4. Publishing as a Relational Practice: Radical Open Access and Experimentation

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> What is on the other side of the agential cut is not separate from us—agential separability is not individuation. Ethics is therefore not about right response to a radically exterior/ized other, but about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming of which we are a part.
>
> —Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*[1]

In the previous chapter, I shortly outlined how the system of material production that historically developed around the scholarly book—encompassing its production, distribution, and consumption—and that helped establish a contingent configuration of powerful stakeholders has played an essential role in the creation of the book as a stable object and a commodity. This book-object, as a technology with specific material and aesthetic features, has in intra-action with these structures and relations again shaped our modern scholarly communication system, influencing future journal and book forms. Yet what I predominantly focused on in chapter 3 is how the various discourses that were formulated around the history of the book played an active role in this development—in particular, how discursive power struggles between different stakeholders were—and are—often set up around binary oppositions (i.e., culture--market, technology-society, scholarship-publishing, open-closed) and differing value systems around propriety, property, and the public good. What is clear is that the outcomes of these struggles, around the origin of the book and peer review, for example, have had a material influence on the format and role of the book. In particular, there is a need to acknowledge here how the often single-sided positions taken in by book (and media) historians have materially shaped the book's becoming.

I have therefore proposed a reframing of this discourse at certain important points, showing how alternative book-historical genealogies highlight that it was technological, economical, and institutional factors and structures combined, and the struggles among them, that stimulated the development of the book into both a product and a value-laden object of knowledge exchange within academia. At the same time, I have tried to show how a reframing of specific narratives (around the press and publishing and around openness, for example), while being aware of and emphasizing the performativity of our discursive practices, can be beneficial to battle the ongoing commodification of the book. Chapter 3 thus highlighted how creating alternative material-discursive incisions in our scholarship, in the way it is historicized, might help develop a more constructive critique of some of the excessive forms of scholarship's

ongoing marketization—such as the increasing need for measurement and audit criteria and for commercially viable and innovative forms of research.

This chapter explores various recently developed alternatives to our academic publishing system as it is presently set up, focusing on those that not only intend to change the way we publish but also have the potential to change academia as a whole. To provide an example, these alternatives include publishing initiatives that not only want to increase equitable access to books in order to battle the object formation and increasing commodification of the book, but also intend to ask important questions on the material nature of books, authorship, copyright, originality, responsibility, and fixity, too—issues that lie at the basis of our modern (humanist) system of scholarly communication and its relations of production. This chapter therefore focuses on the two remaining aspects of the strategy I proposed toward recutting the book as commodity in the previous chapter. There I explored the first step of this strategy by intervening in and reframing the discourse that surrounds the past and future of the book. Here I examine two further steps—namely, reimagining the institutions and modes of material production surrounding the book and, related to that, reperforming our own entangled scholarly research, communication, and publishing practices. I explore how these strategies offer opportunities to intervene in the current cultures of knowledge production in both publishing *and* academia.

To investigate potential alternatives, this chapter begins by focusing on some of the people and projects that are exploring more radical forms of *open scholarship* and *open access*. Related to that, it examines some of the forms a politics of the book based on openness might take, where a politics of the book is concerned with exploring how we can criticize and potentially start to change the cultures of material and technological production that surround scholarly communication in such a way as to allow for alternative, more ethical, critical, and responsible forms of research to emerge. One way to do this is by rethinking and deconstructing the object formation of scholarship, both as part of academia's impact and audit culture and as part of the publishing market's focus on commercially profitable book commodities. This can be achieved not by ignoring the fact that the book is and needs to be cut at some point in time (and thus cannot only be a processual and never-ending project) but by focusing on what *other boundaries* we might emphasize and take responsibility for. For example, we could cut down research at alternative points in its development or emphasize other forms of relationality that do not (solely) revolve around the book--object or the humanist author-subject. How might these aid us in critiquing the ongoing capitalization of research?

The second part of this chapter concentrates on research and publishing efforts that are investigating *experimentation* as a specific discourse and practice of critique, in particular as a counterpoint to narratives of *innovation*. The latter focus on how perpetual innovation can strengthen the knowledge economy, encouraging the intensification of relationships between higher education and industry to support economic growth and outcomes that enable that growth. This business rhetoric of innovation accompanies the university of excellence and more neoliberal visions of openness in publishing, where it limits the value of "disruption" to increasing the marketability and further object formation of scholarship. I instead explore a number of publishing initiatives here for which experimenting with the book and the way we perform our scholarly practices has been an essential aspect of their publishing endeavors. For these projects, experimenting is very much an *affirmative* speculative practice, a means to reperform our existing scholarly institutions and practices in potentially more ethical and responsible ways; opening up spaces for otherness and differentiation beyond our hegemonic conceptual knowledge frameworks; and exploring more inclusive forms of knowledge, open to ambivalence and failure. As such, I outline how in order to sustain affirmative critiques of the object formation of the scholarly monograph (and scholarly research more in general), we need radical forms of open access that include experimentation.

Based on theories related to mattering, relationality, and an ethics of care, and a reading of works on feminist poetics of responsibility, the concluding section of this chapter explores how various scholar-led publishing initiatives, often as part of their publishing experiments, are currently moving away from a predominant focus on the outcomes of publishing. Rather than concentrating on scholarly products and objects, these initiatives want to instead draw attention to the *relationalities of publishing*, taking into consideration issues such as the amount of free and hidden labor involved in publishing, the lack of transparency and diversity in peer-review and citation practices, and the roles various human and nonhuman actors play in the production and circulation of books. This recognition of the diversity of relations at work in publishing and scholarly communication presents a potential alternative to the hegemony of specific forms of relationality in contemporary publishing—that is, ones in which the logic of the commodity tends to be imposed on all social relations.

Radical Open Access

The alternative genealogy of openness I outlined in the previous chapter focuses on the complex interaction between openness and secrecy, as a form of closure, and on

the intricate relationship between the concept and practice of openness and the development of our modern system of scholarly communication. Extending from this, I want to offer a short account here of the different ways in which openness and open access have recently been theorized and practiced. What this shows is that openness—-which, as I made clear earlier, functions as a floating signifier—and especially open access have indeed increasingly been taken up in neoliberal rhetoric and politics. However, contrary to Tkacz and those critics of open access that relate it or its roots to neoliberalism or see its current uptake as part of profit-focused, author-pays models as exemplary, I explore how the understanding of open access, openness, and open science has been heavily contested and how separate discourses on the concept of openness have been developed within the scholarly communication realm.[2] Extending from that, and in response to Tkacz's prompt to explore open projects more closely, I take a more contextualized look at some specific open access projects in the next section.[3] If we analyze specific instances of how openness is practiced and theorized, it becomes clear that open access is not one thing, that its meaning is highly disputed, that it is (or can be) implemented in different ways, and that this leads to different and often contrasting politics. For neither the same rhetoric nor the same underlying motivations for openness are shared by the different groups of people involved in open access practices; openness, as Leslie Chan has argued, "is not a binary condition, but is highly situational, contingent, and dependent on context" and different groups theorize openness according to different underlying value systems.[4] It is important to emphasize this because if the implementation of open access in the UK, for instance, continues to proceed along the lines of the government's adaptation of the recommendations outlined in the Finch report—which I discuss ahead—then there is a risk that this policy-driven version of open access will become the dominant or hegemonic narrative, subsuming the variety of discourses (and practices) that currently exist on open access, as well as its multifaceted history.[5]

The emphasis I am placing here on the sheer variety that makes up the schools of thought on openness and open access also serves to counter the vision that open access is intrinsically connected to neoliberalist discourses and practices, and it enables me to argue instead that it can, at least potentially, be used as a powerful critique of these systems. For example, practices and theories of *radical open access* are critical of openness in its neoliberal guises, but still try to engage with the open in an affirmative way too.[6] These projects don't necessarily adhere to a teleological vision of openness (toward the goal of more openness, whatever that would be), but argue instead that openness is not about being *more open*, for instance, but is rather about

being open to change and experimentation—depending on the contingent circumstances, the political and ethical decisions and cuts that need to be made, and so on. This is a process of continual critique, without necessarily being forward-looking in a teleological sense. In our ongoing affirmative politics and practices of the open, we have to make decisions and thus close down the open; however, we can start to think more responsibly and ethically about the closures we enact and enable in our communication practices and through our systems of knowledge production: for instance, by focusing on creating difference as part of the decisions (which are also *in*cisions or enactments of closure) we make, and by promoting otherness, variety, and processual becoming. Therefore, instead of shying away from these closures, these boundaries that are already implied in openness, might a more interesting approach not be to explore how these decisions are made, by whom, and how we can recut them in different ways? And might it not be more interesting to do so especially with respect to how we currently publish our scholarly books? It is for this reason that I want to both reclaim and put forward an alternative version of open access, one that targets calculative business-oriented approaches directly and instead positions open access as an ongoing critical project. Focused on experimentation and the exploration of new institutions, relationalities, and practices, this approach toward openness, examining new formats and stimulating sharing and reuse of content as part of a knowledge commons, can be seen as a radical alternative to, and critique of, the business ethics underlying innovations in the knowledge economy. It also offers a potential way to break through the object formation and commodification of the scholarly book—-something that, as this chapter shows, prevails in the neoliberal vision of open access, which sees the book as a product—and the exploitation of scholarly communications as capital, as objects to sustain and innovate the knowledge economy.

To illustrate this diversity of uptake, the neoliberal vision of open access publishing as envisioned in the Finch report will be contrasted with forms of radical open access publishing, drawing on some recent experiments that try to challenge and rethink the book as commodity, as well as the political economy surrounding it, by cutting the book *together and apart* differently.[7] To do this, I compare the motives that the Finch report identifies as being fundamental to open access with the values and relationalities underlying these radical open access publishing experiments. This discussion of open access concludes with an exploration of what an open politics of the book could potentially be, the latter being a politics that has its base in forms of open-ended experimentation but that at the same time remains aware of, and takes responsibility for, the boundaries that still need to be enacted.

The Neoliberal Discourse on Open Access

Neoliberalism, which broadly defined focuses on the reshaping of culture and society according to the demands and needs of the market, has infiltrated higher education on different levels. Neoliberalism has turned capitalism from a mode of production into a cultural logic, where economic freedom is seen as the necessary precondition for political freedom. David Harvey, in his history of neoliberalism, describes it as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade."[8] Yet in many ways it goes beyond this; theorists such as Wendy Brown (extending from Foucault) conceptualize neoliberalism as a political rationality that extends market values and economic rationality beyond the economy *into all dimensions of human life*, including our educational institutions, where they become part of our social actions. Neoliberalism should thus be seen as a form of governmentality that "produces subjects, forms of citizenship and behavior, and a new organization of the social."[9]

Within this mode of thinking, not only are universities forced to act more and more like profit-making enterprises instead of public institutions—in a process that also involves the ongoing privatization of higher education in the UK, for example—but the focus of the knowledge economy is also placed to an ever-higher degree on the extensive standardization and economic exploitation of knowledge as a form of capital produced within these universities.[10] This leads to a situation wherein researchers within the knowledge economy are asked to produce research that feeds directly into and sustains the neoliberal economy.[11] As part of this, procedures and measures have been put in place to quantify and measure research *outputs* in specific, as part of a neoliberal knowledge regime structured around market-based performance indicators, feeding an impact agenda that increasingly determines public funding of research. This regime revolves around and further reinforces the vision that knowledge functions as a form of capital, turning research into commodities and intellectual property, knowledge into a product to be owned, and interactions around it to data to be mined. Here the value of research is in danger of being narrowly measured in economic terms, instead of, to provide just one example, perceiving knowledge and scholarly research in terms of a commons of shared knowledge, something to value as a public good or as part of a gift economy, as a process and relationship, rather than as a product.[12]

Increasingly, open access publishing is featuring in neoliberal discourses in higher education and government as a system to promote innovation and transparency of research (fitting in well with the aforementioned audit culture).[13] Open access supports the knowledge economy by making access to information more efficient and cost-effective, which includes making it easier for knowledge, as a form of capital, to be taken up by businesses for commercial reuse, stimulating economic competition and innovation. Following this discourse, open access also means knowledge objects and their dissemination and impact can be more efficiently and continuously monitored and hence can be better made accountable as measurable outputs as part of audit cultures: think of experiments with bibliometrics, for example, or other calculative practices and performance indicators used as tools to rank and index scholars and their universities, and to stimulate greater accountability and transparency of research. In conclusion, according to this neoliberal rhetoric, society—or, better said, the individual taxpayer—gets improved value for its money or return on investment with open access, while making it ever more convenient for business and industry to capitalize on academic knowledge.[14]

The *openness* of the discourse around open access has made it easy to incorporate in a neoliberal context. For example, Martin Eve, although critical of an equation of open access with neoliberalism, argues that open access is easily connected to measures related to the REF, the system used to assess research quality in the UK, with its impact agenda and call for transparency and the privatization of knowledge.[15] This connection can be used to explain to some extent the current resistance of certain (groups of) scholars to open access, again related to its potential for promoting audit cultures—which are severely refashioning the working environment and affecting the subjectivities of academics—and state or institutional control.[16] This opposition focuses on, among other issues, how in the open access system promoted by the UK government (together with funding agencies and research councils—including the seven UK Research Councils and Research England, under the umbrella UK Research and Innovation [UKRI] organization), universities—more specifically, university management—will have more widespread control over their academics' ability to publish. These scholars argue against the article processing charge (APC) model, a specific implementation of gold open access, in which in order to publish in an open access journal, a fee needs to be paid beforehand (e.g., by one's institution). They argue that this model, favored in the Finch report, is an attack on the academic freedom of researchers to choose where they will publish and will most likely be aligned with the REF's impact agenda.[17] In this view, these academics are not

necessarily against increasing access to scholarly publications, but they are afraid that the policy recommendations of transparency and openness will be used as an instrumentalist justification for the imposition of a certain version of open access: one that has the potential to promote a further expansion of neoliberalism and that, as sociologist John Holmwood has argued, will function to "open all activities to the market and reduce public accountability of its operation."[18]

To explore this neoliberal rhetoric surrounding open access in more depth, I want to take a closer look at the report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings, entitled *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence: How to Expand Access to Research Publications*—or the Finch report, as it is more commonly known, after its chair, Dame Janet Finch. This is an independent study commissioned by then UK government science minister David Willetts, released in June 2012 and drawing on the advice and support of a group of representatives of the research, library, and publishing communities. It proved to be a seminal document that set the trend toward recommending the implementation of a certain kind of open access in the UK.[19] The study set out to produce a series of recommendations for making a transition toward and developing an open access publishing system in the UK. The report recommends the further implementation of author-side fees for the open access publishing of journals, in which, as previously outlined, an APC will be needed to cover the publishing costs. This fee, paid for by authors or in most cases by their institutions, will enable the article to be opened up to the wider public under a CC BY license (as recommended by the Finch report). This is a strategy that can be seen to maintain and favor the system of communication (or *ecology*, as the Finch report calls it) as it is currently set up.[20] In this gold APC-based system, publishers' profits will be sustained; in green open access, on the other hand, depositing of articles in repositories will not require an APC, for example.

All the recommendations that came out of the Finch report were subsequently accepted by the UK government, to be implemented by the four UK higher education funding bodies and the research councils. Yet growing critique of the Finch report and the government's open access policy led to a House of Lords inquiry and to a report from the House of Commons' select committee of members of parliament (MPs) that oversees the work of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), which was released after the committee conducted an inquiry into this policy. This report called on the government and RCUK to reconsider their preference for gold open access given widespread evidence of the importance of repositories and green open access in the move toward an open access publishing system. The full focus on APCs as

the main route to open access as laid out in the Finch report (and taken on by government) and the downplaying of the importance of the green option is here seen as a mistake. This preference for APC-based models, against better judgment, makes clear how Willets and Finch's priorities from the outset lay with protecting the UK publishing industry. As Philip Sykes, a librarian on the Finch panel, has said, "It's not in the interests of UK scholarship to make recommendations which undermine the sustainability of the publishing industry."[21] This has provoked Stevan Harnad to conclude that "the Finch Report is a successful case of lobbying by publishers to protect the interests of publishing at the expense of the interests of research and the public that funds research."[22] The Finch report made an active recommendation to adopt a system that simply redistributes costs from libraries to researchers and their institutions, without challenging the commercial premises that underlie this system and without any real mechanism to exert downward price pressure on APCs for scholars and their universities wanting to publish research in open access. Instead of research itself, what are being sustained here are the exorbitant profit margins of publishing industries.

The Finch report also offers recommendations to ensure sustainable and efficient models for future scholarly communication, defining, among other things, the criteria for success with regard to how to reach this goal. In the following quote related to APCs, the report accurately illustrates the neoliberal vision of promoting market mechanisms in higher education and of universities acting as businesses or "purchasers" within an APC realm: "The measures we recommend will bring greater competition on price as well as the status of the journals in which researchers wish to publish. We therefore expect market competition to intensify, and that universities and funders should be able to use their power as purchasers to bear down on the costs to them both of APCs and of subscriptions."[23]

Here a neoliberal vision of market rationality is clearly upheld. As Lawson et al. explain, "By introducing a transparent market for individual transactions within the academic publishing system, we can see that the UK coalition government's support of APC-funded open access is congruent with their neoliberal agenda. The journal article is construed as a commodified unit of exchange, and market competition will determine the economic value of that unit."[24] However, as Eve also argues, our academic "goods for sale" are unique, noncomparable, and nonsubstitutable (i.e., a journal article cannot be simply substituted for another); this works against competitive market price pressure.[25] As Eve makes clear, without a price point, then,

"rates will be based on what the market will bear, rather than what it actually costs, which will continue the ongoing hyperinflationary serials crisis."[26]

But this neoliberal vision toward open access comes to the fore even more directly when we look at the motivations underlying the wider dissemination of research that the Finch report identifies and supports. According to the report, improving the flows of information and knowledge will promote the following:

- enhanced transparency, openness and accountability, and public engagement with research;
- closer linkages between research and innovation, with benefits for public policy and services, and for economic growth;
- improved efficiency in the research process itself, through increases in the amount of information that is readily accessible, reductions in the time spent in finding it, and greater use of the latest tools and services to organize, manipulate and analyze it; increased returns on the investments made in research, especially the investments from public funds.[27]

In short, according to the vision of the Finch report, "these are the motivations behind the growth of the world-wide open access movement": promoting greater transparency, accountability, innovation, economic growth, efficiency, and return on investment.[28] The report thus locates the values underlying open access for the most part in the effect it will have on the knowledge economy and on how it will be a valuable return on investment. Here, again, the focus is not on improving access or rethinking the profit model; it is about promoting the knowledge economy and about publishing economics, about valuing publishers' business models.

Not-for-Profit and Scholar-Led Alternatives

Motivations for experimenting with forms of open academic publishing are not only focused on serving the knowledge economy, however, as implied previously. Many open access advocates, for instance, perceive open access as a movement and a practice that actually has the potential to critique and provide alternatives to the increasing marketization of higher education and scholarly publishing. Yet the schools of thought involved in open access publishing and research can be said to be more wide-reaching, more complex and enmeshed, even than that. It will therefore not be fruitful to create yet another dichotomy, distinguishing neoliberal motives for open access publishing from anti-neoliberal ones, as John Holmwood implies, for instance.[29]

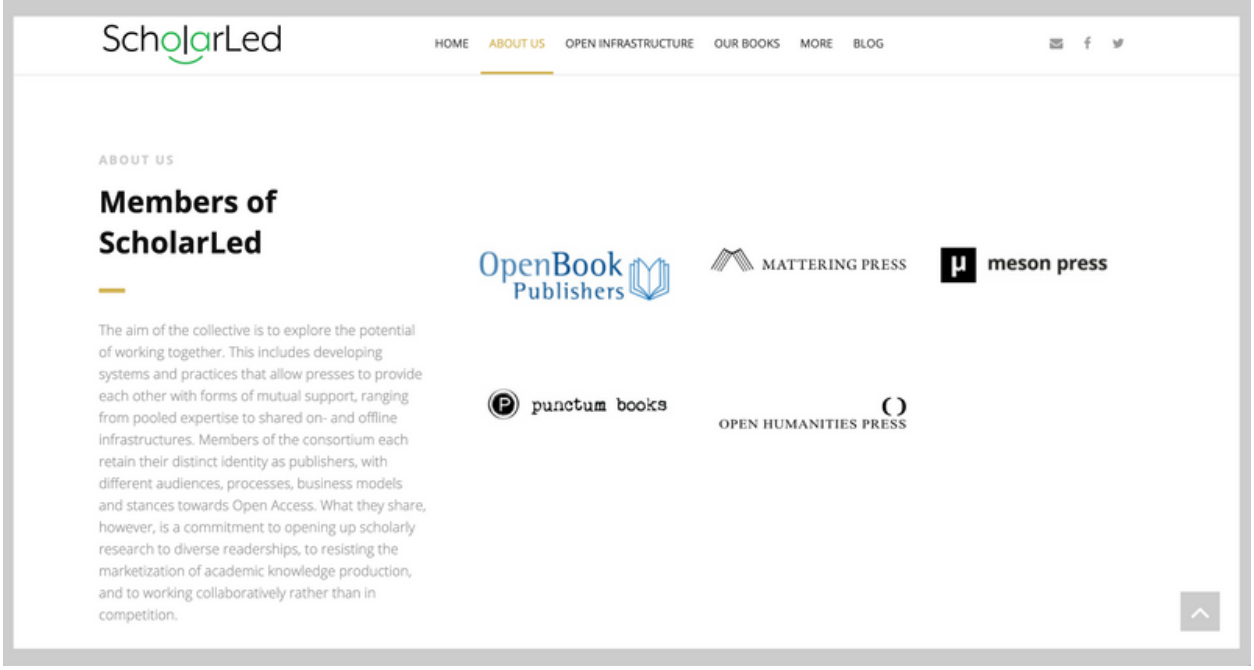

Figure 1
Website of the ScholarLed Collective of presses (see footnote 30).

What I want to explore at this point are examples of experiments with openness in digital publishing as part of which organizations or individuals offer affirmative, practical dimensions through their uptake, critique, and experimenting with openness; as such, they work with their own, alternative value systems that cannot easily be classified as the negative side of a dialectic. Instead, these initiatives can be seen to endorse another set of principles, based on a different underlying system of ethics, distinct from the motivations for open access as defined by the Finch report. Mostly scholar-led and centered, they experiment with making research available on an open access basis using new formats such as liquid monographs, wiki publications, and remixed books; they abide by a not-for-profit ethos, working collaboratively to build a noncompetitive publishing ecosystem (including open, community-governed infrastructures) and to support a progressive knowledge commons based on mutual reliance and cooperation; bottom-up, pluralistic, and community-led, they aim to stimulate a diverse system of scholarly communications as part of their publishing experiments.[30]

In addition, through the establishment of new, alternative institutions, practices, and infrastructures, they try to challenge and reconceptualize scholarly communication while simultaneously experimenting with and rethinking openness itself. This approach toward openness can be seen as a potentially radical alternative to, and a critique of, the business ethics underlying innovations in the knowledge economy. At the same

time, it is an approach focused on creating strong alternatives that try to break down the commercial object formation that has encompassed the scholarly book, by envisioning open access as an ongoing critical and collective project.

What I am calling *radical open access*, as shorthand, is not one thing, nor is it an overarching plan. It consists of various groups, peoples, institutions, and projects with their own affordances.[31] Moreover, radical open access is also a contingent and contextual approach that cannot easily be pinned down as, again, it is an ongoing critical project, one that endeavors to embrace its own inconsistencies and struggles with its own conceptions of openness. Nonetheless, I want to highlight some points of similarity that radical open access projects seem to share—not least as a way of contrasting them to the vision of open access put forward in the Finch report. These points of similarity are illustrated by looking at three examples in particular of what can be seen by now as classic radical open access initiatives that have tried to experiment with progressive, counterinstitutional alternatives: Open Humanities Press, Ted Striphas's Differences & Repetitions wiki, and Kathleen Fitzpatrick's experiments with open peer review for her book *Planned Obsolescence*.[32]

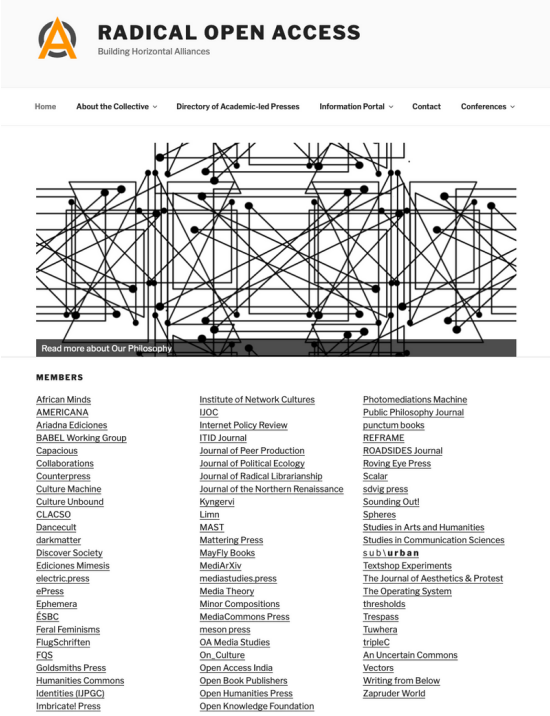

Figure 3
The website of the Radical Open Access Collective (see footnote 31).

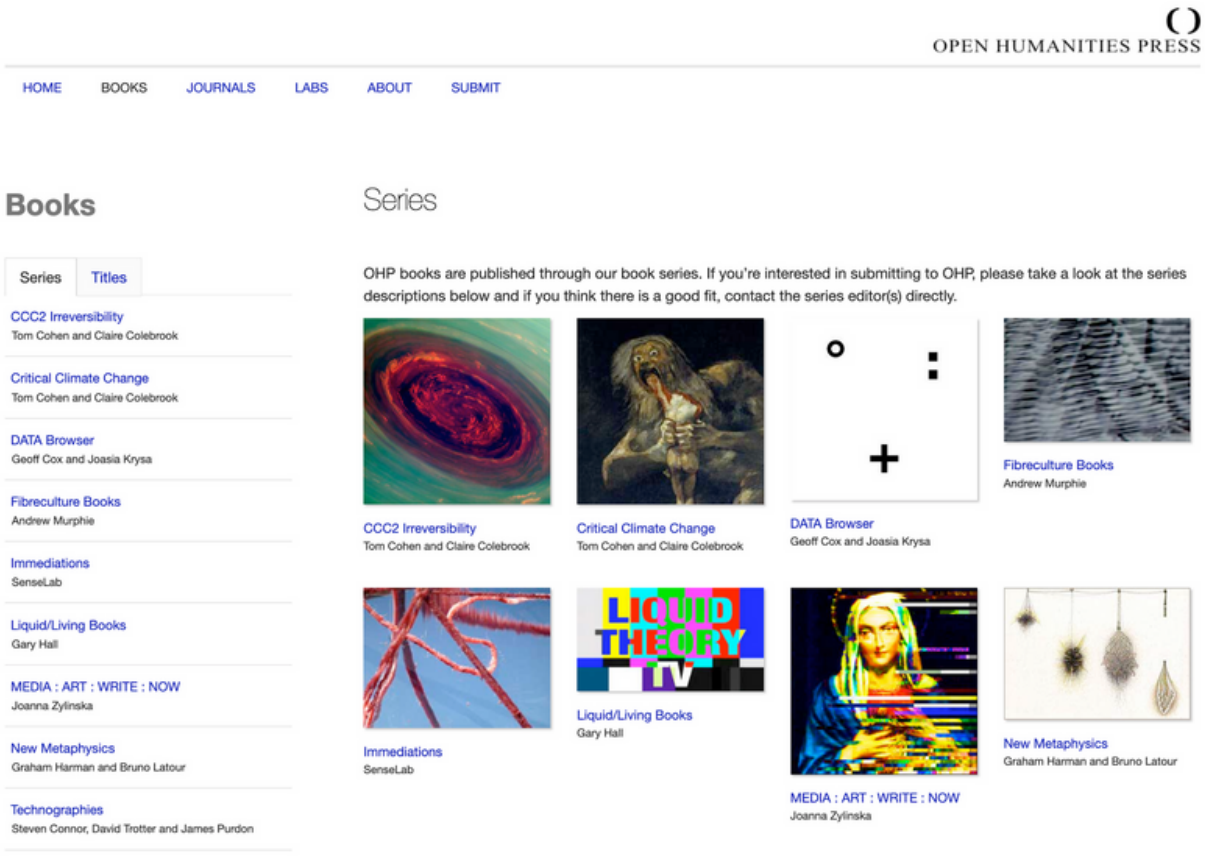

Figure 4
List of book series published by Open Humanities Press.

Open Humanities Press (OHP, see Figure 4) is an international open access publishing collective in critical and cultural theory, founded in 2006 as an independent volunteer initiative by "open access journal editors, librarians and IT professionals," experimenting with open access journal and book publishing.[33] As an international collective, OHP involves multiple self-governing scholarly communities, operating as a radically heterogeneous collective. OHP focuses on countering negative perceptions that still exist concerning open access and online publishing by creating a trustworthy, reliable, high-quality system for those scholars skeptical about online modes of distribution and dissemination. Battling these negative perceptions serves two goals, OHP argues: first, it makes experimentation with new business models possible and can therefore work to help solve the current publishing crisis in the arts and humanities; second, it paves the way for further experiments in scholarly communication—with new forms of writing and publishing and with open content and open editing, for instance—something that stands at the basis of OHP's projects.[34]

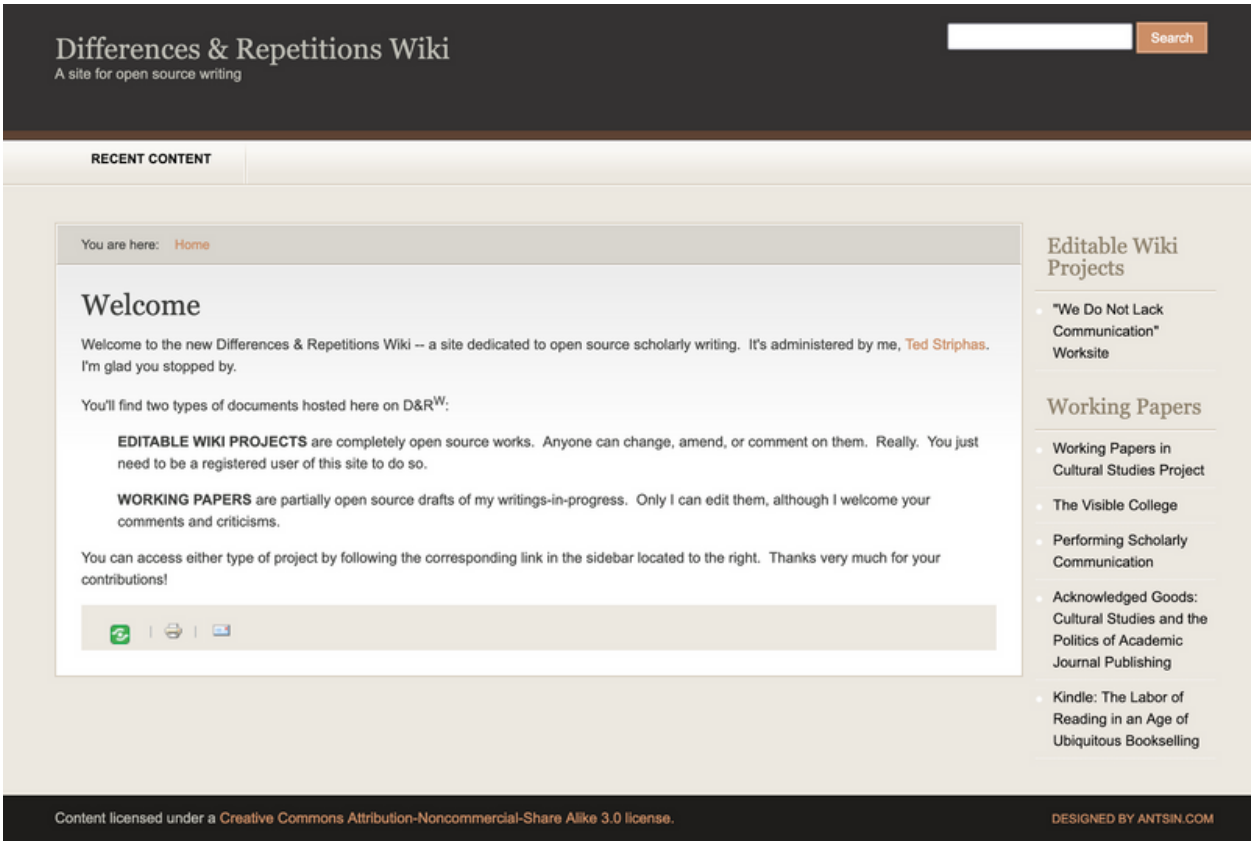

Figure 5
Ted Striphas's Differences & Repetitions wiki

The Differences & Repetitions wiki (see Figure 5) is a site for open source writing (along the lines of libre/read-write open access), which was set up by cultural theorist Ted Striphas. It contains fully editable wiki projects and working papers (which are not openly editable) and was built by Striphas using free open source software. As a personal (though at the same time collaborative) archive of writings, Striphas explores here what it means to publish scholarly findings in a different way and to experiment with new, digital, collaborative writing practices that try not to give in to the compulsion to repeat established habits.

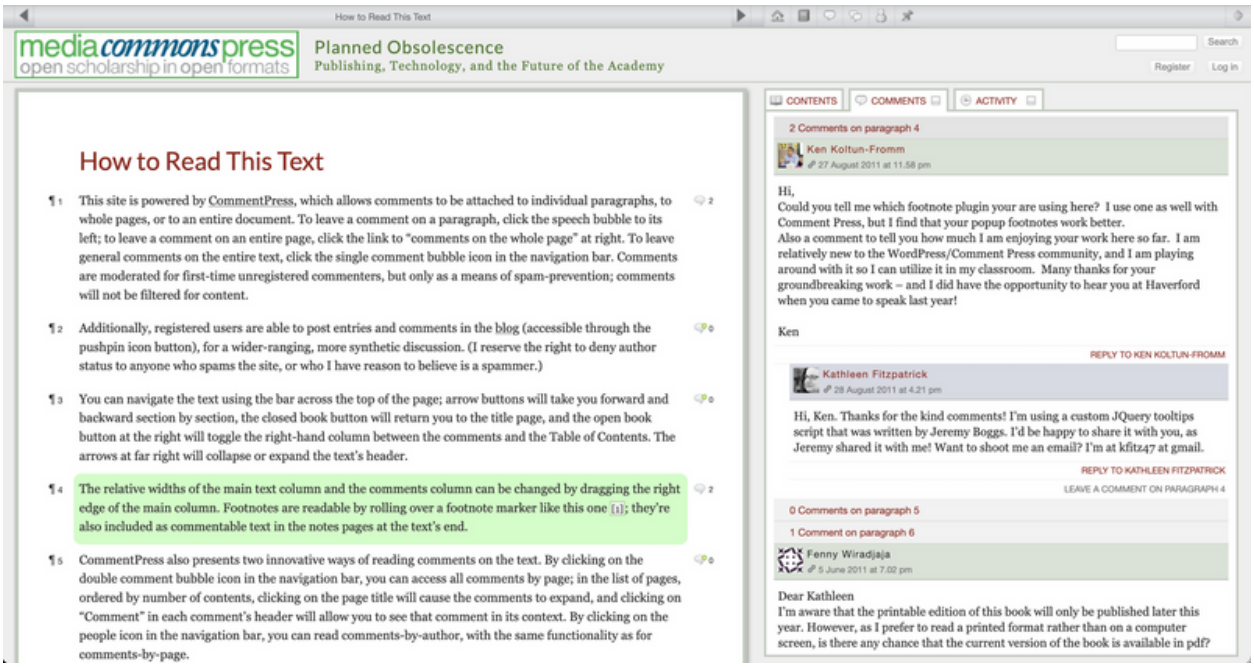

Figure 6
Planned Obsolescence on the MediaCommons Press platform.

Media theorist Kathleen Fitzpatrick coestablished MediaCommons, a scholarly publishing community, to build networks and collaborations among media scholars. She used MediaCommons Press (see Figure 6), a digital text platform and publishing experiment from MediaCommons, to openly review the manuscript of her book *Planned Obsolescence*. Adopting CommentPress software—a WordPress plug-in that allows comments to be made next to specific paragraphs of text—the draft was made available online in 2009 to potential reviewers and commentators (alongside a traditional peer review process by NYU Press).

When examining these projects more closely, it first of all becomes clear that they all offer a practical, affirmative engagement with open access: making research openly available lies at the basis of their publishing practices and is integral to it. Openness enables them to *collaborate* on publishing projects more directly, to create scholarly communities around research. This communal aspect is clearly visible in the Differences & Repetitions wiki, for example, where the collaborative open source aspect of the project enables discursive communities to be created around documents. This has made Striphas reconsider "his sense of propriety" over the works and made him question how we can "curate academic research so as to encourage more broad--ranging engagement with it."[35] Similarly, MediaCommons Press publishes longer-form digital writing in an open way to create communities of collaboration around it. It does so mainly via the open community reviewing of texts, building upon the

MediaCommons network of scholars, students, and practitioners in media studies, which is at its root community-driven. Kathleen Fitzpatrick makes this connection between openness and community creation all the more clear when she reflects on the motivations behind MediaCommons: “The more we thought about the purposes behind electronic scholarly publishing, the more we became focused on the need not simply to provide better access to discrete scholarly texts but rather to reinvigorate intellectual discourse, and thus connections, amongst peers (and, not incidentally, discourse between the academy and the wider intellectual public).”[36]

However, next to establishing practical community-driven and scholar-led alternatives to the present scholarly publishing system, these initiatives also serve to question the system of (commercial) academic publishing as it is currently set up—a system that, as I outlined in the previous chapter, functions increasingly according to market needs. These projects thus also aim to critique the commodification and commercialization of research in and through academic publishing. For example, Fitzpatrick highlights the importance of establishing open access presses in order to save certain forms of specialized research, such as the monograph, from obsolescence in the current “fiscally impossible” system of scholarly publishing. This as part of an effort to rethink our publishing practices and to “revitalize the academy.”[37] Gary Hall, cofounder of OHP, similarly notes that the current profit-driven publishing system does not allow space for works that are specialized, advanced, difficult, or avant-garde, but favors instead more marketable products, making academia as a whole, as he states, “intellectually impoverished.”[38] These publishing initiatives therefore highlight, in a shared critique, how our current publishing system increasingly serves marketization instead of our communication needs as academics; as Striphas points out, “The system is functioning *only too well* these days—just not for the scholars it is intended to serve.”[39]

What’s more, we can see how experiments in radical open access not only aim to stimulate access and reuse of scholarly content by critiquing the economics and excessive commercialization of the current scholarly publishing system and by setting up their own alternative publishing institutions. For these initiatives, open access also forms the starting point for a further interrogation of our (humanist) institutions, practices, notions of academic authorship, the book, content creation, copyright, and publication, among other things. Here the focus is on exploring the kinds of ethical and responsible questions that, according to Hall, “we really should have been asking all along.”[40] This questioning of institutions also focuses on the hegemonic print-on-paper paradigm that, as Hall and Jöttkandt from OHP argue, still structures our current

(digital) scholarly practices, including our standards for reviewing and certifying academic work.[41] We also need to keep in mind, as Striphas notes, the specific historical context in which our currently dominant structures were forged, according to circumstances that might not apply anymore today.[42] In this respect, there seems to be a combined aim to, as Fitzpatrick argues, ensure our interrogations explore not only our scholarly institutions but also our own scholarly practices of doing research, writing, and reviewing in a digital context.[43] As Hall and Jöttkandt ask, might this involve exploring "a new knowledge, a new grammar, a new language and literacy, a new visual/aural/linguistic code of the digital that is capable of responding to the singularity and inventiveness of such [digital] texts with an answering singularity and inventiveness?"[44]

The practical aspects of these interrogations of our scholarly forms of communication come to the fore in some of these radical open access projects too. For instance, Fitzpatrick's experiment with peer-to-peer review very much focused on re-envisioning peer review and quality control in a digital context, pushing it toward a more community-oriented system. Furthermore, her experiment aimed to change the way we think about academic publishing and peer review, moving away from "a system focused on the production and dissemination of individual *products* to imagining it as a system focused more broadly on facilitating the *processes* of scholarly work."[45] Striphas similarly argues that we need to engage with peer review—as a specific fixture of scholarly communication—more creatively in order to explore its future. His wiki, functioning as a form of prepublication review, is a good example of that, as well as comprising an investigation into more communal forms of writing, questioning, as noted before, the individual author and his or her propriety.[46] Hall and his colleagues explored this rethinking of the book, authorship, and authority in OHP's Liquid and Living Books series (see Figure 7), which are books published using wikis that are available on a read/write basis. With this open, collaborative, and distributed way of publishing, OHP endeavors to raise "all sorts of interesting questions for ideas of academic authorship, fair use, quality control, accreditation, peer-review, copyright, Intellectual Property, and content creation."[47]

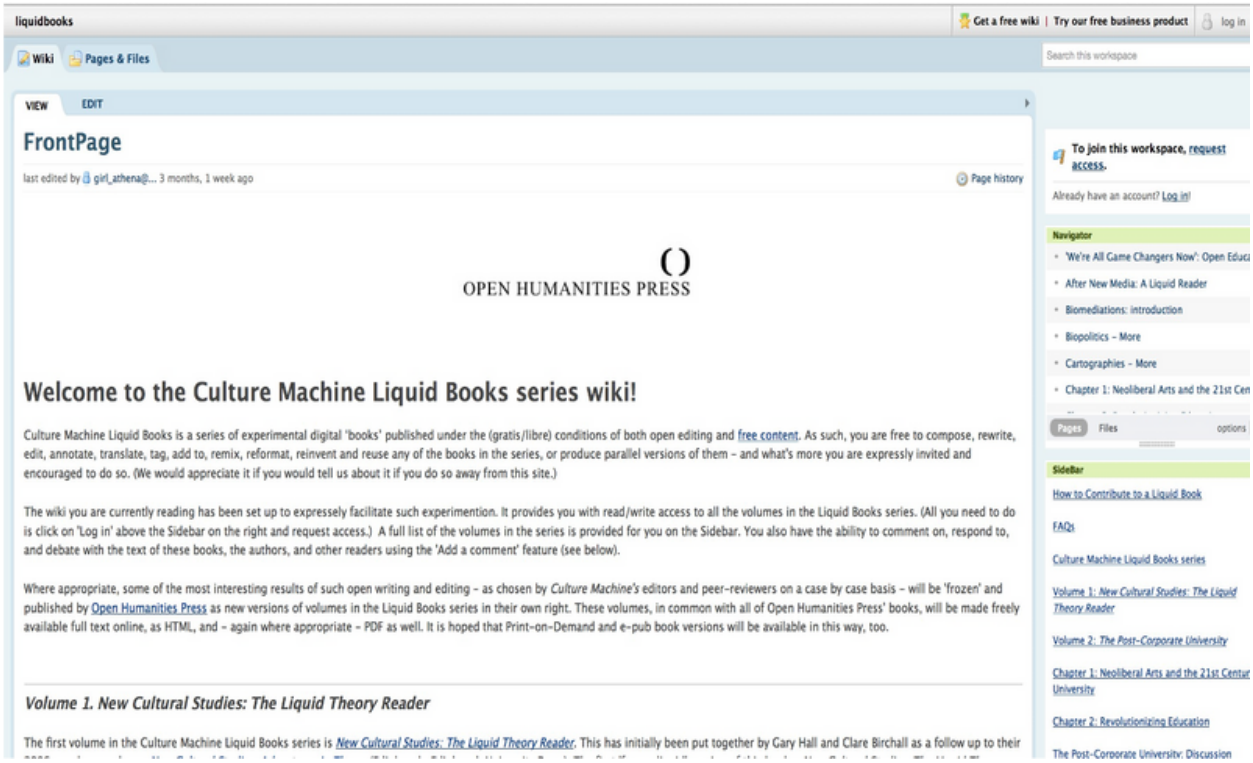

Figure 7
OHP's Liquid Books wiki.

But radical open access also involves the critique of openness as a concept and the practices of openness themselves. This is something that Tkacz, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, sees as missing in open projects. He feels there has been too little reflection on the concept of openness and on its specific projects. What radical open access projects share, however, is a common aim to emphasize that there are ways for open access not to be simply a neoliberal or even an *economic* issue. Instead, as I have shown, they explore open access as a concept and practice based on experimentation, sharing, and community, among other things. We can see this in Fitzpatrick's aim to shift the discourse on the way we perceive open access away from a focus on costs and toward a focus on values, asking, "What might happen if outreach, generosity, giving it away were our primary values?"[48] But we can also see this in Striphas's ongoing critical exploration of the drawbacks and benefits of his own open research projects, where he sees his Differences & Repetitions wiki not as "a model" but as a "thing to think with."[49]

I would like to contend that the engagement these radical open access projects exhibit with respect to openness evidences a specific vision of politics, a vision in which politics is seen as something that can and needs to be rethought in an ongoing manner, adapting to new contexts and conditions. For example, according to political

philosopher Étienne Balibar, a more interesting and radical notion of politics involves focusing on the *process* of the democratization of democracy itself, thus turning democracy into a form of continuous struggle or critical self-reflection. Balibar argues that the problem with much of the discourse surrounding democracy is that it sees democracy as model that can be implemented in different contexts. If we conceptualize democracy in such a way, however, there is a danger of it becoming a *homogenizing force*, masking differences and inequalities, as well as becoming a *dominating force*—yet another political regime that takes control and power. However, democracy is not an established reality, nor is it a mere ideal; it is rather a permanent struggle for democratization.[50] And in this respect, open access can and should be understood in similar terms: not as a homogeneous project striving to become a dominating model or force; not as a thing, an object, or a model with predescribed meaning or ideology; but as a project with an unknown outcome, as an ongoing series of critical struggles. And this is exactly why we cannot pin down open (nor radical open access) as a concept, but instead need to leave it *open*: open to otherness and difference, and open to adapt to different circumstances.

To explore this idea of an open politics more in depth, in particular with respect to open access and the politics of the book and knowledge production, it will be helpful to look at the work of the media theorists Mark Poster and Gary Hall and of literary theorist Bill Reading; Hall in particular has written extensively on the subject of politics in relation to open access.

Open Politics

Mark Poster's influential essay "Cyberdemocracy: Internet and the Public Sphere," published in 1997, explores the relationship between the internet (or new media) and democracy and examines whether the internet has stimulated the emergence of a new politics and new configurations (or relationalities) of communicative power. As part of his argument, Poster criticizes modernist, enlightenment-based conceptions of politics based on fixed, autonomous, and sovereign individuals, while emphasizing that there doesn't exist an adequate *postmodern* conception of politics either that doesn't appear to function as merely an extension of our modern political institutions. As such, Poster explores how the internet reconfigures our modern conceptions of politics and hence represents a potential challenge to our conventional understanding of it, based as it is on rational communication of fixed humanist subjects within a public sphere. Most importantly, as part of this critique of modern political forms, Poster also focuses on how the internet challenges our understanding of politics in the form of *democracy*,

next to the humanist and determinist assumption that "the relation between the technology and human beings is external."[51] Poster's call for a cyberdemocracy thus entails an openness to rethinking politics beyond two of our most ingrained modernist conventions: democracy and the rational humanist subject.

Hall, in his always already contingent conception of politics, further extends the work of Poster to think through what such an open vision of politics might entail, which he formulates in the context of this theoretical exchange as a *hypercyberdemocracy*. Similar to Balibar, Hall's conception of openness and politics is not one that should be conceptualized as a project or a model. He warns, for instance, that when it comes to politics on the internet, we should be cautious about forms of predetermined politics in which "politics would be reduced to just the rolling out of a political plan, project, or program that is already known and decided upon in advance." This would close down what politics is and what it means to be political, without giving space to the potential of the new and the experimental. In such a scenario, "there would be no responsible or ethical opening to the future, the unknown, uncertain, unseen, and unexpected."[52] For Hall, cyberdemocracy then emerges as a potential space for new, "unthought" forms of democracy, in which, following Poster's prompt, "in order to understand the politics of the Internet we need to remain open to the possibility of a form of politics that is 'something other than democracy' as we can currently conceive it."[53] Hall therefore argues for the development of new, specific, and singular theories of politics—-especially concerning the politics of digital media; theories in which politics is responsive to the particular contingent contexts and developments it encounters and is invented in relation to specific practices (such as those described in Poster's account of cyberdemocracy), as these have the potential to alter both our politics and our understanding and analysis of digital culture.[54] Hall points out that in Poster's essay this contextual connection comes to the fore in, among other things, his argument for the intrinsic connection between humans and technology. Hall extends this argumentation; as he states, "Technology is not just part of what makes us 'a cyborg in cyberspace,' as Poster has it; it is part of what makes us *human* per se"—referring to Stiegler's idea of *originary technology* and Derrida's concept of the *technological condition*, explaining that political subjects are continuously constituted by the political networks in which they interact and vice versa. Because "the human is always already constituted in and by a relation with technology," this means we are already cyborgs *before* we interact with internet politics.[55]

Such an open conception of politics runs into a number of challenges: for many, embracing such a position or way of thinking and practicing might be to risk too much,

not least because it has the potential ultimately to place in question what we have come to understand as democracy. This is why, as both Hall and Poster claim, many critics hold on to conventional conceptions of (internet) politics and democracy, including related ideas around technological determinism, the public sphere (in a Habermasian sense), and citizenship. In this sense, Hall and Poster also go further than Balibar. For Balibar, rethinking politics as a process is still seen as a democratization of democracy, in which we can be caught up in a framework of change that necessarily needs to be more democratic, instead of thinking out of the democratic box to explore if there is, potentially, another political form that might be more appropriate for our digital condition. Hall eventually argues, beyond but at the same time with Poster (while simultaneously pointing to the modernistic aspects that remain part of Poster's politics), that we need to be open to both politics *and* hyperpolitics, which are not easily disconnected. As such, following in the tradition of thinkers such as Levinas and Derrida, *hyperpolitics* "names a refusal to consider the question of politics as closed or decided in advance, and a concomitant willingness to open up an unconditional space for thinking about politics and the political 'beyond' the way in which they have been conventionally conceived—a thinking of politics which is more than politics, while still being political."[56]

Applying this argumentation to the specific politics of open access publishing and archiving, Hall states that it is too easy to see open access as merely an extension of neoliberalism, which it necessarily is or can be, when it can also be conceived as a progressive cyberutopian democratic concept. However, Hall is not interested in exploring open access along either of these lines as the two sides of the digital debate—which, as I argued before, are not so easily distinguished in the form of a dialectic. He is concerned not so much with attaching preexisting political labels to open access publishing, as in the potential of open access and of internet politics "to resist and reconfigure the very nature of politics as we currently understand it, its basis in notions of citizenship, the public sphere, democracy, and so on."[57] Following Derrida and Laclau and Mouffe, this focus on a politics of undecidability doesn't mean that we do not need to make decisions, or don't need to cut, in Barad's terminology.[58] By the same token, though Hall does not offer a fully fledged *politics*, he nonetheless insists, following Mouffe, that we need to be *political*, as we still need to make affirmative, practical, and ethical political decisions.[59] And through these decisions, we need to imagine, invent, and experiment with new forms of politics, by asking questions and remaining open toward our notions of politics, scholarship, authorship, and, in this context specifically, the book.

Hall is not the only one exploring such ideas of openness and experimentation in relation to the political in an academic context. In his influential book *The University in Ruins*, Readings formulated a similarly forceful argument focused on openness (though not specifically on open access) and experimentation in his exploration of the ideal type of the *University of Thought*, which he envisions as an alternative to the University of Excellence. Readings argues that the original cultural mission that determined the logic of the university in the past has been declining, producing a situation in which, from a connection to the nation state (producing and sustaining an idea of national culture), it has become a transnational bureaucratic company following the discourse of excellence and accountability.[60] From this position, Readings points out that we should let go of the idea that the university has a social mission connected to cultural identity, when "the notion of culture ceases to mean anything vital for the University as a whole" and "culture no longer matters as an *idea* for the institution."[61] As he states, introducing new referents won't do the university any good; rather, it is important that the university provides a context in which judgment of cultural value and of the value and meaning of the university *itself* is left open. In this dereferentialized, open, and flexible space that the university then becomes, Readings suggests we can start to think of notions of community and communication differently and thus begin to envision them as places for radical dissensus.[62] We need a community without a common identity, which consists of singularities, not of subjects, and therefore we can't refer to an idea outside of ourselves and the university for a community's justification. Instead, Readings argues, we need to take responsibility for our immediate actions *here*, in relation to our present contextualized practices. Readings thus reiterates that we need to keep the question of evaluation open.

However, just as in the thinking of Hall and Barad, this does not absolve us from the responsibility of making cuts, a necessity Readings formulates as the need to make judgments about issues of values. These judgments should not be seen as final, though, as they themselves are part of an ongoing critique and discussion, as "value is a question of judgment, a question whose answers must continually be discussed."[63] Knowledge for Readings then becomes a permanent question, as "thought does not function as an answer but as a *question*."[64] He is thus interested in conditions of openness and decidedness in higher education that enable agonism and heteronomous communities of dissent. From this it follows that disciplinary structures should be rethought and reconfigured periodically; they should remain open to ensure disciplinarity remains a permanent question.[65] In Readings's vision, these

communities of dissent are also nonhumanist in their basic outlook, where they profess an obligation to nonhuman otherness. As he states: “To speak of obligation is to engage with an ethics in which the human subject is no longer a unique point of reference. The obligation is not to other humans but to the condition of things, *ta pragmata*.”[66]

What these readings of openness in an academic context by Poster, Hall, and Readings highlight is the importance of remaining open to, and affirmatively exploring new forms of, *open* politics, while still taking responsibility for the decisions and value judgments we need to make as part of our experiments. In this sense, I want to put forward that the politics and ethics of open access publishing and archiving are not predetermined, do not simply come prepackaged; they need to be creatively performed, produced, and invented by their users in an ongoing manner in response to changing technologies, practices, and conditions. And these practices of open access publishing at the same time offer an opportunity to formulate new forms of politics. As Hall states, “Digitization and open access represent an opportunity, a chance, a risk, for the (re)politicization—or, better, hyperpoliticization—of cultural studies; a reactivization of the antagonistic dimension that is precisely what cultural studies’ politics is.”[67]

Experimentation

In the previous passages, I have explored how open access, and specifically forms of radical open access book publishing, can be envisioned and performed as part of affirmative, continuous strategies directed toward rethinking our market-based publishing institutions, as well as the object formation that takes part through forms of academic capitalism. Although open access, in its neoliberal guise, also has the potential to contribute to this object formation, I have made a plea for reclaiming open access by focusing on its potential to critically reperform our print-based institutions and practices and on its capability to experiment with new ideas of politics, scholarly communication, the university, and the book. Now is precisely the time to focus on a different discourse of openness—in addition to reframing the historical discourse on the book as an object, as discussed in the previous chapter—to emphasize these other aspects of openness and the potential for change it also inhibits, and to encourage a diversity of experiments with open access books.

As I want to outline in this section, experimentation is essential here, not only as an integral aspect of forms of radical open access, but also as a strategy on its own to break through the material structures and practices surrounding the object formation

of the book. As Sarah Kember has written, “Experimenting with academic writing and publishing is a form of political intervention, a direct engagement with the underlying issues of privatization and marketization in academia.”[68] To explore this concept of experimenting in more depth, however, I want to distinguish it from neoliberal notions of *innovation*. I want to do so because, as with open access, the motives, values, and goals that lie behind these two concepts differ fundamentally. I want to differentiate the business rhetoric of *innovation* that accompanies the University of Excellence and more neoliberal visions of openness from the vision of experimentation as promoted from within cultural studies, among other fields. The latter vision will be illustrated by a selection of research and publishing efforts that specifically explore experimentation as a discourse and practice of critique, especially with respect to the current system of scholarly object formation.

The Business of Innovation

The neoliberal rhetoric increasingly accompanying the open access discourse in large part pertains to the knowledge economy and its need for continual *innovation*. Following this demand for innovation and the transparency that it relates to, making research results available online is seen to aid the search for new sustainable business models, to help the creation of competitive advantage, and to maintain the successive testing of new products to satisfy consumer demand. Within this context, experiments with digital, open publishing increasingly take place with a specific outcome already in place: to ensure that a new publishing or business model is viable and that it is effective, in order for it to become a model that can be monetized, with the ultimate goal of increasing return on investment. Besides that, making publicly created research information and data available in this way allows the private sector in general to thrive and to help drive further innovation and creativity for all kinds of business opportunities, enabling our economy at large to be more profitable and competitive.

Joseph Schumpeter’s theories of economic development have heavily influenced the current discourse around the concept and practice of innovation within knowledge economies and creative industries, and it is here that we can locate innovation’s inherent connection to economic growth and development. In Schumpeter’s theorization, innovation is seen as the essential driving force of changes within an economy and of capitalist production and growth, where he defines innovation as (1) the introduction of a new good, (2) the introduction of a new method of production, (3) the opening of a new market, (4) the conquest of a new source or supply of raw materials or half-manufactured goods, and (5) the implementation of a new form of

organization.[69] The aim of technological innovation here is to establish temporary monopolies as part of the dynamic cycle of business innovation, which result in higher profits and economic growth.[70]

Consequentially, such a focus on innovation driving economic growth creates situations in which our ideas of experimentation, or even of critique as open intellectual enquiry, are challenged by what is in essence a corporate rhetoric. Researchers are increasingly asked to experiment with new ideas, methods, or practices not just for experiment's sake or to encourage critical thought, but in the name of innovation, leading to results that are deemed to be an improvement over the previous situation in the sense that they serve dynamic economic growth. If we adhere to a neoliberal logic, then we need continual innovation to stimulate the competitive mechanisms that encourage this dynamic growth. Critical thought, Giroux argues, has given way to market-driven values and corporate interests here. Knowledge becomes a product, a commodity, just another form of capital.[71] As Giroux states: "In its dubious appeals to universal laws, neutrality, and selective scientific research, neoliberalism eliminates the very possibility of critical thinking, without which democratic debate becomes impossible."[72] And Fitzpatrick similarly argues that "having marketability as our only indicator of the value of scholarship or a scholar's work represents a neoliberal corruption of the critical project in which we as scholars are ostensibly engaged."[73]

We can see a situation arise in which the elements of unpredictability and potential failure that accompany experimental scholarly methods are filtered out in favor of robust risk assessments and contingency plans (risk aversion), where the notion of critique, of pushing boundaries, of rethinking systems, is replaced by demands for increased efficiency and transparency. The goal is to make experimentation predictable, where experiments are designed to achieve the goals they were set out to achieve, creating outcomes that are measurable and demonstrable, mirroring a situation in which innovation is often closely linked to specific objectives—namely, those that encourage economic growth.

Pellizzoni and Ylönen point out that perpetual innovation as part of the knowledge economy is seen as one of the guiding principles of the neoliberal era.[74] Within the knowledge economy, innovation is then conceptualized as a collective endeavor, as a coalition between education and industry. The OECD report *The Knowledge-Based Economy* (1996), quoted in Roberts and Peters, states that "innovation is driven by the interaction of producers and users in the exchange of both codified and tacit knowledge," and it pertains to a model of knowledge flows and relationships among

industry, government, and academia in the development of science and technology.[75] Based on her analysis of the perceptions of Canadian health scientists, Wendy McGuire argues that this reorientation of knowledge production toward a collaboration of research and industry is promoting a new vision of what constitutes legitimate science, one based on innovation policies: "Innovation policy is both an ideological discourse that promotes a new vision of legitimate science, emphasizing social and economic relevance, and a neoliberal strategy to change the organization of knowledge production through the intensification of relationships between university scientists, industry and government."[76]

To develop a critique of this notion of perpetual innovation that is increasingly structuring our knowledge domains, experimentation is explored as an alternative discourse. In particular, I want to turn to a selection of alternative conceptualizations of experimentation, to examine how these are practically implemented in radical forms of open, online publishing. The openness of the politics of these projects lies with their will to experiment, wherein *experimentation* is understood as a heterogeneous, unpredictable, singular, and uncontained process or *experience*. In this respect, these projects argue for a more inclusive vision of experimentation, one that is open for ambivalence, and for failure. This vision is all the more important in the context of monograph publishing, where I contend that issues of access and experimentation are crucial to the future of the scholarly book, if the critical potentiality of the book as a medium is to remain open to new political, economic, and intellectual contingencies. I want to explore this idea of experimentation in more depth from a specific cultural studies perspective, as cultural studies has a special relationship with experimentation. Because of this, it is in an excellent position to put forward an alternative vision with respect to experimenting in open digital publishing, a vision that differs significantly from the neoliberal focus on experimentation as a force to drive innovation, capital accumulation, and further object formation.

Cultural Studies and Experimentation

In her book *The Ethics of Cultural Studies* (2005), Joanna Zylinska refers to the specific engagement of cultural studies with experimentation, which marks the "open--ended nature of the cultural studies project," as she calls it. This means that, as a project, cultural studies is constantly being repositioned, without an assured or fixed outcome. For Zylinska, this openness to the unknown, to forms of knowledge and politics that cannot be described easily in more "established disciplinary discourses," is what makes cultural studies intrinsically ethical.[77] Cultural studies, as a field, has

also been interested in exploring more inclusive forms of knowledge that acknowledge otherness and differentiation and that are more affective and experiential. This exploration by cultural theorists of different forms of knowledge was initiated, among other means, by restoring the separation between the concepts of *experience* and *experiment*. Raymond Williams, under the heading of "Empiricism" in his *Keywords* volume, explores the etymology of *experiment* and how it came to mean something different from *experience*, with which, until the eighteenth century, it was interchangeable. Where *experience* started to mean subjective or internal knowledge, *experiment* came to be aligned with the scientific method of an arranged methodical observation of an event, a theoretical knowledge directed toward the external world. For Williams, however, *experience* is crucial to tackle and grasp change, flux, flow—all that escapes our fixed efforts at signification and at knowing. *Experience* is thus directed toward process and emergence. The splitting of experience and experiment, then, led to distinctions between practical and theoretical, between subjective and objective knowledge, and between experience past and present. Williams wanted wholeness again with respect to this concept, with experience now based upon a set of exclusions (of theory, of creativity, of the present and future) and upon a subjectively centered model of consciousness.[78]

This search for a more inclusive knowledge—one that includes both experience *and* experiment—which we can find in Williams work, has been identified by cultural theorist Gregory Seigworth in the projects of a variety of other thinkers, too—most notably, Deleuze, Benjamin, and Bergson.[79] The influence and popularity of these thinkers within cultural studies as a result of the boom in Deleuzian cultural studies might also explain the current renewed attention to empiricism as a resurgent culturalist *experiential* paradigm, Seigworth argues. This is an empiricism in which *experience* and *experiment*—or practice and theory in more general terms—are still one and the same and are not split up. Within this paradigm, the concept of *experience* operates beyond the interpretative powers of a being's knowing sensibility. Experience does not belong to the subject, nor is it mediating between subject and object. It is, as Seigworth states, referring to Williams and his concept of *structures of feeling*, something that needs a form of autonomy; experience needs to become an active potential, freed from the fixed and the personal it has come to be associated with in daily life.

Seigworth goes on to show how Benjamin, Deleuze, and Bergson all explored ways to establish this wholeness between experience and experiment again. Benjamin's notion of speculative knowledge, the knowledge derived from experience, focuses on the

incorporeal and the ephemeral, for example. Unlike a model of knowledge based on representation and resemblance, and similar to Barad's theory of posthumanist performativity, speculative knowledge for Benjamin is nonrepresentational; it belongs to neither subject nor object and is neither inside nor outside. For Deleuze, *experience* refers to open intensities and sensations (affect), which are not subsumed necessarily by faculties of knowing and interpretation. Experience is open-ended and emergent here, not yet articulated. For Bergson, experience and experiment are linked in intuition, which exceeds or overflows the intellect. Intuition is a lived immediacy, it is mobile, processual; it connects past, present, and future; experience can then be seen as memory, duration, and experiment. This relates to William's idea of the pre--emergent, the not yet articulated, in which a practical consciousness functions as a creative process. Williams tried to find space for creative intuition, for an experimental openness to the world beyond our fixing, interpretive consciousness and preexistent conceptual frameworks—an openness toward multiplicities. In this respect, Williams wanted to analyze the flows between process and structure, between a thing's singularity and its contexts of relations, to explore where something new emerges.[80]

In keeping with the viewpoint I expressed earlier when presenting my alternative genealogy of openness, just as it is not useful to maintain the binary between open and closed, so it is likewise not beneficial to emphasize the rupture between experience and experiment. Instead, we need to enable a form of knowledge, a critique that remains open to question but that can at the same time be reconfigured, that can be cut and (temporally) fixed at some points to establish meaning and signify knowing. It is a knowing that in this case goes beyond an internal subjectivity and includes the external lifeworld. Williams's aim to explore experimentation as a way of opening up space for difference and otherness beyond our hegemonic conceptual knowledge frameworks could be extended to our knowledge institutions and practices more widely too. In this particular context, philosopher Samuel Weber has used experimentation to deconstruct one of our most established knowledge fixtures: the university. In the context of experimenting with and rethinking scholarly institutions and practices, his work is therefore essential. Weber connects the search for a different concept and meaning for experimentation directly to the need to break down the modern (or humanist) conception of the university. This conception depends, he argues, on a bias toward universally valid interpretative knowledge, or on a notion of knowledge and a vision of the human as unifying, holistic, and totalizing. Weber notices the integral connection between this perception of knowledge and neoliberalism: "What lurks behind its ostensible universalism is the message that there

are no longer any alternatives to the dominant neoliberal political-economic system."[81] For Weber, however, hope lies in the experimental method derived from the modern sciences, which is focused on creating replicable sequences and repetition and which has an orientation toward the future and the world as open, consisting of a plurality of possibilities.

Yet the scientific method still subsumes the particular under a general conceptual framework. Weber therefore explores alternative conceptualizations of experimentation that are open to ambivalence. To this end, he adopts Kierkegaard's notion of *experimenting* as a transitive verb, using the present participle form of the verb (ending in *ing*), instead of the substantive *experiment*, therewith bringing the noun into motion. The former emphasizes experimentation as a notion, wherein the singular gets articulated without letting its particularities dissolve into the universal. This opens up room for that what is different in repetition, for the exception, and for transformation in repetition.[82] Using Kierkegaard's notion, Weber finds a way to introduce uncertainty, unpredictability, and ambivalence into our modern conception of experimentation, one that seems to go directly against the neoliberal rhetoric of planned outcomes, risk analysis, and contingency plans, all of which are designed to filter out the uncertain and the unpredictable.

Following on from this, we can see how a reconceptualization of experimentation within the discourse of cultural studies toward iterability and difference in repetition opens up possibilities to imagine cultural studies *itself* as a space of experimentation. In addition to the relationship Zylinska sketches between the role played by experimentation in cultural studies and the latter's open-ended nature, we can also connect experimentation directly to cultural studies' *performative* dimension. For example, in his Deleuzian posthumanist reading of cultural studies as experimentation, Simon O'Sullivan breaks with a focus on the interpretation and *representation* of culture, and he opposes the idea of an object of study (culture) that gets interpreted by a human subject. This idea, O'Sullivan argues, works as a mechanism to fix and define culture, as well as fixing both the subject and knowledge, however fragmented they both are. Moving away from this move to fix knowledge, O'Sullivan instead proposes cultural studies be understood as a pragmatic *experimental* program, affirming cultural studies as a critical process, as a *doing*. Using the Deleuzian metaphor of *the rhizome*, he envisions cultural studies as a dynamic, fluid, open, and interdisciplinary system, capable of creating the world differently. This enables multiplicities and the thinking of virtual potentialities, he argues. O'Sullivan notices in this respect how cultural studies, through its actual institutionalizing mechanisms, stabilizes and,

through experimentation, creates new lines of flight. Cultural studies is thus both programmatic *and* diagrammatic.[83] It is this performative dimension—more than a representational one—and the way it is apparent in and being practiced in cultural studies as part of its engagement with experimenting that I am most interested in here.

This in-depth look at the ways in which Zylinska, Williams, Seigworth, Weber, and O'Sullivan have reconceptualized the concept of experimentation from within the discourse of cultural studies forms the basis from which to next explore experimentation from a wider perspective—namely, that of humanities knowledge production, wherein various research and publishing projects are using experimentation in a manner that is distinct from the business logic underlying neoliberal forms of experimentation as innovation. To recap, according to the thinkers discussed thus far, experimenting means to welcome the possibility of new thinking, to explore the conditions whereby ideas and phenomena that escape the formulations of previous conceptual paradigms emerge. To create and think new forms of knowledge, experimentation is reconciled with experience to include speculative forms of knowledge and difference in repetition, thus providing room for ambivalence, for the ephemeral, and for failure, for that which does not fit. Experimentation here has the potential to become part of knowledge production in general, where it can be used to critique the essentializing object formation of our scholarly institutions (including the book) and to actively explore in an affirmative manner what new forms scholarship will take, how it will continue to transform itself, ourselves, and our understanding of the world we live in.

In this respect, it is important to emphasize—and this is where I want to connect back to the work of Barad—that we as scholars are always already a part of the intra-action of the experiment. Based on her reading of Bohr, Barad argues that our experimenting, intertwined with our theorizing, is a material practice. Both theory and experiment are complexly entangled dynamic practices of material engagement with the world. They are both material-discursive enactments that we as scholars perform through our scholarly practices. We therefore produce matter and meaning through our experimenting. And this is in turn a material engaging with the world, in which our experimenting is not an intervening from the outside, but an intra-acting from within, wherein we as scholars are part of the experimental apparatus.[84]

Experiments in Open Publishing

Ted Striphas has noted that experiments in cultural studies publishing (including experiments in open access publishing) have mainly taken place at the fringes of the

field, where these kinds of explorations have mostly been ignored and undervalued as a subject of exploration.[85] This can be partly explained by the way in which our socially constructed habits and honored ways of doing things lead us to engage with repetitive practices in the way we read, write, do research, publish, and assess our research findings. Experimentation, as described earlier, also serves to question the fixtures in scholarly (book) publishing that we have grown accustomed too, especially those established as part of our modern system of scholarly communication and the mostly print-based media ecologies of the twentieth century. We therefore need to think more creatively and expansively, Striphas argues, about these fixtures in scholarly communication and how they might work otherwise—like peer review and authorship, for instance. As stated previously, Striphas uses his Differences & Repetitions wiki to explore this: to experiment with new, digital, and collaborative writing practices that challenge the accustomed tradition of single authorship and the idea of ownership of works and ideas, trying to not give in to the compulsion to repeat and merely produce more of the same. For Striphas, the open wiki experiment is not meant to function as a new type of institution, but as a thing to think with, ongoing, changing, uncertain. As he points out, this experiment has taught him, and can teach us, “a great deal about the types of questions we might ask about our performances of scholarly communication in general, and of academic journal publishing in particular.”[86]

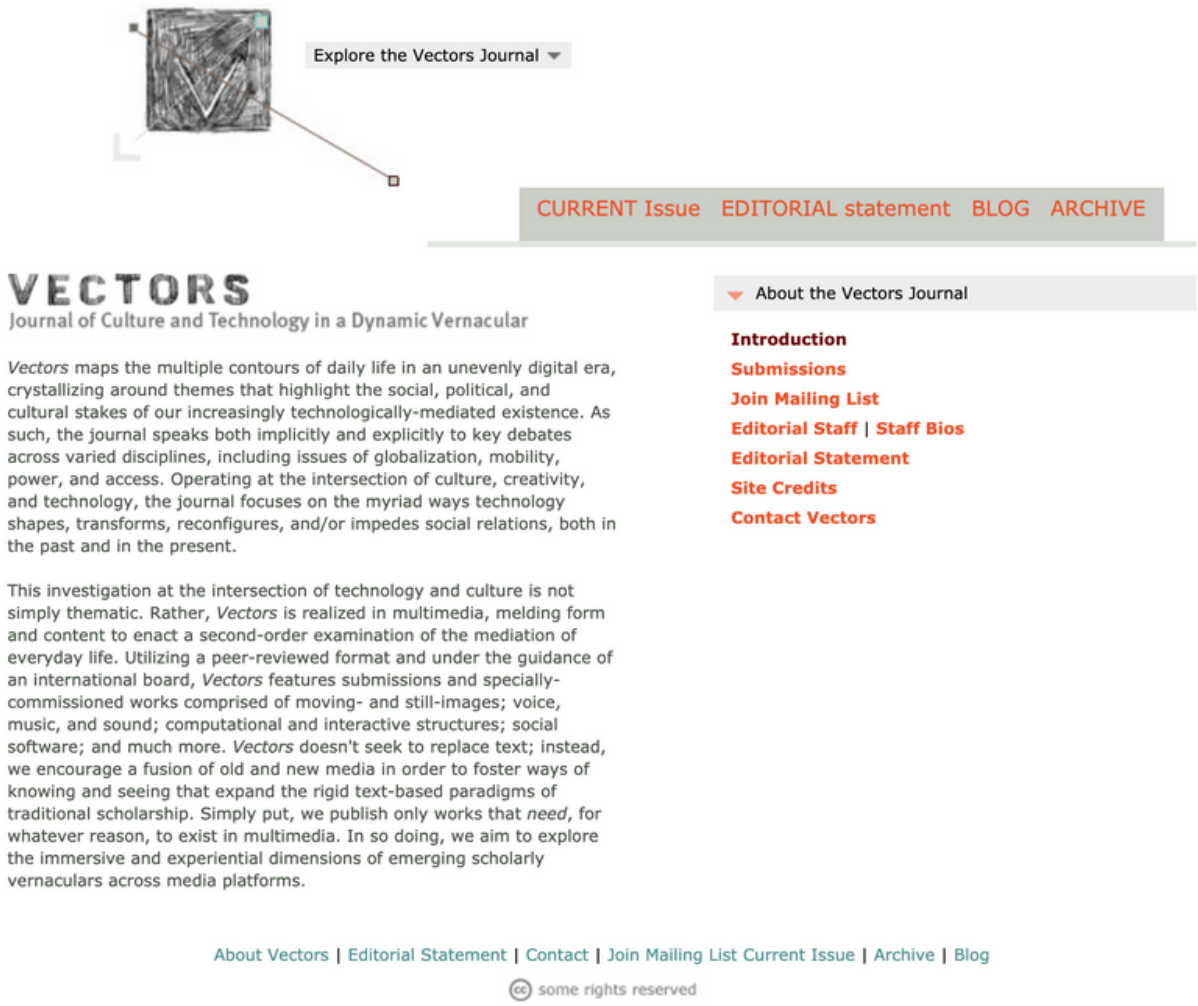

Figure 8
The *Vectors* multimedia journal.

Tara McPherson likewise frames some of the publishing projects she has been involved in—such as *Vectors*, an openly available multimedia journal and platform that investigates the intersections of technology and culture (see Figure 8), and Scalar, a multimedia scholarly publishing and authoring platform—specifically within a framework of experimentation. The aim of both of these projects is to use experimentation to explore new publishing practices that try to make better use of the potentialities and affordances that the internet has to offer, from multimodal scholarship to networked forms of communication. As McPherson puts it, in this respect, "Vectors has functioned largely as an experimental space, publishing work that is formally challenging and that explores the boundaries of what might count as scholarly argument."[87] For these specific projects, this has meant examining the boundaries between creative expression and scholarship, exploring so-called emergent

genres that “better take advantage of the affordances of computation.” This includes investigating “bold new forms of experimentation and bookishness” to push scholarly publishing in the humanities further.[88] For McPherson, experimentation and open access are aligned projects here; for her, this framework of experimentation also stretches to the ownership and distribution of scholarly content. Although she promotes broad experimentation, McPherson is also aware of the fact that it might not be sustainable in the long run. Although we need to continue to experiment, we should also, as she puts it, “evolve more ‘standardized’ structures and interfaces that will allow us to delineate more stable genres and to scale multimodal scholarship.”[89] Nonetheless, this process should not stand in the way of exploring new modes of scholarship and publishing, where McPherson emphasizes the ongoing need for forms of bold experimentation.

A similar sense of open experimentation stood at the basis of one of the earliest online cultural studies archives, the CSeARCH e-archive and publishing project (see Figure 9), founded in 2006.[90] Based on the model of the physics preprint archive arXiv.org, CSeARCH was a free, open access archive for cultural studies research literature and related materials and was provided as a further supplement to the online open access journal *Culture Machine*. This archive formed an experiment with making digital, open texts available online and was one of the first projects to explore some of the possibilities these online works have beyond merely replicating print in the online world.[91] Here it was felt that with their lack of fixity and permanence, with their undermining of traditional intermediaries and roles (i.e., publishers and libraries), and their use of and incorporation of different media, these works have the potential to fundamentally transform the content they transmit and, with that, to change our relationship to knowledge.

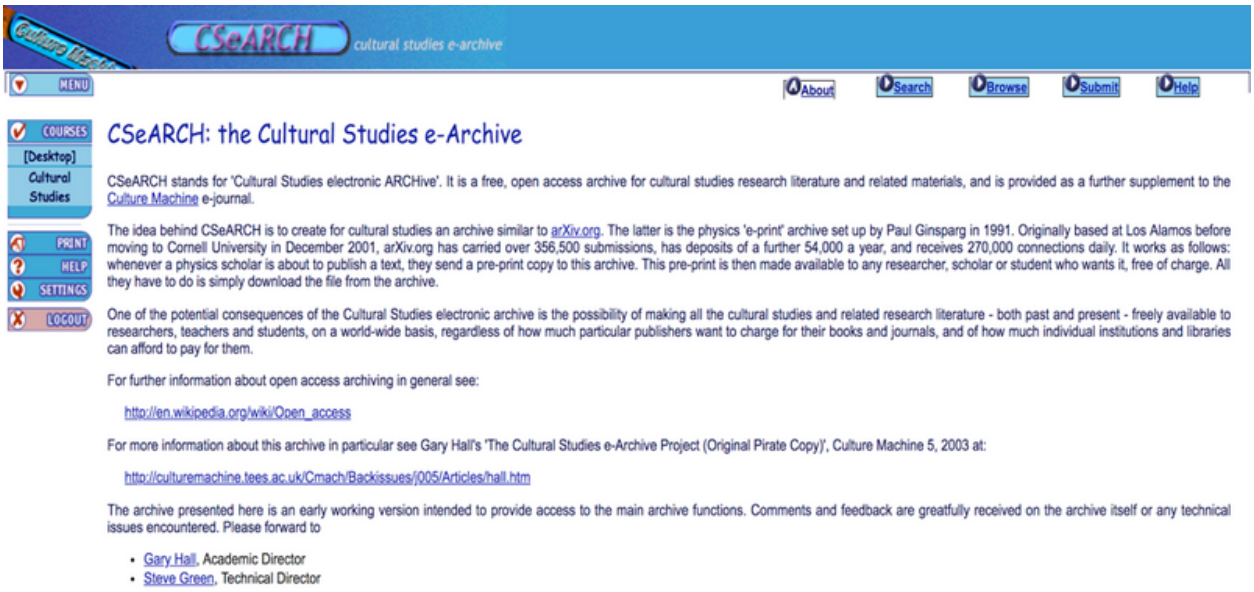

Figure 9
About page of the CSeARCH e-archive

The clear intention of Hall (one of the founders of CSeARCH) was to experiment with these latter, more uncomfortable issues and the kind of impact open publishing has on these.[92] He argues that setting up CSeARCH was motivated by a need to creatively experiment with the invention of new institutional forms, to think the university differently, and to help us conceive a different future for it.[93] Hall and his colleagues, as mentioned before, also experiment with how to reimagine our institutions via Open Humanities Press, especially in its experiments with publishing work in nontraditional formats, such as liquid, living, wiki books that reuse and repackage existing material and that are open for collaborative editing.[94] These books are questioning our notions of authorship, legitimacy, and quality assessment and are exploring the idea of research as a more processual event. These kinds of institutions, Hall argues, are structurally open. As a form or experiment, this makes it easier for them to be incorporated into a neoliberal discourse—as I have tried to show with the example of the Finch report and open access publishing. But it also gives them their force as forms and sites of resistance. In particular, it gives them ethical and political power to create something different, an alternative, a critique of and a resistance to the neoliberal discourse and its hegemonic project.[95] Echoing Bergson, Hall argues that these kinds of experimental archives and institutions can be seen as, as he calls it, “singular, different, alternative instances” of a kind of “experimental, creative militantism” from the side of cultural studies.[96] These institutions, like Weberian experiments, are never finished, nor do they know the answers to the theoretical and

practical questions they pose or the outcomes of the various experiments they are conducting. In this sense, they can be seen as always emerging institutions.[97]

More recently, we have seen the emergence of several new open, scholar-led, and not-for-profit platforms in HSS focused on archiving and networking research, including Humanities Commons (HCommons), set up by scholarly societies, and ScholarlyHub, set up by academics, which both enable scholars to share their research in an open setting and to establish networks, relations, and conversations around it.[98] Kathleen Fitzpatrick, involved in the establishment of HCommons, argues that it fills a need in specific by enabling "forms of scholarly communication that exceed the conventionally understood affordances of publishing." At the same time, for Fitzpatrick, experiments with these kinds of new open platforms enable scholarship as a whole to continuously evolve, based on values of collective action and collaboration. As she states:

> Looking at the scholarly communication landscape today, one can see a lot of experimentation taking place, including many Mellon- and NEH-funded projects exploring new open access business models, new multimodal publishing platforms, new digital-first workflows, and the like. Not all of these experiments will result in lasting changes to the scholarly communication landscape, but they all promise to teach us some important things about the ways that scholars work today and the ways that they might be encouraged to work tomorrow. And the platforms and workflows that result from these experiments, if shared, might be built upon by others in ways that will allow scholarly communication to continue evolving.[99]

Experimentation can thus be seen as a critical process that allows for the emergence of multiplicities, opening up spaces for difference and otherness beyond our fixating and totalizing conceptual and knowledge frameworks. We can see the importance of the preceding articulation of experimentation for the concept of openness—and open access in particular—which is further reflected in forms of what I have called radical open access publishing. Here, as we can see from the examples mentioned previously, experimenting in many ways takes central stage, in contrast with more mainstream forms of publishing that tend either to focus on maintaining the status quo or to invest in innovation with the aim to disrupt or monopolize the existing market to grow their profit margins (which is how most commercial publishers tend to operate). Within forms of radical open access, on the other hand, experimentation serves as a means to reperform our existing institutions and scholarly practices in a more ethical and responsible way. Experimentation here stands at the base of a rethinking of scholarly

communication and the university in general and can even potentially be seen as a means to rethink politics itself. For instance, and as outlined previously, by experimenting in an open way with the idea and the concept of the book, but also with the materiality and the system of material production surrounding it—which includes our ideas of the material and materiality—we can ask important questions concerning authorship, the fixity of the text, quality, authority, and responsibility—issues that lie at the base of what scholarship is and what, ultimately, the functions of the university should be. Radical open access, as an affirmative *experimental* practice, can therefore be seen as an effort toward the deconstruction of the object formation and commodification of the book, which is maintained by the print-based institutions of material production and by our own repetitive and consolidating scholarly communication practices. It can be seen as a political and ethical effort to reperform these stabilizations.[100]

Yet openness itself can also be part of these stabilizing and fixating moves.[101] Radical open access can therefore, to some extent, be seen to function as a critique of the wider open access movement at the same time. In the latter, strategies of providing access to information and of making open, online scholarship more qualitatively esteemed are rather disconnected from strategies focused on experimentation.[102] In this respect, radical open access also constitutes an integral critique of openness, both of the strategic openness of the wider open access movement and of the more neoliberal incarnations of open access that favor a business logic and that promote the existing hegemonic power structures and vested interests of the scholarly publishing system. Both are in their own way very anxious about questioning or disturbing the object formation of the book.

Relational Publishing and an Ethics of Care

Next to an ongoing exploration of the forms our scholarly research can potentially take and the new kinds of institutions we can build to support them, experimentation in this context also involves a creative reimagining of the practices and relationalities that make up publishing. Several radical open access initiatives and organizations are currently, as part of their ongoing experiments with academic publishing and scholarly communication, trying to do exactly that: reconfigure what research is and how we can produce, disseminate, and consume it differently. As part of their theoretical and practical interventions, these initiatives are exploring alternative forms of relational and distributed publishing. This includes envisioning their publishing outlook and relationship with the research community within and as part of an *ethics of care*.[103]

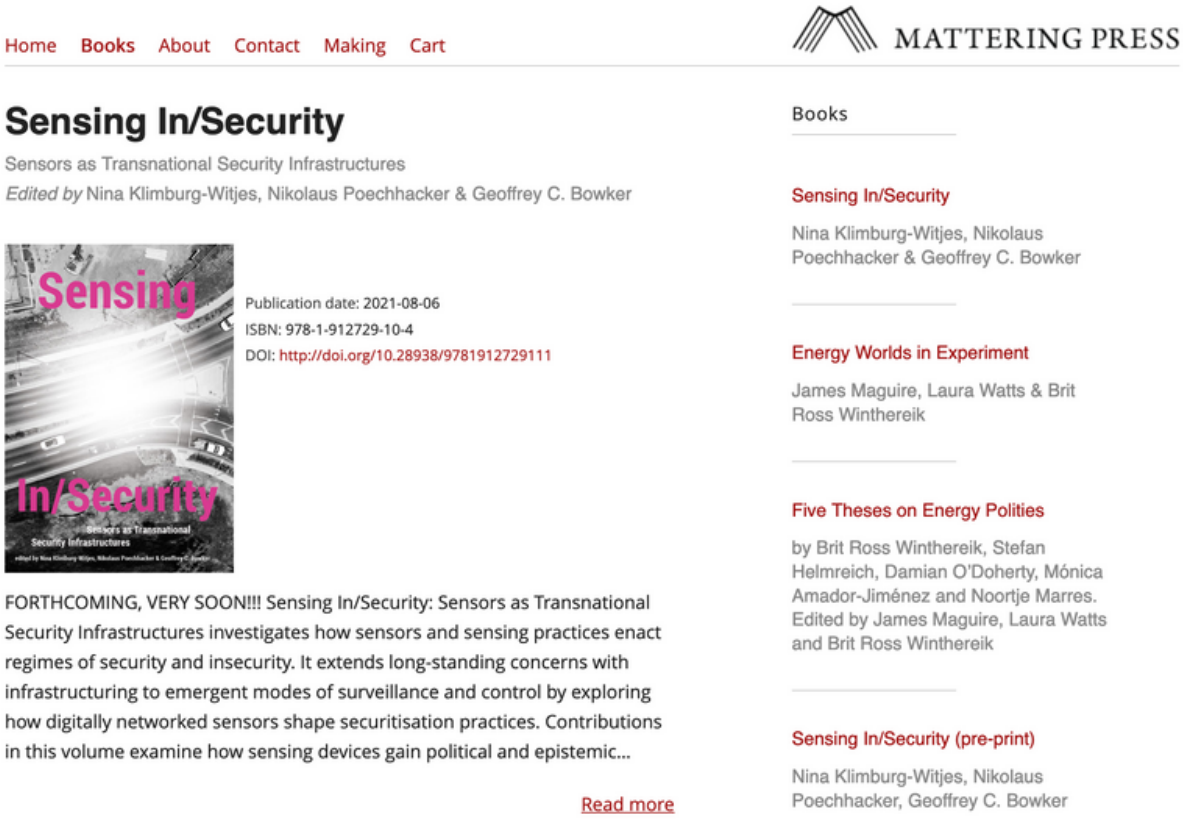

Figure 10
Website of Mattering Press.

For example, one of the presses that has been very outspoken on these matters is Mattering Press (see Figure 10), a scholar-led open access book publishing initiative founded in 2012 and launched in 2016, which publishes in the field of science and technology studies (STS) and employs a production model based on cooperation and shared scholarship. Mattering Press works with two interrelated feminist (new materialist) and STS concepts to structure and perform their ethos: mattering and care. With respect to *mattering*, Mattering Press is conscious of how its experiments in knowledge production, being inherently situated, put new relationships and configurations into the world. What therefore *matters* for Mattering Press are not so much the author or the outcome (the object), but the process and the relationships that make up publishing: "The way academic texts are produced *matters*—both analytically and politically. Dominant publishing practices work with assumptions about the conditions of academic knowledge production that rarely reflect what goes on in laboratories, field sites, university offices, libraries, and various workshops and conferences. They tend to deal with almost complete manuscripts and a small number of authors, who are greatly dependent on the politics of the publishing industry."[104]

As part of its publishing ethos, politics, and ideology, Mattering Press is therefore keen to include and acknowledge the various agencies involved in the production of scholarship, including "authors, reviewers, editors, copy editors, proof readers, typesetters, distributers, designers, web developers and readers."[105] For Mattering Press, then, *care* is something that extends not only to authors but also to the many other actants involved in knowledge production, who often provide free volunteer labor within a gift economy context. Sharing time freely and gifting labor is something that underscores many radical open access projects, but volunteer labor also lies at the base of commercial publishing endeavors, where it is often exploited to gain higher profits. Many scholar-led and not-for-profit projects therefore try to redirect this volunteer labor where possible toward more progressive forms of publishing—for example, by shifting it away from commercial, profit-driven publishers and gifting it to developing, not-for-profit, open access projects instead, as Mattering Press is doing.

As Mattering Press emphasizes, the ethics of care "mark vital relations and practices whose value cannot be calculated and thus often goes unacknowledged where logics of calculation are dominant."[106] For Mattering Press, then, care can help offset and engage with the calculative logic and metrics-based regimes that permeate academic publishing infrastructures and increasingly determine how we relate to one another: "The concept of care can help to engage with calculative logics, such as those of costs, without granting them dominance. How do we calculate so that calculations do not dominate our considerations? What would it be to care for rather than to calculate the cost of a book? This is but one and arguably a relatively conservative strategy for allowing other logics than those of calculation to take centre stage in publishing."[107]

This logic of care refers, among other things, to making visible the "unseen others," as Joe Deville (one of Mattering Press's editors) calls them, those who exemplify the plethora of hidden labor that goes unnoticed within this object- and author-focused (academic) publishing model.[108] As Endre Danyi, another Mattering Press editor, remarks, quoting Susan Leigh Star: "This is, in the end, a profoundly political process, since so many forms of social control rely on the erasure or silencing of various workers, on deleting their work from representations of the work."[109]

Yet care also extends to the published object itself and how relationships and communities are established around it. Tahani Nadim, a long-time friend of Mattering Press, is interested in this respect in how an ethics of care extends through the realm of the personal and is further established through the crafting of affective bonds, constructed and modulated through the publishing process and most importantly

through books as affiliative objects. Books are central here as objects within the publishing process that "mediate and modulate relationships" and which, "for example in the form of gifts, can strengthen and diversify existing bonds and even create new ones."[110] Nadim emphasizes the role relations of friendship play within scholarly production and how they lie at the heart of Mattering Press. She argues that we can develop new ethical positions drawn from interpersonal relations of friendship, just as Mattering Press is doing. Nadim therefore feels that it is "through the realm of the personal that we can articulate and enact a different kind of politics."[111]

Mattering Press is not alone in exploring an ethics of care in the context of the underlying relations of academic publishing. Mercedes Bunz, one of the editors of meson press (a cooperative press focusing on media theory and digital culture), argues that a sociology of the invisible would have to incorporate *infrastructure work*, the work of accounting for and crediting everyone who is involved in producing a book.[112] As she explains, "A book isn't just a product that starts a dialogue between author and reader. It is accompanied by lots of other academic conversations—peer review, co-authors, copy editors—and these conversations deserve to be taken more serious."[113] And Sarah Kember, director of Goldsmiths Press, is also adamant about making the underlying processes of publishing (i.e., peer review, citation practices) more transparent and accountable, to determine where exclusions and hierarchies are created as part of our relations of publishing: "We need to look at the infrastructure and the many mechanisms that reproduce inequality, precarity, anxiety, and ill health off the page and 'below the line,' as Carol Stabile puts it."[114] Open Humanities Press can also be seen as an experiment in how to reimagine our publishing institutions, by operating according to a gift economy while functioning as a networked, cooperative, and multiuser collective, in which authors and editors both internal and external to OHP support one another and share knowledge and skills. In this sense, OHP very much works horizontally in a noncompetitive fashion, freely sharing its knowledge, expertise, and even publications, copublishing with other open access presses such as Open Book Publishers and meson press. As a peer publishing initiative, OHP is fully volunteer-led, which means that hundreds of academics are directly involved in OHP's publishing activities as part of multiple, self-governing scholarly communities, which include academics, librarians, publishers, technologists, journal editors, and more, all operating as a radically heterogeneous collective.

In this context, the question of agency, of who and what produces knowledge and according to what (power) relations, differentials, and hierarchies, takes central stage. When we understand publishing as a complex, multiagential, relational practice, the

focus should be on how to better foreground the various agencies involved in knowledge production—for example, by experimenting with what a potential posthumanities could look like. This includes an acknowledgement of the role played by nonhuman agencies in the production of books (from paper to screens, ink, printers, trees, and Amazon warehouses) and by the book itself as a specific material form (be it printed or digital) in the relations it interweaves as part of its processual becoming: materially, geopolitically, environmentally. It is about recognizing the hierarchies and inequalities at play here and about highlighting the role played by these multiple others—that is, the materials and forms, the practices and processes that constitute and perform, mediate, and read the becoming book, codetermining its temporary stabilizations: "all those distributed, heterogeneous humans, nonhumans, objects, nonobjects, and nonanthropomorphic elements that collectively contribute to the emergence and history of an ink-on-paper-and-card book."[115] Yet next to (starting to) acknowledging the role these play in the production of the book, there needs to be a recognition of how, entangled with this, they are shaping us as authors—but also as humans, disrupting what it means to be human as we adapt to new technological possibilities and affordances, from books to screens to encoded DNA.

What further ties radical open access projects together, then, is exactly a desire to attend more closely to, and reorient, how we work and interact together to create possibilities for more just forms of knowledge production. What is needed to enable this is first and foremost a reimagining of what academic collectivity, community, and commonality is and could be in a digital publishing environment. By developing an ethics of care, supporting the collective advancement of scholarship, and building digital knowledge commons, these projects try to reimagine the relations within the publishing system. "Commoning," as Samuel Moore points out, can therefore be seen as a prime example of a (publishing) practice grounded in care, a relational process "positioned towards a shared, common(s) horizon":

> We can thus reconceive of radical open access publishing as a commons not because of the resources that radical open access publishers make available, nor even because they are governed according to any particular rules or not-for-profit philosophy, but because the presses are involved in various forms of commoning--which is to say informal practices of care, resilience and shared enterprise within and across various institutional arrangements positioned towards a shared horizon of reclaiming the common. Care in this sense is relational rather than end--directed: it is a situated practice.[116]

Taking care to foster community-driven publishing models and relationships of mutual cooperation, bringing to light forms of work and relationality often neglected, absented, or silenced in contemporary discourses on technology, opens up new aspects of the rich, multifaceted relations between humans and things, including those in which the book is no longer perceived as (merely) a commodity or an object of value exchange fueling both publishing and university markets, but becomes an ever--evolving node in a network of relations of commoning, which it both fosters and is fostered by.

Toward a Scholarly Poethics

In what way then should a commitment to a kind of publishing that recognizes the multiple relationalities, forms, and agencies involved in the distribution and circulation of research materials (and that aims to reconfigure and care for them) not also have to include—and perhaps even start with—an exploration of our own scholarly research practices? Following on from what I have argued in chapter 3, in order to combat the ongoing commercialization and object formation of the book and scholarship, strategies to intervene in the current cultures of knowledge production will need to do so in both publishing *and* academia. Next to the previously described radical open access publishing projects (many of which are scholar-led), which are experimenting with and reimagining the forms and relationships of scholarly publishing, I would argue that it is our practices as scholars that need to be open to experimenting more too. This might involve paying more attention to the way we do our scholarship and the way we perform or communicate it—that is, attention to the formats through which we publish our research and make it available to the wider public. Next to forms of radical open access publishing, a focus on a specific scholarly *poethics* might therefore prove crucial to transform the ongoing object formation of scholarship.

Discussions about the contents of our scholarship, about the different methodologies, theories, and politics that we use to give meaning and structure to our research, abound. Yet should we not have similar deliberations about the way we *do* research? About the way we craft of our own aesthetics and poetics as scholars? Should this then have to include a more in-depth focus on the medial forms, the formats, and the graphic spaces in and through which we communicate and perform scholarship (and the discourses that surround these), next to the structures and institutions that shape and determine our scholarly practices—instead of, as Ted Striphas has remarked upon, simply repeating the established forms, formats, and habits we are familiar with? This contextual discussion, focusing on the materiality of our (textual) scholarship and its

material modes of production, is not and should not in any way be separate from a discussion on the contents of our work. Should we then start to more closely explore how the way we *do* scholarship (e.g., by publishing it in fixed, closed access, printed books) informs the kinds of methodologies, theories, and politics we choose and how these again shape the way we perform our scholarship—and with that its outcomes, what scholarship looks like as part of this development (and what is excluded in this process)?

Poetics is commonly perceived as the theory of ready-made textual and literary forms; it presumes structure and fixed literary objects. However, literary theorist Terry Threadgold, in her formulation of a *feminist poetics*, juxtaposes this theory of poetics with the more dynamic concept of *poiesis*, the act of making or performing in language, which, she argues, better reflects and accommodates cultural and semiotic processes and the writing process itself.[117] For Threadgold, feminist writings in particular have examined this concept of poiesis, rather than poetics, of textuality by focusing on the process of text creation and the multiple identities and positions from which meaning is derived. This is especially visible in forms of feminist rewriting—for example, rewriting of patriarchal knowledges, theories, and narratives, which "reveal their gaps and fissures and the binary logic which structures them."[118] Moving beyond any opposition of poetics and poiesis, the poet, essayist, and scholar Joan Retallack brings them together in her concept of *poethics* (with an added *h*), which captures the responsibility that comes with the formulating and performing of a poetics. This, Retallack points out, always involves a wager, a staking of something that matters on an uncertain outcome—what Mouffe and Laclau have described as making a decision in an undecidable terrain.[119] Following Retallack, a focus on what I would then like to call a *scholarly poethics* might be useful in bridging the previously described context/content divide. I perceive a scholarly poethics to be a form of *doing* scholarship that pays specific attention to the relation between context and content, ethics and aesthetics in our research; between the methods and theories informing our scholarship and the media formats and graphic spaces we communicate through. A scholarly poethics thus tries to connect the doing of scholarship with its political, ethical, and aesthetical elements. It involves scholars taking responsibility for the practices and systems they are part of and often uncritically repeat, but also for the potential they have to perform them differently; to take risks, to wager on exploring other communication forms and practices or on a thinking that breaks through formalizations of thought—if these better reflect and perform (potentially) the

complexities of the world and our contemporary society as part of our intra-action with it.

A scholarly poethics, conceptualized as such, would include forms of openness that do not either simply repeat established forms (such as the closed print-based book, single authorship, linear thought, copyright, exploitative publishing relationships) or succumb to the closures that its own implementation (e.g., through commercial adaptations) and institutionalization (e.g., as part of top-down policy mandates) of necessity also implies and brings with it. It involves an awareness that publishing in an open way directly impacts what research is, what authorship is, and, with that, what publishing is. It asks us to take responsibility for how we engage with open access, to take a position toward it and publishing more broadly, and toward the goals we want it to serve (which I here and others elsewhere have done through the concept and project of radical open access, for example). As I envision it, a scholarly poethics is not a specific prescriptive methodology or way of doing scholarship; it is a plural and evolving process in which content and context codevelop. Scholarly poethics thus focuses on the abundant and continuously changing material-discursive attitudes toward scholarly practices, research, communication media (text/film/audio), institutions, and infrastructures.

Chapters 3 and 4 have explored the discourses, institutions, relations, and practices that have surrounded the material production of the academic book-object. As part of this exploration, I have examined what specific roles the book as a commodity has come to play in the current scholarly communication constellation (both in publishing and academia), what struggles it has encountered along its way, and what potential opportunities for intervention this might offer. In this chapter, I have tried to supplement the material-discursive genealogy of the monograph’s object formation, which I discussed in chapter 3, with alternative visions and practices related to both its past and future, to show how a politics of the book can extend beyond dichotomies such as openness and closure/secrecy, experimentation and experience, and object and process.

Our scholarly publishing and communication practices continue to function within an object-based neoliberal capitalist system: a system that is fed and sustained by the idea of autonomous ownership of a work, copyright (mostly going to publishers), and a reputation economy based on individualized authors. In other words, text and works are mostly perceived here as fixed and stable objects and commodities instead of material and creative processes and entangled relationalities. The earlier described

more relational notions of publishing—visible in radical open access experiments, including a wider appreciation of the various (posthuman) agencies involved in academic publishing and communication, based on an ethics of care—challenge the vision of this neoliberal calculative regime and discourse, which originated in and is very much still based on physical book-objects and on a print-based situation.

In this respect, the book, and the practices and discourses surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of its material incarnations, offers an important starting point to envision and shape our scholarly communication system differently. Through its open-ended nature (again, both conceptually and materially), the book offers opportunities to make alternative, critical (political) incisions, enabling practices of ongoing experimentation.[120] Affirmatively engaging with its affordances can thus enable us to explore more ethical, alternative, and responsible forms of doing research. Experimenting through our discourses and practices and through the material form of the book and the various (posthuman) relationalities that make up publishing will potentially give us the opportunity to deconstruct and recut what we still see as the fixed and naturalized features of how we communicate as scholars. Critiquing these structures, however, means at the same time taking responsibility for the new boundaries that we enact, with respect to authorship, copyright, originality, and authority. Nevertheless, through our alternative incisions, we can start to imagine a potentially new politics of the book, one that is open-ended but responds to its environment. This critique of our forms, narratives, and performances of publishing and research needs to be ongoing, however, given that it involves a series of continuous critical struggles concerning both the past and the future of the book, materiality, the university, and what it means to be political.

Footnotes

1. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 393. ↩
2. Adema and Hall, “Political Nature of the Book”; Eve, “Open Access, ‘Neoliberalism,’ ‘Impact’ and the Privatisation of Knowledge”; Benedikt Fecher and Sascha Friesike, *Open Science: One Term, Five Schools of Thought*, SSRN scholarly paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, May 30, 2013), http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2272036; Hall, *Digitize This Book!*; John Holmwood, “Markets versus Dialogue: The Debate over Open Access Ignores Competing Philosophies of Openness,” *Impact of Social Sciences* (blog), London School of Economics and Political Science, October 21, 2013, http://

blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/10/21/markets-versus-dialogue/; Kiesewetter, “Undoing Scholarship”; Moore, “Genealogy of Open Access.” ↩

3. As Tkacz states: “Rather than using the open to look forward, there is a pressing need to look more closely at the specific projects that operate under its name—at their details, emergent relations, consistencies, modes of organizing and stabilizing, points of difference, and forms of exclusion and inclusion.” Tkacz, *Wikipedia and the Politics of Openness*, 38. For example, Tkacz has been doing this extensively for Wikipedia; see Nathaniel Tkacz and Geert Lovink, eds., *Critical Point of View: A Wikipedia Reader* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2011); Tkacz, *Wikipedia and the Politics of Openness*. ↩

4. Leslie Chan, “Platform Capitalism and the Governance of Knowledge Infrastructure,” Zenodo, April 30, 2019, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2656601. Similarly, diverse schools of thought exist in relation to the concept and practice of open science, as Fecher and Friesike have argued on the basis of an extensive literary analysis. Fecher and Friesike, “Open Science.” ↩

5. The Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings, an independent group chaired by Professor Dame Janet Finch, was set up in October 2011 to examine how UK-funded research can be made more accessible. It released a report, *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence: How to Expand Access to Research Publications* (see https://web.archive.org/web/20191118174116/http://www.researchinfonet.org/publish/finch/), also known as the Finch report, in June 2012. On July 16, 2012, the UK government announced that it had accepted the report’s recommendations (see https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-open-up-publicly-funded-research). Janet Finch, *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence: How to Expand Access to Research Publications*, report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings (June 18, 2012), https://www.sconul.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/finch-report-executive-summary.pdf. See also Kember, “Opening Out from Open Access”; Aguado López Eduardo and Becerril García Arianna, “Latin America’s Longstanding Open Access Ecosystem Could Be Undermined by Proposals from the Global North | LSE Latin America and Caribbean,” *LSE Latin America and Caribbean Blog*, November 6, 2019, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2019/11/06/latin-americas-longstanding-open-access-ecosystem-could-be-undermined-by-proposals-from-the-global-north/; Moore, “Common Struggles.” ↩

6. These radical open access experiments, albeit neither homogeneous nor pre-defined, tend to focus on both access *and* reuse, on a critique of the overly commercial political economy surrounding publishing, and on establishing both a practical and an experimental publishing practice. Radical open access can thus be seen as theories or practices of open access that are focused on openness as a means to critique established systems; rethink the book and the humanist understandings that accompany it; change scholarly practices by focusing on "doing" scholarship differently; explore experimentation; and finally—and perhaps most importantly in this context—critique the concept and practices of openness, as well as the dichotomies between closed and open and between the book and the net that keep being (re) introduced. The term *radical open access* was first introduced by Gary Hall during a talk at Columbia University, entitled "Radical Open Access in the Humanities" (Research without Borders, Columbia University, New York, 2010), but it draws inspiration from a wide-ranging set of practices and histories, from the groundbreaking community-led initiatives set up in Latin America to the early experiments with open access journals in the HSS and a continuous tradition of grassroots activist work within academia and publishing. Dominique Babini, "Open Access Initiatives in the Global South Affirm the Lasting Value of a Shared Scholarly Communications System," *Impact of Social Sciences* (blog), London School of Economics and Political Science, October 23, 2013, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/10/23/global-south-open-access-initiatives/; Kiesewetter, "Undoing Scholarship"; Moore, "Revisiting 'the 1990s Debutante.'" For more on the radical open access philosophy, see Janneke Adema and Samuel Moore, "The Radical Open Access Collective: Building Alliances for a Progressive, Scholar-Led Commons," *Impact of Social Sciences* (blog), London School of Economics and Political Science, October 27, 2017, http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/10/27/the-radical-open-access-collective-building-alliances-for-a-progressive-scholar-led-commons/; James Smith, "Open Insights: An Interview with Janneke Adema and Sam Moore," Open Library of Humanities," April 16, 2018, https://www.openlibhums.org/news/278/; Janneke Adema and Samuel A. Moore, "Collectivity and Collaboration: Imagining New Forms of Communality to Create Resilience in Scholar-Led Publishing," *Insights* 31 (March 5, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.399. ↩

7. By *cutting* things *together and apart*, I refer to Barad's use of the phrase *cutting together-apart*, meaning that a cut will not enact permanent boundaries but functions as a reconfiguring, an alternative, rearranged form of "cleaving." As Barad

puts it: “As I have explained elsewhere, intra-actions enact agential cuts, which do not produce absolute separations, but rather cut together-apart (one move). Diffraction is not a set pattern, but rather an iterative (re)configuring of patterns of differentiating-entangling. As such, there is no moving beyond, no leaving the ‘old’ behind. There is no absolute boundary between here-now and there-then. There is nothing that is new; there is nothing that is not new.” Karen Barad, “Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart,” *Parallax* 20, no. 3 (2014): 168, https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927623. ↩

8. David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2. ↩

9. Wendy Brown, “Neo-Liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy,” *Theory & Event* 7, no. 1 (2003), https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2003.0020. ↩

10. Hall, *Digitize This Book!* ↩

11. Mark Olssen and Michael A. Peters, “Neoliberalism, Higher Education and the Knowledge Economy: From the Free Market to Knowledge Capitalism,” *Journal of Education Policy* 20, no. 3 (2005): 313–345, https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930500108718. ↩

12. Stuart Lawson, Kevin Sanders, and Lauren Smith, “Commodification of the Information Profession: A Critique of Higher Education under Neoliberalism,” *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* 3, no. 1 (March 10, 2015), https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1182. ↩

13. For more on the relationship between transparency and neoliberalism, see Clare Birchall, “Transparency, Interrupted: Secrets of the Left,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 7–8 (December 1, 2011): 60–84, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276411423040; Clare Birchall, “Radical Transparency?,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 14, no. 1 (February 1, 2014): 77–88, https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708613517442. ↩

14. Hall, *Digitize This Book!* ↩

15. Eve, “Open Access, ‘Neoliberalism,’ ‘Impact’ and the Privatisation of Knowledge.” ↩

16. For instance, the protest of diverse groups of humanities scholars in the UK—such as the Council for the Defence of British Universities, the Royal Historical Society, the Political Studies Association, and the editors of twenty-one history

journals attached to the Institute of Historical Research—was directly connected to the implementation of open access in the UK, as set out in the Finch report, among other places. Daniel Boffey, "Historians Warn Minister: Hands Off Our Academic Freedoms," *Guardian*, January 26, 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/jan/26/historians-warn-minister-over-academic-freedom; Meera Sabaratnam and Paul Kirby, "Open Access: HEFCE, REF2020 and the Threat to Academic Freedom," *The Disorder Of Things* (blog), December 4, 2012, http://thedisorderofthings.com/2012/12/04/open-access-hefce-ref2020-and-the-threat-to-academic-freedom/. See also https://web.archive.org/web/20130117173147/http://www.history.ac.uk/news/2012-12-10/statement-position-relation-open-access. More recently, announcements from HEFCE (now Research England) about extending open access to monographs for the next REF (REF2027) led to further concern, protest, and critique by academics, among others, as set out in a position paper by the British Academy: "Open Access and Monographs: Where Are We Now?" (London: British Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences, May 2018), https://www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/British_Academy_paper_on_Open_access_and_monographs-May_2018.pdf. ↩

17. Sabaratnam and Kirby, "Open Access." ↩

18. For instance, Holmwood sees this as being imminent in the CC BY license promoted by RCUK (and Finch). For him, an alternative would be a noncommercial share-alike license. See Holmwood, "Commercial Enclosure: Whatever Happened to Open Access?," *Radical Philosophy* 181 (September/October 2013), http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/commercial-enclosure. See also Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei, "Why CC BY-NC Licenses Are Still Necessary in Open Access Book Publishing," Punctum Papers, Punctum Books (PubPub), February 14, 2020, https://punctumbooks.pubpub.org/pub/creative-commons-by-nc-licensing-open-access/release/9. ↩

19. As well as more regionally or globally with the development of Plan S, which has been criticized for "shifting funds from subscriptions towards article processing charges (APCs), whilst leaving the current communication system largely intact." Eduardo Aguado López and Arianna Becerril García, "The Commercial Model of Academic Publishing Underscoring Plan S Weakens the Existing Open Access Ecosystem in Latin America," *Impact of Social Sciences* (blog), London School of Economics and Political Science, May 20, 2020,

https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2020/05/20/the-commercial-model-of-academic-publishing-underscoring-plan-s-weakens-the-existing-open-access-ecosystem-in-latin-america/. ↩

20. It does not have to be this way. The OAPEN-NL project, for instance, was heavily involved in experimenting with an author-pays model for books. However, their attempts were accompanied by an extensive study on the costs of monographs to make these prices more transparent and to distinguish costs from profits, in order to promote a fairer subsidy system. Eelco Ferwerda, Ronald Snijder, and Janneke Adema, *OAPEN-NL: A Project Exploring Open Access Monograph Publishing in the Netherlands: Final Report* (The Hague: OAPEN Foundation, October 2013). Many scholar-led presses have also provided transparent information on their business models and costing structures. See, among others, Rupert Gatti, "Introducing Some Data to the Open Access Debate: OBP's Business Model (Part One)," *Open Book Publishers* (blog), October 15, 2015, http://blogs.openbookpublishers.com/introducing-some-data-to-the-open-access-debate-obps-business-model-part-one/; Gary Hall, "Open Humanities Press: Funding and Organisation," Media Gifts, June 13, 2015, http://www.garyhall.info/journal/2015/6/13/open-humanities-press-funding-and-organisation.html; Sebastian Nordhoff, "What's the Cost of an Open Access Book?," Language Science Press Blog, September 29, 2015, https://userblogs.fu-berlin.de/langsci-press/2015/09/29/whats-the-cost-of-an-open-access-book/; Sebastian Nordhoff, "Calculating the Costs of a Community-Driven Publisher," Language Science Press Blog, April 18, 2016, https://userblogs.fu-berlin.de/langsci-press/2016/04/18/calculating-the-costs-of-a-community-driven-publisher/; Martin Paul Eve, "How Much Does It Cost to Run a Small Scholarly Publisher?," *Martin Paul Eve* (blog), February 13, 2017, https://eve.gd/2017/02/13/how-much-does-it-cost-to-run-a-small-scholarly-publisher/; Lucy Barnes and Rupert Gatti, "The Cost of Open Access Books: A Publisher Writes," *Open Book Publishers* (blog), May 28, 2020, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0173.0143; Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei, Eileen Joy, and Dan Rudmann, "We Got the Receipts: The Punctum Books Financial and Activity Report 2016–2019," Punctum Papers, Punctum Books (PubPub), July 7, 2020, https://punctumbooks.pubpub.org/pub/punctum-books-financial-activity-report-2016-2019/release/5. ↩

21. Richard Van Noorden, "Britain Aims for Broad Open Access," *Nature* 486, no. 7403 (June 19, 2012): 302–303, https://doi.org/10.1038/486302a. ↩

22. Stevan Harnad, “Finch Report, a Trojan Horse, Serves Publishing Industry Interests Instead of UK Research Interests,” *Open Access Archivangelism* (blog), June 19, 2012, http://openaccess.eprints.org/index.php?/archives/904-Finch-Report,-a-Trojan-Horse,-Serves-Publishing-Industry-Interests-Instead-of-UK-Research-Interests.html. ↩
23. Finch, *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence*, 11. This increased role of universities in the publishing process will potentially have further consequences. There is a risk that BPCs or APCs risk disenfranchising independent, nonaffiliated, early career researchers and PhD students (or so-called para-academics), and those on casualized contracts, next to scholars from the Global South or in less wealthy institutions and those who create the kind of research that critiques the institutions of which we are a part, expressing viewpoints that don’t meet with institutional approval. With APCs, a new set of gatekeepers—funders and institutions—will have to be navigated, and it is unclear how this dynamic will play out within the humanities especially. There are huge issues around governmentality here, and there is a risk that, similar to the subscription system, we will be creating a market for APCs and BPCs based on the brand of the publisher. Taking a wider systemic perspective, for example, Martin Eve has estimated that implementing a BPC model for books in the UK following current market rates for BPCs (i.e., £11,000 in BPC at Palgrave Macmillan) would cost more than the entire SCONUL purchasing budget for all types of books. Eve, “Some Numbers on Book Processing Charge Scalability,” *Martin Paul Eve* (blog), November 17, 2015, https://www.martineve.com/2015/11/17/some-numbers-on-book-processing-charge-scalability/. ↩
24. Lawson, Sanders, and Smith, “Commodification of the Information Profession,” 9. ↩
25. Martin Paul Eve, *Open Access and the Humanities: Contexts, Controversies and the Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14. ↩
26. Martin Eve, “Consortial Funding and Downward Price Pressure for Open Access,” *Martin Paul Eve* (blog), June 16, 2016, https://www.martineve.com/2016/06/16/consortial-purchasing-and-downward-price-pressure-for-open-access/. ↩
27. Finch, *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence*, 5. ↩

28. Finch, *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence*, 5. ↩
29. As he states: “The broader matter at issue here is two competing philosophies of openness. One operates under a neoliberal theory of knowledge, where the market serves to maximise the production and distribution of knowledge. The other is where the market is part of the problem and public institutions like universities serve democracy by facilitating debate and dialogue.” Holmwood, “Markets versus Dialogue.” ↩
30. An important project to mention in this context—which I have been involved in as part of the ScholarLed collective of open access book presses, in collaboration with a consortium of libraries, universities, and technology providers—is the Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs (COPIM) project (https://www.copim.ac.uk), which has as its main aim to deliver major improvements in the infrastructures used by open access book publishers and those publishers making a transition to open access books. As a project, it builds on theories that emphasize the political and sociotechnical nature of our publishing tools and infrastructure; for example, see Angela Okune et al., “Whose Infrastructure? Towards Inclusive and Collaborative Knowledge Infrastructures in Open Science,” in *Connecting the Knowledge Commons—From Projects to Sustainable Infrastructure: The 22nd International Conference on Electronic Publishing—Revised Selected Papers*, ed. Pierre Mounier, Laboratoire d’idées (Marseille: OpenEdition Press, 2019), http://books.openedition.org/oep/9072. It does so within a context in which the takeover of community-built platforms by commercial entities is becoming ever more common, and we run the risk that “everything we have gained by opening content and data will be under threat if we allow the enclosure of scholarly infrastructures” (Geoffrey Bilder, Jennifer Lin, and Cameron Neylon, *Principles for Open Scholarly Infrastructures—V1*, February 23, 2015, https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1314859.v1). See also the Invest in Open Infrastructure statement at https://web.archive.org/web/20200917141622/https://investinopen.org/docs/statement0.2. ↩
31. One of these groups, which was initiated after the first conference on radical open access, organized at Coventry University in 2015, is the Radical Open Access Collective (www.radicaloa.co.uk), a community of over seventy scholar-led, not-for-profit presses, journals, and other open access projects, which I have been involved in and have co-organized together with Samuel Moore from its inception. ↩

32. More recently, Fitzpatrick has published *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University*, which she has also developed in an open way by a process of community review—still using the CommentPress plug-in, but now on the Humanities Commons platform: http://generousthinking.hcommons.org/. ↩
33. Jöttkandt and Hall, "Beyond Impact." ↩
34. Sigi Jottkandt, "No-Fee OA Journals in the Humanities, Three Case Studies: A Presentation by Open Humanities Press" (paper presented at Berlin 5 Open Access: From Practice to Impact: Consequences of Knowledge Dissemination, Padua, Italy, September 19–21, 2008), 3–4, http://eprints.rclis.org/13121/. ↩
35. Striphas, "Performing Scholarly Communication," 82. ↩
36. Kathleen Fitzpatrick, "Introducing MediaCommons," *if:book* (blog), July 17, 2006, https://web.archive.org/web/20130911133628/http://www.futureofthebook.org/blog/archives/2006/07/introducing_mediacommons_or_ti.html. ↩
37. Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence*, 156. ↩
38. Jöttkandt and Hall, "Beyond Impact." ↩
39. Striphas, "Acknowledged Goods," 18; italics in the original. ↩
40. Gary Hall, "Liquid Theory" (paper presented at HumaniTech Conference, University of California, Irvine, US, April 3, 2008). ↩
41. Jöttkandt and Hall, "Beyond Impact: OA in the Humanities." ↩
42. Striphas, "Performing Scholarly Communication," 80. ↩
43. Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence*, 10. ↩
44. Jöttkandt and Hall, "Beyond Impact." ↩
45. Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence*, 11. ↩
46. Striphas, "Performing Scholarly Communication." ↩
47. Hall, "Liquid Theory." ↩
48. Kathleen Fitzpatrick, "Giving It Away: Sharing and the Future of Scholarly Communication," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 43, no. 4 (July 1, 2012): 347–362,

https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.43.4.347. ↩

49. Striphas, “Performing Scholarly Communication,” 82. ↩
50. Etienne Balibar, “Historical Dilemmas of Democracy and Their Contemporary Relevance for Citizenship,” *Rethinking Marxism* 20, no. 4 (2008): 522–538, https://doi.org/10.1080/08935690802299363. ↩
51. Mark Poster, “Cyberdemocracy: Internet and the Public Sphere,” in *Internet Culture*, ed. David Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), 205. ↩
52. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 36. ↩
53. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 179-180. ↩
54. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 158-159. ↩
55. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 178. ↩
56. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 197-198. ↩
57. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 195. ↩
58. Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (London; New York: Verso Books, 2013); Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Verso Books, 2001), xi; Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*; Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (London: Routledge, 2001); Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*. ↩
59. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 196–197; Mouffe, *Agonistics*. ↩
60. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 11. ↩
61. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 90-91; italics in the original. ↩
62. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 167. ↩
63. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 134. ↩
64. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 160. ↩
65. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 177. ↩

66. Readings, *University in Ruins*, 187. ↩
67. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 203. ↩
68. Kember, “Opening Out from Open Access.” ↩
69. Joseph Alois Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1983), 66. ↩
70. Schumpeter is also known for his adaptation of the concept of *creative destruction*, which stands at the base of current theories around *disruption*. As part of those theories, Clayton Christensen’s take on *disruptive technologies*—that is, technologies that disrupt an already established market and value network—is perhaps most well-known. For an interesting intervention into this debate, see Pauline van Mourik Broekman et al., *Open Education: A Study in Disruption* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2014). ↩
71. Henry A. Giroux, “The University Debate: Public Values, Higher Education and the Scourge of Neoliberalism: Politics at the Limits of the Social,” *Culture Machine: InterZone*, November 30, 2010), https://culturemachine.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/426-804-1-PB.pdf. ↩
72. Henry A. Giroux, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics,” *College Literature* 32, no. 1 (2005): 10. ↩
73. Kathleen Fitzpatrick, “Neoliberal,” *Kathleen Fitzpatrick* (blog), December 12, 2012, http://www.plannedobsolescence.net/blog/neoliberal/. ↩
74. Luigi Pellizzoni and Marja Ylönen, *Neoliberalism and Technoscience: Critical Assessments* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2012). ↩
75. Peter Roberts and Michael A. Peters, *Neoliberalism, Higher Education and Research* (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2008). ↩
76. Wendy McGuire, “Innovation Policy as Neoliberal Discourse and Strategy and the (Re) Stratification of the Scientific Field” (paper presented at 4S Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, October 28–31, 2009). ↩
77. Joanna Zylinska, *The Ethics of Cultural Studies* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 38–39. ↩

78. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Gregory J. Seigworth, “Cultural Studies and Gilles Deleuze,” in *New Cultural Studies: Adventures in Theory*, ed. Clare Birchall and Gary Hall (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). ↩
79. Seigworth, “Cultural Studies and Gilles Deleuze.” ↩
80. Seigworth, “Cultural Studies and Gilles Deleuze”; Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). ↩
81. Weber, “Future of the Humanities: Experimenting.” ↩
82. Weber, “Future of the Humanities: Experimenting.” ↩
83. Simon O’Sullivan, “Cultural Studies as Rhizome—Rhizomes in Cultural Studies,” in *Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinarity, and Translation*, ed. Stefan Herbrechter (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2002), 81–93. ↩
84. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 55–56. ↩
85. Striphas, “Acknowledged Goods.” ↩
86. Striphas, “Performing Scholarly Communication,” 82. ↩
87. Tara McPherson, “Scaling Vectors: Thoughts on the Future of Scholarly Communication,” *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 13, no. 2 (Fall 2010), http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0013.208. ↩
88. McPherson, “Scaling Vectors.” ↩
89. McPherson, “Scaling Vectors.” ↩
90. The CSeARCH archive was hosted by Teesside University and the landing page is archived via the Wayback Machine at https://web.archive.org/web/20150408114751/http://arc.tees.ac.uk:80/VLE/DOMAIN/CSEARCH/TABS/Search.asp. ↩
91. Earlier experiments in the 1990s mainly took the form of open-access scholar-led journals. For an overview of this development, see Moore, “Common Struggles,” 73–76. ↩
92. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 19. ↩

93. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 10. ↩
94. I provide a more in-depth exploration of one of these projects, Living Books About Life, in the next chapter. ↩
95. For example, it can be argued that it's hard to attribute ownership to a text that is collaboratively written—in a wiki environment, for instance. This in turns makes it harder for any of its authors to sell it, as they'd need approval from all others. Which in turns makes it harder for the forces of neoliberalism to privatize and commodify it (contingent on the copyright or left license used, of course). ↩
96. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 207. ↩
97. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 277. ↩
98. Also see in this context (albeit without additional networking functionalities) MediArXiv, the open archive for media, film, and communication studies: https://mediarxiv.com/. ↩
99. Alison Mudditt, "Humanities Commons: Networking the Humanities through Open Access, Open Source and Not-for-Profit," interview with Kathleen Fitzpatrick, *The Scholarly Kitchen*, December 21, 2016, https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2016/12/21/humanities-commons-networking-the-humanities-through-open-access-open-source-and-not-for-profit/. ↩
100. Hall, *Digitize This Book!*, 76. As Derrida argues, with respect to deconstruction: "If there were continual stability, there would be no need for politics, and it is to the extent that stability is not natural, essential or substantial, that politics exists and ethics is possible. Chaos is at once a risk and a chance, and it is here that the possible and the impossible cross each other." Jacques Derrida, "Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism," in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Routledge, 2003), 86. ↩
101. Think, for example, of how most openly available scholarly publications are either made available as PDFs or through Google Books' "limited preview" feature, both mimicking closed print formats online; of how many open licenses don't allow for reuse and adaptations; of how the open access movement has strategically been more committed to gratis than to libre openness; of how commercial publishers are increasingly adopting open access as just another profitable business model, retaining and further exploiting existing relations instead of disrupting them; of how

new commercial intermediaries and gatekeepers parasitical on open forms of communication are mining and selling the data around our content to further their own pockets—like commercial SSRNs, such as Academia.edu and ResearchGate. In addition to all this, open access can do very little to further experimentation if it is met by a strong conservatism from scholars, their communities, and institutions, involving fears about the integrity of scholarly content and historical preferences for established institutions and brands and for the printed monograph and codex format in assessment exercises. These are just a few examples of how openness does not necessarily warrant progressive change and can even effect further closures. ↩

102. The strategies described herein that seek to attain critical mass for open access and to stimulate open access book publishing and accessibility by focusing on print-based values and practices seem hard to combine with a simultaneous critical reflection on these practices. Conducting experiments with the form of electronic books in the digital age might be hard to do if at the same time we might not want to push too far, given this might risk estranging the average humanities scholar from the open access project. ↩

103. For more on an ethics of care in relationship to open access and scholar-led publishing, see Stuart Andrew Lawson, "Open Access Policy in the UK: From Neoliberalism to the Commons" (PhD diss., Birkbeck, University of London, 2018); Moore, "Common Struggles." ↩

104. Sebastian Abrahamsson et al., "Mattering Press: New Forms of Care for STS Books," *EASST Review* 32, no. 4 (December 2013), http://easst.net/easst-review-volume-32-4-december-2013/mattering-press-new-forms-of-care-for-sts-books/. ↩

105. Julien McHardy, "Why Books Matter: There Is Value in What Cannot Be Evaluated.," *Impact of Social Sciences* (blog), London School of Economics and Political Science, September 30, 2014, http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/09/30/why-books-matter/. ↩

106. Julien McHardy, "Like Cream: Valuing the Invaluable," *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society* 3 (February 17, 2017): 79. ↩

107. McHardy, "Why Books Matter." ↩

108. Joe Deville, quoted in Kember, "Why Write?" ↩

109. Endre Danyi, “Samizdat Lessons for Mattering Press”; Susan Leigh Star, “The Sociology of the Invisible: The Primacy of Work in the Writings of Anselm Strauss,” in *Social Organization and Social Process: Essays in Honor of Anselm Strauss*, ed. David R. Maines (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1991). ↩
110. Tahani Nadim, “Friends with Books,” in *The Commons and Care*, ed. Samuel Moore and Mattering Press (Coventry: Post Office Press and Rope Press, 2018), 29. ↩
111. Nadim, “Friends with Books,” 28. ↩
112. Bunz, quoted in Kember, “Why Write?” ↩
113. Jussi Parikka, “A Mini-Interview: Mercedes Bunz Explains Meson Press,” *Machinology* (blog), July 11, 2014, https://jussiparikka.net/2014/07/11/a-mini-interview-mercedes-bunz-explains-meson-press/. ↩
114. Sarah Kember, “Why Publish?,” *Learned Publishing* 29 (October 1, 2016): 348–353, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/leap.1042. ↩
115. Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, 115. ↩
116. Samuel Moore, “The ‘Care-Full’ Commons: Open Access and the Care of Commoning,” in *The Commons and Care*, ed. Samuel Moore and Mattering Press (Coventry: Post Office Press and Rope Press, 2018), 23, https://hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:19817/. ↩
117. Terry Threadgold, *Feminist Poetics: Poiesis, Performance, Histories* (London: Routledge, 1997), 3. ↩
118. Threadgold, *Feminist Poetics*, 16. For Threadgold, a poetics of rewriting goes beyond a passive analysis of texts as autonomous artifacts; the engagement with and appraisal of a text is actively performed, becoming performative, becoming itself a poiesis, a making; the “analyst” is embodied, becoming part of the complex sociocultural context of meaning-making. Threadgold, *Feminist Poetics*, 85. ↩
119. Mouffe, *Agonistics*, 17. For Retallack, a poethical attitude necessarily comes with the “courage of the swerve,” in which “swerves (like antiromantic modernisms, the civil rights movement, feminism, postcolonialist critiques) are necessary to dislodge us from reactionary allegiances and nostalgias.” In other words, they allow change to take place in already determined situations. A poetics of the swerve, of change, thus continuously unsettles our familiar routes and notions; it is a poetics of

conscious risk, of letting go of control, of placing our inherited conceptions of ethics and politics at risk, and of questioning and experimenting with them. For Retallack, taking such a wager as a writer or an artist is necessary to connect our aesthetic registers to the "character of one's time," acknowledging the complexities and changing qualities of life and the world. Joan Retallack, *The Poethical Wager* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 3, 18. ↩

120. Drucker, *Century of Artists' Books*. ↩