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Ryan B. Anderson

Santa Clara University, rbanderson@scu.edu

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Savage Minds Interview with Jason Baird Jackson.

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Anthropology & Open Access: An Interview with Jason Baird Jackson¹

November 2011 on Savage Minds

During the last few weeks I had the chance to conduct an email based interview with [Jason Baird Jackson](#) about Open Access (OA), academic publishing, and anthropology...

Ryan Anderson: *Thanks for doing this interview, Jason. My first question is really basic: What IS open access all about, and how is it any different from standard academic publishing?*

Jason Baird Jackson: It's a pleasure to have this chance to talk about open access (hereafter, OA). When I am asked to recommend an explanation of what OA is about, I usually point colleagues to the basic introductory documents assembled by philosopher and OA strategist [Peter Suber](#). His one page "[Very Brief Introduction to Open Access](#)" is a great place to start. It begins noting: "Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Two things make this possible: the internet, and the consent of the author or copyright-holder." There is much more that scholarly authors, societies, publishers, and libraries need to know about OA, but this is a good start. The features that Suber notes in this sentence comprise the basic differences that you are searching for.

OA evokes different things for different people and interest groups. I suspect that we will touch on some of the range of concerns that these actors bring to the topic. For a time, it made sense to speak of OA as an alternative to standard academic publishing but I do not think that this framing works any longer. While OA represents a significant set of transformations in what we might think of as the inherited scholarly publishing domain, OA is now at the heart of standard academic publishing. That does not mean that there is agreement about the issues or about emergent practices or even about the definition of basic terms. My "it's all one system now" view just acknowledges such facts on the ground as the reality that we now have academic authors publishing in "gold OA" journals without even realizing that such a nameable kind of publication exists as such. On the other side of the ledger, the largest commercial publishers are fully, if sometimes begrudgingly, involved in open access through their having acceded to public, university, and funder demands for what is called "green OA" and via their author-pays approaches to gold and "hybrid" OA". (We'll touch on these modes, perhaps.) While people like me tend to talk about OA as a means towards a dramatic transformation of scholarly communication, one aimed at making it more sustainable, accountable, ethical, public, etc., commercial publishers increasingly describe OA as just another business model. We are debating and rebuilding the same publishing system even if, at times, and in some senses, it seems like OA advocates are creating an alternative infrastructure for the discovery, circulation, evaluation, and reuse of scholarly research outputs.

¹ This interview was originally published in three parts on Savage Minds ([savageminds.org](#)).

It can be treated as a different topic, one that we need only acknowledge and not discuss, but I just used the terribly clumsy phrase "research outputs" as a way of highlighting the parallel transformations that we are experiencing in the system of scholarly genres. Running alongside the OA transformation, the canonical genres—journal article and scholarly book—are being remixed and destabilized in countless ways. For anthropology, these generic changes are different from those that followed the field's "writing culture" debates. Earlier, we wondered what we could say in a book. Now we wonder what a book is. In your own corner of the new territory, I could ask: Is your *anthropologies* project a journal, a scholarly website, a weblog? Do your authors know? Such questions are increasingly present and point to what a time of experimentation we are in. OA advocates in anthropology have been particularly attentive to this related-but-not-the-same issue of genre. That said, the core of the OA discussion has been the journal article as we've known it and few would deny its continued centrality as the currency of the academic realm.

RA: *These are really fascinating questions, and I want to see if we can get into them some more. This whole subject of genres and different media or publication outcomes seems like a crucial issue to me. In some senses, I think that anthropology is trapped in a very old model--we all just look to produce books, and articles in top-rated journals. As for your questions about what the anthropologies project is--I wonder this all the time but am not sure what to tell people. (See [Michael E. Smith's recent post](#) about this very issue, and [Jason's response](#).) What I have noticed is that calling it a blog can potentially lead people to take it less seriously--as in, "Oh, it's just a blog you're working on, I see." The irony of course is the free blog platform has the same POTENTIAL as The American Anthropologist does to display words, ideas, and images. The difference between them is the social and political systems in which they exist and are used and understood. I mean, the same words show up, so the limits are actually imposed by us.*

So, I have two sets of questions that come to mind with all of this. First, what's the difference between Green OA and Gold OA? Does this difference really matter? Second, what's the difference between the "just another business model" view on the one hand (i.e. the way that some publishers are looking at this) and the position of OA advocates in anthropology who are rethinking what you call "scholarly research outputs"? Are these positions fundamentally at odds with one another?

BJJ: Your first question, about green and gold OA is a good place to start because it represents the kind of basic factual information that all academic authors need to know. We can learn a lot from resources easily found online. Peter Suber's slightly longer "[Open Access Overview](#)" is one great resource among several. Understanding green and gold "paths" to OA is one of several key distinctions necessary for making sense of the shifting academic publishing landscape. I have used the phrase "terms of art" when talking about such key concepts previously and I fear that folks have not realized that I was making a specific point in describing them in that way. The phrase "term of art" refers to words or phrases that have, in a legal sense, a very precise meaning within a subject area. To not know them or to have vague understandings of them stops or derails conversation and effective action. We see such counterproductive slippage when our friends in anthropology use the phrase "open source" (a software development strategy) synonymously with "open access" (an approach to the circulation of scholarly research). When I am at my most frustrated, I think that an unwillingness to master the basic terms and concepts has contributed to the muddled mess that conversations on anthropology publishing have tended to become. Then I

calm down and try to go back to trying to learn more as a student of such things and to teach better as an interested community member.

Suber notes that there are two main vehicles for "delivering OA to research articles, OA journals ("gold OA") and OA repositories ("green OA")." The journal that I presently edit--[Museum Anthropology Review](#) (MAR)--is a gold OA journal. Every item published in the journal is openly available online at no cost. There are many issues in the mix, but for now it is enough to note that in a gold OA journal, the content is born digital and, more relevantly, born open. When people speak of an OA journal, journals like MAR, [First Monday](#), or [Asian Ethnology](#) are what people have in mind. Like their "toll access" counterparts, OA journals usually engage in peer-review (for articles), have editors and editorial boards, regular publication schedules and all the rest of the inherited apparatus of scholarly journal publishing. They have different business models (of which there are several) than toll access journals because they do not rely on restricting access and collecting subscriptions, pay-per-view fees, and other tolls.

The universe of "green OA" centers on a kind of database known as a repository. Repositories are usually organized around a discipline ([arXiv](#) [physics] and [PubMed Central](#) [medicine] are examples) or a research institution ([DASH](#) [Harvard University] and [TopSCHOLAR](#) [Western Kentucky University] are examples). Repositories could be created by funders or other interested parties, but for technical reasons that I'll set aside for now, institutional repositories are the most prominent and promising type.

When university faculties impose "OA mandates" upon themselves (as [Harvard's faculty](#) and hundreds of others have already done) or when a funder makes "OA deposit" a condition of acceptance for a grant, these actors are not insisting that a scholar-author must publish in an (gold) OA journal such as *Oral Tradition* or *Cultural Analysis*, they are insisting that the scholar-author make their work freely available online via a repository. What does that mean, literally? It means that some version of the scholar's journal article is uploaded (as a file with associated metadata) and permanently archived in a central digital database (repository). Such repositories make the work discoverable and accessible to interested readers. The metadata associated with such works can be harvested by broad search tools like Google Scholar and narrower projects such as [Open Folklore](#) (the OA promotion and portal project for folklore and ethnology that I work on). Such search tools lead users to the actual work where it lives and is accessible in its home repository.

What does the "archived" or "deposited" work look like? Here we go again with some unavoidable terms of art, but first I need to make clear that green OA articulates with the toll access journal landscape. When we say that subscription-based journals such as *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *Ethnohistory*, or *Economic Botany* "support" OA, we mean that they have policies that allow their authors to make their work openly available as an individual matter outside the main publication channel provided by the journals themselves. The normative (and best) way to do this is via repository "deposit." Here come the key terms. The phrase "green OA" means that SOME version of the article can be made available in OA form via a repository (or some other means, such as a personal website). To make sense of what is and isn't allowed under the terms of individual journal author's agreements, one needs to know the difference between a "pre-print" and a "post-print" and a "publisher's version." My favorite source for explicating these differences is the informational page accompanying the [RoMEO database](#).

RoMEO is a resource for learning about the OA policies of different journals. In a nutshell, a pre-print is the version of an article as it exists in manuscript form prior to its being peer-reviewed and accepted by a journal. A post-print is an article manuscript as it has been modified by its author(s) on the basis of peer-review. The post-print version is the final version that an author submits to an editor in anticipation that the work will then enter the journal's production processes, which will include such steps as copyediting and typesetting. If you look at a pre-print or a post-print, it has the hallmarks of (and usually is) an author-produced document. These versions look and feel different from the publisher's version, which is the final document that is actually published. To look at them, such versions have been typeset or formatted according to journal standards. In a digital context, such versions have often been "marked up" with technical coding that allows for various enhancements. Underneath, they may also carry digital rights management (DRM) technologies that prevent, or seek to hinder, unauthorized uses (piracy). If you download an article in PDF form from JSTOR or ProjectMUSE or Wiley Online Library, you are looking at a publisher's version.

A journal is "green" if an author is allowed to freely circulate at least their accepted post-print. Some journals also allow authors to freely circulate and deposit the publisher's version, but this is uncommon. Most publishers see all of the work that they put into turning a post-print into a published article as their investment and they are not inclined to give it away. In contrast, some publishers (again, the minority) ask authors to deposit the publisher's version because they see it as the version that will best reflect upon the quality work done by the press in question. It is my understanding that this view is behind the OA policies of the [University of California Press Journals program](#). The important thing to note here is that two toll access journals can both be "green" but can allow or not allow different things vis-a-vis repository deposit by authors. I have [touched on it elsewhere](#) but I want to stress again that many nice people in anthropology are breaking the law (i.e. are out of compliance with their signed author agreements) because they have made publisher's versions of their articles available online via personal or departmental websites when they are not allowed to do so.

What is the difference then between green and gold? We can answer that question from the perspective of different actors. For an interested would-be reader with internet access but without access to the information resources paid for by a major research library, both paths are great. Everything in a gold OA journal is readily discoverable and available in neat and tidy form. If an author publishing in a toll access journal had made her work accessible via the green OA path, then that work too is available to our interested reader. In post-print form, it may not look as tidy as the published version, but the ideas are there and useable, which is worth a lot. If our author is employed by a university that has imposed an OA mandate, then vast amounts of valuable information is being made available. Because so few academic authors know about these processes, our reader is much less likely to be able to gain access to writings by authors affiliated with non-mandate institutions. Still, one need not (as an author) be subject to a mandate in order to participate in OA publishing along either path.

For an author, the differences between green and gold are likely to seem significant. If a junior author has been told, in unambiguous terms, that she needs to publish in journals X, Y, and Z in order to be favorably evaluated for tenure and promotion (and I am simplifying and exaggerating for rhetorical purposes), then she is likely to aim for those journals regardless of whether they are gold or green (or even yellow [pre-print only] or white [no OA allowed]). Much here depends on

the journal landscape within a field.

If well-established journals in a field give up their subscription-based business model and convert to gold OA [two close to home examples are *Asian Ethnology* and *Oral Tradition*], then the status of those journals is usually not diminished by this move. After 155 years, *The Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* are no more or less prestigious because the APS allows the whole world to read its content for free. Still, many gold OA journals are "start ups" and authors may have anxieties about journal stature. Here, the passage of time is sorting out the quality questions. All the old evaluation criteria, like acceptance rates, editorial boards, and "Is this content any good?" still apply. Despite the rise of bibliometrics, different fields still have different attitudes about journal prestige. Cultural anthropology, and folklore studies even more, have historically been very flat relative to other fields in which there is a clear pecking order. Few of us would want to defend an argument that the *Journal of Anthropological Research* is somehow categorically better or worse than *Anthropological Quarterly*. They have their own communities, traditions and histories, but they belong to a broad peer group that would include numerous other titles. Cultural anthropology's indifference to (mainly) or resistance to impact factor rankings stems from such perceptions.

Be that as it may, for authors, where you publish usually matters a lot for a lot of reasons. If a stressed out, untenured person is working under the shadow of journal hierarchy talk, she is going to choose accordingly. If she is committed to OA for ethical reasons (like social justice) and/or for selfish reasons (like self-promotion), she may need to publish (for the present) in toll access journals. She can usually choose those with green OA policies and then utilize a repository at her home institution to make available post-prints of her work. In the absence of a repository at her home institution, she can hopefully turn to one at an institution at which she can muster some kind of secondary affiliation. Alternatively she may be able to find a subject repository suitable to, and willing to take, her work. In a worst-case scenario, she can make her post-prints available on a personal website (up until the time when she can gain access to a repository). [If a journal's author agreement does not allow automatically for green OA repository deposit, she can still negotiate for such rights individually using free and easy to use legal tool like the [Scholars Copyright Addendum Engine from Science Commons](#).

For publishers and libraries, the green-gold distinction is huge. If, and how, a publisher engages with OA is fundamental to that publisher's business model. There are a growing number of different ways that publishers, both for-profit and not-for-profit (including scholarly societies) are making it work. Publishing costs money, hence every kind of publisher has to have some workable business model. We may touch on business models before we are done, but here I will just note that under present conditions, green OA (as we have it now) is seen as compatible with the preservation of the older subscription-based toll access journal system. We are not presently at a stage in which green OA has made scholarship sufficiently accessible in free-to-end-users ways as to (in and of itself) cause subscription cancelations by libraries. The later possibility is why toll access publishers are generally so opposed to OA mandates. Letting the occasional author post a stray article here or there has not been a game changer. If everyone everywhere started doing it, the story would probably be different. I am already going on and on and probably cannot do justice to what we might call the deeper "structural" issues that are visible from the vantage point of the two great parties whose relationship can now be fairly characterized as antagonistic--libraries and publishers. My Indiana University colleague David

Lewis (Dean of Libraries at IUPUI) has recently authored a very interesting analysis of open access journal dynamics in light of these structural issues. [I strongly recommend his paper for an account of these issues and some predictions on where things are headed.](#)

One last set of points about green and gold. While it is not perfect (as evidenced by *Museum Anthropology Review* not being included within it), the [Directory of Open Access Journal](#) (DOAJ) is the main resource for discovering gold OA journals across disciplines. To learn about, and compare, the OA policies of various toll access journals, the place to look is the [SHERPA/RoMEO database](#). (Among other things, SHERPA/RoMEO tells you whether a journal is green or not.) To find out what universities, departments, research institutes, etc. have adopted OA mandates, consult the [Registry of Open Access Repositories Mandatory Archiving Policies](#) (ROARMAP) database. To find the OA repositories that exist in the world, the place to look is the [Director of Open Access Repositories](#) (OpenDOAR).

Ryan Anderson: *So what are the major stumbling blocks holding up a transition to Open Access in your view? What's keeping most people from making this jump? Lastly, what do you think about the system employed by the [Social Science Research Network](#) (SSRN) where authors can post working papers? Can a system like that be a stepping stone to OA?*

Jason Baird Jackson: At the author level, one stumbling block is a pervasive lack of basic knowledge about these issues among scholars and policy makers within our field (and in most fields). I am sympathetic to everyone's plight. It is all very complicated and uncertain therefore doing what we have always done has proven the easiest path. Most of us do not understand copyright or the Creative Commons system. Most of us do not understand journal business models or how it is that librarians have made so much (expensive) information so easily available to those of us with the luxury of university affiliations. In the face of much confusion and anxiety, just sending our manuscripts to the editors and journals that we know in the way that we have always done has seemed sensible and prudent.

Related is the situation in which we perceive that we understand the changing landscape better than we do. A clear instance is when we post the final published versions of our writings online because we wrongly believe ourselves to have the right to do so. The increasing prevalence of such accidental piracy fosters the misunderstanding that such practices are the right way to do open access. Such piracy is counter-productive on many levels and is unnecessary given that there are legal and technically better ways to pursue OA.

Such author-centered issues are the major stumbling block for green OA. The fact that many scholars do not have direct access to a home institutional repository is another factor. I tried to suggest that there are usually workarounds for this in my earlier comments. Your mentioning of the Social Science Research Network represents another possible solution that anthropologists should investigate more actively [see [Adam Leeds' comment about SSRN here on Savage Minds a while back](#)]. I have not yet given it the attention that it deserves as a possible option for anthropologists.

The biggest factor driving green OA are funder and especially institutional OA mandates (touched upon above). Those who are most eager to promote OA in anthropology can work locally to establish mandates in their home institutions. When a university such as Kansas or

California or a college such as Oberlin, or when (hypothetically) a research institute, applied anthropology agency or museum, establish a green OA mandate, this has the almost immediate effect of educating the entire research community at such an institution about the issues that we have been talking about, above and beyond the obvious direct benefit of bringing a large portion of that institution's research output into the OA domain. Such mandates can be established at the school or department level in instances where an institution-wide mandate cannot yet be achieved. The most prominent and persistent advocate for green OA and for green OA mandates is cognitive scientist Steven Harnad, who makes the case consistently and forcefully, on the basis of much evidence, at his website [Open Access Archivangelism](#).

On the gold OA front, the problems center on the business model question. Publishing costs money. In a reoriented scholarly publishing system emphasizing open access, where will that money come from? Alongside some misleading FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt) campaigning on the part of commercial publishers and their allies, there is a lot of hard work going into finding ways to address the business model issues. The money issues are real and I do not know of any serious advocate for change in scholarly publishing who does not acknowledge the need to address them. There is much work to do in many domains but no scholarly field needs to reinvent the wheel alone. There are many allies to be found and many solutions are already well underway. We now have actual gold journals—some quite prominent—about which we can ask questions like: How are you making this work? Who is paying your bills? What are your submission and acceptance rates? How much labor or money goes into formatting your articles? What is your preservation plan? Your succession plan? Your intellectual property strategy? Etc.

[As Chris Kelty has stressed most prominently](#), the changing publishing system is forcing (or will eventually force) scholarly societies to reconsider their roles in intellectual and public life, as well as the ways in which they support themselves financially—above and beyond their work as publishers or co-publishers. Scholarly society leaders really have no other choice but to do the hard work of thinking about the future in a world in which much is going to be different. This is not solely about publishing, but because so much of the life of scholarly societies has been wrapped up in publishing—as an activity of substantive importance and as a source, for some societies, of basic operating revenue—the future of scholarly publishing is deeply entwined with the future of scholarly societies. This relates to OA but is not limited to OA. For instance, separate from OA considerations, the AAA sections are seeing shifts in membership that are surely due in part to the restructuring of AAA's publishing program in the digital era. What benefits, above and beyond access to a journal, will a scholarly society provide? Are these rich enough to motivate individuals to join and remain members? These are the leading edge questions for scholarly societies now, but they are just the tip of the iceberg. I teach at a major research university and effectively no longer have any access to funding to support professional travel. Fewer and fewer have access to resources with which to attend professional meetings. How much longer can physical meetings and print journals be the center of gravity for any scholarly society? I do not want to suggest that society leaders are unaware of these dynamics. As a board member of the American Folklore Society and as a person who follows the AAA and several other societies closely, I know that they are. I am just echoing Chris in observing that it is not possible for society publishers or co-publishers to tackle publishing in isolation from other dramatic transformations of the present moment.

Partnerships with for-profit publishers as well as with not-for-profit organizations like JSTOR

and ProjectMuse have made journals an important revenue stream for those who publish or co-publish them. This is the sticky wicket. While I think that I know how a group of dedicated individuals working with the backing of a publishing society or organization could (along with library partners) sustainably move a major legacy journal out of the toll access column and into the gold open access one, my present efforts and advocacy have mainly focused first on the [easier to solve problems](#) and on experiments designed to as proof-of-concept efforts. For instance, at nearly no cost, the Open Folklore project has made the section journals published by the American Folklore Society (along with other journals in the field) openly available through a number of means, including through the [HathiTrust Digital Library](#). Those journals had not yet been turned into revenue generating machines, thus it was much easier to make them more open without any financial consequences. Other societies have similar scholarly content that could be made open without organizational consequences. The state-level anthropology society journals are finding their way into open access collections in this way. An example is the rich and important journal *Florida Anthropologist* published by the [Florida Anthropological Society](#) and now made available via the University of Florida Libraries.

In the proof-of-concept space, *Museum Anthropology Review* is very much a thriving experiment designed to learn how gold open access journals in anthropology and neighboring fields can work. I have learned a lot from MAR and am trying to use that experience to help other journals that are trying to make gold OA work in a sustainable and responsible way. Such project-by-project work can bring together pragmatists and ideologues of various stripes in the common work of increasing the amount of the scholarly literature that is openly accessible. We do not need to solve the most difficult problems first.

Let me return quickly to your special interest in the prospects for using the Social Science Research Network. As I say, I do not know enough yet about it to be an advocate (or critic), but I do know a little. Anthropologists are already making use of it. Legal anthropologists such as Annelise Riles (because SSRN is big with the law school community) are already there, making available their work in post-print form. Thus SSRN is not a potential stepping-stone to OA; it is one extant, working means of doing OA now. I am uneasy with the SSRN business model and technical infrastructure, but it is the main way that green OA is getting done in some institutions and disciplines. It is prominent part of the green OA ecology that we talked about earlier.

RA: *Can we return now to the second part of my earlier question about the difference between the "just another business model" view on the one hand (i.e. the way that some publishers are looking at this) and the position of OA advocates in anthropology who are rethinking what you call "scholarly research outputs"? Are these positions fundamentally at odds with one another?*

JB: Many commercial publishers are now engaged in what is called hybrid open access projects. These are based on providing authors with the option of purchasing full gold-like open access to their articles on behalf of their readers. There are also numerous journals in other fields that are fully gold open access journals that are built around the collection of author's fees. Some of these author fee-based journals are non-commercial journals that use fee revenue just to cover expenses while others are for-profit publishers. In the latter case, author fee revenue contributes, above and beyond expenses, to the overall profitability of the firm. In both the hybrid and commercial gold OA cases, authors are paying additional sums (separate from the older practices of paying page charges that began in the pre-digital era) for the purpose of making their work

openly available in final form while also publishing in the particular journals in question.

This is all rather foreign to most anthropologists. Pages charges were (and remain) rare in anthropology [*Economic Botany* is the only journal for which I was ever assessed page charges] and the costs associated with hybrid and author-pays gold open access publishing are beyond the ability of almost all anthropologists to pay. This system is predicated on a large grant, big lab system of scientific production that is rare in anthropology and impossible in the humanities. Recognizing this, some major universities have developed funds to subsidize such costs but this is also not at all a complete solution for anthropology. Anthropology, and folklore studies even more, are fields to which many different people working in many different settings can and do contribute regardless of ability to pay.

So for commercial publishers, author-pays forms of OA are increasingly seen as another viable/profitable business model, but for most anthropologists and folklorists, it is a business model that does not seem to make sense for their fields, even if in other fields it has produced remarkable and largely positive effects.

Not all OA advocates in anthropology think alike about inevitable and/or desired changes in scholarly communication. They possess a diversity of motivations and experiences and they sometimes advocate different goals. Some are more reform minded and some are more revolutionary. Some are animated by technical, intellectual, or organizational interests, while others are driven by questions of fairness, research ethics, or social justice.

My own individual engagements touch on a mix of concerns and experiences, but my greatest partners and teachers have been librarians working on scholarly communications issues and projects. As an ethnographer working in historically disadvantaged communities, I am very sensitive to the ethics of OA but I am also very much aligned with librarians and the work they do for scholars and in the public interest. My OA work aims to reduce (rather than increase) the ways in which large (ever more consolidated) multinational corporations control the dissemination of our work. (Many OA advocates are not at all focused on such macroeconomic concerns. As I say, different motivations are at work for different individuals and groups.)

Somewhat separate from OA, I want to strengthen those university press [and small scale commercial] publishers who have long supported our fields and I am especially eager to champion those university presses who are experimenting with open access themselves.

I have long cared about the serials crisis and now that the world is thinking more critically about student debt, I want us all to realize the direct relationship between the scholarly communications system, and the scholarly society system, and the neoliberalization of the American research university. Skyrocketing tuition is a consequence of public disinvestment in public universities like mine and yours. Leasing (we no longer purchase) toll access scholarship at ever higher costs from exceedingly profitable commercial firms (and their society partners) is not helping close the inequality gap in higher education. It is hardly the only factor involved (ex: think health care costs) but it is one of the few factors in which faculty and graduate students have a direct role to play—as authors, as disciplinary policy shapers, as peer-reviewers, as editors, etc. As contributors to the scholarly publishing system, we have choices available to us. We can make our work open in a number of ways and we can support and encourage those

whose values and commitments align with our own. As I noted in my remarks to the [2010 AcademiX conference on open access](#), the main problems that we face now are not technical; they're human factors problems of the sort that we have been discussing. As I'll try to suggest in my presentation on the [Open Folklore project](#) at the upcoming AAA meetings, librarians remain among our greatest partners and allies in this work.

Ryan Anderson: *I think this last point you make about the direct role that faculty and graduate students play in all this is really important. We all have choices, and ultimately the publishing and communication system is what we make of it. So, as a last question for you, what advice do you have for people who are interested in these issues but unsure where to start looking for others who share similar concerns, values, and commitments?*

Jason Baird Jackson: The open access community is by its very nature, open. In North American and European contexts, finding folks eager to help students and established scholars negotiate these questions is pretty easy. If one is at a university with a research- oriented library, there will be one or more librarians specializing in these issues. Such librarians often lead workshops on such topics as “author’s rights,” “copyright issues for scholars,” and “open access.” Librarians have a strong service ethic and are usually very eager to help scholars get their bearings on these topics. They are SO eager to find faculty allies on these questions. If you give them a moment, they will also passionately explain why OA matters so much to the future of the library and its public service mission.

While research libraries at larger universities are often a center of gravity for information and resources on these topics, librarians at teaching colleges are often just as energized and knowledgeable about these matters because, given their scale and budgets, open access is even more important to them as they seek to serve their campuses. Librarian [Barbara Fister](#) at Gustavus Adolphus College is a great example. She writes wonderful columns on these topics for [Inside Higher Education](#) and [Library Journal](#). She’s the kind of thinker, activist, and explainer who is very accessible online. I have already mentioned Peter Suber and the explanatory resources that he has assembled with the help of the larger community.

There are organizations working on the creation of educational resources and tools that scholars should know about. In addition to organizations and databases that I have already mentioned, I would want colleagues to know about the Creative Commons and its work in this area. The [Creative Commons website](#) is a place to begin. There one can find great explanatory videos and other resources. Of special relevance within The Creative Commons organization are its science efforts, including the Science Commons project and the [Scholar’s Copyright Project](#).

Also relating specifically to OA, [SPARC](#) (The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) is a great organization with great resources.

[Open Access Week](#), held each fall, is a major opportunity for educational projects and efforts worldwide.

The work of the [Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media](#) at George Mason University is also vital to the development of this sector. CHNM works at the point where scholarly communications issues meet the digital humanities and open source software

development. They make invaluable software tools like Zotero, and Omeka and have organized innovative projects such as the OA book *Hacking the Academy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), to which I contributed a small essay on scholarly communications.

It's good for scholars to better understand the actual links connecting open access scholarship and open source software. Available itself in an OA edition, Chris Kelty's book *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) addresses this link. Open source software platforms such as [Open Journal Systems](#) and [DSpace](#) are crucial for open access. In some ways technical protocols that allow open access projects to talk with one another and share information are even more important. The most crucial of these is the [Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting](#) (OAI-PMH). Just as I wish more of us were working to understand who pays the bills for the current scholarly communications system, I also wish more of us appreciated the ways that technical systems and choices were alternatively closing down or opening up opportunities for the circulation and preservation of our scholarship.

Just as open access has ties to alternative intellectual property systems such as the Creative Commons and to free software/open source software projects, it is also connected to efforts at creating and sharing freely available educational resources with students and lifelong learners. This domain is called Open Educational Resources (OER). Scholars can investigate OER efforts such as [Connexions](#), [OER Commons](#), and [MIT OpenCourseWare](#).

Talking about software development and metadata protocols is a terribly boring way to end our conversation. If our colleagues would like to be introduced to this world in a more fun way, there are many very accessible videos that have been produced to address the issues we have been discussing. Among my favorites are [a great series of five one minute videos](#) produced in German and English by OA advocates in Germany and a really hilarious critique of commercial scholarly publishing by Alex O. Holcombe called "[Scientist Meets Publisher](#)." It's not funny like the Holcombe piece, but a very helpful introduction to "Author's Rights" for scholarly authors is [a video by SPARC on Blip.tv](#).

In our corner of scholarship, there is a vibrant community of anthropologists and folklorists working towards the goals of OA. There are new journals and projects coming online all the time. The circle of scholars joining the conversation is expanding and thus we have more and more colleagues to turn to for help and more opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the effort as individuals. Given the relationship between much of our scholarship and the (often disadvantaged) communities within which we work, our fields have an extra-ordinarily good set of reasons for making OA work. If the physicists can find a way to do it, certainly we can as well.

RA: *That's a great point to end with. And I agree with you that we have plenty of reasons to work toward OA. Thanks for taking the time to do this interview, Jason. I hope we can keep these conversations going, here and elsewhere.*

JB: Thank you very much Ryan for this opportunity and for all of the ways that you are working towards OA goals.