater speed and efficiency with new software on the horizon that would “expedite” the review and editorial process (Schmid 2014). The central objective of this new blueprint was making digital publication the default with print available upon request (to be operationalized by 2016), but it also required a five year sustainability plan (covering the years of 2016-2020) from each

⁵¹ This model of curating access to thematic content from the archives was later adapted by *deja lu*, a project of the World Anthropological Association, and was a component of HAU’s operationalization of open access as well.

section to be assessed by a new body called the Publishing Oversight Working Group (POWG).

It was in the context of one of these five-year sustainability plans that in 2013 the *Anthropology of Work Review* made its bid, under the leadership of Sarah Lyon, to go open access as a self-published, online open access journal (Brown et al. 2018: 44). In 2014 the journal reiterated its intention and formed a steering committee to begin assessing options, including a potential partnership with a library publisher. However, between 2016 and 2017 the AAA rejected two solid agreements brokered between the Society of the Anthropology of Work (SAW, the section responsible for the journal) and willing library publishers.⁵² Both failed negotiations demonstrated the extent to which the Association's publications were considered a commodity that derived value only through limiting access - as the AWR editors noted, this was "a business model organized around scarcity" and "a desire for absolute control over published content" (Brown et al. 2018: 46-47). By October 2017, the journal was cornered and conceded to another service level agreement with Wiley-Blackwell along with the rest of the AAA's publication program.

Despite the disappointment, the AWR steering committee had made significant inroads in assessing potential partnerships with library publishers and leveraging library support. Marcel LaFlamme, who was both the managing editor of *Cultural Anthropology*

⁵² The first agreement, with OSU Libraries fell through because the AAA would not give up its copyright claims to articles published in the journal, a stance which was irreconcilable with the library publisher's expectations for an open license. The second agreement, with IU Libraries and Indiana University Press would have provided hosting and design services for the journal, in addition to being flexible on a copyright arrangement, however the AAA took issue with IU's requirement that they be able to archive and manage accessible versions of all Anthropology of Work content even if the journal were to move on to another publisher. The AAA couldn't accept any open-ended hosting of content and the deal also fell through (Brown et al. 2018: 44-46).

and a representative on AWR's steering committee, turned his attention to another offshoot of earlier subscribe-to-open conversations among Alberto Corsín Jiménez, John Willinsky, and Giovanni da Col that had germinated HAU: Libreria. Libreria had been established in 2015 as a bundle of anthropology journals (including the *Anthropology of Work*) who sought a new model to enable flipping to open access (Jiménez, Willinsky, et al. 2015). Following the AAA's recalcitrance to engage with library publishers in good faith, Libreria continued a series of projects to investigate potential new models for sustainable open access publication through partnerships (Willinsky 2016; Boyer, LaFlamme, et al. 2018; Pia, et al. 2020).

Formalization and institutionalization of OA

By this time, open access was arguably a fairly formalized proposition. Peter Suber's 2012 introduction to open access had circulated widely and had become a touchstone, establishing terms and solidifying the maturation of the open access movement. This stage signaled a confluence of more institutionalized support, with a series of open access funds becoming available from library budgets, and more individuals engaging with open access as a professional competency. Following quickly on the heels of CA's transition, coeditors Alison and Piot coordinated a half issue to offer a "a panoptic view of the complex, politically-charged terrain of open access (OA) today" pulling the practitioners of open - librarians and CA managing editors - into the conversation alongside "OA

talking head[s]” like Chris Kelty, Jason Baird Jackson, and Ryan Anderson.⁵³

This issue in many ways symbolized that open access was no longer just a matter of sustained speculation, but had in the past decade become a complex technocratic proposition in itself with its own system of actors and tools.⁵⁴ In stark contrast to the first waves of open access sentiment (when going open was just a matter of publication online), the previous ten years had accrued an increasingly intricate set of components equally important to access, most importantly discoverability, persistence, and consistent maintenance. Tim Elfenbein, the new managing editor of *CA*, made clear the massive amount of work that undergirds and supports “making something free,” and encouraged,

“the more wide-eyed open-access advocates to curtail their idealism: not their ethically driven ideals for a more equitable scholarly communication system, but the notion that publishing trades in ideas instead of in documents, data, and the infrastructure through which they travel.” (2014: 296)

Anderson and Jackson’s contribution was a “primer,” illustrative the fact that by this point, open access advocates spent a significant amount of time in the consistent reiteration of the difference between green and gold models, what an institutional repository is, how to articulate the many different forms of preprint, etc. While this “primer” was the majority of their contribution, Jackson also articulated the new realities of open access much the same way as I did in framing this paper: open access was now a model that can be co-opted. Jackson noted that, “while people like me tend to talk about OA as a means toward a dramatic transformation of scholarly communication [...]

⁵³ Ryan Anderson and Matt Thompson had conducted a series of interviews on open access for *Savage Minds*, solidifying a group of not only anthropologists interested in open access, but anthropologists turned open access practitioners.

⁵⁴ Mind the Gap compilation does justice to the sheer number of interrelated tools and platforms that now populate the OA space - <https://mindthegap.pubpub.org/>

commercial publishers increasingly describe OA as just another business model” (2014: 238).⁵⁵ By 2014, the author pays models had been integrated into for-profit publishers’ wheelhouse with exorbitant APCs that further contributed to their net profits, now consistently around 30% annually.

This new dynamic did not necessarily signal a disillusionment with open access, but rather an acknowledgement that the more formalized prescription of what open access publication had become was less of a value proposition and more of a best practice that had clear, but limited, value.⁵⁶ As Chris Kelty noted in his contribution to the special issue, open access was now “one of the more conservative forms of experimentation in scholarly communication” (2014: 207). The same sentiment was echoed by the three new collaborating editors at *CA* in their introductory note: “We feel that the time for a new professional standard of open-access publishing has arrived, and we aspire to prototype, in partnership with allied open access projects and advocates, a model for sustainable peer-reviewed open access that can be scaled up to the level of the discipline. Still, we recognize that open access is no utopia. It will involve retrofits and reskilling, more work, and even sacrifice” (Boyer, Faubion, Howe 2015: 4).

Open access may never have been a utopia, but in the early aughts it was a way to signal interest in utopia - of reprioritizing and drawing boundaries in a publishing ecosystem that was quickly being overrun by the vertical integration of for-profit companies whose values did not align with the scholars they profited from. This much

⁵⁵ Jackson also noted “I want to stress that convergence in practices is very different from convergence in goals [...] Open access practices can contribute to a range of goals, even when many of those aspirations are not recognized, or are even actively discounted, by one or another group of advocates” (2014: 238).

⁵⁶ Cf. Kelty 2014: 206; Jackson and Anderson 2014: 238.

more expansive conversation would continue, but not necessarily with open access as the sole solution.

The third agreement with Wiley-Blackwell

In November of 2017, the outgoing AAA president, Alisse Waterston announced the terms of the latest agreement with Wiley-Blackwell, which would again claim to protect the portfolio principle (despite the implementation of five-year sustainability plans) and the continuation of *Open Anthropology* as a public journal. She also noted that the rebranded CFPEP, now the Committee on Publishing Futures, would be focused on assessing the potential of a discipline-specific repository (Waterston 2017). Yet again, the proposition of a resource for members was open for brief commentary before becoming yet another dimension of the AAA's alignment with the many services Wiley-Blackwell provides in an increasingly monopolized landscape.

Nearly twenty years since these conversations germinated in the closed forums of the AAA's *Anthropology News*, little had changed in terms of the AAA's decisions, but outside there had been a growing, shifting community of open access projects across the discipline. Far from the discrete lists of the early aughts, the number and variety of open access projects has amassed to a degree difficult to quantify or classify. Some of the more promising projects had faltered (most noticeably HAU⁵⁷) and many went through

⁵⁷ As HAU's origins had both an intellectual and organizational dimension, so too did its downfall. Though frequently conflated, its very public disintegration was due largely to its rampant mismanagement, not any failure of its open access model. While HAU's transition to a subscription journal, managed by the University of Chicago Press in 2018 disappointed many who had previously celebrated HAU, the conversation sparked by both the intimations of scandal and the end of its OA model prompted many necessary conversations. Rather than providing a means of leveling access and participation scholarship, HAU in many ways reestablished hierarchies that had haunted the discipline since its inception, privileging

significant changes. But for some of the biggest open access publications, open access was only a starting point. For *Cultural Anthropology*, experimentation in form meant not only PDFs, but decades of new formats: interactive PDFs (unique citation linking), multimedia files, podcasts, a dispersed conference etc., all culminating in something not unlike what was first envisioned for AnthroSource. It is difficult to see how these various projects trace their inspiration back to the serials crisis, or even to the digital revolution that enabled all this far flung imagination of what the internet could do. I would argue that the ideas that motivated these projects have deeper roots in anthropology as a discipline - after all, it is not only the technological capacity that provides the principles that structure these motivations, but the context in which they were generated. For the remainder of the paper, I'll draw upon some of the projects previously mentioned in the history of open access "proper" I outlined between 2004 and 2020, as a starting point to begin to trace back to projects, individuals, and ideas that could be read as precursors to the ecosystem of open access projects that now populate anthropology.

II. Tracing backward

A first step in discerning predecessors to these projects would be to add nuance to what I had previously glossed as a fairly unified cohort of anthropologists interested in furthering open access in the early aughts. In the projects that germinated between the

white American and European perspectives and reinforcing binaries of who does the analysis and who gets analyzed. HAU operationalized open access as a means to provide access to primarily white, male, European scholars in translation as a "gift" to the discipline, which is quite a clear demonstration of Florence Piron's assessment of open access used as a tool to reproduce colonial hierarchies (2017).

late aughts and 2015, there were already tensions among the different articulations of open access that later developed to differences discernible through the projects they had formed.⁵⁸ While these differences are largely obscured by the increasingly homogenized standard format for open access publication, picking up on these differences provides the bit of leverage needed to determine what motivations had preceded these diverse projects.

In differentiating among these different antecedents, it is very easy to see why one would see clear divisions according to where anthropologists were educated or taught. The pedagogical relationship between a graduate student and their advisor is understandably one of the primary models of reproducing particular forms of knowledge within disciplines. More than that, anthropology has always had more of a fetish with genealogy - a department's name is always invoked to mean many more things than simply where someone got a degree and venerating those who, in a (primarily) patrilineal line, reproduced their ideas through their students. Additionally, there are clear reasons why the infrastructure of publishing feeds into and reinforces a genealogical structure.

⁵⁸ Nowhere have I found a clearer articulation of this division than Alex Golub's contribution to a forum on open access in HAU, worth quoting at length:

"We can see an emerging (and friendly!) divide in anthropology between students of the Rice Circle (Faubion and Marcus 2009) such as Chris Kely and more orthodox anthropologists such as [Daniel] Miller and myself. For the Rice Circle, the Internet represents a space in which to continue the genre blurring experimentation that their mentors George Marcus and Michael Fischer initiated on in the 1980s (Marcus and Fischer 1986, Fortun 2011). For the HAU circle, the Internet represents a place in which (as Marshall Sahlins might say) anthropology can become more itself than it ever was before: a shift of format that allows the realization of our scholarly ideals, not their dissolution." (2012: 399)

Though there's a bit of bias to take into account, Golub indicates a primary division between open access advocates informed by their connection to Rice University and those of the HAU circle (implicitly defined by their connection to Chicago and Cambridge). While I think there is just as much evidence to decouple Cambridge and Chicago and add Berkeley as a fourth node in a potential schematization of open access motivations, Golub's comments do signal that disagreements weren't held only on the level of the mode of publication.

Returning to Hannerz' piece, "It is another aspect of localist tendencies in department-based journals that they often show some concern with the past and contemporary history of the home department itself, and not least with its ancestral figures, remote or recent" (1987: 217). Some, like HAU, would see this as a shorthand for establishing authority and prestige. For others, the academic genealogy is a useful heuristic to simplify how to think of how one's influences cohered. In general, the genealogies of Cambridge, Rice, Berkeley, and Chicago are fairly well intertwined - they are also among the most privileged institutions which fund and enable experimentation in what is otherwise a fairly resource strapped context, so their genealogies are, in many ways, self-constituting.

While I do understand the logic of this kind of genealogical connection standing in for the inheritance and transmission of ways of thinking, I would much rather structure the rest of this paper in terms of thematic threads of how openness was approached before the concept of open was overdetermined. Through these three thematic threads I argue that the precedents for open access are not rooted in tensions in scholarly publication, but in knowledge production that precedes the publication process.

First thread: In/of/around the Rice Circle

The first thread I would like to pick up on might be generalized, as it was by Golub, as the Rice Circle. This series of projects, monographs, and discussions thematically cohere around the consideration how one would articulate openness through a focus on the infrastructure that enables openness as not only a tool, but an active component. This includes consideration of how things are enabled to circulate as compared to how things

actually circulate; how formats constrict what is communicated and how, and how then the form of ethnography must be interrogated and pulled into theory as a constitutive dimension - whether analyzed as a form of writing or form of digital engagement. If openness were approached spatially, determining what infrastructure is needed to allow anthropological work to circulate more broadly and freely, then it is easy to see how this logic would easily expand further than the dissemination of academic journal articles to ethnographic data, to the very function of ethnographic inquiry itself. Rice proved to be a locus for many of the individuals present in the pro forma history of open access in anthropology outlined above, including Chris Kelty, Melissa Cefkin, Marcel LaFlamme in addition to those who will be discussed below.⁵⁹ Michael Fischer, himself a member of the Rice Anthropology department from 1981 to 1992, later highlighted this evident coherence in projects and pursuits as “reading for the Rice mark,” which he characterized as “a recursive series of intellectual conversations and experiments that were notable features of a distinctive Rice anthropology from the 1980s through the early 2000s” (2009: ix).⁶⁰

Open as Collaboration

As previously mentioned, the editorial collective steering *CA* between 2014 and 2018, Dominic Boyer, James Faubion, and Cymene Howe, were collaboratively building

⁵⁹ The anthropology department wasn't the only locus of experimentation with open tools at Rice. In 1999, Richard G. Baraniuk, a professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, founded *Connexions* - a massive open education resource powered by CC licenses. *Connexions* later enabled the re-establishment of Rice University Press as a digital open access press from 2006, though this was short lived as the Press closed again in 2010.

⁶⁰ This comment was part of a foreword Fischer wrote for a volume edited by James Faubion and George E. Marcus discussed later as it included a handful of names that have already recurred several times in this paper.

toward a new mode of editorial work. Open access was only part and parcel of the overall vision for *CA* under their leadership; there was far more interest in new formats and redoubling the efforts of editors that had worked before them to create a capacious and flexible online portal. As they articulated in their editorial introduction, “Circles Not Pyramids,” their collaboration exemplified how openness and transparency about the nature of the labor necessary to sustain a publication (and expansive portal) were pivotal thirty years into the life of the journal. In the same issue, Marcus reflected on the past thirty years of *CA*:

“The embracing of open access as a true innovation in journal availability, along with the kinds of forums and discussions that digital media afford academic journals, can only further this kind of engagement by making visible and creating new receptions and relations that have in fact shaped the research tendencies of anthropology for decades but have been offstage, or at most, in the wings, of the media of scholarly communication.” (Marcus 2015: 9)

Marcus’ intent to “make visible relations” was evident time and again in a series of collaborative undertakings - monographs, journal issues, infrastructural projects - that not only relied on collaboration, but were actively informed by the kinds of inquiry that open collaboration fostered.

Coauthoring, coediting, and editorial collaboration in general was a constitutive method for those in this circle. In 2015, Faubion had co-authored a book with Boyer and Marcus, *Theory Can Be More Than It Used to Be*, that concerned “what kind of object ‘theory’ becomes within the anthropological research process” (Boyer and Marcus 2015: 2). That volume was the later companion to the book Faubion had also collaborated with Marcus on years earlier, *Fieldwork is Not What it Used to Be* (2009), which built from the dissertation work of their graduate students to discuss the many ways that fieldwork had to be re-interrogated as a form in the contemporary context. As Boyer and Marcus

glossed in their introduction to the later volume: “Taken together, *Fieldwork* and *Theory* address how the sacred trinity of anthropological practice—fieldwork, ethnography, and theory—have all changed from the ground up, not least in their relations with each other” (2015: 3).

These projects, both the collaborative monographs and the series of editorial collaborations through *CA*, taken together form a broader series of inquiry through collaboration that can be traced back to two touchstones in the development, and refinement, of the ethnographic method: *Writing Culture*, coedited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus in 1986 and *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, coauthored by Michael J. Fischer and Marcus in the same year. *Writing Culture* was, functionally, an edited collection following a Santa Fe seminar on ethnographic form; however, its impact was far more than that of the average collected volume. Together, these two volumes were a significant moment for anthropology as a discipline. They represented the reflexive turn, drawing upon poststructuralist critique to consider ethnographic writing as a particular form that necessarily entailed consideration of how anthropological knowledge is produced, and especially how anthropological authority is produced.⁶¹

Again, evoking spatial metaphors, Marcus described:

“There are shifts in the forms of scholarly communication or at least in the ecology of the present expansion of digital possibilities and how these are affecting the ethnographic genre of research and writing: the book remains important, of course, to ethnography, but in a different ecology which favors ‘commons’ of various sorts [...] Anthropologists move in circuits, assemblages,

⁶¹ As later described by Marcus in an article cowritten with Kim and Mike Fortun:

“The Writing Cultural Critique tradition in cultural anthropology attends to the implications and limits of form—a poetics and politics of ethnography powered, in large part, by poststructuralist understandings of language developed through new exchanges with literary theorists, semioticians, philosophers, and others in the humanities from the 1980s onward.” (Fortun et al. 2017: 13)

or among relations—as working metaphors for defining the field—and they move situated discourses that they accumulate around with them in unusual configurations.” (2008: 429-432)

Marcus’ ideas about necessary shifts in anthropology were explicitly tied to how that work would then be communicated, and often expressed specifically in terms later now seen inseparable from the open access movement.

Open systems

Kim and Mike Fortun’s projects, previously outlined, also share these antecedents. In 2003, Kim Fortun wrote a review of the impact of *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. The title of her review, as later mirrored in the 2008 collaborative article on open access, was in keeping with Marcus’ oft-cited article, which has already been mentioned in the context of my paper twice, “Ethnography: In/of the World System.” Fortun’s “Ethnography In/Of/As Open Systems,” published nearly twenty years after *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, considered the legacy of the volume in relation to the kinds of ethnography “responsive to currents outside the academy [...] anthropological work open to the dynamism of the world” (2003: 173). This responsiveness had a clear corollary in appealing to “open” through metaphors of circulation and flow, but also sought to assert openness as the source of authority for contemporary ethnography (2003: 177). In terms of later open access differences - it was necessary not only to open outward as to allow others to read, but to open inclusively to encourage participation and critique as formative of the anthropological project itself. While Marcus’ article outlined a means of approaching ethnography as a method of keeping inquiry open, Fortun broadened the impetus to call for anthropology to engage as an open system within

broader open systems - what she then glossed as “an ethic of openness” (2003: 171-172).⁶² In 2003, this comment did not directly serve as an entry point for open access, but years later open access served to be a constitutive function of this ethic, though not its endpoint: “From open-access publishing we have now moved to an effort to make anthropological data itself more open, and more open to collaborative interpretation” (2015: 366, fn1).

Structuring for Open

The Platform for Experimental, Collaborative Ethnography (PECE, pronounced ‘peace’) was initially built to support the Fortuns’ project, The Asthma Files. Constructed from free and open source (Drupal-based) building blocks, the PECE supports multi-sited, cross-scale ethnographic and historical research, focusing not on “open access” as such, but on open data sharing as a means to revitalize ethnography in a new digital terrain. As Fortun noted in an unpublished article, PECE was “a site for exposing, testing and extending ethnographic methods and the pedagogical and political promise of ethnographic modes of inquiry” (np.: 1). But as much as it was a project informed by theoretical consideration of what ethnography was,⁶³ the PECE was also informed by the work of computer engineers; Lindsay Poirier, Dominic DiFranzo, and Marie Joan

⁶² Fortun further elaborated on this “ethic of openness”: “Openness can, then, be considered an ethic for ethnographic work, an ethic particularly attuned to the so-called (post)modern but also in keeping with traditions of experimentalism in the sciences, in the avant-garde, and in anthropology itself” (2003: 188).

⁶³ Fortun listed Barthes and Clifford among others. Later, in an article cowritten by the Fortuns and Marcus, they note: “Digital anthropology needs infrastructure that reflects, enacts, or embodies poststructural theories of language, and postcolonial and feminist understanding of the politics of language” (Fortun et al. 2017: 17).

Kristine Gloriaat (colleagues of the Fortuns at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) contributed the “light structure” design that utilized “frames” rather than strictly defined content structure. As Poirier et al. explained, this light structure served “to prevent the production of blindness from over-classifying and to allow for the emergence of shifts in how spaces were interpreted as more researchers were exposed to them” (2014: 2). This in turn served the platform’s primary role which was to enable different “encounters” by engaging with ethnographic writing and data as a unique form that in itself has discernible effects. This concept of “structuring for open” indicated that openness is not an imperative in form (like freely available PDFs), but instead is a quality enabled by certain design choices. Fortun noted, “in building PECE, we thus needed to structure ethnographic work in order to unstructure it” (np.: 4).

George E. Marcus

George E. Marcus was the chair of the Rice Anthropology Department from 1980 to 2005.⁶⁴ During that time he was at the helm of a number of projects that operationalized his conception of openness and circulation in regards to the production of anthropological knowledge. Of course, foremost on the list is that Marcus was the founding editor of *Cultural Anthropology*. The first issue of *CA* arrived in 1986 as a new quarterly periodical of the new section within the AAA - the Society for Cultural Anthropology.

⁶⁴ In 2006, when Marcus left Rice for Irvine, he established the Center for Ethnography. One of the primary contributions of the Center’s focus was on that of the “para-site,” which asserted that academic space that is as much a part of what is subsumed into fieldwork as the fieldsite is: “It creates the space outside conventional notions of the field in fieldwork to enact and further certain relations of research essential to the intellectual or conceptual work that goes on inside such projects” (2010: 30).

Like any section periodical, its aim was to build membership around a coherent set of continuing conversations, in order to structure to a newly articulated community of anthropologists.⁶⁵ Marcus' description of the journal's founding - as an intentionally disciplinary project, engaged in critique of the discipline's traditions and methods - was swimming a bit upstream at a moment when most disciplinary walls were fracturing for sake of interdisciplinary projects. While his primary interest was enabling a forum for specifically internal critique, his secondary concern was how "anthropological knowledge [...] might be developed as a mode of cultural and social criticism" and finally to assert the relevance of cultural anthropology's methods to other interdisciplinary efforts in the US academy (Marcus 1991: 124). As Fischer later noted, "*Cultural Anthropology*, under Marcus's inaugural editorship, also attempted to reach out to contributors in fields other than anthropology in order to enrich the discussions in both directions. It signaled its ambitions physically in the 'little journal' format of uncut edges and rag-textured covers" (2009: xii).

Marcus' attention to the print form of the journal, one that engaged readers with a static form that encouraged paging through, if not directly reading linearly, would also be reflected in his book series with the University of Chicago Press, Late Editions. The series resulted in eight collections published annually and appeared to be somewhere between a thematic periodical and an edited collection. Further, Marcus' attention to how

⁶⁵ As Marcus himself noted: "The formation of this subsociety was a part of a general trend of fragmentation into specialized groups within the AAA during the 1970s and 1980s. The founders of the SCA were clearly concerned about the absence of a coherent vision in contemporary anthropology, or even any focusing debates. They looked to the activities and the journal of the new society to overcome a sense of malaise since the decline in enthusiasm for a number of 1960s theoretical initiatives, including French structuralism, Marxism, and cognitive studies" (1991: 122).

readers engaged with the journal's organization and could be so influenced by the arrangement of articles, is a sensitivity clearly reproduced in later projects, as well as the projects of his colleagues and students - the PECE and the "light structure" that enabled the shifting arrangement of contributions in particular. This was rooted not only in the assertion that ethnography itself has "effects" (as was the contention of *Writing Culture*), but also that the digital structure that holds the ethnography has discernible effects. As Marcus discussed early on in his time as an editor,

"From an editorial perspective, the actuarial content and arguments within the articles published are not themselves enough to make the statement of purpose that the journal intends. To the contrary, in a state of emergence and transition in how knowledge is produced and represented, especially as seems to be the case with anthropology, the question of editorial design or collate in arranging articles for issues is crucial. In fact, the effect of arrangement or juxtaposition should be a clearly established element of attention for readers." (1991: 126)

The development of *Cultural Anthropology* into the "multimedia enhanced journal portal" it is today seems far more closely adhered to a genealogy of its editors (Marcus, the Fortuns, Faubion, Boyer, and Howe), and the broader influence of the Rice circle than the prior formal history would have indicated. This through line certainly returns time and again to how the digital could support new forms of ethnography, but this cannot be easily equated to how the digital merely capacitates. Instead it encourages the inclusion of the digital - the internet, the computer - as constitutive actors in the form and function of the production of anthropological knowledge itself.

Second thread: Opening Authority

The second thread I would trace is thematically defined by openness in terms of making apparent the modes of inquiry and collaboration that produce anthropological knowledge,

which, while closely tied to the concerns pursued by the Rice Circle, took a very different form in a series of projects by nature of a different theoretical grounding. Chris Kelty, an often-recurring name throughout any history of open access in anthropology, was one of the founding editors of a scholarly publication called *Limn* (<https://limn.it/>) with Stephen Collier and Andrew Lakoff. Together, they experimented with the means of scholarly publication to find a form that they described as a “research network first, and a publication second.”⁶⁶ Kelty later described *Limn* as ““a kind of response to the fragility of Internet-mediated collaboration—and indeed on the surface it might look like a reactionary one—it is a print magazine and could appear quite conventional” (2014: 212). Published roughly once per year, *Limn* prioritized design, conserving layout and typesetting in a way most open access publications had eschewed for lower production costs. Intentionally, the “vessel” is just as much a contribution to the project as the scholarly articles it contained. Each issue had a theme that brought editors into collaboration to bring together a series of voices from researchers, practitioners, academics alike. Like projects connected to the Rice circle, the arrangement of articles was intended to generate new connections. As Kelty described:

“Both the style of work it enables and the technologies it employs speak to the changing nature of how we can engage in scholarly communication today. *Limn* creates a growing network of authors, an editorial process that juxtaposes different forms of research, or find conceptual connections across them and tries to display that—something that the journal model cannot do except in the case of a special issue.” (Kelty 2014: 212)

⁶⁶ <https://limn.it/collaborate/>

Limn did carry a Creative Commons license, but small donations were encouraged for a PDF (\$5, though still available for free) and a print copy did have a price tag (\$25). The first issue of *Limn* was published in January 2011, but it had a lengthy prehistory.

Open Prototyping

Before *Limn*, there was a prototype experiment (which is still listed on *Limn*'s website as Issue No. 0). Prompted by a two-day conference on prototyping,⁶⁷ Kelty sent an invitation to the conference's participants to write a brief 750 to 1,000-word contribution on the value of prototyping - in effect, prototyping their own papers for the conference. Kelty's contention was that, in asking contributors to develop short prototypes of their arguments in a short span of time, a new genre of scholarly writing might prove to have new capacities for making clear the dialogue and interaction constitutive of the process of academic writing. As Kelty noted in the preface to the published form of this episode: "We have plenty of publications, but few spaces for collaborative experimentation with ongoing research" (2010: 5). Kelty, with Alberto Corsín Jiménez, and George E. Marcus, compiled the responses into an "episode" - an experimental publication in itself, which appeared as a series of partial conversations, emails, rejoinders and commentaries with sometimes present, sometimes absent, antecedents. The overlapping commentary layered the typical linear form of conference proceedings, creating a reading experience not unlike the hypertext fad that swept the early days of the internet. For Kelty, this presented

⁶⁷ Organized by Alberto Corsin Jimenez and Alberto Estalella via the Spanish National Research Council in Madrid.

a means of “preserving the interactions of collaboration” (2010: 6). This prototype of an “episode” was not only a precursor of *Limn*, but also the first “episode” of ARC,⁶⁸ which has a lengthy history in and of itself.

Opening the Contemporary

Referred to as the Anthropological Research on the Contemporary (ARC), the Laboratory for the Anthropology of the Contemporary (LAC), or alternatively the “col-laboratory,” Paul Rabinow, a professor of anthropology at Berkeley, organized a series of experimental modes through which he sought to conceptualize an “anthropology of the contemporary.” Rabinow had a series of close collaborators, mostly his previous graduate students, including Collier and Lakoff, as well as Tobias Rees and Anthony Stavrianakis. Through the years, the ARC program became a sprawling, multi-faceted collaboration of anthropologists who made a concerted effort to open, and acknowledge, the space of collaborative inquiry and discussion as a model of academic production. The primary model of knowledge production in anthropology they sought to articulate was decoupled from traditional fieldwork and referred to as “concept-work” (or later, “concept labor”).

⁶⁸ “[...] something that the ARC group has recently been working on: the ARC Studio. It is an online publication devoted to experimenting with rapid prototyping of scholarly knowledge and the valorization of the kind of conceptual labor that happens preliminary to conventional publications and is often eliminated from them. In its process, it aims for short timelines (1 month), short contributions (750-1,000 words), found objects, collaborative editing, multimedia presentation, but with permanent archiving and formal recognition in the world of scholarly communication” (2010: 77).

The first “exchange” was led by an “instigator” who collected a series of discussions in diverse forms: conference panels, transcripts of conversations, etc. This form, as articulated in the introduction to the first,

“documents [...] a process that takes place all the time in academic life, but is rarely captured. Namely, the process through which scholars become familiar with each other’s current work, begin a discussion, find fruitful points of intersection or disagreement, and organize a conference panel to explore these in greater detail.” (Rees and Collier 2007: 2)

Much like Fortun’s work, consideration of a new model immediately concerned what kind of structure could be fabricated to enable this imagined, potentially idealized, form of interaction: “thinking about our collective endeavor as a laboratory has provoked reflection on the forms of interpersonal interaction and the infrastructures appropriate to – and necessary for – such an endeavor” (Rees 2007: 8). Other missives from the project took the form of a “conceptual notes” which seemed less collaborative in nature, but sought to articulate the terms upon which the project had set out to redefine the means of anthropological inquiry. Each subsequent paper seemed a further elaboration or wholesale rearticulation of previously stated concepts and structures, creating a dense web of interconnected projects and motivations within ARC. However, there was a recurring insistence of developing new tools and models for production of knowledge that would better reflect the nature of contemporary inquiry. The project’s broader concerns as to the nature of anthropological knowledge production consistently returned to how the recognized mechanisms for an authoritative claim to a concept or idea reify authorship, and similarly how little bits of the publishing process affect (or even predetermine) how knowledge production models work before the point of publication. ARC’s subsequent interrelation to open access conversations was borne out of both a

repeated fixation on attribution - like open access conversations at the time, particularly those around Creative Commons licenses and the limitations thereof - and frustration with the available medium of scholarly publishing, the journal. Rabinow later noted that, “we insisted on the fact that whatever else this form was going to be, it could not replicate the journal form, as we knew that that was a fundamental piece of equipment in the discordancies of the reigning norms of the institutions that we wished to remediate,” citing specifically the long timeline of publishing through a journal (2018: 21).

At this point it may be self-evident to say the ARC project was in the process of reinventing several wheels at once. By 2011, ARC’s large web of collaborators had distilled to Rabinow, Stavrianakis, and Gaymon Bennett; in the years after, in their own words, “career and personal constraints took over, interpersonal breakdown abounded” leaving only Rabinow and Stavrianakis (2018: 31). After nearly fifteen years of experimentation, musings, and quite a few grants, the ARC project produced several volumes (mostly coedited by the primary collaborators) and a number of webpages with broken links and interrelations,⁶⁹ as well as the archive of exchanges, concept notes, and other missives among its series of participants. Its final product, <https://snafu.dog>, was a set of compiled missives, documenting the end of the project from 2017 to 2018. Rabinow and Stavrianakis also composed a chronicle of their experience with the project, which vilified both their home institution, Berkeley, and the university presses that now

⁶⁹ Later Rabinow would have three sites. Each, to the outside observer, would appear to be iterations of the same project: Bios Technika, which outlined a series of “concepts, diagnostics, pathways, cases, determinations” that would recur frequently in the course of the ARC program, an iteration of the Stanford’s Poetic Media Lab project Lacuna Stories: The Contemporary (no longer accessible), and the ARC site itself.

refused to publish their work, for interference in their project. Despite the palpable frustration, the detailed chronicle of ARC's origins and its relatively lengthy history also serves to situate Rabinow's motivations in the context of his own participation in the Santa Fe seminar that produced *Writing Culture* in 1984.

Paul Rabinow

Though his discussion of the "experimental moment" in anthropology in the mid-80s was rather dismissive (referring to *Writing Culture* itself as a fetishized object [2018: 5]), it did serve to root ARC's own history in 1984.⁷⁰ To Rabinow, ARC was following a trajectory separate from the lines of inquiry that the Santa Fe seminar reified in *Writing Culture*, and while he was intent on following this path, others seemed too wholly enveloped by the nature of ethnography as a writerly form (and consequently, ethnographic authority). In comparison, Rabinow was interested in the significance of what is uniquely anthropological knowledge and how that knowledge is produced. Notably, these two concerns are nearly impossible to disentangle, but Rabinow's discussion of the seminar did have a far different, Foucauldian bent which is evident in his writing. Upon reflection of his participation Rabinow noted:

"We anthropologists should now know that we live in language. Yet in their role as writers, most anthropologists continue to act mainly as writers, to treat language as a transparent tool, and to attack as subjective those who seek to incorporate their authorial function. The philistine temptation remains alive: a phobia of navel gazing, however, does not make language into a neutral medium." (1985: 2)

⁷⁰ "ARC as an experiment in venues for working on problems should be conceived as a continuation of and reactivation of the experimentation and exploration that preceded and paralleled and that which could be conceived as agonistic to *Writing Culture*" (2018: 7).

He goes in the same article to contrast one ethnographer who tried (and failed) to remove himself as author completely and someone who clearly situated himself as author in every sentence. Engaging perhaps more explicitly along the poststructuralist lines of the reflexive turn than others at the seminar, Rabinow was concerned with the form effect of the author's authority in ethnographic writing, and with the nature of anthropological authority more broadly. He noted the earlier, simplistic model, the "I was there" logic, which served to naturalize ethnographic authority when the anthropologist of Malinowski and Boas' era was an observant traveler to distant field sites.

"For many years, anthropologists discussed fieldwork experiences among themselves [...] But such matters were not written about 'seriously.' They remained in the corridors and faculty clubs. But what cannot be publicly discussed can be neither analysed nor refuted. Those domains which can not be analysed or rebutted, and yet are directly central to hierarchy and survival, should not be regarded as innocent or irrelevant. Until very recently it was simply bad taste to discuss the conditions which gave modern anthropology its own self definition fieldwork." (1985: 11)

His subsequent call, "let's turn this corridor talk into discourse" (1985: 11), draws a clear through line from the experimentation with collaboration as a mode of inquiry (in ARC) and the focus on finding better means to document collaboration through scholarly publication evident in the work of his collaborators and students.

From this perspective, Rabinow was engaged with much the same concerns as those that prompted both *Writing Culture* and *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*; though, due to his almost singular focus on Foucault, his perspective was shaped by the lens of power relations and the authority of the author (in 1988, Rabinow explicitly noted that Foucault was excluded from *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*). Later he viewed the anthropological project, and summarized part of his career, as "a practice of studying how the mutually productive relations of knowledge, thought, and care are given form

within shifting relations of power.”⁷¹ The seed of this project was evident in his 1985 paper, deeply rooted in his perspective of how he sought to give form and tools to enable “corridor talk” or collaboration more broadly a role in the production of anthropological knowledge.

Third thread

A third, and final thematic thread I would identify is the recurring temptation to approach “open” as a corrective for governance issues. Openness is often seen as a means to invite participation, and sometimes equated with a quick and dirty means of democratization. However, this often proved to be an overly-simplified engagement with the promise of open as not much more than an alternative to “closed.” As Hannerz had noted in 1987, in an earlier era where print dominated “professional socialization” was, and continues to be, a core function of the circulation and dissemination of ideas. In conjunction with the rising number of scholarly blogs with comment sections, many turned to social media as an alternate means to professional socialization.

The projects in this thread cohere around Keith Hart, an economic anthropologist trained at Cambridge, who had become frustrated with the professionalization of anthropology. Hart, as an economic anthropologist, was particularly interested in pointing out the many ways that anthropological careers were intertwined with privatization and individual interests, and particularly, “how to make research publications freely available

⁷¹ <https://anthropology.berkeley.edu/paul-m-rabinow>

without undermining their role as cultural capital in academic career

advancement” (Hart, in interview with Anderson 2017). In 1997 he separated his three projects accordingly:

“The world is not short of ideas. What we lack are the social forms capable of giving expression to them under changing historical circumstances. I now work with three models for the transmission of knowledge - handing down, selling and sharing. Each type corresponds to the idea of the guild, market, and community respectively.” (100)

The guild, according to Hart, is the African Studies Centre he led at Cambridge, characterized by academic bureaucracy. The second, Prickly Pear Press is the market as it is a “nominally commercial outfit,” though it relies on free labor, reducing cost to printing and postage, which will be discussed below. The third, and first model Hart sought to organize in opposition to the bureaucracy and hierarchy of the academy was the community: Hart’s mailing list, the aaa.⁷²

The Open Anthropology Collective

In some ways a later version of the aaa, Hart and others launched another online network that sought to engage anthropologists socially; somewhat interconnected to the growing network of anthropology blogs in the late aughts, somewhat separate. The concept of forming a new social media network for anthropologists originated from a conversation

⁷² Before the OAC, Keith Hart had founded the amateur anthropological association (aaa, or alternatively referred to as the small-triple-a) a mailing list, participation on the list was still nearly entirely English-speaking (56% British, 27% American), but students and “non-anthropologists account for more than half the membership” (1997: 102).

on Twitter in 2009, and interest grew rapidly.⁷³ Sparked by the many frustrations with the AAA in the years preceding and directly after the first agreement with Wiley-Blackwell, and fueled by the many conversations now enabled online, interest in the potential of a new social network grew quickly. From its first conversations, the Open Anthropology Cooperative (OAC) promised democratic and inclusive engagement outside of the academic hierarchies - Friedman had even referred to it as the anti-AAA. In its first few years, membership in the OAC was fairly far-reaching, but, despite its lowered barriers to entry, involvement and participation still skewed toward Anglophone participants, who made up about a third of the online members, but over 60% of the online visits and even more in terms of posts and comments. As exemplified by this project, though certainly evident elsewhere, technology - particularly digital platforms - were conceived of as neutral tools used to capacitate socialization.⁷⁴ Later chronicled by Hart and another contributing founder of the OAC, Fran Barone,⁷⁵ this quickly proved a far too simplistic understanding:

“interaction in the site is ego-centric for technical and cultural reasons and despite the founders’ collectivist aims, the result is a conglomerate of individually curated pockets of information [...] The new organizations we try to create are often hamstrung by the old intellectual equipment we bring to the task [...] Building an open association as an antidote to a closed academy turned out to be more complicated than we realized.” (2015: 199-200)

⁷³ “Over one hundred members joined on the first day, seven hundred in the first month, and one thousand in the first three months; by the end of 2014 it had eight thousand members around the world” (Barone and Hart 2015: 198).

⁷⁴ “The OAC’s founders, relying only on digital tools, aspired to truly global scope, egalitarian ideals, and the abolition of academic hierarchy” (Barone and Hart 2015: 202).

⁷⁵ Then a graduate student at Cambridge, Barone had started a blog during her graduate studies (Ethnography in 2006) which later became Analog/Digital in 2010.

In the OAC's loose structure, there was little consideration of the human element, and no predetermined plan for administrative control. Hart noted, "no one would try to build a community on free market principles, but in retrospect this is just what we did" noting a de facto "laissez-faire policy" in the absence of an intentionally structured forum (2015: 208). As noted by one of the earlier supporters of the OAC, Maximilian Forte "It is not open anthropology as much as it is merely anthropology out in the open."⁷⁶

In fact, it was precisely the lack of structure that contributed to many of the network's issues. The problem was not openness itself, but governance. By centering resistance to the top-down model of a scholarly society and seeking something "else," the distinction between "open" and "closed" was the only operative distinction - and that assertion that was quickly undermined by the day to day functioning of the site. As Barone and Hart reflected, "defining openness became slippery and contradictory as the site grew" as site founders soon became administrators charged to "discipline" offenders, particularly those of copyright infringement, a notably sticky concept when trying to uphold "open" (2015: 202). With the benefit of hindsight, the OAC appears more of a libertarian solution than a cooperative one, though assuming digital tools to be neutral wasn't nearly such a dubious idea ten years ago as it is now, and realistically assuming open access is an intrinsically good proposition is still a common assertion. Despite the issues raised by the OAC during its short time online, it still served to fuel interest in alternate ways of doing things, including fostering other projects.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ <https://zeroanthropology.net/2009/05/28/open-anthropology-cooperative/>

⁷⁷ Such as Ryan Anderson's Anthropologies Project and Erin Taylor's PopAnth.

Prickly Pear Press

In 1993, Keith Hart and Anna Grimshaw founded Prickly Pear Press, which sought to bring anthropological arguments into wider circulation through relatively small scale and cheap printing akin to the pamphlets of the eighteenth century. There were ten pamphlets produced in the first iteration of the press,⁷⁸ the first being Hart and Grimshaw's own *Anthropology and the Crisis of Intellectuals*, which not only took the professionalization of the discipline to task but also noted frustration with "its narrow specialization and arcane professional language" (1993: 228). Their commentary on the discipline was rooted in the same moment of the late eighties which prompted Clifford and Marcus' *Writing Culture*, though noted its intent to offer "new textual strategies failed to deal with the more fundamental question of intellectual practice in the world [...] *Writing Culture* advocated a kind of activity (writing) that served only to increase the power and authority of the anthropologist" (1993: 229). Rather than continue to feed into the exceptionalism of the anthropologist as cultural critic, Hart and Grimshaw wanted to trace a different intellectual lineage, which would serve to reconnect the anthropological project to its democratic impulses.

For those well-versed in the colonial and imperial entanglements of the first century (or arguably longer) of the discipline, this may seem a dubious claim, but Hart and Grimshaw went even further back, citing W. H. R. Rivers as the real creative force in

⁷⁸ Prickly Pear became Prickly Paradigm in 2001, when Marshall Sahlins and Sean Dowdy shifted its center of gravity to Chicago, bringing the number of pamphlets in circulation over 50 (and using the University of Chicago Press' distribution services).

establishing anthropology. They lauded Rivers for his commitment to “openness and accountability,” continuing, “his primary concern was to generate replicable, objective findings which could be used reliably by others; and transparency in method, for the sake of scientific reproduction of knowledge, was his watchword” (1993: 238). In this narrative, one of the field’s oft-cited forefathers, Bronislaw Malinowski, symbolized the moment when power was appropriated by both science and democracy in the service of control: “a new kind of intellectual class now came into its own. It was distinguished by its service to the state in the guise of a popular and progressive agenda” (1993: 237). Rivers represented not only anthropology as a scientific enterprise, but also the more democratic intellectual project propelled by “the rise and visibility of ordinary people as a force in history” (1993: 236).

This then meant, for Hart and Grimshaw at least, that *Writing Culture* symbolized the “final demise” of scientific ethnography (1993: 245). What was once the method strong enough to validate anthropology as a social science and anthropologist’s claim to authority, was now in a mess of its own making: unable to assert scientific authority and therefore left to cling to the more tenuous claims of a subjective field. As Grimshaw and Hart stated succinctly,

“We lay the blame at Malinowski’s door. For he took the modern anthropology of Rivers, with its open and explicit methodology, and turned it into a practice filled with epistemological confusion and contradiction.” (1993: 250)

This is a rather large argument about the nature of the discipline, but within this narrative is a significant contention about openness in relation to accountability and transparency in an intellectual project. Newly rooted in a more earnest pursuit of anthropology as a transparent, scientific project, this argument raised yet another rather simplified

distinction between open and closed that was not interrogated further. Instead, their concern for the opaque nature of ethnographic authority is pushed back into concern for the means of professionalization for the discipline as a whole. Their concerns for the professionalization on these tenuous grounds - they even noted Rabinow's (without citation) "uneasy joke that the methods advocated in *Writing Culture* are best carried out by professors with tenure" (1993: 252). This understanding of openness had not prompted an open access publication, but instead generated new communication channels that did not exclude members on the basis of education degree obtained (the aaa and OAC) and a mode of publication that favored broad circulation among all those interested (as opposed to the relatively limited circulation of academic monographs).

Conclusion[s]

In articulating these three threads, there was no intention to separate them; in fact, there is far more evidence to support braiding them together. There are not only thematic similarities, but also projects and concrete moments of collaboration that document how much interrelation and engagement there was among these articulations of "openness"; however, while within this generation there was massive overlap in collaborations and engagement, these threads still serve to differentiate the many motivations and antecedents that informed these collaborators when they began playing with the concept of "openness" and what it could mean for the discipline. *Writing Culture* was certainly not the only locus in a prehistory of open access in anthropology, and as Rabinow noted, "the one-week seminar in Santa Fe that produced the *Writing Culture* volume [...] was both more heterodox and polyphonic (to use Tyler's term) than it came to be talked

about, and moreover, it drew on a range of impetuses that preceded it” (2018:

5). *Writing Culture* certainly had its own prehistory and number of varied influences that shaped its footprint.

While no genealogy of this sort would claim to be comprehensive, it does serve to demonstrate how varied and deeply-rooted these concerns were – not only in the scholarly communication field, but in anthropology’s history as a discipline, preoccupied with its own means of producing knowledge. By the time these three interrelated circles came to the discussion of open access as a thing already in the world (from the free software, open infrastructure movements), their own investments in what “open” was informed how they adapted and operationalized open access. It is telling that three very different strands of experimentation with ethnographic authority and form of ethnography were once again interwoven in and among various open access projects. This is, from my own perspective, a short, interpretive history of how anthropology engaged and wrestled with “open” as an expansive proposition long before the open access movement had formalized into what is recognizably “OA” today.

References

- Alison, Anne, and Charles Piot. (2014). Editors' Introduction: Open Access. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 201-202.
- (2014). Editors' Farewell. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(4), 599-601.
- (2015). Editing the Times. *Cultural Anthropology*, 30(4), 525-530.
- Alison, Anne, Dominic Boyer, and Charles Piot. (2016). Financing Open Access: Introducing Friends of Cultural Anthropology. *Cultural Anthropology*, 31(2), 159-161.
- Barone, Francine and Keith Hart (2015). The Open Anthropology Cooperative: Towards an Online Public Anthropology. *Media, Anthropology and Public Engagement*. New York: Berghahn, 198-222.
- Boellstorff, Tom. (2009a). From the Editor: Access. *American Anthropologist*, 1-4.
- (2009b). Open and Free: Reviewed Work(s): *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software* by Christopher M. Kelty, *Current Anthropology*, 50(6), 964-965.
- (2010). From the Editor: Journals, Genre, and Value. *American Anthropologist*, 509-511.
- (2012a). From the Editor: Why the AAA Needs Gold Open Access. *American Anthropologist*, 389-393.
- (2012b). Editorship, value, and American anthropology. *American Anthropologist*, 114(4), 567-570.

- Bowen, John R. (2004). "Annual Report of the Committee on Scientific Communication." AAA Committee Report.
- Boyer, Dominic, Alberto Corsín Jiménez, John Willinsky, Giovanni da Col and Alex Golub, "Why an Open-Access Publishing Cooperative Can Work: A Proposal for the AAA's Journal Portfolio" *Cultural Anthropology*. October 20, 2015.
- Boyer, Dominic, Marcel LaFlamme, Kirsten Bell, Alberto Corsín Jiménez, Christopher Kelty and John Willinsky. "Let's Do This Together: A Cooperative Vision for Open Access." *Anthro(dendum)*, June 27, 2018.
- Boyer, Dominic, James Faubion and Cymene Howe. (2015). Editors' Introduction to 30.1: Circles Not Pyramids. *Cultural Anthropology*, 30(1), 1-5.
- Brown, Nina, Marcel LaFlamme, and Sarah Lyon. (2018) "What Happened, or, Impasses and Future Horizons for an Open Anthropology of Work." *Anthropology of Work Review*, 39, no. 1: 44-47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/awr.12137>.
- Busch, Jessica, (2005). "AnthroSource in a Changing Field" *Anthropology News*, December 2005, 46(9), 11-14.
- Calpestri, Suzanne and Bonnie Nardi, (2004). "Creating a Shared Vision for AnthroSource" *Anthropology News*, March 2004, 45(3), 9.
- Cefkin, Melissa, (2008). "Organizing for Access" *Anthropology News*, February 2008 49(2), 8-9.
- Christen, Kim. (2012). Does Information Really Want to Be Free? Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Question of Openness. *International Journal of Communication* 6 (2012), 2870–2893.

- Clifford, James, and George E. Marcus, eds. *Writing culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. University of California Press, 1986.
- Coleman, Biella & Benjamin Mako Hill. (2004). How Free Became Open and Everything Else Under the Sun. *M/C: A Journal of Media and Culture*, 7.
- Coleman, Biella. (2004). The Political Agnosticism of Free and Open Source Software and the Inadvertent Politics of Contrast. *Anthropology Quarterly*. 77(03): 507-519, Summer.
- da Col, Giovanni and David Graeber. (2011). Foreword: The return of ethnographic theory. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 1(1), vi-xxxv.
- Davis, Bill, (2003). "Public Access to Scholarship" *Anthropology News*, September 2003, 67.
- (2007). "Financing AAA's Publishing Program in an Era of Open Access" *Anthropology News*, May 2007, 67.
- (2008). "The Financial Underpinnings of Society Journal Publishing" *Anthropology News*, September 2008, 55.
- (2010). "Free Journal Access as a Public Issue" *Anthropology News*, September 2010, 22.
- Elfenbein, Tim W. (2014). Cultural anthropology and the infrastructure of publishing. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 288-303.
- Faubion, James D., and George E. Marcus, eds. (2009) *Fieldwork is Not What It Used to Be*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Ferguson, Jane, (2005) "Bronislaw's Laptop Dance: How Cyborg Pirates Plundered the Gated Community in the Ether" *Anthropology News*, December 2005, 46(9), 13-14.

- Ferguson, TJ, Ed Liebow, and Oona Schmid. (2010). "The AAA Publications Program: Our Common Property Resource" *Anthropology News*, September 2010, 51(6), 23-24.
- Fischer, Michael. (2008). "Realizing the AnthroSource Vision" *Anthropology News*, March 2008, 49(3), 16.
- (2009). "Renewable Ethnography" in *Fieldwork is not What it Used to Be: Learning Anthropology's Method in a Time of Transition*. vii-xiv.
- Fortun, Mike, Kim Fortun and George E. Marcus. (2017). Computers in/and Anthropology. *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*, Ch. 10.
- Fortun, Kim. (2003). Ethnography In/Of/As Open Systems. *Reviews in Anthropology*, 32(2), 171-190.
- (2011). Open Folklore as an Open Access Model. *Anthropology News*, 52(2), 6-6.
- Fortun, Kim and Mike Fortun. (2012). "Liberating Cultural Anthropology: A Thought Experiment." *Anthropologies*. <http://www.anthropologiesproject.org/2012/03/liberating-culturalanthropology.html>.
- (2015). An infrastructural moment in the human sciences. *Cultural Anthropology*, 30(3), 359-367.
- Friedman, P Kerim, (2004). "Open Source Anthropology: Can the Subaltern Google?" *Anthropology News*, October 2004, 45(7), 14-15.
- Friedman, P Kerim, Alex Golub, and Christopher Kelty. (2008). "Three Years of Savage Minds: From Blog to Scholarly Civil Society" *Anthropology News*, March 2008 49(3), 22.

- Golub, Alex, (2005). "AnthroSource - Actually Useful?" *Anthropology News*, December 2005, 46(9), 12-14.
- (2007). "With a Business Model Like This, Who Needs Enemies?" *Anthropology News*, April 2007 48(4), 6-7.
- Goodman, Alan, (2006). "AnthroSource for All (And All for Anthrosource)" *Anthropology News*, September 2006 47(6), 63.
- (2008). "Expanding and Engaging Anthropologies" *Anthropology News*, January 2008, 49(1), 21-22.
- Goodman, Alan and Bill Davis (2007) "A New Partnership" *Anthropology News*, November 2007, 48(8), 67.
- Grimshaw, Anna and Keith Hart. (1993). *Anthropology and the Crisis of the Intellectuals* (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Prickly Pear Press.
- Hannerz, Ulf. (1987). Anthropology's other press: Training ground, playground, underground. *Current Anthropology*, 28(2), 214-219.
- Harper, Ian and Alberto Corsín Jiménez. (2005). Towards interactive professional ethics. *Anthropology Today*, 21(6), 10-12.
- Hart, Keith. (1997). Prickly Pear Polemics: Anthropology beyond the university. *Critique of Anthropology*, 17(1), 99-102.
- Jackson, Jason B., and Ryan Anderson (2014). Anthropology and open access. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 236-263.
- Jiménez, Alberto Corsín (2008). Relations and disproportions: The labor of scholarship in the knowledge economy. *American Ethnologist*, 35(2), 229-242.

Jiménez, Alberto Corsín and Adolfo Estalella. (2017). Ethnography: a prototype.

Ethnos, 82(5), 846-866.

Jiménez, A. C., Willinsky, J., Boyer, D., da Col, G., & Golub, A. (2015). Why an open access publishing cooperative can work: A proposal for the AAA's journal portfolio.

HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory, 5(2), v-viii.

Kelty, Christopher M. (2004a). "Culture's Open Sources" and "Punt to Culture."

Anthropological Quarterly 77(3).

----- (2004b). "Anthropology and the Open Access Debate" *Anthropology News*, October 2004, 45(7), 14-15.

----- (2008a). "The State of Open Access Anthropology" *Anthropology News*, February 2008 49(2), 9-10.

----- (2008b). *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software*. Duke University Press.

----- (2009). Collaboration, Coordination, and Composition: Fieldwork after the Internet. In *Fieldwork is not What It Used to Be*. James D. Faubion and George E. Marcus, eds. Pp. 184–206. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

----- (2012). "This is not an article: Model organism newsletters and the question of 'open science.'" *Biosocieties* 7(2):140-168.

----- (2014). Beyond copyright and technology: What open access can tell us about precarity, authority, innovation, and automation in the university today. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 203-215.

----- (2016). "Open Access, Piracy and Scholarly Publication." University of California, Davis, March 16, 2016. https://video.ucdavis.edu/media/0_lu8p2zco.

- Kelty, Chris and George E. Marcus, "Open Source Experiments and What They Show About the Analyst's Frustrations in Intelligence Communities," *Anthropology News*, (February 2007).
- Kelty, Chris, Michael M. Fischer, Jason Baird Jackson, Kim Christen, Alex Golub, Michael Brown, and Tom Boellstorff (2008). "Anthropology in/of Circulation: The Future of Open Access and Scholarly Societies" *Cultural Anthropology*, 23(3), 559.
- Kember, Sarah. (2014) Opening Out from Open Access: Writing and Publishing in Response to Neoliberalism. *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, No.4. doi:10.7264/N31C1V51
- Kemper, Robert, (2008). "From Bulletin Boards to Anthrosource" *Anthropology News*, March 2008 49(3), 7-8.
- Kenner, Ali. (2014). Designing Digital Infrastructure: Four Considerations for Scholarly Publishing Projects. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 264-287.
- Kiesewetter, Rebekka. (2020). Undoing scholarship: Towards an activist genealogy of the OA movement. *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies*, 23(2), 113-130.
- Lathrop, Stacy. (2007). "Friends, Why Are We Sinking?" *Anthropology News*, April 2007 48(4), 7-8.
- Liang, Lawrence. (2012). Shadow Libraries. *e-flux Journal*, 37.
- Lynch, Clifford A. (2003). "Institutional Repositories: Essential Infrastructure for Scholarship in the Digital Age," *ARL Bimonthly Report* 226 (February 2003), 1-7.
- Mangiafico, Paolo and Kevin Smith (2014). Reason, risk, and reward: Models for libraries and other stakeholders in an evolving scholarly publishing ecosystem. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(2), 216-235.

- Marcus, George E. and Michael Fischer (1986). *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An experimental moment in the human sciences*. University of Chicago Press.
- Marcus, George E. (1991). American academic journal editing in the great bourgeois cultural revolution of late 20th-century postmodernity: The case of "cultural anthropology". *Cultural Anthropology*, 6(1), 121.
- (1995). Ethnography in/of the world system: The emergence of multi-sited ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24(1), 95-117.
- (2009). "Notes toward an Ethnographic Memoir of Supervising Graduate Research through Anthropology's Decades of Transformation" in *Fieldwork is not What it Used to Be: Learning Anthropology's Method in a Time of Transition*. vii-xiv.
- (2015) "Editorial Curation and the Durability of Anthropological Ideas In a Time of Ambient Innovation: A Comment on the Thirtieth Year of Cultural Anthropology." *Cultural Anthropology* 30, no. 1: 6–11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14506/ca30.1.02>.
- "Mellon Funds AnthroSource: Enriching Scholarship and Building Global Communities" *Anthropology News*, January 2004, 45(1), 63.
- Merry, Sally Engle and Ed Liebow (2008). "Publications Finance Update" *Anthropology News*, September 2008, 19.
- Miller, Daniel, Amita Baviskar, Don Brenneis, Carlos Fausto, Kim and Mike Fortun, Alex Golub, Sarah Green, Christopher Kelty, Martha Macintyre, Atsuro Morita, and Carlo Severi (2012). Open access, scholarship, and digital anthropology. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 2(1), 385-411.

- Moore, Samuel. (2019) 'Revisiting 'the 1990s debutante': scholar-led publishing and the pre-history of the open access movement', *The Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24306>
- Nardi, Bonnie, Michael Adams, Melody Chu, Shiraz Khan, John Lai, and Elsy Lao. (2004). "AnthroSource: Designing a portal for anthropologists." *First Monday*, 9(10). <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v9i10.1181>
- Perrin, Andrew and Maeve Duggan. (2015). "Americans' Internet Access: 2000-2015." *Pew Research Center*, 26(6), 1-12.
- Pia, Andrea E., Simon Batterbury, Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi, Marcel LaFlamme, Gerda Wielander, Filippo M. Zerilli, Melissa Nolas et al. (2020). "Labour of Love: An Open Access manifesto for freedom, integrity, and creativity in the humanities and interpretive social sciences." DOI: 10.21428/6ffd8432.a7503356
- Poirier, Lindsay, Kim Fortun, Brandon Costelloe-Kuehn, and Mike Fortun. (2020). Metadata, Digital Infrastructure, and the Data Ideologies of Cultural Anthropology. In *Anthropological Data in the Digital Age* (pp. 209-237). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Posada, Alejandro and George Chen. Inequality in Knowledge Production: The Integration of Academic Infrastructure by Big Publishers. ELPUB 2018, Jun 2018, Toronto, Canada.
- Rabinow, Paul. (1985) "Discourse and Power: On the Limits of Ethnographic Texts." *Dialectical Anthropology* 10, 1-13.
- (1988). Beyond Ethnography: Anthropology as Nominalism. *Cultural Anthropology*, 3(4), 355-364.

- Rabinow, Paul and Anthony Stavrianakis. (2018). "Apologia of a Crucible of Experience and Experimentation: Chronical of the Anthropology of the Contemporary 2004-2018." Snafu.dog, <https://www.snafu.dog/arc-a-chronicle>.
- Scmid, Oona, (2009). "The Price of Free: An Invitation to Engage in the Future of AAA's Publishing Program" *Anthropology News*, October 2009, 50(7) 21.
- . (2014). "Getting to Journals 3.0." *Anthropology News*, March 3.
- Skomal, Susan, (2005). "Transformation of a Scholarly Society Publishing Program" *ARL* October 2005, 1-5.
- Suber, Peter. (2012). *Open Access*. MIT Press.
- Swist, Teresa and Liam Magee. (2018). Academic publishing and its digital binds: Beyond the paywall towards ethical executions of code. *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research*, 9(3), 240-259.
- Tewell, Eamon, Nora Almeida, Romel Espinel, and Lisa Hinchliffe. (2019). "From Value to Values: Information Literacy, Capitalism, and Resistance" Presented on April 12, 2019, ACRL.
- van Gerven Oei, V. W. J. (2020). *Viral Open Access in Times of a Global Pandemic*. *Punctum Books*.
- Vieira, Scott and Shannon Kipphut-Smith. (2019). Cultural Anthropology and Open Access—Interview with Dominic Boyer, Cymene Howe, and Marcel LaFlamme, *Serials Review*, 45:1-2, 54-60, DOI: 10.1080/00987913.2019.1613213
- Waltham, M. (2010). The future of scholarly journal publishing among social science and humanities associations: Report on a study funded by a planning grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 41(3), 257-324.

- Waterston, Alisse. (2009). "Disseminating Anthropological Knowledge Today: AnthroSource as an Evolving Resource" *Anthropology News*, October 2009, 50(7) 21.
- (2017). A Year of Challenges and Accomplishments. *Anthropology News*, 58(6), 158-162.
- Weiss, Brad. (2014). Opening Access: Publics, Publication, and a Path to Inclusion. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(1), 1-2.
- Willinsky, John. (2016). The Libraria Open Access Publishing Cooperative: Toward a Sustainable Financial Model, Working paper, Stanford University.