This collection brings together academics, archivists, artists, and activists whose thought and practices make critical intervention into cultural phenomenon of open data. The sub-title of this publication – politics / practices / poetics – reveals a close entwinement between thought and practice, between thinking and making. The contributions offer critical perspectives combined with implications for practice, or they in themselves are practices (such as performances, discussions, acts of care, or visualisations). Each contribution is an open data project in action. Openness is part of the Living Archives research project.

<http://livingarchives.mah.se/>

<https://medium.com/the-politics-practices-and-poetics-of-openness>

Details

Title	Openness: Politics / Practices / Poetics
Authors	Various contributors
Publisher	A Living Archives Publication
Copyright	2017 (all texts, unless otherwise noted, released under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License)
167 pages	PDF and Printed Book Free download
ISBN	978-91-7104-692-5 (PDF) 978-91-7104-693-2 (Print)

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Preface

Susan Kozel

Why this publication on Openness?

Let us begin with form. Or rather format. Openness has been released in three versions. The collected articles appeared as a series on medium.com (1/3).¹ Next they were made available as a freely downloadable PDF (2/3)², and finally as a limited hand bound print run of approximately 30 volumes (3/3). These are iterations on openness comprising 18 contributions existing, to cite Jean Luc Nancy, “between exposed thought and knotty intimacy” within a Commerce of Thinking (Nancy 2009, 3). These 3 versions travel across materialities. They are re-mediated, but to me it feels like a sort of de-mediation – a stripping away – as we moved over time from the digital versions toward the print version. Video had to be unspooled into image frames, audio into fragmented text transcriptions. These iterations render Nancy’s argument multiple both in form and in voice, without a doubt “born in agitation and anxiety, in the fermentation of a form” (ibid) but not in search of anything as unified as a coherent style or position.

The temporal dimension of each version of Openness ranges from relative ephemerality to potential longevity.

This publication (in whichever form you read it) reveals the assemblages surrounding and shaping such projects at the same time as each version enacts a slightly different assemblage. For example, medium.com is located in a wider online journalistic forum with a lightly political voice and largely American perspective. The PDF version lives through our research project’s online presence and the shared personal and academic networks of the researchers. The print publication has a distribution that occupies both ends of a public spectrum: highly personal as it sits on our shelves at home or in the homes of selected friends, and highly institutional as, bearing an ISBN number, it will be sent to various national libraries and archives. The temporal dimension of each version of Openness ranges from relative ephemerality to potential longevity: medium.com exists now, but could disappear at any point; our university’s web presence and digital archives may be a guarantee of greater longevity; and the bound hardcopy versions lodged in libraries could last longer. Archiving has always been unpredictable over time, but paradoxically in the digital age one of the best ways to ensure longevity is printing and storing (it is also one of the most environmentally sound ways, given the energy costs of powering and cooling vast server farms).

The sub-title of this publication “politics /practices / poetics” reveals a close entwinement between thought and practice, between thinking and making. We are not just offering abstract arguments on open data and not just implementing technological or social methods for distributing or accessing data. The contributions offer critical perspectives combined with implications for practice, or they in themselves are practices (such as performance, discussion, acts of care, visualisations). Each contribution is an open data project in action.

The articles are paired, not because they share an approach, but because reading them together might promote a dialogic quality: as if they are talking to each other. Early editorial discussions evoked the metaphor of the A Side and B Side of a vinyl record, but this implied a dominant recording and a subversive one, which did not suit our purposes. But the pairing remained. Two authors might approach a similar topic from

1 <https://medium.com/the-politics-practices-and-poetics-of-openness>

2 <http://livingarchives.mah.se/>

different perspectives or they might offer compatible approaches to different topics. The voices vary from academic to more poetic or personal, and referencing conventions are non-uniform. The contributions that took advantage of medium.com's ability to display audio and visual media easily had to be de-mediated into alternate forms for the graphic layout of the PDF and book forms, but in the process a different dynamics were generated, or at least different poetic qualities.

The contributions to Openness offer critical perspectives combined with implications for practice, or they in themselves are practices.

The contributions for Openness were solicited according to the academic conventions of an open call. They were subject to peer review, revisions by the authors, and eventual copyediting. Copyright free images were selected. Part of the experiment was to follow an academic-yet-open process: following scholarly procedures to generate conceptual depth and quality of writing, but attempting to reduce gate-keeping and permit a range of voices and contributions. The process was, true to academic form, quite slow.

Open Data in relation to Archives

Openness is part of the Living Archives research project located at Malmö University, funded by the Swedish National Research Council (VR) under the rubric of an initiative called the Digitized Society. The project lasted from 2013-2017, which turned out to be a pivotal time in global techno-culture to reflect upon data and archives. During this period we witnessed the impact of Snowden and Wikileaks; the expansion of the Internet-of-Things, the quantified self, and social media; and increased applications of Big Data combined with network analytics.

Our interdisciplinary group of researchers (from philosophy, interaction design, computer science, performance, art history, art practice, cultural studies, education and media) decided to consider archival practices rather than archives as repositories, never having as a goal the direct digitisation of archives but rather a critical and expansive approach to archives. The what, how, from whom and by whom of archives became our various foci. This expansion of the construct of the archive coincided with concerns for access, inclusion and participation, or at least with recognizing that archives tend to be the bastions of the powerful with weaknesses or blind spots when it comes to inclusion of minority voices and lives (Derrida 1996). In our research, archiving practices resulting in digital or analogue traces became twinned with archiving in corporeal forms, the somatic or bodily processes of remembering/forgetting/re-enacting (Schneider 2011).

Archiving practices resulting in digital or analogue traces are twinned with archiving in corporeal forms.

The two research strands of the Living Archives project are Performing Memory and Open Data.³ The Openness publication, in its various forms, comes out of the latter strand. In fact, it reflects the unravelling of research assumptions and their re-assembling. Here's how:

³ <http://livingarchives.mah.se>

In 2012 we proposed to approach open data, inclusion and access by initiating a technology-driven experiment in crowd sourced metadata tagging. On a specific level, we were inspired at that time by the Ghost Rockets initiative.⁴ Building on a cultural fascination with UFOs and the timely release of Swedish government (military) archives relating to the reported sightings of planetary visitors in northern Sweden, Ghost Rockets proposed to integrate a game model for generating metadata with something akin to The Guardian newspaper's experiment in crowdsourced data analysis of MP's (members of parliament's) expense accounts.⁵ More generally, our proposal was caught in the spirit of open data from the early part of this century, and we took inspiration from a range of valid and laudable initiatives:

[Open Data Handbook⁶](#)

[Europeana Linked Open Data to connect and enrich metadata⁷](#)

[Open Archives⁸](#)

[Initiatives involving visualisations and mashups for revealing spending⁹ or crime statistics¹⁰](#)

[Cultural crowdsourcing initiatives¹¹](#)

Metadata

While recognising that there are clearly valid archival problems around metadata (tending to be imprecise, patchy when handling sensitive material, categories becoming obsolete or language inappropriate over time, often obtained through closed, arbitrary or at least veiled institutional processes, suffering from institutional underfunding) we rapidly realised the innate risks to implementing yet another technological solution to archiving problems.

We could clearly contribute a small infrastructural software application relating to opening up the process of metadata tagging but this no longer sat easily with us, and in saying "us" I'm including the members of the research team from computing science and those from the humanities and arts. It became impossible to ignore that there is too much emphasis on the political and technological work of establishing open data projects and not enough on studying the discursive, material, social and cross-cultural realities of open data creation, archiving and distribution. Further, the sort of data included in open data tended to be that of high public policy and commercial reuse value, like economic and spatial data with data still seen as a "product to be stored and distributed" (Kitchin, 52).

Open data can be "both extremely open and terribly closed at the same time"

The paradox of open data is that huge releases of information manage to be "both extremely open and terribly closed at the same time" (Rogers, 2009). Open because if you know where to look there can be unprecedented access to civic data, but closed because many details remain blacked out or impossible to

4 <http://www.ghostrockets.se/>

5 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2009/jun/18/mps-expenses-houseofcommons>

6 <http://opendatahandbook.org/>

7 <http://labs.europeana.eu/api/linked-open-data-introduction>

8 <http://www.openarchives.org/>

9 <http://openspending.org/>

10 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/truthaboutcrime/crimemap/>

11 <http://www.onedayonearth.org> and <http://foursquare.com>

analyse due to sheer volume (as with Big Data) or opaque metadata and representation conventions. I recall a conversation with a meteorologist at a conference on open data who said he would be happy to let me have access to their data flow from satellites but said it would be pointless because I would not know how to make sense of it. The warm feeling of being able to access flows of data previously closed to me rapidly evaporated, leaving me feeling confused and a little cheated.

Open Data / Big Data

Since 2012 the data climate has changed significantly, in particular due to Wikileaks on-going activities and the continued reverberations of Edward Snowden's revelations on the extent of illegal personal data capture sanctioned unofficially by British and US government agencies and telecom service providers. A subtle emotional shift in the framing of open data occurred, from civic data to personal data, from an abstract sense of quantified data necessary for managing and governing citizens or for delivering services to populations (such as schools and fire departments) to the data of private people in their personal lives. In some respects, Snowden shattered the wall between big data and small data, revealing that both categories are subject to similar capture and storage, and that this can happen in legally grey areas or be overtly illegal, contravening the laws of a government and the privacy rights of its citizens. As such, open data can no longer be seen as a politically neutral resource. The what, how, from whom, and by whom take on greater significance, as does the interpretation of data. Citing Florian Cramer, "there has never been as much interpretation going on than in the era of analytics" (Cramer, 2016). For of course false, misleading or partial data is still data, and the truth of any data triangulation is only as effective as its algorithms and the people who eventually interpret the results.

Open data can no longer be seen as a politically neutral resource.

The unravelling invited by this publication on openness reveals how cultural imaginaries shape a sense of what open data are or might be. Such imaginaries come from as diverse sources as the natural world and from neoliberal politics. Take, for example, the mixed legacy of the "data wants to be free" mantra, closely allied with Stewart Brand's (founder of the Whole Earth Catalogue in the 1960s) famous statement that "information wants to be free." This belief presents an analogy with dynamic elements within the natural world, aligning data circulation with basic rights to clean air and water and resulting in argument that data should not be owned but freely available to all. This stance is closely allied to the argument that regulation or critical intervention are inappropriate or unnecessary, echoing the rhetoric of the free market needing no regulation because it has innate checks and balances. This natural resource is also perceived to be abundant, and somehow pure. In close parallel to the naturalistic metaphors, open data occupy a key place in neoliberal political beliefs that economic value can be created by the free circulation of data, including the exploitation of what has been called "data exhaust" -- data mistakenly deemed to be useless until it can be monetised in new ways (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 113).

These now valuable tiny transactions make up what was framed as data exhaust (useless data) only a few years ago.

Unfettered data circulation is cited as a driving force for "innovation" (Goldstein and Dyson, 2013). Promoting "transparency of decision-making," generating "accountability for elected and appointed officials,"

spurring “greater citizen engagement,” and producing economic value “beyond the walls of governments” have become the contemporary civic corollaries of the data as a natural force metaphor (Chui et al, 2013, 163). The language is so seductive that it is hard to critique, hard to hold in our minds the growing sense of what is really happening with the shiny rhetoric. It is equally hard to get our heads around the extent to which open data swallow up the micro activities of a person that may not be consciously or willingly given: my texts and phone messages, my location as determined incessantly by my mobile phones, my internet searches and my amazon purchase records, the GPS location I send texts from, the time of day or night I send them. I have deliberately inserted “my” in the above list to emphasise the embeddedness of bodily actions, perceptions and emotions within that border where open data gives way to big data. These now valuable tiny transactions make up what was framed as data exhaust (useless data) only a few years ago, “data that is shed as a byproduct of people’s actions and movements in the world. For the Internet, it describes users’ online interactions: where they click, how long they look at a page, where the mouse-cursor hovers, what they type, and more” (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 113). Perception, attention and choices not made but pondered become included in data sets – open and proprietary.

The Non-inevitability of Data

Open data bleed into big data, and a tacit assumption regarding the inevitability of full data circulation is created. There is a performativity in this statement, meaning a quality of bringing something into existence by actions or thoughts that construct a reality. In this case, the reality of the inevitability of data is the futility of attempting to question or slow an inexorable progression of data towards massive generation, circulation, capture and storage. Public attitudes and civic policy tend to be either favourably disposed or fatalistically resigned to there being nothing that we can do to stop it. Our abilities to imagine the data traces we leave on a daily basis and sheer volume of data in circulation are as challenged as our abilities to formulate political or activist strategies for intervening in the massive capture of data enacted by corporations and government agencies, where the laws sometimes follow the actions, retroactively legalising what has already been done.

The non-inevitability of data, opens scope for changing attitudes and behaviours

The somewhat awkward phrase, the non-inevitability of data, opens scope for changing attitudes and behaviours to promote a “new generation of responsive and responsible data work.” (Wilson cited in Kitchin 2014) The first step toward positing a non-inevitability of full data capture is questioning the assumptions around open data and big data, and speculatively constructing practices that cannot be captured, refuse to be captured, or insist on being captured and circulated differently. Non-inevitability articulates “registers within which interventions can and are already being made” (ibid). This publication aims to contribute to such speculation.

“Cloudiness of Data” versus Data in The Cloud

Illegally obtained data from unsuspecting telecommunications users sits in counterpoint with the astonishing amount of data willingly provided through social media (and then used to enhance the profit of multinational corporations like Google, facebook and SnapChat.) In 2012 the economic construct of data-funded had not entered our awareness, and still in 2014 people genuinely believed that Snap Chat’s disappearing images actually disappeared (instead of living on servers somewhere contributing to data that might be open to some but not to others). Sharon Mattern captures a cultural confusion when she states that there is considerable “imprecision” in how data are conceived, “cloudiness” in how data are derived, analysed and put to use (Mattern cited in Kitchin, 2014). When this cultural ambiguity is given further academic depth by realising that ontologies (what data are), epistemologies (how data construct knowledge), methodologies (ways to handle and research data), techniques, tools and infrastructures for sorting and storing data are entwined, we see that cloudiness regarding open data affects a very broad spectrum indeed, and increasingly impacts our daily lives. It also reveals a range of explicitly and implicitly held stances:

Open Data is not Open enough (but should be)

Open Data is not Accessible/Inclusive enough
(but should be)

Data should not be Open (a position shared by
cypherpunks – radical encryption advocates for personal
data – and corporations alike)

Thus, within our project on archiving, the unravelling of open data began as we decided to better understand openness and what this means not just for our particular research into archiving, but what it might mean more broadly as a concept and as a set of practices or sensibilities. This was our way to question the technological fix to social problems implicit in a lot of open data, or as Haraway says with her typical wit and accuracy, to question the hope that “technology will come to the rescue of its naughty but very clever children (Haraway 2016, 3). Openness falls into her category of the what/how, of thinking and making, as we ask simultaneously what open data are and how we enter into the data choreographies that swirl around us on a daily basis. Then we might suggest alternate formations and practices.

“Data matter and have matter”

There is, however, one assumption that has not been unravelled, “data matter and have matter” (Kitchin 2014). This publication is not based on a disregard for or a disinterest in data, but quite the opposite – we care tremendously about data.

In expanding, and to use a popular term at present, “troubling” (Haraway 2016) openness we looked to what could be called its others. This refers both to people and materials that have been excluded from archives despite wanting to be included, and those who might want to stay outside the big data surge in data capture, storage, archiving and analysis. An additional category is those who might want to be included in archives and the circulation of digital data, but on their own terms.

It is important to state, once again, that we do not dismiss the need for open data or for transparency on the part of corporations and governments: we need access to data. In calling for a critical account of open data we are opening the spectrum of voices and helping to cultivate new cultural imaginaries, sensibilities and practices concerning open data, and its sibling Big Data. To give a final word to Richard Topgaard, with much appreciation for his role in the early stages of shaping these publications: “I am probably out on thin ice.” We are all on thin ice with this publication, and with our expanding datafied existences.

Susan Kozel (March 2017)

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements go to the members of the Living Archives research group who reflected on openness: Erling Björgvinsson, Maria Engberg, Anders Høg Hansen, Nikita Mazurov, Elisabet Nilsson, Temi Odumosu, Jacek Smolicki, Richard Topgaard, and Veronica Wiman. Appreciation is expressed to the contributors to Openness who offered their ideas and creative work. Thanks to support from the Faculty of Art and Culture of Malmö University and to the Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish National Research Council). Big thanks to Agnieszka Billewicz for designing the book and PDF.

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Digital Archives, the Museum and the Culture Snacker

Maria Engberg

The (In)Discreet Charm of Openness

Jacek Smolicki

Digital Archives, the Museum and the Culture Snacker

Maria Engberg

Fig 1. Credit: Flickr user Khánh Hmoong CC:BY-NC

History made comestible

In April 2013, after being closed for ten years for renovation, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam reopened. The long hiatus allowed the museum time to thoroughly and carefully reimagine its role in the Netherlands and its relationship with its visitors and customers. Central to this important change for the museum was a complete overhaul of its digital face outward. The result is a new website with the Rijksstudio at its center, a digital platform for easy access to the digital parts of the museum's collection. The creation of the digital presence of the museum centred on a vision of the public now living digital lives in a Web 2.0 reality of user generated content, interoperability, and ease of digital access to information and communication.

Martijn Pronk, head of publishing at the Rijksmuseum, defined the museum's new relationship to the public as follows:

The Rijksmuseum is for everybody. Therefore, the Rijksmuseum website is for everybody.... For the development of our site we have looked at what else is successful on the Internet today. We have targeted those customers. The “culture snacker” we focus on is the typical Internet user of today, pinning on Pinterest, watching videos, sharing photos. Interested in art, design, travel, but not an art lover per se. Rijksstudio is the “translation” of a museum website for this group.

(Gullström)

Packaging our snacks: make your own masterpiece!

The tour de force of this new relationship that the museum envisions with its audience is the digital Rijksstudio, which provides an interface to the museum's digital archive (containing at present 200,000 objects). The studio foregrounds the user's personal engagement with the artworks, allowing you to create your own account in which you can create your own curated collections in archives by marking whole or sections of artworks as your favourites. Finally, under the heading “make your own masterpiece”, you can take your selections, download the images and transform them into other images or use the images to decorate objects to buy (a cup, a phone cover) or even to mark your own skin with (tattoos).

Fig 2. Detail. Rijksmuseum collections. "Chinamen eating in a restaurant. Canton, China," C.H. Graves & Universal Photo Art Co., Carlton H. Graves, Universal Photo Art Company, 1902t

The phrase "culture snacker" stands out in Pronk's statement. This is what the Rijksmuseum calls the segment of their audience that engages with these steps of the Rijksstudio: the gathering and sharing images and then creating new objects and images out of the archive material. At the time of the re-opening in 2013, Peter Gorgels, the Rijksmuseum's manager of digital communication, suggested that the culture snacker "is the digital counterpart of the culture tourist." Culture snackers are, he continues, digitally savvy users who know how to engage with our by now "image-heavy culture" (Gorgels 2013). Gorgels' description of the museum visitors' online media engagement is similar to behaviours that social scientists Madianou and Miller have called "polymedia use" (Madianou and Miller 2012). Polymedia use is a set of strategies for choosing media platforms according to social, personal and emotional needs, and reasons other than rational technical choices based on each channel or medium's affordances and nothing else. Individual needs and associations weigh heavier than broader cultural assumptions about how visitors should engage with cultural material. The snacker wants to put together their own little tidbits of culture to take away: "Creative manipulation of images has become commonplace, both for humorous and aesthetic ends" (Gorgels).

Is cultural snacking good for you?

The culture snacker wants high quality snacks, the Rijksmuseum wagers. Despite that Gorgels seems to suggest that easy access is paramount for the culture snacker, the snacking here is not so much the unhealthy picking at high-energy, empty calorie foods that ultimately corrupt your health, or in this case, cultural education. The empty calorie version of what the Rijksmuseum offers is, in this scenario, the abundance of low-resolution images that are easily available online but do not have the quality and authority that an image directly from the museum does. Instead, high-resolution images are offered much in the way that the [Google Art Project](#) foregrounds high resolution images that allow for zooming in to see details as one would see them during an actual visit to the museum.

What I see as I read Gorgels' description of the Rijksstudio's intended audience is a version of Nicholas Carr's multitaskers, who jet about digital fields picking up bits here and there. In Carr's cognitive science-influenced take on web culture, the snacker, or in Carr's words, "the juggler", relies too much on brain functions that "help us speedily locate, categorize, and assess disparate bits of information in a variety of forms" (2010, doc. 2441). This juggling causes the brain cells that "support calm, linear thought" to wither, Carr argues. These are, the argument goes, the very cells we draw upon when reading long narratives or "involved argument" (2010). What is for Gorgels a force for positive engagement with digitized cultural heritage objects, is for Carr a very real threat to our ability to think critically in a sustained manner.

Being there—a sidebar

I have always been more fascinated with watching people who look at art than only looking at the artworks themselves. With few exceptions, I am often more intrigued by the social scene in front of me than simply immersing myself in reflection in front of masterworks. Whenever I visit a museum, I find myself slowly following the path of other visitors to see how they see and what they see. I will stand by one visitor for a while then change to another. Looking over their shoulder, I see the artworks and the visitors looking at them at the same time. This has become one of my favorite modes to look at art while also documenting others' behavior. Looking at the Rijksstudios of other users is another way of looking at them looking at art.

Fig 3. Photo: Maria Engberg, 2009

RIJKS STUDIO
Food

Nora

8

0

I love this

Banquet Still Life
Adriaen van Utrecht

Still Life with Cheese
Floris Claesz. van Dijck

Still life with small game and...
Frans Snijders

Still Life with Asparagus

Fig 4. Screenshot from Rijksstudio user [Nora's collection](#)

Closeness

In the vast landscape of digital material that is the world wide web, how would an institution with digital archives lure potential visitors? Access is one key element, particularly for a state institution given public funds to provide services for the preservation and presentation of important cultural objects. However, boundary-less digital access can lead to a sense of excess (Fjellestad and Engberg 2013). An excess of visual material which arises from digitalization efforts and social photographic practices (propelled by the digital camera phone and social media platforms that support or even foreground the publication of amateur photography); a moment of what Johanna Drucker argues is fueled by "image glut and visual overstimulation" (Drucker 2005, 193).

For the Rijksmuseum, another guiding principle has been "close to". They want to come close to us, and for us to want to come closer too—close to the collection, close to the building itself on visits in person, and close to their expertise which stands ready for us online and in the bricks-and-mortar museum.

We bring everything close by, so that the user can reach out, establish personal contact, and zoom in and out. We make art accessible, inviting, and inspiring. We encourage touching. We create ease of use.

The zoom is the tool *par excellence* in the Rijksstudio that facilitates this closeness. It allows us to zoom in and come so close to the objects that we can perceive cracks in the surface, and see brush strokes and lumps of paint. The gaze that is evoked by the interface choices and the high resolution digital images of the Rijksstudio therefore become highly corporeal and suggest a sensual and seductive experience, rather than one which is informative or respectfully distant. Laura Marks' (2002) suggestion that certain cinematic sensibilities foreground a haptic visuality which calls upon multiple senses through the visual seems apt to use when describing the effect that the zooming interface of the Rijksstudio is supposed to call forth. The tactile sensation that the zoom is supposed to intimate is quite different, however, to what Marks understood as defining haptic visuality. She foregrounded instead grainy images, changes in focus, overexposure, and close-to-the-body camera positions; in short, less than "perfect" images, less than complete. The contemporary use of high-resolution images and zoom functions points more toward a wish to get the complete and physical experience of the painted canvas with all its imperfections.

In a time when already digitized material now has to find new models of access and consumption for users, cultural heritage institutions with digital archives are exploring how to envision what a digital museum can be. For visitors to the digital archives, such as the ones on offer by the Rijksmuseum, Europeana and the Google Art Project, the experiences are set up so that visitors come into imagined close contact with the cultural objects on display by way of zooming. Unlike the distance that is maintained in the physical collections, digital museums foreground a photographic urge to zoom in, to create close-ups, to be able to virtually stand so close to the surface of a painting that you can see its brush strokes and cracks. In the case of the Rijksmuseum, the zoom interface is made specifically with the touch interface tablet in mind. High resolution images along with possibilities to zoom in present a strategy of interaction that foregrounds a tactile gaze: an intertwining of touch and look. There is a scopophilic and tactile tendency built into its interface, one that users have seemed quite eager to embrace judging by the number of visitors the Rijksmuseum's online archives have. It is a strategy that gestures toward a Benjaminian aura, intended to mimic the experience of being in physical proximity to the actual physical artwork. Not to replace the physical art piece by millions of less-than-equal copies but to invite us into a museum

*Fig 5. Rijksmuseum Collections.
Italian Landscape with
Umbrella Pines, Hendrik Voogd,
1807 and detail of the same.*

*Fig 6. Photo:
Maria Engberg, 2009.*

world of ready-to-snack goodies. This is a strategy of opening up the museum towards the visitors where they are: on Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The goal is of course to invite us to create links, to share, and to reuse material that is in some way linked to the Rijksmuseum, and in that way, strengthen their presence, relevance and brand.

The web equivalent of peering over visitors' shoulders in the digital collection of the Rijksmuseum is to look through the users' individual sets and collections, their own Rijksstudios. As of December 2015 there are over 230,000 Rijksstudios on rijksmuseum.nl/en/rijksstudio. Visitors can flit in and out of others' collections and snapshots, see what other visitors are seeing and how they see it, along with interpretations and biases indicated by the set names and the details they have chosen to highlight. In the section "Creations," users can upload their own creations which have been inspired by, used or otherwise echoed the works that are in the collections. This, too, becomes a way to consume in light pieces here and there. Any visitor can peer into another's collection. A peer-curated collection also foregrounds the "snacking" metaphor of which the museum speaks. These collections most often foreground keywords (a set of paintings centering on food, or flowers or eyes, for instance) and most often skew art historical groupings or distinctions. In fact, most often, the historical context of any of the works has been taken away from the site altogether with the reason that "[i]t is our e-strategy that we only publish ourselves what has real added value. For example, we no longer explain who the biblical Moses was, as we did before, since this information is readily available from a host of sources even more authoritative on the subject than the Rijksmuseum" (Gorgels 2013).

From cannibal to snacker

In 1928, the Brazilian poet, Oswald de Andrade, published the *Manifesto Antropófago* (Cannibalist Manifesto) in which he proclaimed, "I am only concerned with what is not mine" (de Andrade and Bary 1991). Andrade's ideas of a cultural anthropophagy that cannibalized European high culture into the Brazilian context to the great benefit of Brazil suggested that something strong and new could be constructed out of the act of devouring others' creative and cultural ideals. Although not always proclaimed in such corporally violent terms, practices of re-appropriation are central to the modernist project as a whole: eating, devouring, regurgitating, or more plainly, using that which is not one's own. Thus, there is a movement away from the unrepentant and defiant calls to resist the colonization of European culture onto the Brazilian cultural landscape by "writing back" to the Empire that is at the core of de Andrade's manifesto, or the destruction of European history, repeated in every tenet of the violent romantic, misogynist 1909 manifesto of Italian Futurism (Marinetti).

Once practices with pronounced radical intentions, the consumption and regurgitation of cultural objects continue but have lost some of their politicizing force. Now, metaphors of use and reuse have been hopelessly tamed: no longer do we tear flesh from cultural bodies in order to forge our own stitched-together Frankensteinian creatures. In the digital age, we snack, picking at the pieces that are presumably the most accessible and possibly the most desired: remixthemuseum.com; www.museumix.org. Outside of museum politics perhaps, these kinds of "remixes" of museum objects seem less than radical and more in tune with the dominant aesthetic practices in contemporary culture, from music and art to creative practices in digital social media culture. Rijksstudio has taken those digital cultural impulses to reuse and re-publish seriously and offer them as a path towards what they view as a closer and longer engagement with the Rijksmuseum archives. It has proven to be a fruitful strategy: in the first three months after launch, the average visit length

Fig 7. Combinations of two paintings. Rijksmuseum Collections.

went from 3.05 minutes to 10.42 minutes. The average visit among iPad users was more than 19 minutes. Within a year, the number of Rijksstudios passed 100,000 (Fabrique), and at the close of 2015, the Rijksstudio has more than 230,000 users.

On the go

These thoughts on the opening of the museum through hyper-visual display and remix may offer only limited insight into larger cultural questions of archiving practices or questions of openness, access, and cultural cache. Despite this, as someone who finds her way to cultural objects by way of watching them as part of a social scene rather than reified high cultural objects in their own right, the possibility of glimpsing others' re-appropriations and digital traces of visits to the online Rijksmuseum becomes a diet that, much like snacking in real life, fills you up without actually giving you proper nourishment. Gives you glimpses without full insight. Ultimately, what the Rijksstudio offers by opening up the digital archive is, despite appearances, perhaps not far from offering us that moment of satisfaction when we buy a couple of postcards to show that we were there as we exit through the museum shop.

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The (In)Discreet Charm of Openness

Jacek Smolicki

"Now you can stream your dreams for real."

In this text, I offer a somewhat flipped perspective on open data practices. Here, open data is not seen as a positive aspect of the proliferating digitisation of our cultures. It is no longer something we acquire for free by browsing on the Internet, but rather the opposite. Open data is being acquired from us, ever more often latently ... on the basis of an involuntary transaction ...

Rooted in my interest in the Internet, and more broadly, digital technologies as contemporary archiving and capturing devices, in this short text, I turn to art and media art for inspiration on how to both practically and conceptually move beyond the paralysing confines of skepticism with which we increasingly approach modern technologies.

On us as open sources in the realm of transactional media

Constituting an ever-expanding network, digital media (such as social media platforms and applications) 'treat' us, their regular or incidental users, as sources of open data. Or put differently, by interacting with these networked media, we voluntarily or involuntarily subject our lives to becoming open sources: open to the never fully known benefits of various industries, commercial agents, state-run agencies, and other third parties. Despite often being free of charge and open to everyone, such types of media have a transaction-like character. In order to gain access to the data that particular medium hosts (whether these are images shared by our friends on Facebook or music videos we view on YouTube), we (have to) open up and expose some aspects of ourselves.

This often happens with no given consent or only limited understanding of the potential implications and purposes that data points which emerge from our interactions might be used for.

The principles and complexities of such transactions are meticulously diluted in often endless lines of terms of agreements that, as some studies show, only about 7 percent of users put in an effort to go through.

Every day when we interact via such transactional media, our locations, decisions, choices and hesitations become subjected to various invisible transactions. These transactions are certainly not based on fair and transparent forms of exchange, but rather, they are highly unbalanced. In other words, there is an obvious, large disproportion between the extent, purpose, and scale of the individual's singular act of accessing the web and acquiring or viewing data and the extent, purpose, and scale with which third parties access, scavenge, and potentially benefit from digital traces that such individual acts leave behind. Although we may have a clear purpose and goal in accessing or acquiring certain data, we can never be sure what the purposes and goals might be of diverse social media providers and the allies they sell our information to. Moreover, it is not only these purposes and contexts that we cannot be sure about, but also the time span over which our data points might remain circulated, exploited, and possibly misused.

Going online today seems increasingly like stepping into the woods filled with animal traps and lures distributed around to cause us to navigate in a certain way and seamlessly capture our movements.

Many online services, in particular social media, are designed to stimulate our behaviours and cause us to act in a predetermined manner. (Consider, for instance, Facebook guidelines on how to take a proper portrait picture. While seemingly serving the user, these guidelines also ensure that the face of the photographed is recognisable by the face recognition algorithms embedded in Facebook code.) Transactional media enforce certain openness on us hoping to increase the number of data points that can be extracted from our online wanderings. Consider the omnipresence of 'like' buttons, requests for rating, comments, and shares, not to mention the intriguing headlines and seemingly personalised advertisements we come across on a quotidian basis.

Every intentional response to these reveals yet another bit of our personality. It enchants our sense of privacy, unveils a degree of our personal taste and curiosity, delicately and unnoticeably widening the scope of our not necessarily intended openness. As a result, our digital presence (or 'data double' as Stephen Fortune, an open data scholar, calls it) gets labelled and tagged, so it can be more precisely returned to, tracked back, targeted, and addressed by, for example, advertisers, into whose hands the information about our interactions is imperceptibly transferred. Whether we want it or not, our movements across cyberspace are subject to recording, framing, tracking, and categorising.

"Super-screens without a proper feeling."

While voluntarily constructing an archive of our lives by posting multimedia content on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs or any other semi-automated, life-logging platform, the same digital traces contribute to the formation of a shadow archive, an involuntary constructed one to which we have no access. One example of this is found in Google's aggregation of personal data resulting in a construction of our digital doubles. These digital doubles are estimates of who we are, how old we are, and what our preferences are, based on our daily interactions with online browsers. The realm of the web has turned into a location-less archive aggregating and merging both private and public, intimate and explicit, closed and open. By a location-less archive, I do not mean one without a physical basis; but rather, location-less here denotes the lack of one singular physical grounding—a state of continuous, dynamic migration of the content from one location to another beyond us being fully aware of it. In other words, the content of such an archive, constituted by bits of our lives, persistently migrates in time and space, loosely changing its owners, agents, appropriators, and abusers.

What actions might we take to address these problems? In the context of pervasive media and network technologies, shall we fully embrace the fact that there is no escape from being exposed to the unknown and unintended deployments of our life-bits (Bell and Gemmell 2009)? Shall we altogether forget about the idea of privacy, secrecy, and ambiguity and fully comply with a new condition of post-privacy, total openness, and transparency?

"Super-screens without a proper feeling."

On transparency and instrumentalisation of personal data practices

As Edward Snowden noted in a short interview around Christmastime in 2013, those born today (or what we might as well call them, 'digital natives') will have much difficulty trying to understand what privacy is, or was. Already tricky to clearly delineate today, the divide between private and public in the cyberspace of the future will be increasingly indistinguishable. Moreover, consider the further realisation of already operational concepts such as 'smart city', 'predictive policing', or the 'internet of things'; for these concepts, the provision of personal data is an unquestionable prerequisite. It is required as a component of a large feedback loop, an inseparable unit of large data swarms fueling and setting in motion algorithmic procedures aimed at orchestrating the ways we navigate and behave, and consequently enhancing the ways we produce and further contribute with our personal data.

Perhaps one of the most revealing depictions of such a tendency to ‘cybernetically’ instrumentalise personal data practices has been offered by Dave Eggers in his critically acclaimed novel *The Circle* (2013). Although it is a (science) fictional speculation, Eggers’s text provides us with a handful of inspiring insights which are also informative for more rigorous and academic deliberation. Provided that some of the current trends in technology (such as wearables, self-surveillant gadgets, and network technologies) remain proliferating as fast as they currently are, we can read his text as a message from a near, and to some extent, plausible future.

An intriguing vision proposed by Eggers is one in which every single human behaviour can be easily detected, tracked, archived, and processed for the general betterment of humankind.

The vision of the world proposed by the Circle—a Silicon Valley based, techno-enthusiastic corporation aiming to unite all social media platforms into one, globally standardised tool—is basically a vision of the world with no privacy. As the founders of the Circle believe, privacy opens room for secrecy which instigates the majority of problems that humanity has to confront today. In other words, secrecy is an evil to be eliminated and replaced by complete openness. The openness (transparency) can be achieved through the disciplined use of tracking technologies (wearable cameras) and services that the Circle develops, implements, and propagates (such as TrueYou, a meta-social media platform). Tracking and recording technology and its democratic distribution is believed to be the most efficient way to counteract and ultimately erase all kinds of misbehaviour that secrecy tends to make room: criminality, corruption, injustice, inequality, racism, child abuse and poverty. In other words, in order to establish a perfectly functioning, unambiguous society, complete openness is what the ‘Circlers’ believe needs to characterise every single human act in the ever more tightly interconnected, self-surveilling world.

Does such a vision sound like an unrealistic, science-fiction scenario never to become fulfilled?

Or, taking into consideration our techno-politically aided desire to track, share, post, tweet, and snapshot—as well as the proliferation of data surveillance, aggregation of private data by ever fewer large corporations that increasingly monopolise and colonise the web—is this an only slightly exaggerated vision of where our contemporaneity is incontestably heading toward? Although a bit far-fetched, Eggers’s vision does not seem to intend to confront us with an entirely futuristic scenario, but rather, allows us to see in a new, media-technologically saturated context, the old desire to possess total insight.

Similarly, Eggers’s *The Circle* is not merely a critique of the shortsightedness which characterises Silicon Valley-based capitalist entrepreneurship, but instead, it is perhaps a somewhat more universal critique of totalitarian aspirations to be able to infiltrate, make open, and record every aspect of human life. It is the questioning of a dream about the ability to control every current of our lives, whether it is a dream woven by a technologically-aided individual life-logger, state apparatus, private enterprise, or an alliance thereof. Circle,

"Newly produced, deadly disharmonies drawn upon the digital trends."

the corporation, promotes openness and transparency as forces capable of overcoming the conflict between individualism and collectivism (or capitalism and socialism, if you will). On the one hand, it advocates for the discovery of one's 'true self' through submitting into an ever-visible contest in which, after applying proper tracking technologies, one's daily performance gets upgraded from the mundane to the spectacular event widely exposed to the public and its 'honest' commentary. One's daily life becomes subject to quantification, measuring, and rating with the exciting prospect of being awarded by other positively stimulated members of the globally interconnected community.

On the other hand, the Circle promotes a utopian vision of a perfectly synchronous collective working together towards making the world a better place for everyone. This collectivity is achieved by the exactly same means that promises to enable the aforementioned individuation. Due to the highly disciplined compliance of citizens in the on-going techno-political revolution through the consistent use of self-tracking technologies and wearable cameras, the reality which transpires in this utopian vision is united, intra-surveillant, and hence, results in safe and secure global nations (think of the everyday reality of Soviet countries where surveilling and spying on your neighbour was not only seen as a good example of civic duty, but also was, in fact, programmatically encouraged and rewarded).

Thus, we might say that in Eggers's vision, what is often seen as polarised ideas, individuality and collectivity become reconciled. The reconciling medium is nothing other than the idea of complete transparency and openness—the ultimate and irreplaceable prerequisite to a perfectly organised society. In such a vision of the world built upon a hybrid of social and individualistic motivations, the figure of a big brother—'traditionally' an external eye of the centralised system monitoring the behaviour of the population—is not needed anymore.

It becomes replaced by many smaller, little brothers—the actual citizens who, either deliberately or because of not having any other choice, monitor themselves and their fellow citizens in the name of the good.

Surveillance becomes outsourced to the very people who are the subjects of surveillance. Citizens transform into cells and microbes forming body of no-longer physically consolidated, but rather fragmented, pervasively distributed, and hence, operationally much more effective 'Big Data Brother'.

"Traumatised economy?"

On how to life-log with the presence of 'Big Data Brother'

Whether we want it or not, possessing a digital device with access to the network, to some extent, makes us all metamorphose into the microbes of a larger, ubiquitously operating, digital-archiving body—some of us to a greater or lesser degree. Some microbes voluntarily contribute their life-bits by choreographing their actions much in line with the grooves, patterns, and trends provided to them by ready-made technologies, protocols, and mainstream data aggregation services (again, social media), but some microbes attempt to resist such rules.

After Eggers's novel and its critical stance on surveilling technologies, let me turn here to media arts, which in a similar way provide food not only for reflection, but also action. Consider the obfuscation of digital traces, a practice that has emerged as one of the techniques to overcome proliferating data surveillance.

In this sense, obfuscating is about sending false messages while remaining a part of the system, like consciously taking the role of a cancerous cell, simultaneously compatible and integral in terms of its operability, yet incompatible and self-destructive when it comes to motivations.

Kevin Ludlow's artistic work entitled Bayesian Flooding can serve as a good example; for several months, Ludlow has been feeding his Facebook profile with false information about himself. He deliberately pressed the thumbs-up 'like' icon under content he did not necessarily like, and he kept uploading fake updates on his health condition, location, religious orientation and much more. As a result, his online profile became polluted in a way that significantly disturbed usually more accurate advertising and automated recommendation models.

Other examples of a similar technique of obfuscation can be found among many critical browser extensions and scripts (such as Greasemonkey and UnFuck Facebook). Some of them aim to either encrypt one's browsing by hiding one's searches in a cloud consisting of other random queries (for instance, TrackMeNot). Others draw on Ludlow's approach and automatically like and share every likable or shareable content detected on platforms such as Facebook. Digital obfuscation today has almost become a distinctive form of artistic expression—an act of poetic resistance. An interesting example of such, especially in light of the openness discussed here, is the work of Hasan Elahi.

After being linked to terrorist activities post 9/11, and stopped and even detained by security guards at the airport, Hasan Elahi was required to regularly report his international travels to FBI officers. Realising that, despite whatever effort he would make to resist, his life would have been monitored by FBI anyway, Elahi decided to start deliberately tracking and archiving his everyday life. Since 2002 he has, among many other things, been recording every geographical location he visits, every meal he consumes, every public toilet he uses and every expense he makes.

He subsequently shares these data directly with the FBI officers. As he ironically states, no technology or agency can track us better than we ourselves can.

The website he constructed for this project, entitled Tracking Transience, continuously updates its followers on the artist's daily life and current location. In contrast to earlier examples of obfuscation, at first glance, Elahi's project does not intend to confuse the addressee by projecting a falsified identity, but rather, quite the opposite. Elahi goes as far as modern tracking technology allows to achieve a state of complete openness. By deliberately opening up every mundane and boring aspect of his life, sending it directly to FBI officers, and by doing so, relieving them from doing the same, he subversively questions the very logic of extensive data collection and surveillance. As he mentions in one of his lectures referring to basic economical terms, his project can be seen as an unexpected intensification of supply over demand, which as a result drastically deregulates the value of what's demanded. In other words, if you search for something, and I not only give it to you, but also to a million other people, the (market and symbolic) value of the given drops down to almost nothing.

Although expecting the sensational, the viewers of Elahi's work are confronted with the most boring and prosaic. Paradoxically, this almost complete, compulsively constructed display of Elahi's life events somehow does not seem to be truly accounting for it. It does not let us in, but rather, quite the opposite—it constitutes an unbreakable wall. Or put differently, it does invite us in while simultaneously forcing us to stay away. At the same time, it exposes and obscures, disambiguates and ambiguates.

As Simone de Beauvoir (2000) argued, ambiguity is a default condition of a human life. It is a continuous oscillation between one's awareness of being free and constraints established by other people's way of framing the freedom of the Other. The ambiguous character of Elahi's work can be seen precisely in such a suspension. The exercise of an/the individual's freedom can be seen in the act of voluntarily performing the total openness of the author's life. Yet, the way that this act is executed, its techno-political context, might as well account for the other pole of one's ambiguity, namely, the constraining gaze of the Other.

"Real life paranoia cheaper than digital."

On moving forward

As this text addresses the notion of openness, drawing conclusions would be somewhat inappropriate; thus, a few open thoughts and questions instead. In this short text, I intended to draw attention to the fact that today's major technological means of interacting with the world—the web and numerous services, protocols, codes, platforms, and algorithms that the web is constituted of—are increasingly conceptualised and practically programmed to treat their users as sources of open data. Yet, becoming the sources of open data, which is an increasingly unavoidable price for engaging with digital technologies, does not seem to be an upsetting or painful experience. Quite the opposite; if it is not pleasurable, it is definitely presented to us as such. In fact, a study conducted at the department of psychology at Harvard University proves that self-disclosure stimulates the same areas of the brain that are also activated by known pleasurable activities such as eating and sex. Thus, as the said eating or sex calls for being satisfied, so does the need to self-disclose. This is the point where cognitive capitalism finds its realm of operation; however, this is a subject located beyond the scope of this text.

Given that the need for personal openness, or self-disclosure as described above, is becoming an uncontested and somewhat successively naturalised phenomenon, a consequence is that the condition of becoming an open source for various industries (to use a technical term) increasingly constitutes a default setting for many digitally mediated behaviours. If there may not be a way back from such a condition, perhaps what needs to be emphasised is not the criticism of the very idea of personal openness in the context of digital media, but rather the question of according to whose terms this openness is to be determined and subsequently performed.

Can we, as individuals, gain more agency in terms of defining how open our personal records are and according to whose rules and conducts this openness is to be constructed and then mediated?

In one of the last interviews before his death given to War for the Web, Internet activist and programmer Aaron Swartz speaks of a polarised image of which the Internet is commonly being discussed. While some see it as liberating and democratic, others tend to perceive it as a spying and constraining tool. As Swartz argues, the Internet is, and always will be, both—and, because it has these two sides, we cannot easily pinpoint and define its nature. As perhaps the most complex human invention, the Internet only reflects the ambiguity of human nature.

As I tried to exemplify by turning to the artistic project by Elahi, deliberate stubbornness, ambiguity, and perhaps irony, may constitute a resonant response, allowing us to be simultaneously synchronous and asynchronous, tuned and out of tune, open and closed, in relation to numerous forces constituting the complexities of the web (as opposed to either on or off, with or against, present or absent). Although Elahi's project is quite a literal response to the techno-political condition of our times (in other words, it constitutes a balancing point in the axis where the other point is the spying eye of the authorities), there are other artists whose practices, characterised by the qualities drafted above, but unhinged from such a relation (in other words, not directly addressing the problem of the infiltration of one's personal life), might also be inspirational for conceptualising methods to take back control over how open our lives should be in the age of total traceability.

Here, I have in mind the practice of Roman Opalka, a representative of a group of artists who emerged from the minimalist, conceptual art scene of the '60s and '70s, and who worked with the idea of a personal structure as a basis for artistic practice. In such practices, life becomes an artistic medium subjected to meticulously conceptualised and implemented rules and conduct. From 1967 to the end of his life, Opalka was committed to highly artistic and punctiliously crafted methods of opening his life onto the public view and with highly idiosyncratic methods of coding it (such as painting numbers from 0 to infinity or audio recording his voice during this daily process).

Other practitioners working in a similar manner include On-Kawara, the Japanese conceptual artist who consistently kept painting dates on which the very painting was executed, and Alberto Frigo, one of the pioneers of manual life-logging who, for the past ten years, has been documenting his life through photographing every object his right hand uses. Also, Janina Turek, a Polish diarist who for more than sixty years encrypted her life in accordance with a highly personal set of rules, and Jonas Mekas, a Lithuanian-American video artist, who over time built his personal and not easily accessible visual dialect through painstakingly video-documenting his daily surroundings.

A deeper look at the idea of personal structure, which all of the aforementioned artists have been exercising, might provide a productive and constructive perspective on (personal) openness in the context of digital technology, data aggregating, and life-logging services. A perspective that, while pointing to the significance of poetics and aesthetics, not only inspires methods for resisting the very data surveillance mechanisms other than those intervening into the digital code, but also, in a more general sense, lets us rethink the idea of openness in relation to one's personal life and the forms of its mediation.

About the author

Jacek Smolicki is an artist, designer and doctoral researcher within the Living Archives Research Project interested in aesthetics, poetics and politics of personal archiving practices that utilise, subvert or appropriate diverse recording, tracking and archiving technologies. Since 2008 he has been documenting his presence and mapping the space according to personally conceptualised and consistently performed conducts and rules. The project is showcased on www.on-going.net.

The illustrations used in this article come from 'Misquoting', one of Smolicki's practices constituting the life-long, On-Going Projects' framework. Started in 2012, 'Misquoting' is a collage-like, visual record of fragments of news, advertisements and charts extracted from freely distributed newspapers picked up every week. Prior to further copying, using or appropriating the images, contact the author on jacek@smolicki.com

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Reclusive Openness in the Life of Eugene Haynes (1927–2007)

Anders Høg Hansen

What Care Can Do

Veronica Wiman

Reclusive Openness in the Life of Eugene Haynes (1927–2007)

Opening the Suitcase and the Writings of an African-American Classical Pianist in Europe

Anders Høg Hansen

Figure 1. Haynes' suitcase

A Decade Reopened

Reclusion and openness—an oxymoron, one might think. However, in the course of this essay, I attempt to test these notions on the life trajectory of the African-American classical pianist, Eugene Haynes, who befriended an even more well-known artist, the Danish writer Karen Blixen (also known under the pseudonym Isak Dinesen). Haynes crossed continents for work and adventure in the midst of the Cold War, and now with a base in Denmark, he continued to nurture his friendship with Blixen and her secretary, Clara Selborn, from 1952 and over the next ten years until Blixen's death in 1962. Over many holidays and work trips in Denmark, he used Selborn's house in the small fishing village of Dragør, located south of Copenhagen (while Selborn stayed with Blixen in Rungstedlund), to practice the piano, study music, and in between, travel around Europe giving concerts.

Haynes' life, and the ten years in question for this essay in particular (1952–1962), has recently been reopened for the public upon the publication of his diaries and letters in 2000. In addition to these, a suitcase belonging to Haynes containing clothes and other objects was found at Selborn's house after her death in 2008. The contents of the suitcase was then turned into a temporary exhibition at a local museum, the Dragør Museum, in 2012, along with other objects placed in a model of Selborn's house (Phillipsen 2015).

A Black Classical Pianist in Europe in the 1950s

In the 1950s, Haynes was sponsored by the USA Information Service program, which aimed at improving America's image abroad and countering Eastern European political and cultural influence. Given that the Cold War was “cold,” it also became a battle of culture (Phillipsen 2012). Racial segregation and discrimination was a sensitive topic in the US, where the civil rights movement, formed half a century before, was about to gain new momentum. The Information Service tried to promote the US as a non-discriminating nation, and with Haynes, they could show that Blacks do have opportunities, even as classical pianists. At the time, the terms *black* and *classical pianist* may have seemed mutually exclusive and just as much an oxymoron as the pairing of *reclusion* and *openness* because classical music was a trade of artistic work almost solely reserved for whites; black musicians were more commonly known to play soul, jazz, and blues. The Information Service was also trying to sell a culture-rich nation—a USA which was more than just Hollywood, cartoons, and Coca-Cola—which has classical musicians just as talented as in Europe.

A breakthrough was difficult. For his high school classmate, the black jazz musician, Miles Davis, the situation was different. As Haynes said to him once in France:

“He (Miles) was entering a world where no one would question his right to function. This is still far from true where black African instrumentalists are concerned (in the States) which is why I spend as much time away from home as possible” (letter to brother 76).

Haynes spent the last two to three decades of his career, from the 1960s onwards, mostly in academia as a music teacher and as artist in residence at Lincoln University in Missouri. He also worked as radio presenter. Later years saw him return to his birthplace of East Saint Louis where he worked with young people.

Hidden Histories and Music Surfacing

In 2000, a book of letters and diary writings was published called *To Soar with Angels. The European Travels—Remembrances of Isak Dinesen*. At that time, Haynes was over seventy, but the writings in the book are from 1952 to 1962. In 2001, the year after publication, his first CD came out, and his last public concert was in 2005. He died in 2007 at eighty years old. In 2008, his old friend Clara Selborn died. In her house in Dragør where Haynes had stayed, a suitcase belonging to him was found and given to a local museum, the Dragør Museum. The museum displayed a temporary exhibition in 2012 and produced five short films, “The Pianist Eugene Haynes in Dragør, Denmark, and the World” (my translation). I was intrigued by Haynes when I first heard about the exhibition, but it was not until 2015 that I managed to visit the museum’s collections and open the suitcase. It is a special moment—inspecting the objects, one by one. With gloves, I remove the thin, protective paper and look through some books (though with a gentle hand), open leather cases, inspect a pipe instrument, and so forth. I read attached newspaper and magazine articles used in the exhibition, and a few days later, talk to the curator, Ingeborg Phillipsen. She explained that they had not found any remaining family members alive, such as any brothers and sisters. Haynes was not married and did not have any kids, although Phillipsen and the museum had acquired some material from the American archives in addition to the diary and letter collection of this ten-year period abroad.

No other major texts exist on the Internet apart from a few brief obituaries. The longest texts are Phillipsen’s narration over the short films and also edited in presentational texts on YouTube.

Suitcases as Personal Archives

Suitcases have, in museum contexts, often been loaded with symbolism; they are the private remains of people who became separated from their most important or needed belongings, often because of war or prosecution. “A deep historical metaphor for both willing and unwilling travellers,” as Temi Odumosu (2015) reminds me. Famous Holocaust exhibitions have suitcases.

The suitcase, the exhibition, and the accompanying short films, as well as the book from 2000, have focused on the one decade of Haynes’ life abroad which coincided with the last ten years of Karen Blixen’s life. The objects tell a story which the letters and diaries expand upon. It did not surprise me that the suitcase contained ordinary everyday-use belongings, like shoes and trousers and a few books—as well as keepsake objects like dried flowers in a frame. However, I am puzzled about why the suitcase remained at Selborn’s place for so many years—a reclusive collection and travellers’ bag in a reclusive village far away from the buzz of Paris or Saint Louis. Perhaps he may have pondered a return to Denmark, and therefore, let it stay.

Now, after both Selborn and Haynes are deceased, I participate with this essay in a new “opening” of the suitcase and his life, which the museum had initiated some years ago. Haynes had voiced himself eloquently, and interestingly, the museum and its associated films chose to represent him. I could relate Haynes to some of my own earlier engagements with unknown biographies of war and migration. Among these was the case of a soldier’s diaries from Bergen-Belsen, a distant Englishman turned Israeli, an American in his eighties running a folk centre in Stockholm who, back in the 1960s, gave Bob Dylan his first gig, and an additional story (though outside the migration/war themes) about the former owner of a Black-American bookshop in Harlem (Høg Hansen, 2006–2012).

In Haynes, I found another person I wanted to embrace. It was another interesting life journey touching upon the migration theme, this time leading me to Dragør. Initially, I was disappointed in not finding some of his own words in the suitcase, like in diaries and notes; I had been reading and watching how he was represented by others and wanted to read him represent himself. However, the objects also spoke. Immediately after the museum visit, I received the letters and diary which provided his own narration, nuanced the picture, and confirmed the warmth of his friendship with Blixen. In a diary entry titled “First meeting,” Haynes writes about a walk with Blixen:

“Along the way she talked about the many discussions she and Finch-Hatton had had on music. I asked if she had the gramophone he gave her in Africa. She was happy to show it to me when we returned to the house . . . As we said good bye, I made a quip about being a ‘bit of Africa sent out’ to her”

(28–29).

Blue Overalls, Poetry, German Grammar, Leather Cases and a Pipe Instrument

In the suitcase, one finds his dark blue jeans overalls, shoes, and a hat that, according to a 1957 article written in a popular gossip magazine, *Billed Bladet*, (“The Picture Magazine”) made him look like the local fishermen—and maybe the bohemians he hung out with as well, I would add. There are books, two refined leather cases, a pipe instrument, various paper clips, and reviews as well as photos and PR material from his tours. The *Billed Bladet* magazine and article is there too. A black American female tourist is on the front, and there are more rarities inside. The vocabulary is not surprising for the time: ‘Der bor en neger i Dragør,’ the headline states (“There is a negro living in Dragør”).

It was a time where the word black was seen as more offensive than negro—whereas today, it is the other way around, although negro is still in official use. It is the first time I find a copy of *Billed Bladet* so interesting. I also find it somewhat surprising that the museum used the article title in their exhibition in 2012. The curator, Ingeborg Phillipsen, explained that the choice had been considered carefully; it was a deliberate quoting of *Billed Bladet* and aimed at throwing the visitor back in time to the thinking and vocabulary of the 1950s (phone interview 2015). In the magazine, the picture of a private, yet popular, man is painted.

Der bor en neger i Dragør

Som haaber paa, at Europa vil
holde lige saa meget af ham,
som han holder af Europa.

JEG føler mig aldrig ensom, for
saa snart jeg kommer uden for
døren, er jeg omgivet af børn og
gæst, siger Eugene Haynee.

Han er amerikaner, han er pianist, han
har lejet et hus i Dragør — og han er
neger. Børnene i byen kan ikke rigtig
vænne sig til, at han er sort. Han kan til
gengæld ikke rigtig vænne sig til, at de
kigger paa ham. Alligevel holder han af
Danmark og har i sinde at alaa sig ned
her, bygge et hus og have det som ud-
gangspunkt for sine koncertturneer.

Eugene Haynee var vidunderbarn som
4-aarig. — Da han blev ældre, holdt han
op med at optræde. Den berømte franske
pianist Isidore Phillipe og lederen af St.
Louis Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir
Golchmann, tog sig af ham, uddannede
ham og slap ham først løs i det ameri-
kanske musikliv for et par aar siden.
Han fik en manager, rejste rundt i USA
fra den ene straalende modtagelse til den
anden — og blev træt af det. Det ameri-
kanske tempo passede ham ikke.

Nu er han nærmest paa maa og faa
naget til Danmark og haaber kun paa,
Europa vil komme til at holde lige saa
meget af ham, som han holder af Europa.

FOTO: PER WILMANN

Seks til otte timer hver dag øver Eugene Haynee sig. Han
har et omfattende program af bl. a. Beethoven og Schubert.

I Dragørs gader er der stille og roligt. Ingen skynder sig —
heller ikke Eugene Haynee. Han nyder bare at drive rundt.

Eugene Haynee har ikke mange venner i Danmark, men han
kommer en del hos Karen Blixen, og digteren Jørgen Gu-
stava Brandt lærer ham dansk. Til efteraaret giver han sin
første koncert i Odd-Fellow Palæet. Hvis han faar succes,
bliver han og bygger hus. Ellers rejser han hjem til USA.

From Now On, Your Name is Hans. You Are One of Us

"From now on, your name is Hans. You are one of us," the local fishermen renamed and assured him (84). He frequents not only Karen Blixen's home north of Copenhagen in Rungstedlund, but also hangs out with locals like the Dragør-based poet, Jørgen Gustava Brandt, who Haynes describes as "a real Casanova" in a letter to his brother (77). Gustava teaches Haynes Danish, a language which he came to speak alongside French. In the suitcase, there is a book on German grammar and an anthology of literature (with one text by Blixen). When it came to music, critic Isador Phillip called Haynes "one of the greatest musical talents America has produced." Seen in that light, it is a pity that the only CD that came out late in his life is not really seen as proving and showing his talent, the curator, Ingeborg Phillipsen, explains (2015), referring to conversations with reviewers and musicians in the same field. Thus, we do not have recordings that truly document his musical importance.

His summer home in Dragør between 1957 and 1961 was lent to him by Blixen's secretary, Clara Selborn. Haynes had met other Danes in Paris when he had begun studying with a world-famous musical pedagogue, Nadia Boulanger, in 1951. One of them, the journalist Bent Mohn, a friend of Blixen's, introduced him to her writings. In 1952, Blixen herself invited Haynes to Rungstedlund in Denmark where she lived most of her life until her death in 1962.

Figure 4. "The pianist Eugene Haynes lived with Karen Blixen when these pictures were taken. He is one of her good friends, and he was in the country to perform at a concert." (translated from Danish)

Haynes writes in his diary about his first meeting with Blixen: “I have seldom been so curious about anyone.” He further writes of Blixen,

“She was a lady of La Belle Époque, one of the last of the great femmes du monde . . . Had she said she had dined at the Café Procope with Diderot and the Philosophes (public intellectuals of The Enlightenment, my note), I would have believed her” (28),

perhaps also showing that Haynes had just returned from Paris. He appeared to connect well with cosmopolitan and “high art” Europe as well as easily lend himself out to the Danish locals—a world citizen who could thrive among the geese and fishermen of Dragør just as well as in the concert halls of Paris.

Before returning to Haynes in more detail, let me light the lampposts I intend to use to guide my further reading of reclusion and openness. These two terms are not meant as a dichotomy or a source of conflict, but rather, to reflect harmony or at least the merging of two concepts which can be thought to symbolise the life trajectory of a public, yet reserved, artist who, interestingly, crossed paths with a woman (Blixen) who could be defined through the same embrace of reclusion and openness.

Reclusion and Openness

Dictionaries trace the word ‘reclusive’ back to the French *reclus*, meaning a person who hides away from society often with the purpose of religious meditation. The reclusive person seeks a withdrawn life shut off from interaction. *Openness* is, in philosophy, a state of transparency, with free and unrestricted access to knowledge and information. It may also imply unrestricted means for the use and adaptation of information or data. The era of the Internet and social media has given rise to several related “openness” movements and debates (for example, with open source and open data), but have also reshaped the ways in which we live and understand the public and the private.

On one hand, *reclusion* describes a state of reservation and closeness, a communicative existence that is solitary or at least reserved for a small circle. Reclusion may, taken further, describe information passed on or circulated only among a select few. Archives may also, despite laws on public access, be viewed as reclusive or only clumsily accessible for the layperson. Archives, despite the twenty-first century’s slow settling and normalisation of the online and clicktivist world, are still in some people’s imaginations guarded by experts behind institutional walls who meet you with a “can you fill out the form and provide ID” request before you are actually given permission to try and pull out a heavy metal drawer with dusty files, or step up a ladder to take down a box with yellowish documents from shelf 3B.

On the other hand, there is *openness* as the mantra of the good intentions of an idealised, interconnected Internet world overcoming digital divides in our global public sphere.

Archives on the Internet are praised for size and quantity, and despite the emphasis on magnitude, they do not feel as heavy to engage with as the rows of drawers in the metal cabinets of libraries, hospitals, DDR and the FBI.

The Internet has introduced a proliferation of archival practices and authorities, and many of these take a more horizontal approach which rely on other people's histories and collections. On Facebook, we share superficial privacy with our hundreds of so-called friends; we write and comment on blogs, Twitter, and in the commentary sections of columns and articles of every kind. Walls are taken down and the comment or Facebook wall is erected instead. Images or content can be shared freely and appropriated by fellow friends or all, depending on our settings of the Facebook archive.

There are clearly positive aspects to this: previously disempowered people, such as the women in many places of the world who "do not have to sit at home waiting for the husband to return with the news and newspaper," as Vicensia Shule, a Tanzanian scholar, expressed it (2015). They are texting and phoning (also abroad), using *WhatsApp*, and checking blogs and news sites. Haynes was in the midst of a cultivated *WhatsApp*-type art circle, but one that "talked" slower and in longer sentences during dinner gatherings or with ink on paper.

The notion of openness has joined a family of popular and almost categorically positively flavoured notions such as 'participation,' 'empowerment,' 'transparency,' and 'innovation,' though we may forget to ask *how*, with whom, and *when* (or in which contexts), the practice of openness, as well as reclusion, is desirable. Let me "open" this through some situations of a private nature covered in Haynes' book: "And now, dear friend, here on Ewald's hill, I proclaim you my own Prince Rasselas," Blixen says while taking Haynes' hand on top of Ewald's hill during a stroll. Ewald was a famous poet who had lived in the same property, known today as Rungstedlund and located north of Copenhagen. Used by emancipated slaves, the name 'Rasselas' refers to the prince (son of the King) of Abyssinia (modern day Ethiopia) in Samuel Johnson's tale, *The Prince of Abissinia. A Tale*. After quoting Blixen, Haynes adds that he felt it was their own secret moment, not to be shared with others (89). I had mixed feelings about this while reading it. It seems well-intended, but could the elderly Blixen have seen or imposed herself as a type of matron? Either in the sense of a mother figure or else as a person in a senior position or perhaps even as a backer or supporter, as in patron.

In his diaries, Haynes further quotes Blixen, who told him, "You'll have to be patient while you grow into your grace" (104). Haynes was a young man of around thirty and working for a breakthrough. By her embracing him (as a matron?), despite obvious differences, she also grounded them in a shared experience: "In some ways we are both outsiders. I in Denmark, you in the land of your birth." Again, I am not fully comfortable with Blixen placing both of them in the same boat; however, it is clear they were fond of each other. Haynes reflects on his relationship with her:

"When Karen Blixen is interested in what you are saying, she can fix you with an almost hypnotic gaze and you are then convinced that you are at that time the most important person she knows, and what you are saying is of great moment. It is her most endearing trait"

(63).

Haynes found Denmark open and hospitable (somehow, the image is different these days), but he also encountered stereotypes and racism. A university professor from America visiting Blixen referred to "the accent of our nigras" while at the table, and Haynes describes the situation and his discomfort in detail. Blixen had not heard the remark, but detected something was wrong. When she later asked about what happened, she was "enraged" about the guest's behaviour after Haynes had explained (201–2).

Nevertheless, there were many other much more enriching gatherings and conversations, and Haynes' delight in these meetings with Blixen shines through. At a dinner in 1961, Blixen suggests a game where each guest is assigned a famous intellectual, writer, or actor/actress. Haynes had given Blixen the witty French philosopher, Voltaire, and a woman with the name Birthe got Casanova. Haynes reveals fragments of the discussion in the diaries: Casanova had insisted on superstition as necessary, whereas Voltaire (The Enlightenment man) had favoured to free men of the "monster of superstition," arguing that liberty and superstition could not go hand in hand" (180).

In between dinners like these, Haynes is in blue overalls and blue trainers among the geese of Dragør and occasionally hanging out with fishermen at the harbour.

Haynes' writings, published in 2000, contain only texts from the years 1952–1962; we have no afterword or later reflections. Therefore, it is not an autobiography in the sense that texts are produced in the aftermath of events. It is truly an epistolary and diary genre account which engages with a present, or very recent, past and also for a limited audience—a tongue of reclusiveness spoken only to the drawer or oneself at first (the diary) or one or a few receivers of the letters. In Haynes' case, all his letters are to family members or friends. Reclusive, yes, but also very open in this case. In the letter and diary genre, the author has the reduced ability to engage with and construct long-term causes from the clearer light of hindsight. Haynes is, in diary-writing, a "prisoner of time" (as Margareta Jolly describes the condition of letter writing) and inevitably engages with history in its making caught in, as well as freed, in the moment, trying to make sense of the now or recent moments.

The letter-writing genre may be similar to some forms of today's personal blogging on the Internet; however, it is in the situation, not public. Personal archives and connections are created, which may be expanded later by exhibiting or publishing the letters.

While experiencing an archival growth of public or semi-public ping-pong correspondence, visually and with words in the social media age, what happens to the deep openness of the material (paper, pen, envelopes) and wordy epistolary and diary genres?

Are we seeing a general decrease in the production and documentation of slow, elaborate, and personal writings and correspondences in reclusive circles? Our era appears to turn towards quick visibility and availability across platforms rather than deep presence: the age of the overload of digital selfies.

About the author

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What Care Can Do

Reflections on art, archives and openings

Veronica Wiman

At this moment in history, of extreme closure in societies and the literal closing of borders towards groups of people who are socially unwanted, it is complex to discuss openness. But perhaps, as in some other situations of madness and disruption, never ending brutal violence and injustice, there can be small lights flickering and an opening far at the end. The necessity for survival, human love and care, will remain and hopefully be the saviour.

“To open our hearts more fully to love’s power and grace we must dare to acknowledge how little we know of love in both theory and practice. Contemplating the practice of love in everyday life, thinking about how we love and what is needed for ours to become a culture where love’s sacred presence can be felt everywhere, I wrote this meditation”—bell hooks.

Generosity and care in the activities of daily life are central to the artistic practices of the artistic couple Valentina Curandi and Nathaniel Katz (known as Curandi Katz). Their actions begin in their role as parents and caretakers, where a culture of love and care has evolved into a political strategy, methodically performed in engagement with others.

Beginning with openings

A labour of love is one in a series of works that have adopted this approach. Its focus is the personal archive of the communitarian and utopian Toma Sik (1939–2004) which is now hosted by the Institute for Social History (ISH) in Amsterdam. Toma Sik was a Hungarian-Israeli anarcho-pacifist, utopian socialist, vegan, world citizen, anti-zionist and activist. He lived an ascetic lifestyle, collecting all of his furniture from the street and never bought food, instead waiting for the end of the market and gathered the leftovers and discarded fruit. During their research process, the artists were told that Sik had an extensive library of pacifist books, however almost no one had been able to consult them due to the messy condition of his apartment in Tel Aviv, where they were then stored. In the autumn of 2009, the artists finally travelled with their child to Amsterdam to study and look through the archive face to face. Upon arrival to ISH they were told that they couldn’t see the archive, with the explanation that it was not yet organised and was still sitting in boxes on the original palette that had arrived at the institute shortly after his death in 2004. Since Toma Sik was considered a marginal historical figure, the institute was short on staff, and the unorganised material was in multiple languages (English, Hebrew and Hungarian), they decided to leave it untouched. The artists conducted negotiations for spending some time in the archive, explaining their expertise on Sik and their knowledge of English and Hebrew, and offering their free labour.

The eventual result was a five-week period spent with unrestricted access to all of the materials contained in the body of papers in the archive; working in shifts whilst also taking care of their daughter. One condition was given by the ISH, which was to make some organising principles out of the mess.

Here began their performance of care for Toma Sik's body of papers, which they entitled *A Labour of Love*. During their daily practices they drew parallels between caring for family and attending to Sik's papers. The artists said: *"We performed the role that many adults our age find themselves in, having children later and with the elderly living longer: caring for their young children and their aging parents"*. As a result of their intervention, the organisation of the Toma Sik archive today, doesn't follow the standards or norms of the Institute, but instead reflects the artists' personal approach to the person. The Toma Sik archive, now available for public consultation, is therefore organised according to the self definitions that Sik used in order to describe himself when approaching potential future members of his commune.

The poetics of care

Working in the archive, Curandi Katz care with their bodies, laying their hands carefully on these documents, sometimes with, sometimes without gloves. They also lie down, placing their entire body on the written material and files, in this way connecting their energies with the archive. They carry files and books on their backs, similar to the way one carries a baby. Treating the archive equally to how they treat each other and their children, they draw from the love and care that they have within the family. Curandi Katz describe this process as a strategy that weaves artistic forms with radical actions related to the realm of activism. For they see the offering—or imposing—of care onto an archive, an institution, a community as radical in itself. By opening up their family structure and intimacy to others, making the archive in this case part of their family culture, their little universe becomes a larger political spectrum.

In another performative artwork, *The Pacifist Library* (2012), a mobile archive, they again took Toma Sik's dusty and inaccessible collection of papers and books in their hands. Inspired by the anecdote that no one was able to consult Sik's library of books because of the huge mess of his apartment, they wanted to take care of it and make it accessible. When building the mini-mobile pacifist library they used Sik's home, his apartment in Tel Aviv, as a model and constructed their library entirely from recycled and reused materials. With this library carefully hanging on their back they travelled around New York City and other places. Some of the activities of the Pacifist Library included the publication of a series of pamphlets on themes related to pacifism, nonviolence, social justice and community building.

9/11 - 71 "I'm only interested in people engaged in a project of self - transformation." Susan Sontag

The artists' processes prompt obvious concerns and questions: what is it to give care to an archive?, what does this particular archive look like and what does it need in terms of physical and emotional support and comfort? In what position stands the archivist or artist with their heart and intentions? Perhaps we also need to reflect on the term "care". What meanings does it have and activate from other perspectives beyond this artistic practice? And is all care and love healthy and "good"? One could also understand care as something opposed to this archive. I again turn to bell hooks who says: *"Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, we still accept that the family is the primary school of love"*.

The work of Valentina Curandi and Nathaniel Katz is better experienced than described in words. There is a particular atmosphere created when feelings and touch are transmitted in space, and the energy of the artists' relationships to people is central to the work. Curandi Katz describe how their work actualises dynamics of interaction that move from a private and intimate scale of personal desire towards a warm openness of mutuality, creating accountability and transparency between individuals. This can be with formal and

informal communities, and in relation to intentional or unintentional institutions. Beginning from within their family of four, they open to bring others and the institution closer towards them. (As sociologist Richard Sennett describes, it is within the institution where there is potential for real dialogue and access to the level for true political impact. Could the acts and institution suggested by Curandi Katz be such an opportunity?) In another performance, *Activities of Daily Living* (2012), Curandi Katz entered the Villa Croce Contemporary Art Museum in Genova at a moment when the institution was going through a period of redefinition. The artists prescribed two activities for the institution, to get in touch with its soul: first, when giving a ticket, the attendant was to warmly hold each visitors hand. Second, when finding windows in the building closed to open them, and when finding the windows open to close them. As part of their intervention, the artists also made a video where they imposed on the museum an exercise in writing a personal mission statement. The artists' intention did not structurally propose to change the institution, but resulted in a function beyond the symbolic. As the artists describe, "to activate it was literally to act upon the museum, and in doing so to come into conversation with and to mediate conversation between artist and institution". The exhibition curator, Anna Santomauro, described the artists' intervention: "Through a series of symbolic and minimal gestures they tried to reshape institutional hierarchies and dynamics. This is the synthesis of the temporary dialogue between me and the duo artists' life and perspective, and witnesses an experience that probably Viktor Misiano would call 'institutionalization of friendship'."

Post partum documents: openness and care

Another artist and archival practice who has been essential in my thoughts as a researcher and curator of contemporary art in this context, and significant of the politics of care and parent-child learning process, is Mary Kelly. Kelly was a leading artistic voice in the western feminist movement of the 1970s. Her work has pursued the conceptual framework of feminism, psychoanalysis, and semiotics. She is an artist and mother who spent years exploring the relationship between mother and child, and its visual interrogations of gender formation, motherhood, the sexual division of labour, and much more. Kelly, like others in the feminist movement, asserted that motherhood and caretaking was not a biologically inherent state but rather a performed gender role. Such views were groundbreaking at the time. In her series *Post-Partum Document* from 1973–1979, she created a series of photographs and drawings that depicted the everyday life and growth of her child and their development together. The project caused scandal in its daring to integrate motherhood within art discourse.

Beyond the project of second wave feminism in Mary Kelly's conceptual framework, what I wish to point out here is how she also brings up the human mind's investment when offering care, or the ways in which caring for another meets the inner demands of the self. Mary Kelly used a Lacanian analysis of motherhood, which implies that only with a child does a woman succeed her inner fulfilment, through the role assigned to her, since the experience of carrying a child seals the woman's gendered identity. Furthermore he notes that as the child grows up to become an adult and thus autonomous, the mother is left deplete as a "woman." In Kelly's work we as spectators witness the intensity of this intimate relationship through a mother's passionate devotion to rituals of care-taking. Kelly proposes the contrary to what the obvious meaning of care for a child is, a process for the child's survival or her wellness. Kelly instead claims that it is the mother's self-interest and preservation of an inner completeness. (The piece *Post-Partum Document* has also been part of the exhibition *At the Mercy of Others: The Politics of Care?* curated by curatorial students at the Whitney program in New York where the exhibition in itself dealt with the curatorial practice as actions of care.)

From the artist's own archive Mary Kelly later created the work *Love Songs*, an installation of elements of the women movements from the 1970s. The assemblage of archival material questioned what is passed on from one generation to another. Through the elements, she combines past and present, exploring varying modes of historical engagement and its relevance in sexual politics today. Here, motherhood and caretaking is free labour, which Kelly also addresses in her conceptual work and what Curandi Katz live. But, the care and love in relation to archives, institutions and art practices are obviously not acts of free labour. What then really happens to "care"?

Care as form

Above care and archival practices as described, I wish to suggest that what furthermore brings these artists together is the relationship to the concept of *Living as Form* (developed by Nato Thompson in the book with the same title). Here I wish to argue for *Care as Form*, where care for a child, documents, staff, an institution, in everyday life, are conceptual acts and also political processes. Thompson argues that there is value in symbolic gestures as method for societal and political change. And in striving to connect art with life, important historical references in the works referred to in his book, are social movements that include AIDS activism, the feminist movements, anti-apartheid, Perestrojka, the Paris 1968 movement, the Algerian wars, the civil rights movements etc. What I find interesting to emphasise here is how artists, activists, citizens and more seek methods to create genuine personal and human relations. As often, the inquiry of where lies the essence of the art work is especially engaging to me in the context of *Care as Form*. Perhaps it is as complicated to answer as to what Thompson claims is the absolute burning question in regards to *Living as Form*: what is life?

Kelly's radical proposal in the 1970s leaves me with the reminder that it is and will for ever be about one-self, caretaker of a child, a friend in crisis, of an archive, of an institution, of a political decision and more. We human beings, are only capable of carrying for our selves, even when it comes to our baby child, the ultimate figure when we supposedly withdraw our self and hand our self over. All we do, is a selfish act.

2/12-70 "Being in love means being willing to ruin
yourself for the other person!"

Susan Sontag

My politics of care

For the first time in my life, I have a profound feeling I don't want to be on this planet. It's cruel and grim. In every direction you look in, there is just a small variation of the other, armed forces taking lives of innocent persons, violence and oppression of some sort. No one has chosen to be born or to be here. But like many adolescent kids in Israel, some choose to leave by taking their own lives. If I could choose, I would take my family and jump to another star just like *Le Petit Prince* (by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry) but I can't jump that far. Then, I would like to run away but there is nowhere to escape the reality of a melting bombed planet earth. I am, however, very fortunate, and in comparison to many others these days in Europe, I am not forced to take the way over the Mediterranean sea or the Arctic or other extreme alternative paths risking me and my family's lives. So, I must stay, and I must take care of my family and take responsibility for my capacity of giving and embracing—with my heart, mind and arms open in the most generous way I possibly can. Perhaps to find ways to balance my despair and cope with the unforgivable position of witnessing the pain of others through a strong belief in humanity and justice, but also through care and love. This is where it's likely to find meaning and hope in this moment of time. Love and care implies openness to others and to the paths that life needs to take. It also includes the care and love to what sociologist Meltem Ahiska calls "notes we are dropping of our time" (artefacts, archives and other cultural expressions). I have chosen to interpret and approach openness in such, in love, care and in these cases performed in relation to archives. My optimism lies in the care we express among people, among the family and our encounters in daily life to the potentials of care as a political strategy. How can this seemingly intuitive and natural behaviour become methods and strategies applied to persons, an archive, institution to reach an infrastructural and political level? However, the question that remains, can we come around Mary Kelly's conviction or only submit to doing our best to care, in the process of taking care of our selves?

"We still hope that love will prevail. We still believe in
love's promise". - bell hooks

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Veronica Wiman is a curator of contemporary art with a focus in urban concerns. Her recent research includes womens safety related to schools and feminist strategies within urban development. As a professor at Tromsø At Academy/Tromsø University she was in charge of developing the new mastres program Art, Capitalism and Sustainability. Her research within Living Archives focused on urban archiving among other working with gardens and communities as archives to explore memory, cultural heritage and inclusion vs exclusion.

From Openness to Encryption

Susan Kozel

Conversations from the Sauna

Molly Schwartz

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p9/QE7iQEeUyFfxq5mCXD9aECExbQkI
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yKBB/6pmacyy2QTIOHkwfyz5ATb090I

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Middle: Efva Lilja, used with permission.
Down: copyright the author

This contribution to the topic of openness is really about closure. Or if openness can be seen as clarity, then here I will explore ambiguity. Deliberate ambiguity, arising through bodily movement.

This is a story of a clash designed to explore a tension. The clash was an experiment called Performing Encryption where full body movement improvisation became the basis for generating a digital encryption key. Not just a clash between dance and technologies (we've seen this creative convergence for some time now), but rather one where improvised movement sequences were set into play with a particularly abstract mathematical dimension of computation—randomly generated encryption algorithms. The wider tension is between perceptibility and evasion; between physical, social and affective surveillance and possible corporealities of resistance.

The Key

Let's not begin at the beginning. Let's begin in the midst of things. This is an encryption key:

```
Version: GnuPG v2.0.17 (GNU/Linux)
lQO+BFVvTEEBcADbWBLvG6CQlignsu3k1mXmrBzVYU/C6ZHKpXx/hk3lg0xgNpt7XmN3gVRRRA+WUtiRSgNtaMqsPECBTzxuvlKw
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+x7orQ4c3VzYW4ga296ZWwgKGNhCHR1cmUgYW5klHRYW5zZm9ybsKgpPHN1c2FuLmtvemVsQG1haC5zZT6jATgEEwECACIFAI
WvTEECGwMGcWklBwMCBhUIAgkKcWQWAgMBAh4BAheAAAJEhGjsvzce/2VLeQH/jzys4Gt+M1WGvckJ/9v0YCOBDBnsboBH1C
VOCg+Xl2NsmWkmp2ZLWaZMDU4g4jOTCc+YID/zg3d4XyaPSS45E6LgOU4bt6HwZDtvC5uobftmxoW0E0jEmSz+2QKyn7ory
RdPWt3jaEpKbCscG2cR5cWpPumg8vairhwyjLL21oMnCB0zYVBzyoxeSaeCSB1GiFLgtDpxLkjj3wLcQtnh10CeKG6SaCcL59Gmf
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w5aCkGch1j4Po+RQ+5d+I54b0Tz6mulTLxn1bYbUrpGGoGqImovH/CVedA74EVXBMQEQEIALIDimgz31w3OkDITRda41w6vGEW
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jE1EN9jvle8A8anYyXyPbQFJhaiaycl05qni37M7s+S6CqG+qDmgEHn9NA850xQc0cq9C5XClv4pGVPNecQFMYvuN/c3NCnihs9/ilgDu
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AAEWtlxiEL2zAjpyVN5HnAulFw/DQXzQ+FU4l3bHyRm+D0iClrVTReuekir44sTpe/85SJFN7q7bvZxPUYBBI9IPq4iLCMeDa1/ee/
pznUTKRSEpXmgBfl7apM0Cbq5M+D2ghQwJRMKhn3R5M3Sio/mlfxEsrbwU46LdsjrNfb3Qz/h9xY2YpFemxtL+y2eEtadysSLV
VY7haxklF3CblEmou4yIxpTqeq7yGP31dhY1K10YZXQotOcxTNQVD70adSCTluzkjr/E3oCiO6UvX2zMKRr107zSU+fj9MVn9Adv90
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PB9k0PsiQEfBGBAgJBJQVjExBAhsMAAojEHGjsvzce/2VYfoH/UpdTLBU1o27jiXgmeG0GueU07GF2TBCWnlF73m1dLUKNX8V
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BbjNZckRlPqXLTDCvXjlvY6GbZAxQphc9Ber2ynl6aLqVtNym2dZ55S5HfqYR8jMX2mXxp70CjJfrKiNyK/1==OF3M
-----END PGP PRIVATE KEY BLOCK-----
```

It was generated by [PGP software](#) during a Performing Encryption workshop. This sort of data encryption is available to individual users of computers and devices and counters the sense of being vulnerable to surveillance by offering an affordance of unintelligibility, somewhat like “donning a pair of special personalized decoder glasses to be able to see an otherwise scrambled image.” (Thanks to Nikita Mazurov for this effective turn of phrase.) The block of characters shown here is somewhat scrambled, so it cannot be used to unlock

files that I may have encrypted, but it has a poetics and a materiality that speaks of unintelligibility, or at least something that is differently intelligible.

There is movement in this key. To explain this, I will tell the story of a conversation.

The conversation

Jay David Bolter, known for his scholarly writing on remediation, described what it was like to have encryption software installed on his computer. Not the state of living with it once it is installed, but the act of software installation. A specialist from the IT department at the Georgia Institute of Technology (where Jay works) did the installation, and during the process she asked him to move his mouse. While talking to me some months later in the Medea Studio at Malmö University in Sweden, he moved his hand in the air as a gestural re-enactment of what he did at that time. The act of moving the mouse had an explicit function in the process of generating a private encryption key: The movement data helped to achieve a degree of randomness sufficient for generating a reasonably safe key. True randomness is much harder to achieve, but the quality of randomness required to generate a GPG key can be obtained by hand and arm movement sustained for an interval of time lasting between 30 seconds and 5 minutes. I was struck by both the poetic and the practical implications of physical gestures embedded in the process of generating an encryption key. Analogies and questions sprang to mind, motivating the design of the Performing Encryption workshop:

“What if the hand and arm gestures were replaced by full bodily improvisation?”

“Could this provide a performative dimension to creating a personal encryption key, producing a different relation to both the key and to the process of encryption?”

The desire to draw encryption processes closer to the body is not just based on one person's hand waving in the air during a conversation. Much as I like the idea of a gesture launching a research process, there is a more complex grounding to this artistic research process, and there is the story of a collapse.

The AffeXity project and a surveillance crisis

AffeXity has been written about from several perspectives and remains an active trajectory in the [Living Archives](#) research project (Kozel 2012, Kozel 2013, Kozel, Spikol and Smolicki 2014). Here is a brief account:

A collaboration initiated by screen dance artist Jeannette Ginslov and myself in 2010, it began with a convergence of three questions: one political, one technological and one from dance. The dance question we set for ourselves was whether it is possible to improvise (with bodies and cameras in urban locations) from affective sensibility rather than emotional or formal impulses. The technological question was whether Aug-

mented Reality (AR) browsers running on devices such as mobile phones and iPads could support the visual, affective, kinaesthetic and participatory qualities we desired. The political impulse was the warning that we ignore affective manipulations in our cities “at our peril” (Amin and Thrift 2002). A beta version of the performance/installation, *AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels* premiered in 2013 at the Re:New Festival in Copenhagen (Artists/designers: Jeannette Ginslov, Daniel Spikol, Jacek Smolicki, Camilla Ryd and Susan Kozel).

Juxtaposed with the unexpected success of *AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels* was the unease I felt with a programme of artistic research that used mobile media to access affective data. In this instance, data is very loosely construed as archived traces of emotional, kinaesthetic or somatic states of one or several bodies. A flow of information is generated by bodies in motion; this becomes data once it is recorded and stored, by ourselves or by others, either with or without our consent and awareness. No longer just channelling affect into artistic content for the project and opening access to archival material, I was forced to recognise the wider affective cloud permeating *AffeXity*. In short, mobile technologies felt like a beacon to inner states, making them vulnerable to detection, tracking, recording and analysis. By whom? I couldn't say with any specificity, but the power dynamics were impossible to ignore, and as a long-time feminist (concerned with agency) and phenomenologist (concerned with corporeal experience), I found myself unwilling to peel away the last layers of unintelligibility, of protection, existing between inner bodily states and total transparency in the face of the ever-expanding and complexifying network of connected devices and sensors.

*Fig 2. Photo credits:
Jacek Smolicki, 2013*

The Cloud and the Internet of Things (IoT) in combination are potentially devastating from the perspective of embodied agency.

In terms of rearrangements of the ontological status of dance, I shifted squarely to the position where the political and ontological complicity of our artistic work had to be acknowledged. I realised on a somatic level that surveillance is the dark side of archiving. At the same time, the implications of Edward Snowden's revelations continued to reverberate through civic and personal realms.

Personal vulnerability loomed large.
The research was thrown into question.
So I stopped.
And the research process collapsed.
(At least for a while).

And quite soon I realised that the performativity of capture could be

mirrored by a performativity of encryption. This translates into a need to be present but absent, mobile but evasive, expressive but ambiguous. Fear, together with a desire for protection, make up the strongest affective forces in contemporary politics and point to a wider affective exploration of contemporary urban life that was at the basis of the AffeXity project from its inception. The collapse of the research was essential to the research process.

There remained simply the question of how to do this. How could we create performances of encryption? Was this not just paranoia in motion?

I began to research the history, theory and practices of encryption at the same time as trying to get a better understanding of ambiguity. There are ironies in wanting to understand more clearly processes devoted to a lack of clarity, but instead of thwarting me, this only fuelled a not-quite-yet-but-rapidly-developing obsession. Suspending the practical artistic research temporarily, I pursued a conceptual and cultural route. I learnt how early twentieth-century literary theory and poetry were used for training WWII and Cold War spies to enact subterfuge and to detect when it was being used on them; I researched cryptography (stopping once the mathematics became too complicated); I immersed myself in the political and cultural backlash caused by Snowden's revelations. Here, I found implications for practice and poetics, as well as politics.

Edward Snowden and Laura Poitras

"The Snowden leaks made people all over the world feel violated. We don't know who has read our most tender emails. It feels bad, and if we ever get used to that feeling, that would feel even worse."

(Jaron Lanier 2014)

In Edward Snowden's famous video statement from June of 2013, produced by filmmaker Laura Poitras, he revealed the extent of the data-snooping impacting every digitally networked being on the planet and invoked a physical metaphor for the US National Security Agency: "The NSA targets the communications of everyone, it ingests them by default, collects them in its system, filters them, analyses them, stores them."

Fig 3. Snowden preparing to leave his Hong Kong hotel room. From Citizenfour by Laura Poitras (2014)

The NSA is described as a body: digesting, remembering, somatic. The metaphor for the system is bodily, the data captured is of actions and attitudes. Both system and data are bodily performances. Yet, it is no longer enough to state in a general way that performativity exists in many practical and metaphorical ways across bodies and systems. Speaking with greater precision and reiterating the aforementioned claim: the performativity of capture is mirrored by a performativity of encryption.

When [Snowden addressed the SXSW conference in 2014](#), appearing by videoconference through seven proxies with heavily lagged visuals and audio, he urged everyone to use encryption software: “Our networks have been designed with surveillance in mind.”

His many videoconferenced presentations have become his own telematic performances of *From Russia with Love*, calmly clarifying the extent of the mess we are in. In this one, he explains the threat of predetermination, reminding us that the NSA would “figure out uses for the data down the road.” From a performance perspective, this is future performance, not performance as a repetition of the past or revelation of the present, but the performance of predetermination.

It is a sinister rehearsal of the future because
we participate unknowingly with little choice of
opting out.

Laura Poitras, in an [interview with journalist Carole Cadwalladr](#), makes explicit the parallels with contemporary digital surveillance when each person’s Google search terms are a psychogram of their thoughts. “I’m so careful about that,” says Poitras, and she provides a small glimpse of her own practices: “I use different computers for different uses.” And throughout Berlin, the city where Poitras now lives in order to obtain a modicum of personal privacy, “there are people working on ways to fight the technology with technology; who’ve devised the crypto equivalent of what, in the former German Democratic Republic, was done by turning on the radio or running the tap.” What she describes are a range of digital and non-digital performances of encryption.

Performing Encryption

At the invitation of Miska Knapik of the Open Knowledge Foundation, we decided to launch our Performing Encryption workshop during [Nordic Open Data week](#). Our celebration of openness, if you can call it that, was to promote and perform encryption. Clearly, the intent was to create a tension in the rhetoric on openness by staging an event in this digital cultural context which challenged some of the implicit political assumptions around open data. This is not to say that we are the only ones in the open knowledge community questioning and qualifying the practices and rhetoric of open data—far from it. The terrain has indeed shifted in recent years.

[We released the call through the Living Archives website](#). The ‘Way In’, or tag line, to this area of performance research was:

“Sometimes the best way to tackle the big
questions is obliquely, and in motion.”

When we designed the Performing Encryption workshop, Nils Thalin and I examined the way GPG software functioned and tried to detect fissures in the black-box-ness of it. By this, we mean the way GPG captured movement and generated a key without revealing or opening up how movement was inserted, recorded and transposed. We asked where we could find “moments of movement” (a classic formulation from dance improvisers, Blom and Chaplin 1988), either performed live or captured as data at various stages of the encryption process. Identifying these moments was helped by viewing the whole process as a media performance. Once this shift was made we were able to distinguish various layers of performance: the live movement in physical space; the sequence recorded by Kinect; the sequence translated into binary data; the key itself; plus any external video recording of the performer’s movement within the sensing system. There are surely other moments of movement as the data is transposed, shared and archived. Here are our notes:

Some of these performative data sets were quite open, and some were abstracted or inaccessible to us by being embedded in the software. We were locked out of not only access to some performative representations of bodily movement, but also the full awareness that they had even existed and in what form. We had to do some performative forensics to find the physical movement in the digital processes. Once we found the bodily traces, we were in a position to decide what to do with them. Expose them? Archive them? Ambiguate them? Or ignore them and let them lie quietly in the system, but this time with our knowledge. This is another play of perceptibility and evasion beyond the generation of an encryption key: deciding when to break open hidden processes to reveal what is actually happening to our data, followed by the decision of what to do with this knowledge, with the result that we can perhaps exert a little more control over how we are measured, and how we ‘matter’ in the wider sense of the digital–non-digital materiality that shapes our lives. (Kozel 2015, on measurement and ambiguity)

Archiving (or not): How to leave traces of a process of encryption?

There was—and is—some hesitation over how to discuss, disseminate and document the activities of the workshop. The ethics of whether or not to archive processes that led to the generation of a digital cultural artefact to preserve privacy collided with the ethics of discussing and disseminating a mode of performance that might have the ripple effect of encouraging encryption.

Encryption may be de-mystified and re-embodied if these practices circulate, but an encryption key that has movement improvisation embedded within it, however obliquely, is a personal and somehow intimate digital ‘thing’.

For some time following the workshop, documentation of the event consisted of the participants exchanging short video sequences of the movement improvisation we performed to generate the key. We encrypted

this video and sent it to each other using GPG, decrypting it with our keys. But there was wider interest in this performance process. The next stage of presenting and discussing the workshop occurred as a keynote for the [Dance and Somatic Practices conference in Coventry in July 2015](#). I described our Performing Encryption improvisations verbally but did not show the video of anyone's movement. Instead, I showed my (scrambled) encryption key. I chose not to circulate a written transcript of my talk but consented to an audio recording ([listen to it on YouTube](#)).

[Visual representation and textual description of the workshop](#) was first generated for this publication on openness. It seemed appropriate for Jeannette Ginslov be the one to edit the visual material, given her work with affect and visual media, and given her long association with the AffeXity research. Nonetheless, the video documentation continues to generate unease around the visual representation of the encryption processes. It was edited several times following discussions concerning degrees of visibility and ambiguity of the various participants. The usual norms and conventions around documenting performance events (according to which all publicity is usually considered good publicity) were quite thoroughly short-circuited.

Performing Encryption intends to open new patterns of actions, new performative responses to unprecedented conditions of physical, affective and data monitoring. Not content to evade by ceasing action entirely—which clearly happened at the point during this process when the research ground to a halt and paranoia produced immobility—the aim is to provide scope for a new range of performances, each offering a different balance between clarity and ambiguity, openness and closure.

Thanks to Nils Thalin for performance design and opening out the GPG software using Kinect and camera sensing; Jeannette Ginslov for a video edit of the Performing Encryption visual material that conveyed the ambiguity of the workshop; Jay David Bolter, Miska Knappek and the Living Archives research group for ongoing discussions; Inter Arts Centre for the use of the studio; Inge Gerner Nielsen, Alessandro Carboni and Temi Odumosu for performances and discussion; and Nikita Mazurov for helpful comments.

About the author

Susan Kozel is a professor and a dancer focussing on the convergence between bodies and digital technologies.

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Conversations from the Sauna: On Privacy, Openness, Nudity, and Coming Together

The Finnish sauna is a closed space where people open up.

Molly Schwartz

Fig 1. Finland recently published country themed emojis. Among them are a man and a woman enjoying a sauna. <http://finland.fi/life-society/the-headbanger-throws-his-phone-away-and-goes-to-sauna/>

A discussion between Rae, Molly, and Sebastian Slotte, a Finn who grew up going to sauna every week, recorded from inside a sauna.

Going to sauna is a sacred tradition that extends back as far as any Finn can remember. Women gave birth in the sauna. Families gather in the sauna. Finnish presidents conduct diplomacy in the sauna. Tough old men cry in the sauna. It is a place where people connect.

Warm, steamy, and enclosed, the sauna is an intimate place where nude social interaction is decidedly non-sexual. People gather in these humid cocoons, with friends, family, strangers, or alone, devoid of clothing or technological gadgets, to relax and escape from the cares of everyday life.

Ask Finns, and they'll tell you that the sauna is a space of equality. Stripping down requires shedding the trappings of everyday life and acknowledging that beneath it all, we are humans.

Finnish Secretary of State, Pertti Torstila, gave an address at the XV International Sauna Congress in Tokyo in which he said:

"In sauna all are equals. There are no superpowers or minipowers in a sauna, no superiors or servants. You don't keep your politics up your sleeve when you are not wearing sleeves. If you discuss and agree on something when you are all naked, it's difficult afterwards not to keep your word. For us it's as natural as it gets and networking in the nude is an absolutely moral good."

We are Rae and Molly, two Americans who were living in Finland, and we entered this closed space to talk to a Finn about what sauna means, how it is practiced, and how it evolved as a tradition. By recording and publicizing a conversation from a traditionally private space, we are exploring the conditions for openness in an unconventional setting.

Are physically enclosed meeting spaces inherently open, because they create a space of trust and intimacy for the parties involved; or are they inherently closed, because they exclude those on the outside? What happens when these kinds of meetings facilitate political decisions? How does physical comfort, or discomfort, relate to emotional openness? Does disconnecting from technology make us more open or more closed to human connection, and which kinds? We are blurring the lines between public and private, broadcasts and conversations, open people and closed spaces, in order to explore some of these questions.

The audio piece (transcript on next page) is a discussion recorded from inside a sauna that took place between Rae, Molly, and Sebastian Slotte, a Finn who grew up going to sauna every week and who brought a pop-up sauna along on a cross-country bike trip. Opening to the sound of water hissing as it is thrown on the sauna stove to create steam (known in Finnish as *löyly*), this is a candid recording in which the three of us openly discuss nudity, human connection, silence, political transparency, equality, and the role that sauna has played in Finland.

Recorded on 22 February 2015 in Helsinki, Finland.

What follows is a loose transcript of the conversation. The audio recording can be found at: <https://soundcloud.com/mollycait/sauna-interview-with-sebastian>

Sebastian:[00:00:18] In my childhood in the 70s, 80s, it was Saturday. And still is for many families, Saturday is same as sauna. Saturday evening. [00:00:27] And it would be a weekly routine. I think today people do more than once a week. But, yeah in my case, in my family, it was one or two times per week.

Rae: [00:00:43] So you would all go together at the same time every week, and what would you look forward to about that? Or expect from that?

Sebastian: Well I think it was the big day of the week. There was [00:00:53] many issues, like there was having a soda. [00:00:59] The rest of the week maybe you wouldn't, couldn't afford, or you couldn't have a soda drink. Whereas the Saturday night equals having a Coke or a Fanta, something like that.

[00:01:14] And also like, same as the beer, the sausage. Which we think we are best in the world in Finland, is that, Saturday evening, grilling sausage [00:01:22] and having sauna and then the certain TV programs. That is, I mean, 70s, 80s, I don't know if that goes really for 90s, I would say maybe yes. Even up til our days.

Rae: [00:01:37] Sounds like a pretty integral part of your childhood.

Sebastian:[00:01:39] It's all very simple, [00:01:39] it all comes down to being together and having very simple elements. Like drinks and food and, you know, I can't imagine a smartphone in a sauna. Even today. So it would be a smartphone-free area. And how many of those do we have these days, actually, when you start to think about it?

Molly: [00:02:01] That's true, there is something so elemental about the fact that it's just so hot in here that all you can do is kind of sit. And be together. Yeah. [00:02:11]

Rae: We just have really ideas, different ideas about what nudity is and who can see who naked.

Molly: [00:02:16] Oh totally. And it's usually, I mean there's almost nobody you can see naked, essentially. I realized that when I came to Finland and I went to a public sauna and I was there with a lot of women, that I had never really seen [00:02:28] real women's bodies before, in my life. I had seen my mom before maybe when I was very young [00:02:33] but, you don't actually what other people look like, which is actually kind of incredible because it's the most basic thing. We all have a body.

Rae: [00:02:45] How would you describe the etiquette of nudity in Finland? What's considered appropriate?

Sebastian:[00:02:52] That is very tricky question. From what I just hear from Molly it's certainly different. I mean, if you have to become adult to see a naked human body it's totally different here.

Molly: [00:03:09] The Finnish UN peacekeeping missions, even if they go to somewhere in a very warm country, like in Africa or something, one of the first things they do when they're setting up their camp or their base is they build a sauna.

Sebastian:[00:03:26] Oh that's what I heard too. When you have a crisis somewhere in the world, and some Finnish peacekeeping forces are commanded, yeah they would put up a tent sauna. I think it's also building some Finland brand. Maybe they are sponsored, who knows.

Rae: [00:03:43] Because the sauna, sauna is one word that exists in many languages that is actually Finnish but nobody realized that they know a word of Finnish. It's like the original Finnish innova

tion that's traveled everywhere, no?

Sebastian:[00:03:58] That's very right. Yeah. I've been to saunas in Middle East, and there would be a Finnish sauna oven, and yes a text on the door saying "sauna." And same in Japan and I suppose anywhere in the world.

(Sound of water being thrown on the stove and steaming.)

Rae: [00:04:39] It's a nice sound.

Sebastian:Yeah I agree.

Rae: In some cultures nudity equals sex, [00:04:47] nudity and sexuality are like completely linked. And I feel like in Finland, and I'd be interested to hear your opinion, that's not necessarily the case.

Sebastian:[00:05:02] The answer for that question is that, you know, in Finland we are so much, um, how do you call it, innocent. Yeah, innocent. So to that extent that, that we don't necessarily link sauna with sexuality. And I mean necessarily. I mean, of course there is a chance that there is sexuality included in the act of sauna. It's different implications for different cultures.

Rae: It's linked with a sexual orientation or preference for certain sexual activity.

Sebastian:Oh very much. And I need to travel away from [00:05:49] Finland to become aware of that.

Molly: That's definitely true. [00:05:56] And it's actually interesting because for, my experience when we're talking about bringing family members here who are very uncomfortable with the nudity element, once you accept it, I actually think there's nothing more comfortable, in a way, that just being kind of naked and sitting and relaxing. In some ways it's like sauna is the ultimate place of comfort. And it's just interesting to me that for some people that element of it is so uncomfortable.

Rae: [00:06:25] The first time I went ice dipping, with the sauna, so you know, you really want to get cold, I was amazed because I found it so hard not to shout expletives really loud upon entry into the water, and that was the only way I could stay inside the water, and then I wanted to scramble my way out really fast. And then, these two older women, they must've been in their 60s or 70s, they went in completely calmly, and just swam all the way across this freezing cold pool, there was snow all around, and in silence came back, got out, calmly, walked back to the sauna. I was like, wow, takes a lot of control.

Sebastian:[00:07:12] It's interesting you mention they were all silent, these ladies. I would like to ask you, how do you feel about the fact that it's all ok to be just quiet, a bunch of strangers in a sauna, just sitting quietly. Because we don't think about it but I guess that, you know, from other cultures ...

Molly: [00:07:30] I found it at first difficult to adjust to because sometimes I would find when people were quiet, or not necessarily totally silent, but somewhat reticent when I would first meet them, like maybe they didn't like me, or maybe we weren't really hitting it off, but I learned pretty quickly that that wasn't what it meant at all, it just sometimes took longer to open up, and sometimes it wasn't necessary to say anything. And once you got past that point of realizing that this wasn't a personal reflection on you, it's actually really relaxing, and it's kind of honest in a way that you say something when you have something to say. So I think, at least I've come to embrace the silence in the sauna.

Rae: [00:08:15] I like it, but outside of the sauna I definitely have a hard time with it too. I still think of silence primarily as awkward. And I have to really coach myself into thinking, no, don't ask a random question, no, don't introduce an unrelated comment. Just let it happen. Think about what people

just said.

Molly: [00:08:36] I would agree, the silence, maintaining the silence, becomes an active act actually. It seems like it should be active to say something. But for me as well it's like I have to very intentionally be like, do not say anything right now.

Sebastian:[00:08:48] I mean, sauna is definitely ok that it's perfectly ok to be just quiet. Without putting a word.

Rae: [00:08:58] What kinds of memorable conversation have you had in the sauna, or memorable interactions?

Sebastian:[00:09:07] I mean, sometimes you hear stories in sauna that I wouldn't hear other places. For example, the veterans. You know they would go together to a public bath, and if you happen to be there same time with war veterans, they would maybe at some point start to memorize times in the past. And also other elderly people, they would start to, if they start to think about old times, it's a, I would miss these chance to, since my grandparents are not here anymore, I would miss these unique chances to hear these unique stories of times that have gone. And I think that is definitely the case. I don't hang out with people that are older than 70 years old in my everyday life, so in a sauna, it just, you just get to hear these stories.

Molly: [00:10:02] So in some ways in the way it's a place, especially the public saunas, where people all kind of come together. Like you're there with people of all age ranges and things like that.

Do you think that the sauna affected Finnish history or the development of Finland in any really significant way? You always hear these stories about how, like, politics were conducted were in the sauna, or important decisions were made. Do you think things would have gone differently in Finland if there hadn't been a sauna?

Sebastian:[00:10:30] Yeah, what I also heard is that some big matters were discussed in the sauna environment. I think it's been all good. But today's transparency and today's, um, what we think is a way to conduct politics, we, maybe we want to avoid what we call "cabinet politics" in these days. But I think that's still, people discuss matters in sauna that would not be discussed any other place. Surely.

Rae: [00:11:10] And why is that, because it's considered a completely private or secure place?

Sebastian:[00:11:14] I think that it's a place that we feel more equal because you undress, you dismantle yourself from all, from the signs of power or, you know, so when you're in that sauna you're like when you're on the skiing track, you're equal.

(Sound of steam and showers.)

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The Illusion of Public Space

Gunnel Pettersson

Amit Sen

Open Images or Open Wounds?

Temí Odumosu

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Fig 1. Image sequence from *The Illusion of Public Space* video; Image sources: Arendt: public domain, Žižek: Photo by Mariusz Kubik, Spivak: Photo by Shih-Lun CHANG, the rest: photo by Gunnel Pettersson & Amit Sen

Half a century ago, Hannah Arendt described how public space has been transformed from a place for democratic discourse to a place where we move from one point in the consumption cycle to the next. The alliance between capitalism and democracy is broken when information becomes a commodity. One might argue that democracy never has been democratic, as this presupposes that everyone has access to all the necessary information and a well-developed ability to assess and evaluate this information. Moreover, groups included in the concept of democracy have varied over time. In Sweden, citizenship and age determine who is included in our representative democracy. Historically, income and capital have been determining factors to voting rights.

As argued above, the mere access to information doesn't in itself guarantee a democratic society. We have deliberately chosen the wording "necessary information" and emphasized the capacity to evaluate this information. Nørretranders coined the term 'exformation' to describe information depth or degree of meaningfulness and complexity. Exformation is a measure of the amount of work needed to extract valuable information from a data set.

Further more, the process of extracting information is dependent on the interpretative framework at hand. Today's prevailing ideology encourages us to talk about what seems to be important in a fashion that keeps things in status quo. "We are doing all the necessary changes to make sure that everything remains the same" as Žižek puts it. This is an ideology that benefits from selectively presenting facts and reinventing truth as a looser concept.

Information and free communication is the base of democracy. Now our economic system has turned information into a product that can be bought and sold ... and twisted. To counter-act this, to make sure that information and communication can remain free we have a gift, a work of art if you will.

Like Lewis Hyde we believe that

"... a work of art is a gift, not a commodity. Or, to state the modern case with more precision, that works of art exist simultaneously in two 'economies', a market economy and a gift economy. Only one of these is essential, however: a work of art can survive without the market, but where there is no gift there is no art."

(From "The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World", page xvi. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1 juli 2009)

Therefore we propose the crowd funding of a communications satellite. This satellite will be in the public domain built on open source/open hardware and free for everyone to listen to. The satellite in turn, will listen to all the radio traffic that crosses its path. It will also have a dedicated channel for internet traffic, making it virtually impossible to restrict internet access on the earth.

This megalomaniac idea, the obvious problem of analysing the ridiculous amount of data and the overwhelming power of the self-regulating flow of big capital, puts us in the place of David in his fight with Goliath. We – somewhat naively – believe that like David, we can win the fight. A small tuft often overturns a big load. Ours is a turf in the sky.

Quotations from artist's video

(Please refer to medium.com for the full video associated with this article.)

"We should not fetishize truth as such"

"It is going to go out in space and circulate around. It's called a satellite. And it will pick up all the signals and all the information going round in the universe."

"This is our proposal, and this is what we want to give to humanity"

"Oh, new media ..."

"What should we do with this information? We need to think and we need to sit down. We cannot just throw it out ..."

"To protect the reason that must be our ally in a world that is being put together more and more with the false promise of level playing fields but deeply divided by class apartheid. To protect reason as our ally contained within other kinds of systems; to grant the subaltern the possibility of logic. And there, the two things that one must protect is the abstract understanding of secularism, and the abstract understanding of the state."

Gayatri Spivak

About the authors

Gunnel Pettersson is an artist and senior lecturer at the School of Arts and Communication (K3) at Malmö University, Sweden. Her areas of interests are experimental film, social structures, processes, and the initiation of actions and proceedings for change through the arts.

Amit Sen is an artist, musician, composer and a gestalt therapist. His areas of interest are relational art, performance and social interaction. He continually problematises contemporary art and philosophy on issues related to the interpretative privileges in the arts and the structure of privileges in society as a whole.

Puppet: Abelli's Magic Theatre

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Hannah Arendt; Slavoj Žižek, London School of Economics (2014)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, University of California (2004)

Slavoj Žižek, Intelligence Squared, London (2011)

Open Images or Open Wounds?

Colonial past and present in the city of Copenhagen

Temi Odumosu

“Seeing black is always a problem in a visual field that structures the troubling presence of blackness”
Nicole R. Fleetwood

“Industrial societies turn their citizens into image-junkies; it is the most irresistible form of mental pollution. Poignant longings for beauty, for an end to probing below the surface, for a redemption and celebration of the body of the world.” *Susan Sontag*

“Cultural mummification leads to a mummification of individual thinking” *Frantz Fanon*

I had moved to Copenhagen, from London, for not more than a week before a strange conversation between myself and the city began to occur.

It started with the drawn head of an anonymous brown-skinned girl with a cornrow hairstyle, who piqued my curiosity as she began to appear randomly on a poster here and there, emblazoned on shopper bags under the arms of Danish students, and then in a visual cacophony at the co-operative supermarket where she took her place on the packs of the coffee brand she represented, and was used liberally to decorate serviettes, paper cups and even the faces of clocks. Drawn in profile with a small rounded nose, sullen eyes, and elegant high cheekbones, I remember thinking that she looked like me as a child: quiet, serious, and highly aware.

The “Cirkel Kaffe Girl” was the first of many visual assaults that wrought havoc with my emotions and senses, whilst the months and years ensued. Her ubiquity as a design motif within a largely homogenous European culture agitated my embodied sensibilities; as a scholar who works on race and representation but more directly as a Black woman commencing the slow and gradual project of dwelling in a new city—attempting to make the unknown and unfamiliar into something approximating home.

The following photographic chronicle seeks to express what was difficult to say openly in moments and encounters I experienced whilst roaming in Danish public space over the last three years (2012–2015). What you will see are my hurriedly captured snapshots of discomforting objects, signs or images that restaged colonial visual strategies, recalled the plantation or the slave ship, and reproduced anachronistic racial motifs that seemed to me entirely out of place in a modern and progressive city.

I found these urban artefacts, like the Cirkel Kaffe Girl, in places of regular and commercial daily activity: at the supermarket, bus stop, along the high street, or in cafés waiting for my order. They were just above my head, behind the window, or on the shelf lodged amidst other items. They were also in spaces that I had to share with other citizens. During these encounters I would always experience a moment of alarm, which was sometimes expressed by gasps, head shaking, or quiet vocal outbursts like “Really?” and “I can’t believe this!” Yes, the difficulty adjusting to this new environment influenced some of my reactions. But they were also a response to the primacy of these images; their inherent readability as racial icons and thus as psychic residue of unfinished imperial sagas.

As these moments became more regular I intuitively used whatever camera I had to try and capture the uncanniness of my experience, the sudden intrusion of colonial nostalgia into my visual field. This has evinced a sort of makeshift mobile archive of images, both in and out of focus, which I have also used to teach and ask questions about ethnic representation. My eventual conversations in workshop settings with teachers, university and high school students, and with the general public, have had interesting but also mixed outcomes. Overall discussions were engaging and positive. I learned from a fantastic group of students

in their mid teens about the notion of “ironic distance” that made the presence of such imagery both possible and also fashionable. Some critical teachers reflected that overall “nothing is sacred in Denmark”. Occasionally I was challenged for being unaware of Danish cultural mores. It was sometimes difficult to convince people (tied to their cultural habits) that how they represent ethnicity and difference could be considered offensive, or that they re-inscribe negative historical values.

I continue to be made aware that I am, after all, an outsider looking in. There also seemed to be an unwillingness to pander to anything suggestive of political correctness because it impinges on a very deeply held notion of personal freedom in Denmark—which (on the downside) means that I, and others who look like me, are still comfortably referred to by the diminutive label ‘neger’.

Whilst living in Denmark I have learned that the country traded in enslaved Africans, built Christiansborg trading fort in Ghana, and governed three sugar islands in the West Indies (St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John) until selling them to America in 1917. The country does have a deep and layered colonial history also including India and Greenland, even further complicated by separations, invasions and losses of territory within Scandinavia and Europe. I don’t yet know enough detail to hold my historical ground, but what is clear is that colonialism is a sensitive topic shrouded in silence. Perhaps this is due to shame, or because education and storytelling in museums has been limited to administrative facts, the showcasing of luxury handmade artefacts, and positive success stories—such as the fact that Denmark was technically the first to abolish the slave trade.

To suggest that the “long gone” past is unresolved is thus entirely at odds with the more active collective identity of a people who do good for others in need.

Paradoxically the silence around this past is foiled by the omnipresence of all these widely used and circulated images, which preserve in their historicism a palpable sense of colonial values (the black/brown body as commodity) and prejudices (the black/brown body as site of abuse). In this way they are products and also wounds, continuous reminders of unequal human relations.

What does this mean in a growing culture of openness that advocates for the sharing and exposure of everything?—or, more specifically, for a media landscape that prioritises representational abundance at the expense of its affective consequences?

What I present here skirts this complex picture to access something more direct and personal. This chronicle marks the beginning of an opening for me as a researcher, an alternative process of critical annotation doubly enacting a form of independent cultural surveillance, whilst mapping a city becoming more and less familiar to me at the same time. It speaks about the delicate relationships between people of colour and Western public space; how difficult memories can be activated on a simple morning errand, about the intimacy of the colonial project, racialised aesthetics in postcolonial cities, and furthermore the challenges of living across cultural borders.

1. Ethnic cross-dressing

24 August 2012, Nørrebro

A Danish actor on reality TV show pretends to be an African woman by sashaying his hips, dancing like a duck and carrying a basket on his head—all whilst waving the South African flag. Everyone is doing this, as part of some exotic challenge. I have no idea what they are saying but they seem to be enjoying themselves. It's not even funny or ironic, just ... annoying and surprisingly upsetting. Why? Is it the public performance, the audacity in the mockery, the disregard for another potential viewpoint, or simply my discomfort in this place?

2. Pretty Black girl, will you speak to me?

4 September 2012, Central Copenhagen Supermarket

Cirkel Kaffe Girl, I finally found out where you came from. You've been haunting me for a few weeks now and each time you take me by surprise. A message without words, everywhere and always for sale and even sometimes at half price. Somehow it pains me to imagine your face wiping the lips of uncaring mouths, and then soiled, crumpled, and abandoned in the garbage after use. What is your name? Are you happy here? Because I am not ... yet. You are in their homes, you are in their lives and yet I do not believe that they really know you—the you behind your pretty painted face.

3. Cast iron smile, or, what kind of welcoming is this?

11 Sept 2012, *Gammel Kongevej*

Some days I just can't believe my eyes, and today was one of them. How is it possible that even you exist?

And just round the corner from where I now live! You are the mocking moneybox of old Jim Crow; the deferent plaything that made American and European children save their coins. I know that you are not a "real" antique; "just a reproduction made in China", says the mildly apologetic man in the store. Somehow this seems worse to me, for it speaks of a demand. Here you are, come to haunt this modern space with your archaic racist values—your wrought iron smile and blood red lips. Who is even going to buy you? Apart from me (although I am torn about that idea) ... Dinah, I'm sorry they made you this way. I'm tempted to smash you to pieces like the man in Ralph Ellison's novel. But then how would I prove that you were really here?

4. Vanilla Bean Knights

19 November 2012, *local supermarket*

Somehow I feel compelled to quote from Tahir Shah's travelogue *In Arabian Nights* (2007):

"Settling into a new country is like getting used to a pair of shoes. At first they pinch a little, but you like the way they look, so you carry on. The longer you have them, the more comfortable they become. Until one day without realizing it you reach a glorious plateau. Wearing those shoes is like wearing no shoes at all. The more scuffed they get, the more you love them and the more you can't imagine life without them" (pp.29–30).

These new shoes still pinch a lot, and the supermarket is always transporting me somewhere far away from here. Maybe that is the point?

5. Kakao Goddess

17 December 2012, *local supermarket*

At this moment, I have been in Copenhagen since the beginning of August (2012) and I haven't met a single Black woman in person, but I keep meeting them in relation to food: coffee, chocolate, cake. The face of easy pleasure and strangely always decapitated; cut at the tract that connects body to mind, breath to voice. Are these women the spice heating the Danish kitchen table in the depths of winter?

6. Consuming contested cartographies

12 March 2013

Lynchburg Lemonade?! Do they even know where that is? Why is the American South suddenly so appealing? Had it occurred to them that Lynchburg was a historical site of unspeakable suffering, as Virginia's enslaved peoples cultivated pungent tobacco for others to smoke, spit and chew. Rivers and canals strengthening the trade of products made for

almost nothing. The word “lynch” rings like the crack of a whip, a disgusting method of torture and then the name of that mythical man who claimed to have the formula for making and breaking slaves. Lynchburg—Willie Lynch—The Lynching Tree: Naming is so important.

7. Wild Tastes

15 May 2013, Copenhagen Airport

Apparently there is nothing refined about Australian dining, except perhaps the wine that might come with your meal.

How could a photograph of an Indigenous Australian be so flagrantly appropriated as a visual prop for even more consumption? What strikes me is that your body is marker of authenticity. Clearly, none of the more generic tropes (like a Kangaroo or a boomerang) have quite the same ability to recall the imagined drama of “original man” hunting for his prey than the clay covered face and torso of an Aboriginal. But close cut framing cages the wild man, for we do not see you in motion with a hunting spear but as a head and shoulders just capable of raising a glass.

8. Organic Cape Town Roast

9 August 2014, Juice Bar

bell hooks articulated this moment, better than I ever could:

“It is precisely that longing for the pleasure that has led the white west to sustain a romantic fantasy of the ‘primitive’ and the concrete search for a real primitive paradise, whether that location be a country or a body, a dark continent or dark flesh, perceived as the perfect embodiment of the possibility. Within this fantasy of otherness, the longing for pleasure is projected as a force that can disrupt and subvert the will to dominate.”

(Black Looks, p.27)

9. A cake to ease a troubled conscience

11 January 2015, the high street

1 Flødebolle (a chocolate covered cream bun, once called negerbolle and negerkys) = 1 day's wages in Africa.

Is that all of Africa? A sugary solution to the problems of an imaginary continent/country that is supposed to make you feel good for doing better.

How many chocolaty kisses will it take?

10. Original Sin, or, Black Eve and her apple

14 April 2015, local supermarket

If you look at the spectrum of historical representations of African women in literature and visual culture, overwhelmingly she is characterised as an exotic mantrap; highly sexualised, easy to capture, and possessing a

sort of magical charm that eclipses all reason. I wonder what prompted this reworking of the creation story, as Adam is lured by Black Eve and her apples? The Belgian brand, Kanzi, asks us to “seduce life” with this cross breed apple of Gala meets Braeburn. So, the mix is transformed into a vision of cross-racial seduction. Is Black Eve an “original sin” or the mother of the modern world?

11. Incessant noise, or, Little Black Sambo

17 May 2015, raw food café

An English housewife in colonial India, at the very end of the 19th century, decided to turn the stories she told her children into a book. Little Black Sambo (1899) adopted the racial lingua of the time, transforming the locals into a bizarre mix of minstrel actors and African savages.

In America and the UK, it is considered a highly offensive text, exemplary of overt racism in children’s literature that is enacted both in the illustrations and the text. The story has been discussed by some scholars as a work of resistance, since it makes Sambo a hero by defeating the evil tigers who could arguably be read as colonists.

In Denmark this book is both popular and widely read in primary schools. But every time I see this book in public space, I want to scream.

For in my mind it represents a damaging form of first contact for Danish children and the “other”. I would argue that Sambo, and his parents Black Mumbo and Black Jumbo, literally line the foundations of early-years racial thinking; and in this place where nothing else works to counteract the simplified tropes of another age (the panorama of zulu sweets and chocolate women), what should we expect to be the outcomes of this conditioning?

About the Author

Temí Odumosu is an art historian and a postdoctoral researcher for the Living Archives research project. Her research and curatorial practice is concerned with the visual politics of slavery and colonialism, Africa in the archives, Afro-Diaspora aesthetics, media images of Blackness and Africa, and the psycho-social consequences of distorted representations. Under the 'Performing Memory' strand of Living Archives, she is currently working with Augmented Reality (AR) experimentally, as tool for interfering with colonial amnesia.

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Borderland

Madeleine Tunbjør

P(*AR*)ticipate

Jeannette Ginslov

Borderland

Attending to the cracks in search of openings

Madeleine Tunbjer

Holding space for what is fractured is an act of non-resistance. Making time for discontinuance is an act of openness. Classical logic wants to solve contradiction and doesn't recognise it as a multi referential source of knowing. No level of reality, anywhere/anytime, is complete on it's own. I found a space I call Syrup Line for my next inquiry, where formal history, informal history, disruptions, representations, transformations are intangible but fearless layers of incompleteness and non-resistance. The lines between them are of a different kind. I conceive the territory as a pedagogical space with capacity to bridge the abyss between differentiating layers, without reduction, as a source of dimensionality and transition. Facing divides between territory, people and politics as in my embodied conceptions is an act of empirical subjectivity. Employing myself and others in bridging them is an act of poetic objectivity and might strangely enough rebuild social ties, or so I hope.

The quest could be called art beyond art or curating gaze. Curating sources of reflexivity, within the dynamics of several layers of reality, all at once.

Johan Rockström and his team of international scientists at Stockholm Resilience Center have managed to pinpoint the nine planetary boundaries within which we can maintain "a safe operating space". Two have already been largely exceeded. One is nitrogen levels, which have been altered by humankind more than any other basic element cycle. Reactive nitrogen is being injected into the environment from both emissions and fertilizers causing a chain of events. Feeding more people in one end, but causing grave impacts such as global warming, acidification of the oceans, ozone depletion, biodiversity loss and loss of livelihoods in the other. Biodiversity is the second already crossed boundary, balancing our ecosystems and providing us with ecosystem services on which the biosphere depends, such as supporting the entire food chain, the fresh water cycle, medicinal resources, biomass, raw materials and biomimicking capacity. It is also balancing our climate by neutralising carbon into oxygen. Extensive disruptions on both local and terrestrial levels can cause food scarcity, conflict, land and fresh water depletion beyond repair.

Another boundary within dangerous levels of irreversibility is that of climate change. Due to the interconnectedness between all the nine boundaries, severe self acceleration and tipping points will occur when not being sustained within safe borders. Already, 60 percent of the Earth's capacity to buffer the effects of human activity and to support our population are lost. We already know the injustice of who has to bear most of its consequences, so far. By 2050 we will be 9 billion people on this planet, 6.5 will be living in cities. Affluence of middle incomes with increased levels of consumption, and huge migrations due to knock-outs in the biosphere when the inbuilt resilience of planetary systems are being destroyed, are parallel aspects of daily life to come. The planetary situation demands transition on a multitude of levels.

Where is resonance, where is evidence of acceptance and resilient alterations?

I have become particularly interested in the concept of “lost” as a transitional capacity, a place of study, whereas having things to lose seem to prevent people, places and practices from generating that very same capacity. It might sound obvious but we tend to regard such cracks as drawbacks rather than openings for renegotiation. All aspects of a fracture are disrupting a continuum; it hurts, but resilience is the capacity to adapt and develop during disturbance or even shock. Many of Earth’s inhabitants have already had to adapt. Some, as we know, have an amazing expertise. Here (in the West/North), most of us would need training.

My practice is about the archaeology of cracks (in emotional and radical landscapes). I use long-term presence and deep “listening” as method to detect transitional evidence, particularly in un-planned movement, or passage from one position, state, stage, subject, concept to another. And in that movement, on that edge between something and something else, lays the potential of autonomy, of open-endedness, of agency, of change. Intentionally or unintentionally. When attending to the layers, the cracks, the openings, or directing potential readers to the source, an edge-effect occurs. When the unintentional writings are made readable—intellectually and/or bodily—conflicting paradigms challenge personal boundaries. Although sometimes, as in my previous six-year-long research, the archive of my attention had to stay in the ground, covered, secret and sacred.

In 2015, I turned my artistic practice back towards the dynamics of place, choosing to work with this site situated on the south-east corner of the Swedish countryside; a place where 30 percent of the people vote for the Sweden Democrats, which is Sweden’s ‘polished’ equivalent to the French Front National; a place of ordinary day to day life; a place connected through a short corridor to urban centres; a place with an abandoned industrial sugar plant from 1921–1966. Here I began my next art-based research; not in a building but in the un-used, open air, semi-public, post-industrial site. A reserve: Lost in transition. Recovering from economic trauma. Entirely made of concrete, and yet organic. An evolution of radical nature, and yet neither rural nor urban. Transforming over fifty years of uncertainty, of ambivalence, where during this time an open-ended archive has developed—on its own terms. What is here to read, what is here to learn, hold or face? What is here to curate? Or not?

Using voice, performance and an Augmented Reality (AR) application for smartphones and tablets, I present here a layered provocation that asks of this space and its memories:

Where are the openings? The possible disentanglements?
How to move the important porousness of urban centres
further outwards,
in order to forge deeper connections with
different kinds of people? How to share these learning
processes? How to unfold the deeper ecologies of matter?

This contribution is an interactive artwork accompanied by Augmented Reality (AR) tags, through which you can explore additional content. The purpose of this dimension is to share living archives and alternate realities located at a former sugar plant in the rural village of Gärsnäs, Sweden.

Currently there are ten site-specific AR zones—however, the work is constantly developing. Visitors will eventually be able to use these AR elements live onsite, but for now you can explore some examples using a mobile device (Smartphone or iPad) pointed towards your screen at the selection of trigger images presented at the beginning of the article .and later on.

Here now i focus on my arrival practice
my surveillance
the readings of the space
what is
what is embodied
where are the records, the articulations
how to open them, unfold
who can read as is - who can read if augmented?
how to make this data accessible, democratic
shared, open!
The invitations
in layers.
Why?!!

Here are the site-specific historical layers: Who can extract the data? An early Swedish sugar industry, in strange ways, moving Sweden away from the sugar slavery (presently replaced by the sugarcane cutters in the ethanol industry). Layers of how one crop (the sugar beet) helped farmers into a capitalist economy and artificially driven yields. Of evolving wage labour. Of general growth & consumption. Of losing small-scale in favour of large-scale. Layers of a driven rural economy that comes with contradictory: of industrialism, urbanisation, land failure & welfare at the same time. And then silence, recovery!!!

Here are the benefits from time & erosion, provided by economical disinterest & wind. Layers of biological data. Readings on how soil is organically emerging, offering an increasing nutrient fabric for a growing biodiversity. Edge-effects & peak-soil! A strange involvement of natural ecosystems on top of sealed land! Who can read such text? What to learn from such yields?!

The site is also made of embodied kinesthetic memories. As an escape from adult conservative settlements in favour of danger, openness & bodily learnings. Young people from different generations has temporarily & over time, used the site in their own transition. Who are they? Will they help us read differently? How to protect & connect such transition-spaces for improvisations & open-endedness! For un-certainties?

Layers of ~~sprayed~~ thoughts are posted here, to no one, someone! In a timeless glade surrounded by loyalties & regulations, a refuge occur for solitude in the wind. A no religions temple for questions, sight & openness! How to honor that? I will augment my answers. Others could too! A thinking spot to share!?

Unfolding here, in this neither rural nor urban setting, is also an obvious relation between the two, otherwise so dialectic categories. This place un-dual & mirror rather than dichotomise! Make porous rather than closed! Can augmentation of all data at site be that art of invitation, creating receptiveness & mutual curiosity? Opening borders? Like Syrup!

The last layer is the layer of post-capitalism. Of 50 years of piece. Of letting go, of letting come, of arrival, of outlook, of invitation. Can lost in transition produce transition - economically, ecologically & emotionally? In what further scenarios? In what cross-scale community?!

These are the layers, detected & archived in collaboration with a great variety of knowledgeable people regardless of age, gender, profession or citizenship.

These are the questions unfolding, from reading into the raw & open narratives.

These are the openings, the wisdoms, the components I believe, of resilience. A tonality of ambiguity to tap further into.

Some technical instructions

First download Aurasma for free, from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Then follow these steps:

1. Start the Aurasma app and click the A-shaped icon at the bottom to go to the home screen.
2. On the home screen, tap the magnifying glass icon and carry out a search for the “Syrup Line” channel.
3. Tap on the channel in the search results and then tap the follow icon in the top right.
4. You are now connected to the channel and ready to go.

View the Works

Tap on the viewfinder icon to bring up your Aurasma viewfinder.

Line up the viewfinder with the images below on your screen. This should bring up the auras (additional archival layers) created for different points at the original location.

The space and its archive present us with a different organic matter in which we might find content and courage to prototype new gentle scenarios on social-ecological complexity. How to know what we know? What to do with what we know? How to invite unrelated tribes in co-creative futures?

To be continued ...

About the Syrup Line project

Landscape archaeology is looking at a landscape as a social construction, responding to and translating different elements embodied at a specific site, such as:

1. historical uses, different ways it has functioned over time
2. contemporary use, disruptions, mythology and response

3. the phenomenological understanding; what is it like to be a body in that place, what are the performing bodies (or when missing) explaining on human measures and other textures?

This provides us with an archive of missing facts. What is here not readable, what is here not anymore. Reflected also through my personal encounter—my body here over time sensing it, becoming aware, creating trust but also responding to the different layers—including incarnated matter beneath the surface, that might become contesting.

Landscape archaeology and augmentation creates the first level of readability. The place-based intrusion will, at the next level, be one of response to what is embodied at site. Much is at stake in the current context as already mentioned. Social unrest based on exhausted living conditions or change of rules will increase hierarchies between one locality and another. Current focus on city development creates dangerous zones of people feeling left out of an equation. Dark matter evolve when being undisturbed. Cities on the other hand need to better understand their dependence on rural provision of food, water, carbon neutralisation etc. **Syrup stage** will discuss and perform a culture of rural/urban continuum. **Syrup lab** is going to be a container of experimental pedagogy, where young adults now in precarious states of poverty, can create a symbolic and real counterpower, not only on who gets to speak on behalf of institutions and futures, but also what knowledge and what skills do we really need, for a serious adaptation to a situation very different from now. This will be co-created with different holders of the stakes, at site. Agriculture needs to transform in a world when we face peak soil and unprecedented human disruption on planet boundaries. **Syrup Farm** will rethink, experiment and share reality issues of food, productivity, economy and circularity.

Local presence at **Syrup Line**, which is the name of the whole endeavor, the entire quest as already mentioned, is an expression of agency and will knit together various movements on related subjects, as a force of connectivity and relevance.

Co-producers documenting the hidden archive are Clea van Berkel (film), Thomas Persson (sound), Helena Olivestedt (behavioural understandings) and Roger Knast (owner). The 10+ zones of augmentations wouldn't be possible without a kaleidoscopic contribution of people with key insight on specific detected layers.

About the author

Madeleine is an artistic researcher making socially engaged art in long-term processes. Taking a practical and conceptual approach, she runs a “placemakers” studio. For the last six years, she has been working with and reflecting on exclusion and emotional loss amongst people that are long-term unemployed, at four different locations in the south of Sweden.

P(AR)ticipate: body of experience/body of work/ body as archive

An exploration of openness, otherness and porosity

Jeannette Ginslov

A subjective sense of bodily movement and unique sense of touch makes us self aware and forms our somatic and haptic engagement with the world. Through our bodies, we make contact, contain, remember and remake living stories, create memories, narratives and meaning for ourselves and others.

This paper describes how openness, porosity and audience reception of personal somatic and haptic memory affected the creation and negotiation of an ongoing interdisciplinary performance work called P(AR)ticipate: body of experience/body of work/body as archive. This is an immersive, autobiographical, participatory and live installation that uses analogue drawings, improvised dance, screendance and the AR (Augmented Reality) app Aurasma to capture, access and share personal and somatic memories of living in an apartheid and democratic South Africa. These formed part of “the body of experience” and “the body as archive” section. It includes an archive of live dance performances, documentary footage, spanning twenty-five years. This formed part of the “body of work” section. The idea was conceived and developed during a six-week self funded Dance-tech.net residency at the Lake Studios in Berlin, where it premiered on 30 August 2014. It has since been performed three times in Scotland during 2015, for the Senses showcase at the Dance Base in Edinburgh, at the Hannah Maclure Centre in Dundee as part of the decoding space exhibition, and at the CCA (Centre for Contemporary Arts) Glasgow for the D-Word screendance showcase.

The performance of P(AR)ticipate highlights and encourages revealing, extracting, capturing, sharing and participation in my personal narratives, accumulated dance archive and somatic experiences of living and working in apartheid and democratic South Africa. This was facilitated through the use of analogue and digital technologies: a video camera, a smartphone app and the internet. My personal memories, somatic experiences, archives and narratives were written, drawn, video recorded and uploaded to a cloud on an apps server. During the performance, audiences walked on the “stage” or in the installation with a smartphone or tablet following the channel housing my uploaded archives. The setting is not the traditional theatrical proscenium arch set up, with a seated audience in the auditorium. The audience becomes a participant by physically walking on the “stage” or in the installation space, using their mobile devices to trigger the media attached to the images in the performance space. I also dance in the installation space, reiterating the somatic memories, in real time during the performance.

P(AR)ticipate, then, demonstrates a porosity between live and mediated experience as audiences enter a networked environment, a field of fleshy and digital networked media, moving through living archives of somatic memory and intimacies, negotiating and participating in visual and auditory affordances that the interaction design provides. They access the media by physically participating in, walking around, reaching for, kneeling and bending to trigger the tagged images with their smart phones. The mobile device becomes a tool of extrapolation, a magnifying glass revealing hidden layers of haptics, affect and memory. In effect they are dancing with the media, with me, my memories, a quiet dance of participation, touching intimacies, with moments of surprise in and around points of contact, using the AR as portals to other times and places.

AR is a mobile app technology that uses Wi-Fi or 4G and allows the superimposition of digital media over the real time view on one's smartphone camera, thereby augmenting what we can literally see with video, animation or graphics. The AR app uses a tagging system to connect and trigger digital media, archived on the app's server and uses image or location recognition software to recognise images or GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates that then trigger the archived media. In P(AR)ticipate, audiences hold their devices over screen grabs of the screendance works archived on the server. The videos then spring to life, mostly always eliciting positive surprised haptic responses.

Audiences are invited through touch to find out more about me. They touch their screens and have visceral responses to the haptic imagery captured by the technologies. Their very first reaction, when the videos that are streaming from the server onto their devices is always, “Wow!”, “It’s amazing” or “How is this happening?” Sometimes they jump a little in their chest or they take a sharp inhalation and eyebrows shoot upwards when they view the haptic videos. Then they become more curious and try to visit all the tagged images. Sometimes, mostly males, use two devices, one in front of the other, trying to re-remediate the relationship between analogue and the already mediated. Some participants see me in the middle of the room with tags on my body and attempt to move with me, with their device still in their hands, their eyes and body focused on trying to keep the media playing on the connection between moving image, device, bodies and the internet. They also enjoy placing their hands in the camera’s viewfinder so that it comes along with my video playing on the device. It is as if they desire to touch the augmented digital material and perceive a sensation of touching it.

This for me is what haptic imagery is all about. It enlivens one’s sense of touch, even if digital.

Laura U Marks (2000) states that the haptic imagery is about tactility, the visceral, texture, proximity, contact, touch. They may be extreme close-ups, disturbing the mastery of reading the image, engaging the viewer with the moving images rather than narrative or character. However in her book *Carnal Resonance* (2011), media theorist Susanna Paasonen addresses experiences of online porn largely through the notion of affect as intensities of experience, resonances, and ambiguous feelings. To Paasonen, affect is about carnal responses, immediate and direct bodily sensations, tactility, texture, proximity and gut responses by viewers. Affects are forces that cut across and connect different bodies and when watching online porn are associated with authentic reactions to amateur video production. The more “home-made” the video is, the more authentic and affective—carnal and erotic. Special technical effects and slick production values cause a distancing. However according to phenomenologist Susan Kozel (2013), affect is more subtle, about varying experiences of intensity, and is located beyond the domains of logic and reason. It is about changes of shape, colour and form.

“This passage of intensities is like a vibration or a shimmering, in the sense that shimmering is based on change and is not a static state. Viewed this way, affect might travel through familiar states but it may also participate in the creation of something that did not exist previously, in what I am somewhat reductively calling ‘change’” (Kozel 2013, 6).

Furthermore:

“Affective forces need not be forceful, they can be barely detectable shifts in relationality between ourselves and our built environments, or between bodies in urban spaces mediated by technologies exploring a body’s ongoing ‘immersion in the world’s obstinacies and rhythms’” (Gregg & Seigworth 2010, 1, cited in Kozel 2012, 76).

Porosity of experience: Processes and outcomes

The research for P(AR)ticipate started with my exploring the notion of otherness that I experienced whilst growing up and living in an apartheid and democratic South Africa, the moment of my becoming aware of being part of a dominant racial group, of being White in a White racist society. Most importantly I remembered those moments when that oblivion lifted. I also focused on the events where I encountered racism and oblivion in others, of being oblivious to racial identity and privilege and the inevitable invisibility to one’s own identity that usually accompanies this oblivion.

“body of experience”

It started with my recalling events in my life that seemed pivotal to my understanding of what was going on around me in South Africa during the oppressive apartheid years. Investigating and revisiting these events on my own in a rehearsal studio, I tried to locate where in the body emotions were arising from, which could also mean where the emotion is possibly remembered or stored. During this reflective and creative process, which lasted many hours working through various states and phases, I danced, moved, cried, wept, laughed, talked, yelled, wrote, drew, and recorded vocally narratives of my life, capturing them with a small Sony Handycam. I also walked outdoors in a nearby forest narrating the events of my life on the voice recorder on my iPhone. These were later used in the text that became part of the final performance and formed part of the “body of experience.”

Example: Oblivion lifts (1973)M

My father picked me up three times a week, after my Ballet classes in the centre of town, at the Rita Liebowitz Ballet School, West Street Durban. I would wait anxiously sometimes inside the building if he was late. A White thirteen-year-old, in a deserted centre of town, after the shops were closed, was not a good thing ... Anyway, after picking me up one day, chatting about this and that, we came to an intersection where we often stopped on the way home. I looked up the street past the intersection. I saw a throng of Black people, men and women, walking or rather trudging down Warrick Street on their way to the Station. It was a wide pavement full of adult Black people intent on getting home. I looked at this and grew silent. My father waited for the lights to turn green. We drove past and I continued staring at the mass of people. I turned to my father and asked: “How come I’m in a car being driven home and all these people are walking to the station?”

My father’s head snapped round to look at me directly. “Well!” he said, “A young girl like you should not be thinking about things like that!”

“body as archive”

Additionally, I drew out my experiences in analogue shapes using pen and paper, recording in abstract form somatic drawings or hieroglyphs. Drawing hieroglyphs is a methodology created by choreographer Nancy Stark, enabling one to describe or draw or capture somatic states occurring in the body, in analogue form.

I then choreographed ten somatic movement sequences, using the hieroglyphs as an impulse for a sequence of movements. The movement sequences were short, improvised and were physically connected to the remembered event, the location of the event, and how it felt emotionally at the time. Most importantly I tried to locate where in my body the impulse, or memory was located, or how I felt at the time and how I felt upon revisitation. These were video taped and edited using the X-ray effect in iMovie. These screendance works are in effect haptic as they are grounded in triggering visceral responses from viewers and reveal close up parts of my body that seem strange or unclichéd. Below is an example of a hieroglyph and a haptic video that I drew and choreographed to describe an intense personal experience in South Africa.

The more subtle videos reveal affect and, thinking back now, connect with times after the Apartheid era had ended. [The ten haptic videos are viewable in this YouTube playlist.](#)

“body of work”

This section includes a number of my stage works that resonated with the notion of otherness and racism or that I felt that I had created in resistance to the Nationalist government during the time of apartheid. One

Fig 1. In order to access the video tagged to this image, download Auryasma from the App Store or Google Play. Open the app, search for P(ARt)icipate and follow the channel. Hold your device over this image and it will start to play the video tagged to it.

critical work was Sandstone (1988) which was banned after its first live performance at the Rand Afrikaans University in Johannesburg, for being in “poor taste” and became part of the agit-prop movement that grew during the Cultural Boycott of South Africa. Many regard this work as the first South African screendance work.

I also curated dance works that I had choreographed which reflected a time of democracy, awareness and “freedom” and created a soundtrack for the performance layering the sounds of the haptic videos in recurring and layered loops. [Here is the playlist of archived work.](#)

The Aurasma application, downloadable on mobile devices, enables the transformation of images and objects into tags or triggers for virtual content, known as “auras”. Some performance video clips were auras, linked to (or rather emanating from) my drawn hieroglyphs, which I printed on A4-size pieces of paper and pasted on the walls and scattered on the floor of the performance space. I printed smaller ones and pasted these on my body hoping that viewers or audiences would view the tags that were on me, close up, whilst I moved very slowly in the space—a contact improvisation of sorts using the Wi-Fi as a point of contact. I then also wrote ten two-minute narratives that reflected these events but these remained untagged and analogue in format.

Fig 2. Screenshot from the film Sandstone (1988)

Performance and porosity

The participant enters the space after downloading the Aurasma app and following the P(AR)ticipate channel. I am dancing in the middle of the space, sometimes performing snatches of the haptic choreography or movements of my solo dance works. The narratives are pasted on the walls to be read, the hieroglyphs are pasted on the walls and scattered on the floor. The viewer negotiates and accesses the media floating in this space that is suspended over the images on the wall, the floor and on my moving body. The soundtrack plays. The entire space feels suspended, networked with invisible layers, mutable, dialogic and relational.

When I was performing with very small hieroglyphs on my body I encouraged viewers to come right up to me, where we moved slowly together, in a slow mediated dance, both willing the media to be triggered, to feel connected and remain in a contact/connection/participation improvisation. Some viewers did in fact come right up and we moved slowly together, in a slow mediated dance, both willing the media to be triggered, to feel connected and remain in a contact improvisation via the internet. Sometimes we lost connection but found a synergy again when I saw that the viewer had the video running again on their phone. Always there is a look of relief when the video is triggered again, not forgetting that I cannot see the video looping on the devices as it was turned towards the participant's point of view or face. I am also in a way part of this participation, reading somatic, emotional and proprioceptive gestures from the audience, and then responding to this.

My somatic memories, haptic events and personal emotional memory reflecting events twenty-five to thirty years ago are being expressed and released as data that is stored in a cloud and shared. During my intense artistic residency I was really researching where my body's memory is stored and if by accessing this, is one able to recall the actual emotional state and affective state, or is one just remembering it as one last thought about it? Is that the first or last memory you have of an event? As a dancer and choreographer, one is highly attuned and sensitive to one's body and locating body signifiers is part of a choreographer's job. One

remembers perhaps globally first and then pinpoints the exact location in the body where the emotion is felt or the memory of that emotion. However with my remembered body up in the cloud, archived and stored and shareable, I have essentially become data. My lived time has become data. I don't know how to respond to this as I share a lot of information online and I enjoyed the experience of sharing my personal memories with my audiences.

What do you think, feel, how do you move?

Social theorist and philosopher Brian Massumi (2002) claims that when we are in motion we undergo intuitive experiences and interactions with the environment. We forego the linguistic models of coding and try to find a "semiotics willing to engage with continuity" (Massumi 2002, 4). It is in this ever present kinesis, movement and change that we experience things. The body unfolds in its own transition, its own variation supporting philosopher Merleau-Ponty's idea that this is how we anchor our bodies to the world, expressing and functioning in spaces of "muddy, unmediated relatedness" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, 4, cited in Kozel 2012, 91). Film theorist Rudolph Arnheim (1957) furthers the idea and claims that our eyes constantly work in cooperation and are connected with the rest of the moving body. A person is always relating to the environment in a state of presence, synthesising, perceiving the experience of objects with the mind and the body or an embodied mind. This approach is dynamic and enactive according to philosopher Alva Noë (2004). Consciousness becomes a combination of "mind with a body, a being which can only get to the truth of things because its body is, as it were, embedded in those things" (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 56).

My strategy as a screendance maker has always been to explore an enactive approach using the camera and edit to create what Paasonen calls "carnal resonances" (2011) or Deleuze's affect images, or those "dizzy disappearance of fixed points" (Deleuze 2005, 77). As a consequence the images become liquid, less stable and visceral or what Deleuze (*ibid.*) would call melting, boiling and coagulating. The camera needs to tease, sniff and nudge out the haptic and affect. It is here that the screendance maker needs to be awake, alive, in order to capture, connect viscerally with the affect and haptics being delivered. The camera should be handled with intuition that is fresh and engaged so that moments of liminality, between the techne and the live spontaneous body may take place. Mainly it is about capturing the spontaneous body with a spontaneous camera. When footage is created with this in mind and distributed through the internet using AR and tagged within an interaction design, we are creating hot spots or vortexes of "techno-fleshy" moments tagged to images or places in time and space. This is archived and shared through the AR. The haptic nature of these hotspots draws people in, they relate, review and revisit. They are not seated but visit each tag out of curiosity.

AR sets up a relational aesthetic and has the ability to shape choreographic and theatrical formations that have not yet been fully explored. This may challenge the current perception and framing of theatre, dance and choreography. For Laura Kriefman from Guerilla Dance Project, augmented dance and theatre "is a specialised and evolving form—where the choreographic language is interrogated not for form or content sake, but in response to the changing stimuli and physical liberties of the technology itself" (Kriefman 2014). These experiential encounters consequently liberate the choreographic language from more traditional vocabularies and settings. Audiences partake rather than consume. The production and reception of this mediated dance form is dialogical, inter-human and temporal. P(AR)ticipate encourages rendezvous experiences for the audience. They participate and engage physically in the space, in the work and archive, rather than remain seated gazing upon an auratic object such as a Henry Moore statue for example or a live dance performance within a traditional proscenium arch setting.

If one takes the entire installation into consideration, the room, myself in an immersive field of flesh, data and technology, it could be seen as an organism or a body, a "body without organs" [1]. It could also be seen as reflecting or representing in a real space the posthuman subject, one that is "contingent on power formations that are time-bound, and consequently temporary and contingent upon social action and interaction" (Braidotti 2013, 189). The posthuman subject is "fully immersed in and immanent to a network of non-human (animal, vegetable, viral) relations" (*ibid.*, 193). By extension then it could be seen to reflect a form of subjectivity, "with relational linkages of the contaminating kind/viral kind, which interconnect it to a variety

of others, starting from the environmental or eco-others and include the technological apparatus". This then is an act of "unfolding the self into the world, whilst enfolding the world within" (ibid., 193).

As an artist I have opened my internal somatic liminal self to others using the internet. Should I worry about this? Data mining is taking place even as I walk to the local supermarket, my every step traceable as I carry my iPhone on me all the time. I write on my laptop, Wi-Fi streaming through the walls and my fingertips. I feel this has become the norm and nothing is going to stop this. Questions then surface: Where are the filters? How do I block this? Do I need to? Is the sharing of information and data diminishing my sense of agency? Is this ethical? What happens to all my online data? How is it being used? Has my body become viral? Do I know about this? Should I worry?

[1] See the notion of assemblage: <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue5/poke/glossary.html> based on Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987) <http://projectlamar.com/media/A-Thousand-Plateaus.pdf>

About the author

Jeannette Ginslov is a specialist in Video Dance for AR, screen and internet and directs, shoots and edits her own works that centre around affect, the moving body and its digital materiality. Her artistic practice also examines digital movement within AR installation settings, investigating live performance and augmented choreographies that may be used to trigger, perform and archive somatic memory across bodies and networked mobile devices.

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Online Video resources

[P\(AR\)ticipate Haptic videos playlist](#)

[P\(AR\)ticipate Dance Archive videos playlist](#)

[P\(AR\)ticipate Introductory video](#)

[P\(AR\)ticipate Documentary of the premier](#)

[Sandstone \(1988\)](#)

Blockbusters for Everyone!

Linda Hilfling Ritasdatter

Into the Great Wide Open

Thomas Andersson

Blockbusters for Everyone!

Amputated public domains on the rise

Linda Hilfling Ritasdatter

Fig 1: "Amy" is a registered wordmark by Laniel A/S, Thisted, Denmark, and "Nick" is a registered wordmark by Viacom International Inc., New York. As a result, the dual narrative structure of "Gone Girl" by Gillian Flynn disintegrates as the main characters, Amy Dunne and Nick Dunne, become one. ("Kvinden Forsvandt", Ind4, 2013)

The public sphere and the public domain are different but interrelated concepts for the circulation of ideas and goods associated with a high degree of openness. Yet, as we know, these concepts are always contingent upon the constraints of specific cultural and technological settings. The project briefly outlined here is a performative intervention into a supposedly open public sphere, reminding us of its compromised nature, not by creating a utopian alternative, but by remediating its contents in an amputated post-utopian public domain of fragmented and truncated information.

In “Kioskbaskere til Alle” (Blockbusters for Everyone), e-book versions of current Danish bestsellers were modified and redistributed, turning stories about sex and murder into conceptual poetry that reflected the changing conditions of literature in a networked and digital public sphere. The public reveals itself as compromised by market interests, but the “Kioskbaskere til Alle” intervention ironically points towards the possibilities of creating alternative publics through amputation.

“Kioskbaskere till Alle” was commissioned by Kunsthall Aarhus as part of the exhibition Systemics #2: As we may think (or, the next world library). The project was simultaneously a deconstructive and constructive critique of the new digital model for the distribution of literature which was launched by the major Danish publishing houses in 2013. In an attempt to maintain market control, this model created artificial scarcity and mimicked the model of analogue book distribution but eventually ended up being more restrictive than the analogue distribution. This is ironic, not least given that the promise of the discourse surrounding digital technologies was always about openness, equal distribution and simplified access to cultural products.

During the exhibition period, the project redistributed new versions of some of the most popular books, “kioskbaskerne” (the blockbusters), from Århus municipality’s public libraries. The physical versions of the modified books could be borrowed like “normal” library books from Risskov library, and the e-book versions were distributed online.

At first glance, the redistributed bestsellers appeared as exact copies of their originals. However, in some copies, a word in the title or parts of the author’s name would be missing. When readers examined the books carefully, they would find that all the novels had been altered. All text that was not literally in the public domain—the so-called wordmarks, which are words or phrases that regardless of their graphical representation have been registered as trademarks—was replaced with blank spaces. This meant that chunks of information were missing and that the readers eventually had to guess the overall meaning of the content.

The experience of this text-based public domain was amputated and fragmented, but because the work excluded the “privatised” words and

Fig 2. “Kvinden Forsvandt”, Ind4, 2013

Fig 3. Risskov Public Library distributed physical copies of the modified books

Fig 4. "Forfatteren til mysteriet Inferno", Ind4, 2013

Fig 5. ""Steffen", Ind4, 2013

replaced them with voids, it was precisely under this amputated condition that it could be understood as a public domain.

As proposed by Habermas, within the historical bourgeois public sphere, the private consumption of literature became the building block for so-called public conversations that took place among the privileged members of a society. Habermas, however, articulated his fear of the vulgarisation of these conversations into a “plebeian public sphere”—a public sphere compromised by market interests and corresponding to a society of consumption and mass media.

Libraries have long catered to bestsellers and mass media culture, and this could be connected to this cultural-conservatist idea of an eroded public sphere. However, in the context of a digitally distributed “plebeian public sphere”, the project “Kioskbaskere til Alle” did not reject this development. On the contrary, through a performative and critical intervention, the project utilised the “plebeian public sphere” as a site for making the public aware of contemporary socio-economic contradictions which are undermining the radical ideal of the public domain as consisting of cultural resources that can be shared on equal terms.

The “plebeian public sphere” was reappropriated into an anti-communicative public domain, which through its irrationality and absurdity pointed towards glimpses of understanding the impossibility of being created under the conditions in which it was created—with other words, a post-utopian public domain.

Fig 6. Amputated public domains on the rise: On January 1, 2016, a large part of the major Danish publishing houses withdrew their titles from the public digital library, ereolen.dk.

[Project website at kta.lnd4.net](http://kta.lnd4.net)

About the author

Linda Hilfling Ritasdatter is an artist working with the premises of participation and public space within media structures, with a focus on means of control (codes, organization, and law) and their cultural impact. Her artistic practice takes the form of interventions, which in humoristic and often absurd ways reflect on and reveal gaps within existing structures—the place where a system fails and its inadequacies become visible.

Into the Great Wide Open

Or the becoming of a part-time publisher

Thomas Andersson

Fig 1. Credit Flickr user ssoosay CC:BY

I am a part-time publisher. In 2002, I co-founded a small press—I was a publisher—but now, in the beginning of 2016, I am a part-time publisher. I however still co-own the publishing house I co-founded and we still publish translated fiction from around the globe. We in fact publish almost one book a month nowadays, but in 2002 and in the following years we only published one to three books per year. “From one book a year to one every month? That’s capitalism!” some of you might say, and sure, that might be it, but it sure doesn’t explain why or how the terminology has changed: part-time publisher.

Since 2002, the publishing landscape has changed immensely. Books with titles such as *The Last Book*, *The Bookless Future*, *The Last Days of Publishing*, and *The Gutenberg Elegies* have all claimed that books as we have known them—ink printed on paper of uniform size and bound in a codex format—will soon be historical relics. That has not yet happened, but since 2007 the transformation has geared up, and one reason can be traced to the introduction of the Kindle, an e-reader designed and marketed by Amazon. The Kindle introduced not only a new device and a new file format—it introduced a new business model. Suddenly there were hints of a way of making money on digital books, which was something that the big publishers had not foreseen but was something that they were eager to invest in—not knowing, of course, that this new business model would come to affect their own business models.

Amazon wasn’t just out to help the other players in the publishing industry by disseminating their literature; Amazon wanted to change the game.

The Kindle used the proprietary AZW file format instead of the EPUB (Electronic Publication) format, which meant that Amazon chose not to be part of the IDPF’s (International Digital Publishing Forum) aim to create an open standard (i.e. the EPUB format) for the publication of e-books. You may notice that I didn’t put brackets after AZW; this, dear reader, is consistent with Amazon’s stance on openness, or rather lack of. The acronym (or is it an abbreviation?) might stand for Amazon Word, but Amazon hasn’t officially confirmed that.

Proprietary e-book file formats have been around since the 1990s, but, thankfully, past attempts have been shelved and forgotten. In 1998 NuvoMedia bundled their e-reader, *Rocket eBook*, with their own file format and in 2000, Microsoft introduced the LIT format for their Microsoft Reader. Both formats have been discarded, the former much faster than the latter, but they strike the same chord. Open formats (in contrast to proprietary) have, by being available to users to modify and build on, been widespread and in use throughout media history, and thus established itself and helped generate new knowledge, e.g. HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) and EPUB.

As of 2011 Amazon declared that they were going to publish 122 books in an array of genres. When the CEO of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, that same fall introduced the new Kindle Fire, he referred several times to the Kindle as an “end-to-end service.” According to the New York Times, he envisioned a world where Amazon not only distributes books published by others but also develops and promotes books themselves. Concurrently Amazon launched the Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) program, thus further stretching their ambitions of be-

coming this end-to-end service. The KDP has been a tremendous success with more than one million books published, which is assumed to equal around 25 percent of all books listed at Amazon.

Once Amazon started to publish books, the non-transparent business model grew. One indication is the refusal to employ the book industry's identification standard, ISBN (International Standard Book Number). Amazon have instead introduced a new standard, the ASIN (Amazon Standard Identification Number) number. This means that books published by Amazon are not catalogued e.g. by the UNESCO book production statistics, where a total title count of books published in the world is being done, nor are they being indexed in libraries throughout the world. For the book industry, the titles published exclusively by Amazon are, with Mike Shatzkin's words, a total "black hole," i.e. Amazon is creating a body of content (number of works, types of genres etc.) which is a desirable factor of building a literary public sphere, but is available to nobody but themselves.

Do you as an author or publisher need to choose between ASIN or ISBN? There are however outliers. One that could serve as an example is the UK small press Headpress who has decided to introduce a third option: the rejection of cataloging identifiers altogether. Headpress issues "no ISBN special edition" and they have thereby stopped trying to get their books into the retail outlets (which more or less means death in the world of book publishing) and thus their books cannot be found anywhere but on the Headpress website. This is a form of resistance that is reminiscent of the Swedish magazine OEI with their series of works named "Häftad serie," which are publications only to be sold at the launch event of the publication.

The creation of the Amazon publishing landscape has not gone unnoticed, thankfully. One of the first and most infamous examples might be the realization of a license agreement that affects the rights of the ownership, sometimes more than anyone could foresee. In July, 2009, Amazon customers who had purchased the George Orwell novels 1984 and Animal Farm on their Kindle one day discovered that the titles simply had vanished from their devices without a trace.

It turned out that the publisher of Orwell had reconsidered the desirability of an electronic edition, after which Amazon quietly located and deleted the works from every single Kindle—taking back the book.

Actions like these have led to reactions, interventions and artistic attacks within the avant-garde media landscape. An example of this is the artist Johannes P. Osterhoff who commented on the violation of the integrity of readers through extensive tracking by creating the online performance "Dear Jeff Bezos." Osterhoff's performance is based on the function of making a bookmark; every time Osterhoff makes a bookmark in his Kindle, an email is sent automatically to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, containing information about Osterhoff's reading habits.

Dear Jeff Bezos,

I just read

“Papa To Go: Schnellkurs für werdende Väter”

by Christian Busemann
until position 3460.

Sincerely,
Johannes P Osterhoff

Email sent to
jeff@amazon.com
on Dec 29, 2013 20:03:37 CET

Fig 2. Dear Jeff Bezos by Johannes P. Osterhoff (2013)

A somewhat more traditional take on the Amazon framework, and an example of a hands-on project reminiscent of the Xerox tradition of copying books, is the [DIY Kindle Scanner](#). Executed by Peter Purgathofer, the DIY Kindle Scanner is a [scanner that runs in a loop](#), repeatedly pressing the “next page” button on the Kindle and taking a picture of that page. The DIY Kindle Scanner then sends the pictures to an online optical character recognition service and you end up with a plain text file of the scanned book. Purgathofer underlines that this is an art project that is meant to critique Amazon’s end-user license agreements, i.e. the agreement that changes the relationship between buyer and seller of a book. Originally readers tend to think that they bought a book once they bought something to read in the Kindle, but as it turned out, they only bought a license to access this book, and not e.g. to disseminate it amongst friends as a recommended read.

With the Kindle, Amazon is not offering a product but rather a service where the reader, as a consequence of advanced tracking, is becoming a producer of content within the Amazon publishing landscape—and this has effects on the already existing publishing landscape. For example, Amazon works really hard to invite authors to their publishing platform, the KDP. One way of doing this is by emphasizing the openness of the publishing platform; that is, they let everyone be a part of this platform, but once a book has been published, they modify this openness by changing the terms of sales condition and by ignoring archiving standards (Amazon neglects the ISBN in favor for their own ASIN). In combination with allowing extensive tracking of the reading habits of the users, Amazon does the opposite of what is preached in an open society: the freedom of speech, the accessibility of texts that are distributed over time and space. Values we’ve come to associate with an open public sphere tends to, when you look at it this way, be centrifuged into the Amazon public sphere, i.e. the consolidation of a market might lead to consequences we do not yet know.

When I ask friends that are not engaged with the publishing industry if they know any big publishing houses, more than a few answer “Penguin,” and then I’m sorry to inform them that Penguin as a stand-alone publisher doesn’t exist anymore; they merged with Random House in 2013. The literary media landscape has been transformed by media giants such as Google, Amazon and Apple; actors which all practice “controlled

consumption” where copyright, trademarks, patents etc. have all been wrapped up in contractual and restrictive end-user license agreements. This transformation of the literary media landscape highlights the success and growing of actors and the ongoing horizontal integration of publishers as in the case of Penguin, i.e. the big ones are getting bigger. At the same time it also sheds some light in the opposite direction, like the transformation of myself, once a publisher, now only a part-time publisher.

It is not that the small presses are getting smaller,
but rather, as a consequence of consciously naming
ourselves “small,” we underline the contrasts within
the literary publishing landscape.

This is a strategy, if true, that is awfully short-sighted. We, the small presses, need to discuss the ongoing consolidation of the book market where it looks like 25 percent of the books sold

on Amazon, the world’s largest book store, are books that not a single person outside of the platform knows how to catalogue and disseminate. Openness can hence be guaranteed by the small presses, not only by putting this transformation on the agenda, but we also need to organize ourselves in order to maintain a literary public sphere. But sure, every cloud has a silver lining. For example, the Nobel Prize committee, a curator of openness, has for the last four years awarded authors who are published on small presses in Sweden. Or, to rephrase, it has been five years since a big publishing house in Sweden got awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. Part-time publishers into the great wide open.

Thanks to Nikita Mazurov for useful comments.

About the author

Thomas Andersson is co-founder of [Råmus](#) förlag and an awarded graphic designer as well as lecturer in Media Technology at Malmö University. Experiments conducted by him within the field of literary publishing are often connected to how different materialities correlate with the creation of new narratives of fiction.

Open Access and I

Jutta Haider

Openness without Persecution

Nikita Mazurov

Open Access and I

The story of a long-term relationship

Jutta Haider

Fig 1. NamSan Love, by Flickr user Young Sok Yun, CC:BY-NC-ND

A note of caution for the reader: This paper is a translated and edited version of an opening lecture, held in 2014 at the annual conference Meeting place Open Access (MOA). The MOA conference is organized by the Swedish National Library and is attended primarily by librarians and, increasingly, also professionals working in supporting roles at research councils and in university administrations.

It is important to know that librarians have been drivers of much of the Open Access movement, which is concerned with the free and open online availability of scholarly literature, from the very start and they are still deeply invested in it. I edited the text to be read and not listened to, but some of the quirks in the text have its roots in it being designed as a lecture.

This is a story of my relationship with Open Access. I am not telling it because I love talking about myself, but because I have been on a journey with Open Access; a journey that I think many librarians and Information Studies scholars can recognize themselves in. We spent a lot of quality time together and what follows is a rough and personal account of some of my experiences with Open Access during that time.

Open Access has grown up. This becomes obvious not only considering the amount of attention that Open Access now receives in different publications, but especially in the matter-of-fact way in which research funders today require Open Access—that is, free online availability—to the research they fund and its almost unquestioned acceptance as a publishing strategy also by traditional publishing houses. “Growing up” also means that Open Access has become multifaceted and complicated. But it also means that Open Access is now mature enough to deal with some loving resistance. Not least, for the librarians’ and the libraries’ sake, I think, an articulation of a reflective critique is necessary. What is needed is a criticism of Open Access that is not out to discredit; a critique that takes Open Access seriously and wishes it well.

When I started my education in Information Science in England in the early 2000s, Open Access had just been given its proper name. It had been around for some time, but now it had finally received a name with which to position it: Open Access. The little word “open” established links to all sorts of open movements that existed and that provided glimmers of hope in an internet that was being commercialized all around.

Into this came Open Access: free scientific information, non-commercial—or so I thought—on the internet; a little activist of a concept and an expression of resistance. This was something that those of my colleagues who specialized in public libraries got for free, as it was incorporated into the very mission of public libraries: fostering democratic values and facilitating access to knowledge and information. Open Access filled this void for research libraries. It was needed. It was aimed—or so it was framed—against the big, commercial, profit-driven publishers, who waste taxpayers’ money, who harm libraries, which in turn harms free speech and also scientific progress and development.

I fell in love immediately.

What happened was this: I wrote my master’s thesis about Open Access. And not just that, I wanted to excel even more and added the developing world into the mix, as if Open Access needed some additional back-up to justify why it was good and what was so good about it. I really wanted to make sure that my research, my job, would be of use. I had a hellish (long and very hot) summer with Open Access, involving

bibliometric investigations and contact with libraries all over the world in places that, according to the World Bank, are considered poor and with all kinds of organizers of programs enabling access to the scientific literature around the world. To cut a long story short, it was a bit confused. I was confused by the power of the issue and this was reflected in my approach. Still, it turned out good enough. And when I was finished with the master's thesis, I was still quite in love. Or actually,

I was ready for a relationship.

Above all, when I was done, I felt that this was a topic that I really wanted to continue with. I was sold. I was determined to remain in this area. I was lucky and a year later I started working on my doctoral dissertation. I had received funding to continue research on just that: Open Access and development. In the beginning, everything seemed clear to me. But then I began to dig and explore and I got to know more. In a way, I had moved in with Open Access and I also started to question my own trust in Open Access.

To start doing research meant two things. First, it meant doing research about a subject; second, it meant becoming part of a community and adapting a certain practice. Both, in my case, had very much to do with scholarly communication and thus with science and research and what they are supposed to be. Quite early on in this process, it became apparent to me that science and research—as these concepts were described in the literature on Open Access—were not at all what I saw and experienced in my work as a researcher; it was an entirely different breed of activity. The arts and humanities, although mentioned, were either curiously shapeless or carelessly included into a broad understanding of science in how Open Access was framed in the early days. Altogether the notion of science seemed streamlined and simplified.

Open access has to do with scholarly communication and publishing. Through this, it is intimately connected with science and academic research, however broadly or narrowly understood these may be. There exist different views of what science is and should be. How it is done and why, how it developed, who should be doing it and under which conditions, who should pay, what should be the topics of research, and, what is the role of the arts and humanities and the social sciences in all this? There are different views on how the history of science should be written, but, above all, the main question is what kind of knowledge is produced and what is the status of this knowledge.

Bernd Frohmann (2004) distinguishes between two discourses related to scholarly communication: an epistemic discourse and a practice discourse. The epistemic discourse focuses on the content of research in research publications. Here research publications are seen as instruments for disseminating research results. The practice discourse concerns what you do and how you do it. In this view scholarly communication is part of a system of merit, which communicates status and belonging. Both discourses are part of academic research and both are intimately connected with scholarly publications and specifically communication.

It can be said that libraries are traditionally situated in an epistemic discourse. Although, this is currently being challenged by the fact that libraries today also employ bibliometricians, whose job it is to make metrics-based assessment of research publications, typically without considering a text's epistemic content. Scientists or researchers are acting to a large degree within a practice discourse. In between, we find journals, repositories, publishers, and even funding agencies or universities. As is often the case, what is perhaps most interesting and also most difficult is the in-between position.

One's view of science, however narrow or broad, is central for how one relates to scholarly publishing and communication, and thus to Open Access and its role and significance.

Very roughly, in one view, science is considered to be linear and evolutionary, where development progresses and knowledge improves and gets more accurate all the time. This is often captured in Isaac Newton's famous saying, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Not least since it became the motto of Google Scholar, Google's search engine for scholarly papers, this saying sets the tone for a popular understanding of the role of scholarly literature.

In another view, science emerges as a field that is socially structured and where different practices, ways of doing things, and different views of knowledge oscillate back and forth and are blended with other interests that may be important in how we consider what is worth knowing in the first place. Predictably, I find the latter version more interesting and not least more rewarding to engage with.

Such an understanding brings with it that we accept that there are many who do science; that science and research is not only done by scientists and researchers. There is a number of other actors who also create science, its significance and meaning. These are, not least, librarians, students, professionals, school teachers, funders, science journalists, university administrations, politicians, bibliometricians and evaluation units. This list could be continued for a very long time. Where you stand in relation to this messy area called science is crucial for what shape it takes.

To a large extent, Frohman's framing of scholarly communication along two discourses—the epistemic and the practice discourse—is tied to how we talk about science (and, in a way, also other forms of producing academic knowledge). We have already established that science is malleable and multiple. Different subjects with different traditions and epistemic cultures, as sociologist of science Karin Knorr Cetina (1999) calls it, meet and this has implications. Yet it is also different for different groups and individuals, not only for different research subjects or disciplines. 'Multiple' means here not just that it is the same entity seen from different angles, but that there are literally different sciences, although they are of course mutually dependent. The librarian who deals with documents, and who addresses researchers as users of an institution, deals with an entirely different science than does the professor in biomedicine who is in charge of large research funds or the lecturer in media and communication studies. For the science journalist, science is not the same as for an undergraduate student; not to talk about representatives of industry or research funders, teachers or university administrations.

Science is so many different things to so many different groups and it is constantly being re-imagined and invested with different interests. Yet still, and this is what is strange, there exists an idealized view of a unified, universal science where results and knowledge can be encapsulated in publications, which also can be measured, counted and distributed. This idealized view narrows down science and scientific or scholarly communication in a way that makes it difficult to believe in it.

The Open Access movement has often subscribed to this idealized view of science; one science, for the entire world, which produces truth and where progress happens through communication in scientific publications, where the results are published and then built upon. This way, progress is indefinite. Admittedly this is a bit simplified, but it can be seen in the Open Access movement's central documents. For instance, in the now often-quoted Berlin Declaration of 2003, one of the most important founding documents of Open Access, it reads as follows:

"We define open access as a comprehensive source of human knowledge and cultural heritage that has been approved by the scientific community."

(Berlin 2003)

This is an all-encompassing understanding of what science is and what Open Access should do. Open Access turns into an umbrella concept that somehow equates science, knowledge and cultural heritage. Something else stands out in this and other similar descriptions, namely a faith in technology as a driving force to solve problems, to advance science and diffuse it to all. Somewhat polemically formulated, the view encapsulated seems to be that if only scientific knowledge reaches everyone, all will be good.

I would like you to compare these following three paragraphs. The first two are from influential Open Access declarations from the early 2000s, the third is from a speech held by U.S. President Truman in 1949.

(1) "For the first time ever, the internet now offers the chance to constitute a global and interactive representation of human knowledge, including cultural heritage and the guarantee of worldwide access." (Berlin 2003) (2) "An old tradition and a new technology have converged to make possible an unprecedented public good. The old tradition is the willingness of scientists and scholars to publish the fruits of their research in scholarly journals without payment, for the sake of inquiry and knowledge. The new technology is the internet. [...] Removing access barriers to this literature will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor and the poor with the rich, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge."
(Budapest 2002)

This sounds worth aspiring to, but it also sounds very familiar:

(3) "[...] we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. [...] Their poverty is a handicap and a threat bothering to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people."
(Truman 1949)

It is the same spirit that is found in these statements. The same belief in progress and development, and in science's and technology's role in it. There are over fifty years between these statements. And very similar statements can be heard today. The story goes like this: A new technology will expand the reach of science—either to the countries and communities outside what is called the West, or to groups and individuals outside what is the center of science; loosely framed, the general public and the civil society. And this will lead to more just societies. Open Access is part of a tradition, a long line of similar technological solutions. A hope is evoked, which—and this is important—is never fulfilled.

To understand the various stages of this continuity—because there are many forms, many varieties and many different actors involved—how it is articulated and the role Open Access is given in this, is what I ended up describing in my PhD thesis. What I suggest, roughly summarized, is that Open Access continues an established tradition of talking about progress, science and technology. It is part of a well-established discourse where hope for a better future is continuously evoked but which in order to work pushes everything in a future that is never reached. My research found its home in theories that had emerged from postdevelopment and postcolonial studies. In particular, an adaptation of the Deleuzian concept "Desiring Machine" (de Vries 2007) helped me catch Open Access as part of this hope for development, this desire that must be had, but which can never be fulfilled in order to be productive. I had, in the end, managed to capture something relevant.

My trust in Open Access had been harmed during the writing of the thesis, I can admit that much. Open Access was not a rebel, not an activist—it sounded like everyone else. The view of science, knowledge, the internet and publishing, and development was old-fashioned; it was more or less identical to those views advanced by the World Bank, IMF, or other major mainstream players who see economic growth and to become more like "us in the West" as the main progress humanity can make.

This is when we started to live in separate houses.

Since I had managed to focus on the productiveness of the desires created and delayed, and thus could also emphasize the hope which was still at work in the Open Access movement, my fundamental respect for Open Access remained intact and we managed to maintain a pretty relaxed long-distance relationship for a few years. We could not really live together or raise a family, but neither did we want to separate for good.

During that time, Open Access grew in importance. More and more people began to talk of it and express opinions about it. Quite often I experienced that these were based on a pretty loose understanding of what it is all about, how research is done, what author processing fees are, how scientific communication looks in various disciplines, the role of copyright, and not least the relation between Open Access and peer-review and quality control. Quite often one is confronted with a fear of Open Access because it appears to challenge something people are used to. Many librarians have great experience in addressing these fears and concerns and often they are successful. For my part, when I had to meet such fears of Open Access, I could simply say: No worries, deep down, so far, most of Open Access is “science as usual” and nothing to be afraid of even if you like the status quo.

Over the past five to six years, Open Access has really become successful. All of a sudden there were emails coming from university administrations announcing that they were adopting one of the various Open Access policies; admittedly often quite perplexing or contradictory ones, but still these were important steps. Research funders everywhere introduced requirements for Open Access, and so on. Then came the influential Finch Report (Finch 2012) in Britain and the entire UK decided to move to (the ‘author pays’ model of) Open Access. Now it had become mainstream for real. Yet it also meant that traditional publishers began to see it as their own agenda, and commercial interests began to shine through all the more clearly in how Open Access was framed. Open Access moved away from being seen as the agenda solely of researchers and librarians and came closer to the administration, evaluation, and traditional publishers.

For many researchers, Open Access had now turned into a part of the administrative system that one is forced to relate to. It became something else to deal with, yet another system you have to relate to and one more instrument for evaluating, measuring and increasing productivity and efficiency. Open Access became another requirement to consider when you are done with all your other administrative duties, which are a large part of many researchers’ daily life; a life that for many today is synonymous with writing research grant applications, getting together a competitive résumé and acting as a research entrepreneur drawing in external funding and managing it effectively.

In this association of Open Access with yet another administrative burden lays a danger that libraries must take seriously. Moreover, the way in which an idealized notion of a linear science provided much of the blueprint for how the role of scholarly communication is inscribed into the concept of Open Access has to do—I suggest—with some of the difficulties encountered by the arts and humanities, as some dominant Open Access options do not gel well with humanities traditions of publishing and communicating. More specifically, questions concerning monographs, local languages, and author processing charges are issues with entirely different implications for the humanities than for the medical sciences or the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines. Yet, in recent years, the arts and humanities have begun to claim and reshape Open Access and many innovative publishing projects and cooperative approaches have emerged.

For my part, I also began to see that while Open Access had grown in significance, it had finally also become more diverse. Now there were no well-defined black and white roles anymore; for example, publishers on one side and Open Access on the other, or progressive researchers on one side and conservative universi-

ties on the other. Now things had become blurry. Open Access belonged to everyone and no one was “right”. There were many Open Access. The criticism addressed against the so-called Finch Report and of the way in which it had been interpreted in the United Kingdom was often well-articulated. This criticism was also successful in putting Open Access in a larger context of how science is done and what it means, not least in relation to society’s increasing dependence on digital networks.

Personally, my interest in Open Access was sparked again in late 2013. The news section of the well-known Science Magazine published an article called “Who is Afraid of Peer Review?”, a piece of investigative journalism written by science journalist John Bohannon (2013). He had sent a paper with a number of significant and easy-to-spot flaws to hundreds of Open Access journals in biomedicine and more than half had accepted it. Just as Open Access had gained traction, along came Science Magazine, part of the Science family, one of the epitomes of excellence in research, and insisted—or so it seemed—that Open Access was not to be trusted after all. A claim that was made on quite shaky grounds, as many highlighted.

A debate ensued and what happened was so interesting that I decided to engage with Open Access again. My colleague Fredrik Åström and I started to study the reactions that Bohannon’s article attracted, mostly in the blogosphere but also in legacy media. And what we saw was very interesting: Clearly, many of the reactions were critical of Bohannon’s method and quite rightly point out that he did not compare with non-Open Access journals or even with Open Access journals without author processing fees. Yet, what was really interesting is that in addition to defending the Open Access principle, a lot of emphasis was put on discussing the conditions for doing science and research and the mechanisms used for quality control. Central questions that emerged were: How is trust in science built? How do today’s conditions for research and for succeeding as a researcher in a system which demands constant acceleration, evaluation and competition shape how we actually do science and how we control the quality of it? What we could see were stories about a system in distress (Haider & Åström, in press). An “acceleration of research”, as the Budapest Open Access Initiative had suggested Open Access should lead to, did not emerge as the solution.

Still, Open Access comes in as an opening, as an opportunity to discuss conditions for research, for scholarly communication, and of review mechanisms and what they actually evaluate. Open Access can act as an opportunity for asking questions, and through this, perhaps, be an opportunity for change.

Open Access has grown up. Simple positioning for or against Open Access is not what is needed. And this can be frustrating. Sometimes Open Access at any price might not be the best solution. Sometimes Open Access hinders research rather than promotes it by being part of the administrative everyday life and the systems of constant evaluation. Yet, it is a great opportunity that involves many critically thinking people.

Frankly, from a personal relationship point of view, it is intellectually much more rewarding to converse with a complex adult with different sides to its personality than with a two-year-old. Now that Open Data has joined the debate, this conversation promises to be even more rewarding.

I think that Open Access and I will stick together for a little longer.

About the author

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Openness without Persecution

Preventing Attacks on Archivists

Nikita Mazurov

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Fig 1. Image credits: Flickr users Jay Tamboli (CC:BY-NC)

The Shadow Archive

Traditional archives today have been eclipsed by shadow archives—free-form digital collections of cultural products which exist in-between any given legalities accompanying or hindering data exchange and characterised by an openness borne of peer, or guerrilla, curation. Within the shadow archive, everything from the self-selection of content to its actual storage and distribution may be orchestrated by open, voluntary collaboration, with guerrilla curators consisting of individual, self-designated contributors, as opposed to institutionally created and sanctioned job forms. To give but one example of the sheer magnitude of the shadow archive, the British Film Institute's (BFI) archive—[described by the Guardian](#) as “reputedly the largest in the world, including 230,000 films and 675,000 TV programmes”—pales in comparison to [LimeTorrents](#), a directory which indexes more than 1.2 million movie torrent files and more than one million TV show torrents.

So-called torrent directories such as LimeTorrents neither store the actual content of the ensuing archive—the film, audio, text, and other digital media; nor do they store the file pointers to this content, the digital .torrent files which contain metadata—information about the files and helpful pointers for specialised BitTorrent software clients to be able to download their particular contents. Instead, torrent indexers such as LimeTorrents provide links to these torrent files on other websites, which can then be downloaded and loaded into the torrent software, and then the particular file is finally retrieved by downloading it from other users who already have the file. In other words, LimeTorrents constitutes a collection of links to torrent files, which are themselves a sort of digital pointer to the actual file that one wants to share by way of loading the torrent file into the aforementioned torrent software.

The decision of choosing which files to index on LimeTorrents thus falls not on a predefined team of digital curators, but on anyone wanting to add content to the directory. Similarly, individuals have the option to share or not share particular files, as the content itself is also not stored on any centralised archive project server, but rather, is located on individuals' computers.

The shadow archive thus contests the very notion of a centralised archive space, functioning instead as a dispersed, distributed phenomenon.

Fig 2. Image credits: Patrick Breen (CC:BY-NC-ND)

The openness of the shadow archive is, above all, predicated on voluntary user participation and cooperation. This openness is precisely what makes these archives a powerful force for the distribution and preservation of cultural production. However, this same openness is also precisely what makes shadow archives extraordinarily vulnerable to attacks by adversaries who want to shut down the distribution of the world's cultural heritage that is preserved and disseminated outside of official state or corporate channels. This article will look at a particular manifestation of citizen curation—bootleg film recording—and will examine the risks posed to guerrilla archivists and curators engaged in such practices, in addition to putting forth various practical counter-measures that may be taken to help ensure their safety from persecution.

Cams

In the vocabulary of the shadow archive, a cam is a digital recording of, most commonly, a motion picture (although it can also be a recording of, for instance, a play or an art installation) made with a camcorder. The practice of engaging in producing cams is hence the act of camming, and those who engage in this practice are known as cammers. The usual technique for producing a cam—as [graciously explained by the Motion Picture Association of America](#)—is taking a modified camcorder and tripod into a movie theatre, recording the film as it plays on the screen, transferring the resulting video file from the camcorder, and then distributing it via physical media as well as online. A potential, typical workflow of a shadow archive guerrilla curator may thus proceed as follows: cam a copy of a film not yet available on the archive in the theatre, transfer the resulting digital copy of the film from the camera to the computer, make a torrent file using BitTorrent software and start sharing the file, upload the torrent file to a torrent repository website, and finally, add a link to the torrent file on any number of selected shadow archives.

The decision of which film to add to the archive, as well as the allocation of resources across the entire workflow itself, is made entirely on the curator level. This is in contrast to the formal, top-down control over curation found in traditional archives, where it would indeed be highly unlikely that anyone could come in off the street, add an item to the archive, and instantly have the item be accepted and available to the public at large—imagine the (im)possibility of such a workflow at the aforementioned BFI!

Persecution

So far so good, but what if one day upon returning to the same theatre where one had already made numerous cams of films, the curator suddenly finds oneself in handcuffs? The crucial point here is that the darker flipside to the openness of contribution is the openness to attack. It is precisely because these cultural products can be shared in an open archive, accessible to all, that those with adversarial interests may gain access and seek to harm the archive by neutralising its contributors. Here, an adversary is any agent (individual or collective; state, corporate or independent) who seeks to inhibit the operations of a shadow archive and any of its curators.

To give a recent example of precisely such an occurrence amidst an unfortunate and lamentably all-too-sizeable pool to choose from—additional examples including [a person being arrested on suspicion of recording films](#) in Nottinghamshire in September, 2015, and [another person being caged for 33 months](#) due, in part, to recording a film in a theatre in Wolverhampton—we turn to [the case of Sujay and Challa Pandi Ravi](#). The two were alleged cammers who had allegedly recorded and distributed some 300 films, both digitally and physically, over the last two years before making one last trip to the Q Cinema in Bangalore on July 24, 2015, for the ten o'clock matinee screening of a James Bond movie. Their arrest means that whatever particular archives they may have contributed to, whether directly or else indirectly by a copy of a cam they had made ending up on LimeTorrents, for instance, would now (or at least for the time being) be deprived of future contributions from them. As a result, all those who may have benefited from Sujay and Ravi's curatorial additions—for example, those unable to go to the cinema, whether due to geographical distance or physical disability, or perhaps due to simply not being able to find a babysitter or any other salient reasons—would, for the time being, be deprived of content.

As Sujay and Ravi would languish in the confines of a prison cell for engaging in archival practices deemed impermissible by a repressive econo-legal structure predicated on violently enforcing the myth of intellectual property at the expense of cultural livelihood, so too would the films languish in the confines of the theatre as products of a global culture and be further denied to those not in the vicinity of the theatre with money to spare. The archive would likewise be all the poorer for their absence. The apprehension of Sujay and Ravi can thus be seen not as mere prosecution, but indeed as an act of persecution, or ill-treatment precisely due to the underlying political beliefs—regarding unsanctioned sharing of cultural products in this case—of the curators.

Apprehension

But let's back up—how on earth did Sujay and Ravi end up arrested in the first place? How were their curatorial practices abridged by the aforementioned adversaries? Reports of archival repression and curator persecution are notoriously glib on the details of the circumstances that lead to arrests. From official reports, we only know that the two were apprehended, but not how. There are many overt mechanisms for apprehension—stemming from a theatre employee noticing the use of a camcorder and calling the authorities, to perhaps one of the cammers themselves inadvertently letting slip that they were going to be recording a particular film, but one particular vector of target neutralisation perhaps necessitates more time and explanation due to its covert operation—latent cinematic watermarks.

When discussing technological impediments to open guerrilla archival practices, we can group them into three broad categories: Digital Rights Management (DRM), overt watermarking, and finally, covert watermarking. DRM is a manifestation of access control: managing the ability of someone to use, for instance, a piece of software or play a movie. If you purchased a digital download of a movie from Amazon, for instance, you will be unable to play back the file on more than two devices; if you try to play the file on a third device, your video player will display an error saying that it cannot decode the file. This is one evident example of DRM-based access control: access to a given file may be overtly denied or granted by the seller.

On the other hand, let's say that you download a copy of a journal article from an academic database. You may be able to open the article on as many devices as you want, but you may notice a message which appears in the margin of the article saying that it was downloaded at such-and-such time from such-and-such place. You may thus not be inclined to upload the article to an open shadow archive, as perhaps the publisher will find it and then know it was you who shared it and instigate legal proceedings against you. This is then an example of overt watermarking: the given cultural product is explicitly or visibly marked to identify the source (the purchaser), leading to potential apprehension of the source should the source decide to engage in such archival practices as that which are unauthorised by the seller of the content.

The flipside for publishers is then, of course, that if others can clearly see the overt watermark, they may also be able to remove it. This is why some content controllers have switched to using latent or covert watermarks which are not immediately apparent to the unknowing viewer. This may be as simple as having the same message as in the previous example of overt marking, but now the message is in the same color as the rest of the page—invisible unless one knows to look for it. Of course, content controllers have much more elaborate ways of potentially hiding identifying marks in the given cultural product as well. Given that, unlike with either DRM or overt watermarking, we are unable to see right away whether a particular item has been marked, covert marks are far more dangerous to the open sharing of cultural production.

Discovery

Let us then return to the case of Sujay and Ravi and speculate on how the two guerrilla curators may have been apprehended. To make things challenging, let's assume that what led to their apprehension was perhaps the most nefarious form of technological impediment to open archiving—the aforementioned covert watermark. Let's assume that an adversary, in this instance, an outfit known as Anti Piracy Solutions (MAPS)—who have previously collaborated with the police to neutralise many guerrilla archive curators—found

out that Sujay and Ravi were recording films from a particular theatre at particular times of day and then simply waited for them to show up the next time. But how could MAPS have come to possess knowledge of Sujay and Ravi's curatorial habits?

A modern film essentially has two key components, two streams which join together to produce a motion picture: video and audio. Both are potential venues for covert watermarking. Turning to the video first, a feature-length film is composed of thousands of still images known as frames displayed one after the other at playback speeds such as 24 frames per second. Given that a 90-minute film may thus have roughly 129,000 individual frames, and that the human eye cannot usually pick out the differences in every single frame as they are being displayed, what if tiny markers or dots could be imbedded in select frames? If frames numbered 37; 75,006; 101,183; and 122,894 all had unique formations of dots in them, chances are that most viewers of the film would not notice one bit.

Now let us imagine that the frame, a still image composing the film, can be parceled out into sections as big or small as necessary, with each section in turn receiving a numerical value. In other words, we could say that if a dot appears in the top left corner of the frame, it receives the value '01', and if it appears somewhere towards the bottom right of the frame it receives the value '32'. If all the values of all the dot positions respective to their particular frame were combined to form a string or line of numbers, we could get a serial number such as 01322012. It then stands to reason that an adversary such as a film studio could then assign a unique serial number to every individual print it sends out to different theatres.

If an adversary were to then analyse a cammed copy of a film procured from an open archive, locate the marked frames, and calculate the positions of the dots, they would thus extract the latent serial number covertly implanted in that particular copy of the film. If MAPS did this and then found out that many copies of films all had serial numbers that led to the same theatre, they could deduce that this particular theatre was the one to concentrate surveillance efforts on for any future camming activity.

Gratitude is extended to anonymous source(s) for the provision of the audio-visual watermarking examples.

Likewise, the same thinking can be applied to the audio stream of a film. If unique sounds are implanted at unique intervals in the audio track, for example, if there's a barely-perceptible 'bleep bloop' at one hour, two minutes, and three seconds and a 'bloop beep' at one hour, thirteen minutes, and one second, and so on as necessary to reconstitute a unique serial number, then the audio track could also readily betray the location where the cam (or at least the recording of the audio stream) was made. Knowing the location, adversaries could once again concentrate extended surveillance efforts around that particular theatre, leading to a greater likelihood of apprehension and, in turn, the prosecution of the cammers.

Prevention

Given these briefly outlined potential attacks on open archivists, what then are some potential preventive counter-measures? With regard to the

Fig 4. Examples of a visual forensic watermarks imbedded in film frames in unique formations at unique intervals in the films.

visual watermarks imbedded in the frames of the film, each frame can be scrutinised separately for any potentially identifying markers, and then these frames could be replaced with a 'dummy frame' identical to the one immediately preceding or following it (alternatively, the frame could also be simply deleted with no replacement) to effectively excise the troublesome watermark. Similarly, the audio track may be closely scrutinised for any faintly perceptible irregularities which can then be removed using basic audio editing software.

In other words, the guerrilla archivist must consistently and effectively engage in counter-forensic practices to ensure both their own safety and the longevity of the shadow archive.

Before engaging in the actual sharing and distribution of procured cultural products, successful curation of the content must begin with the careful scrutiny of the given item and the removal of any potentially identifiable information. In order to protect the archive, we must protect the same guerrilla curators who make it what it is. The first step lies in awareness-raising: covert watermarking is successful precisely because it remains unseen. By highlighting its operating practices, we neutralise its key primary line of effectiveness—lying in a latent state waiting to be discovered by adversaries exploiting the public openness of the shadow archive. By making the covert overt, we pave the way for the next step: the removal of the marks to facilitate the successful and continuous supply of materials to the archive without fear of persecution for engaging in the distribution of cultural products.

The job of today's citizen curators is thus the protection of their fellow curators and the archive in general against attacks by adversaries who would love nothing more than to see the shadow archive fall so that they can maintain their tenuous grasp over control of what are deemed to be acceptable archival and curatorial practices around cultural production.

About the author

Nikita Mazurov is interested in investigating modes of guerrilla archival practices, the threats thereto, and the protection thereof. He is further interested in exploring potential modes of ensuring archival longevity and availability of information.

The Import of “Open” in the Civil and Civic Spheres

Robert Jacobson

The Smell of Urban Data

Elisabet M. Nilsson

The Import of “Open” in the Civil and Civic Spheres: An Open-Ended Question

Robert Jacobson

Fig 1. "Tucson at Dusk", Flickr user Jill/Blue Moonbeam Studio, CC:BY-NC-ND

This article is dedicated to I.A. “Tony” Newstead, the Australian pioneer of open planning for new technologies. TELECOM 2000, which Newstead produced for the Australian Telecom Commission in the late 1970s, was a groundbreaking experiment in and exposition of citizen involvement in technology policymaking and planning. Sadly, every copy of TELECOM 2000 but one (in the Australian National Library) was destroyed by Telstra, the privatized version of the formerly public telecommunications network.

*Newstead resides in Melbourne, an unsung hero of the online world as we know it today. For the story of Newstead’s eventual policy triumph two decades later, and its implications for other jurisdictions, see *An “Open” Approach to Information Policymaking*, Robert Jacobson, Ablex Publishing, 1989. Also see *Smart Internet 2010*, Trevor Barr, Alex Burns & Darren Sharp, Smart Internet Technology CRC, Eveleigh, Australia, 2005, reportedly available from smartservicescrc.com.au.*

The positive sheen of “open”—suggesting universal access to knowledge and awareness, and the untrammelled ability of like-minded persons to communicate and collaborate—has worn off. In our digital age, it also has come to mean exposed and revealed, not just for a moment or any discrete period of time, but eternally so long as there are mechanical memories. Lauding “open data,” “open planning,” and “open policymaking”—terms I myself have used more than once, sincerely, without irony—is now a problematic proposition. Because functionally, social harmony and effective governance, especially in a modern democracy, require a high degree of openness.

Yet the ability of all to see all (with varying degrees of resolution and accuracy, depending on a person’s social stations) has been demonstrated too well to be a useful tool for repression and aggression, institutional and military as well as personal.

So which “open” shall it be, for which and with which we design contemporary systems of exchange?

For me and those working with me on Smart Citizens in southern Arizona—a progressive region of three million inhabitants in a reactionary state, with local aspirations for greater regional autonomy—this is not an academic question. Smart Citizens is a global movement. Its goal is to develop resiliency in communities, cities, and regions in the face of novel challenges as well as sustainability on a constant basis. Theoretically, it does this by using problem-solving knowledge and relevant experience embodied in a jurisdiction’s residents, who are then embedded in the machinery of government. They share with the formal government responsibility for proposing, making, executing, evaluating, and revising policies and operations. [1]

Smart Citizens is about achieving public engagement, grassroots service-delivery, and ultimately, co-governance—qualities of governance that have long been bandied about but are seldom actualized except in moments of extreme crisis, when it may be too late to prevent the oncoming catastrophe. Since most proposals and plans for increasing citizen engagement resemble Smart Citizens in one or more aspects, especially its “open” character (discussed below), what we learn from Smart Citizens may have general application—both positive directives and cautionary lessons.

Historically, Smart Citizens stems from two critical propositions: (1) that “Smart Cities” (as opposed to smart citizens) are unreliable in times of crisis and (2) that because of not actually being smart, only automated, “Smart Cities” are unable to learn; they can only reify—reinforce—existing systems of governance and management—even those doomed to fail (Hemment & Townsend 2014).

But Smart Citizens is ultimately hopeful and proactive. It finds among today’s urban chaos a plentiful

Fig 2. Urbanscale's Urbanflow dealing with pedestrian-oriented cartography, wayfinding, and journey planning—an interactive element that should be built into Smart Citizens for use on desktops, mobiles, and in the streets.

supply of champions for humanistic, holistic, and highly interactive and open policymaking, planning, and management—progressive urban leaders and the people themselves, abetted by powerful new technologies and guided social organization.

Oops, did I say “open” again? It comes so easily to mind, the buzzword de jour among today’s urbanists of all cuts of cloth. But what does it mean in the context of a Smart Citizens approach to policymaking, governance, and management? Genuinely?

To answer this question, let’s first distinguish between the *civil sphere* — also known as “civil society,” a concept developed by Habermas (1991) — comprising broad public and private interests, and the *civic sphere*, the specific realm of urban governance. Each is a source of urban experience. Though sometimes used interchangeably, the civil sphere and the civic sphere are in fact two distinct aspects of political and cultural life. Smart Citizens impacts each differently. Opening each of these spheres brings with it possibilities and opportunities, some commendable, some fearful.

The civil sphere is societal space wherein persons and institutions construct and carry out roles and relationships, in a very general sense. “Civility” is a subjective measure of how well these roles coalesce and interact: whether they are in accord or discordant. Broad themes of inclusion and exclusion, of cooperation and conflict, flow through civil society, breeding outcomes that are productive of a shared high quality of life and outcomes that are hostile to this sharing, usually mixed and in contention (Alexander 2006).

The civic sphere is a discrete portion of the civil sphere. It is determined in part by the character of the larger civil society; and reciprocally, it contributes to the civil sphere’s evolution. Though more narrowly focused, the civic sphere has its own complexity. It is the designated political and cultural space in which urban and regional interests and their leaderships cooperate and contend in the spirit of the locality. Their product, governance, is the process of policymaking and taking action in response to regulatory and operational policies. Governance is the essence of local formal government.

Traditionally, these conversations and contentions take place exclusively among elected and appointed officials, and between these officials and mostly professional individuals and organizations whose business is lobbying government. This has been true of almost all societies, even those that strive to be consultative.

Smart Citizens challenges this cozy state of affairs. In each of its various expressions, if the civil sphere permits, it “opens” the civic sphere, injecting citizen-driven inputs—those invited and those invented—into policy and managerial conversations. These inputs—citizens’ observations, reports on their experiences, the data they have accumulated in practice, and their resulting opinions, recommendations, and offers of collaboration—can be determinative, empowering citizens to take action, especially when a formal government is incapable of successfully tackling an issue, unable to solve a wicked problem, or unwilling to implement a necessary solution. Whether the resulting citizen actions are deemed successful or not is in the eyes of their beholders.

That is because the current state of urban and regional affairs is wholly sympathetic to citizen engagement, even to the extent of encouraging co-governance. Elected officials and appointed government employees everywhere are overwhelmed with the ever-increasing complexity of serving their jurisdictions. In the USA and elsewhere, this general trend is exacerbated by repeated “reductions in force” at all levels of government, leaving the remaining workers with even more to do per capita.

Smart Citizens sees with the people’s eyes. This sets a standard that some local governments may find objectionable; but so far, most have not.

... And not only in terms of typical services—sanitation, roads, education, and so forth: government workers these days are also responsible for educating citizens and residents about the cities in which they live and work—not just about their physical and social infrastructures, but also about their economies, environmental condition, quality of life measurements, cultural affairs, governance, and so on. These topics include virtually every aspect of urban/regional living and daily experience. [2]

Simply put, managing the city or region frequently exceeds formal local governments’ capacity. Government responses proceed in discreet steps. Many urban and regional governments are supplying citizens with open data in order for citizens to better understand the urban or regional dynamics of which they are a part. The next step, occurring in many jurisdictions, is for city and regional governments to share power with citizens outright. And after that, to delegate citizens responsibility for meeting agreed-upon goals. The penultimate stage in this evolution of the civic sphere is to empower citizens to call out issues and solve problems themselves—usually in collaboration with formal government.

We can now foresee idealized cities and regions in which citizens and other residents do most of what needs doing, with the formal government only providing experienced guidance and funding (if it is available). The result isn’t a policy or operational free-for-all. In these jurisdictions, citizens will usually be required to work within the laws and regulations that formal government itself must obey. But not always. Occasions for citizen-driven innovation will occur organically—improvisations that uniquely meet formerly unsolvable (or even undetected) challenges. Co-governance and management of the city or region will benefit from open-policy-making, open-planning, and extensive, inclusive citizen engagement.

These basic premises are embodied in Smart Citizens. So, what can we expect in the way of “openness” and its repercussions within the civil sphere and the civic sphere, when Smart Citizens comes to town?

A Smart Citizens system in its most general form has two primary components. The first component is a community media network—run over existing communication infrastructure—that permits community

Figure 3. Smart Citizens sites around the globe. Courtesy of the Smart Citizens team, <https://smartcitizen.me/>

formation, information exchanges, and tools for collaboration. The second component is a means for social organization, arising organically within the participating citizenry or supplied via a governmental or institutional entity (like a university), or an NGO.

The specific forms that Smart Citizens systems take so far have reflected their respective civil and civic spheres' conditions, capacities, and cultures. This will always be the case.

For example, in Pima County, Arizona, where I reside (in Tucson), Smart Citizens Pima is intended to

Figure 4. Smart Citizens Pima's consultations and transformations

promote connectivity among communities distant from one another, resulting in a strong regional identity, which is considered a necessary precondition for coordinated regional development. Smart Citizens Pima in official and community circles has been spoken of much like the Pony Express, the stagecoach, the railroad, and the telegraph—the fabled “Old West” forms of communication that first enabled remote communities to stay in rapid touch with one another.

In Malmö, Sweden, where a Smart Citizens program has been proposed and may be implemented, where the goal is comity (harmony) among neighborhoods and ethnic groups, the proposed system is more often spoken of as a medium for “community communications.”

Figure 5. Smart Citizens Malmö, a proposal. Credit: ATI, Zern Liew.

In both cases, social organization and actual person-to-person communication and collaboration, organic and facilitated, is the invisible fabric that will bind their participants to a common purpose. Elsewhere in Europe—Barcelona, Amsterdam, Manchester, and Vienna—environmental concerns have produced techno-centric expressions of community concerns, with human reporting and sensing technology at the core of

these Smart Citizens experiences.

By definition Smart Citizens projects take place within the civic sphere. But inevitably the forces, tendencies, and initiatives that these projects generate will permeate the civil sphere, too. In the more precise civic sphere, the effects will be clearly evident by intention. In the more diffuse and encompassing civil sphere, they may be more encompassing—beneficial to many, disturbing to some.

In the civic sphere, the in-person conversation among citizens has traditionally been constrained to the fuzzy experience of living in a city or region—what it is and how it can and should be improved. Recently, and with the best intentions, many city and regional officials are opening their civic-data repositories to citizens, though not with co-governance in mind. This newly available online access to “open” data often generates among the techno-avant-garde citizenry an operational-management conversation that resembles citizen engagement—but isn’t quite. Merely sharing more data and holding officially sponsored hackathons signifies only superficial involvement by the citizenry.

Perversely, such ameliorating has the effect of increasing citizens’ dependency on the formal government, in the same way that access to universal search and the desired broadening of one’s knowledge breeds de-

This is where firm adherence to principles of openness — absolutely requiring discourse and record-keeping to be open — earns the term “open” its initial virtue and attraction.

pendence on Google, Amazon, and other highly efficient, monopolistic discoverers, collectors, and managers of general and personal data.

“Openness” in the ideal Smart Citizens scheme renders the civic sphere not just visible but also permeable and accessible to citizens in organized geographical communities and communities of interest, and as individuals. Not only data but the policy and practices behind the data will become fair game for the conversations taking place in the genuinely autonomous Smart Citizens online *and offline* environments.

Openness in this sense also means that processes and procedures are not only visible to citizens but also inviting of citizens’ solutions—and their ownership of them. Embedded in Smart Citizens projects is a mandate for their champions to design prototypes that by example educate citizens in how their respective civic spheres can intelligently evolve using technology and social organization. Smart Citizens projects trust the citizens to author their own user requirements (what they want to accomplish, procedurally as well as concrete goals) and to define urban or regional system-performance specifications, technical and social. This is a dynamic process.

Smart Citizens projects resist the usual subsumption of grassroots ardor within the machinery of formal government, which can make official holders of power uncomfortable—but they also offer formal governments access to immense, formerly underutilized resources: their citizens’ hearts and minds, as well as their pocketbooks, time, and energy. Tomorrow’s Smart Citizens-effected civic sphere will be a very different place than it is today!

Opening the civic sphere won’t solve all urban and regional problems. Rivalries among groups and individuals regarding civic ends and means will still exist, and social differences—such as class, ethnicity, culture,

and educational standing—will continue to plague us. Merely because they can be spoken of in Smart Citizens-enlarged policy conversations and processes does not eliminate these divisive conditions. But being spoken of communally in the context of solving what are perceived to be common, community problems can go a long way toward producing solutions that “float all boats.” Bringing people together to do what they can do best as communities—for example, improving the quality of their own urban life and boosting the economic competitiveness of their regions—is the truest path to future urban and regional success. [3]

Now, how such openness in the civic sphere permeates the enclosing civil sphere remains to be seen. History has not been kind to reformist efforts at altering the overall balance of power, for citizens to autonomously communicate and collaborate, independent of government and corporate influence. Too often they have been at loggerheads even when, in retrospect, cooperation among all parties would have produced the best results for all concerned. Holding the purse strings, seeking competitive advantage, and maintaining control over the means of communication are all too common characteristics of those who believe they benefit from the civil *status quo*.

It’s time for a new, “open” approach to societal problem-solving, at all levels within the civil sphere.

But objective conditions today dictate otherwise. The grand challenges facing government, public institutions, the commercial sector, and the citizenry in common demand grand, inclusive civil coalitions. Grave environmental threats arising from climate change, for example, will spare no one. Economic crises generated by one or another party too desperately grasping for every slice of the social wealth damage the prospects for everyone’s future. Ethnic and community disputes sap the energy of societies, locally and globally. We all know these things and lament them.

Most reasonable persons agree: Around the world, in all sorts of situations, we must hasten the demise of unnecessary contention, encourage common understanding, ensure social peace and security, and design positive futures. Smart Citizens, as an intentional open system of communication and collaboration focused on improving urban and regional governance, makes it possible for each and all of us who dwell in collective human habitations to express relevant, reliable, and reasonable points of view on key issues, backed by openly shared knowledge, science, common sense, values, and simply good intentions. Smart Citizens and similar open approaches to common understanding leading to effective action are historically appropriate and timely efforts to produce more democratic, people-serving commonweals.

The current convergence of technology, social action, and shared need that produce an open approach to urban and regional governance could not be more fortuitous. It’s time to get on with it.

About the author

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Notes

[1] For the best descriptions of Smart Citizens as a concept and programmatically—each project reflecting a different point of view—see David Hill’s “[Smart citizens make smart cities](#),” posted on YouTube, 2 September 2013; David Orban’s “[Smart Citizens in Smart Cities](#),” posted to YouTube on 20 January 2015; and Christoph Schmidt-Mårtensson’s Vienna TEDx talk, “[How to engage smart citizens](#),” posted to YouTube on 20 October 2014.

See also IBM’s whitepaper, “[Beyond Citizen Engagement](#),” 2013.

Amsterdam’s Waag Society, an urban, public “Smart Citizens Lab,” has produced a [slideshow](#) that is both theoretical and practical. It is based on Den Haag’s groundbreaking work that resulted in Amsterdam receiving the 2015 Most Open City award, presented at Vienna Open, August 2015.

[2] One can read about this phenomenon with dismaying regularity in the excellent eRepublic.com online publications, [Digital Communities](#), [FutureStructure](#), and [Government Technology](#), which are global in outlook. eRepublic’s editors and writers deal in concrete solutions more often than dreams or Jeremiads, which makes their publications worthwhile sources of ideas, inspirations, and examples.

[3] Over the centuries, methods that epitomize this progressive trend have been developed and deployed by benevolent administrations or citizens acting autonomously to accomplish these ends: the Greek agoura, the Roman forum, Florentine ateliers, New England town meetings, citizen-directed community centers, folk schools, and similar facilities. More recently, local radio and TV, the public-access cable movement, and finally the Internet and Facebook et al. have enlarged the dialogue—but somewhat haphazardly. By contrast, Smart Citizens is systematic, theory- and evidence-based.

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The Smell of Urban Data

Urban Archiving Practices Beyond Open Data

Elisabet M. Nilsson

*Fig 1. Performed memories and intangible urban data
(CC:BY-NC)*

In the last decades, with climate change and alarming news on the state of planet Earth, the call for new urban solutions and alternative ways of organising urban life with consideration to our common and finite resources is highly ranked on the political agenda (Emilson 2015; Gerst, Raskin & Rockström 2014).

The development of network technologies, wireless or wired, has enabled us to collect, store and share data on flows of actions and human activities in cities on a scale never before seen. The data sets generated are stored in urban archives ('urban' in the sense of the topic or subject that is archived, not the physical location of the server) that sometimes are fully, or to a certain degree, open to the public and referred to as *open data*—and sometimes fully closed. What defines open data is that it is a resource "that can be freely used, reused and redistributed by anyone—subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and sharealike" (Open Data Handbook 2015). Typical open urban data sets hold data on energy consumption, population and depopulation, human mobility, traffic congestions, temperature fluctuations, environmental pollution, and various socioeconomic factors such as income, education and employment rate (Open Knowledge Foundation 2015).

Local governments and public authorities have a long tradition of collecting and archiving urban data on cities and citizens. In the mid-2000s, governments started to open up their archives hoping that open data could benefit society by creating conditions for more participatory democracy and public engagement. The hope was also that the data could be used to understand cities and urban dynamic processes and become a resource in domains such as urban development (Batty et al. 2012; Ubaldi 2013). Since then, the number of Open Government Data Initiatives has multiplied and become a political objective in many countries (see, for example, [Data.gov.uk](#), [Dutch data portal](#), [NYC Open Data](#), [UN Habitat Urban Data](#), [US Government's open data](#)). Initiatives and projects exploring the potential of open urban data have received a lot of attention as well as funding, but so far only little research exists on the actual outcome of the interventions (Baccarne et al. 2014).

The ability to collect, store and share this massive amount of data on human activities and records, and store them in urban archives, raises a lot of questions regarding matters of privacy and the security of personal data in a surveillance society. An important part of the research scope of the Living Archives project is to critically scrutinise and reflect upon these matters of concern (see the work of Susan Kozel, Nikita Mazurov, and Jacek Smolicki in this book). Without losing a critical perspective on urban archiving practices as such, the research interventions presented in this essay explore the other side of the coin, namely, the view of open urban data sets as an enabler and a resource in processes of urban development (Batty et al. 2012).

Open urban data as a social resource

By analysing open urban data, the movements of people, material and actions can be modelled, visualised and serve as input when drawing the big picture of a city. The belief is that such insights will improve our chances of coming up with urban solutions that make cities 'smart', function more effectively and become more sustainable on an infrastructural level.

The concept of *smart cities* has been developed during the last decades and can be described as a collection of ideas on how network technologies generating open data can play a larger role in the functioning of cities and in how to address urban matters. As put forward by Batty et al. (2012), "[c]ities are becoming smart not only in terms of the way we can automate routine functions serving individual persons, buildings, traffic systems but in ways that enable us to monitor, understand, analyse and plan the city to improve the efficiency, equity and quality of life for its citizens in real time" (p. 482). There is a long list of projects currently exploring the potentials of using open urban data to plan for and to build smart cities (see, for example, [CityZen](#), [European Smart Cities](#), [Green Digital Charter](#), [PLEEC](#)).

Urban archiving practices beyond open data

Open urban data sets of the kind referred to so far can certainly be helpful in visualising the mountains and valleys of a city and in answering questions on urban matters starting with a *what*. Cities are complex systems developed through numerous individual and collective choices, everyday practices and more than the sum of their parts (De Certeau 1984). As a complement to the rather functionalist vision of smart cities, we have seen so far that there is a call for a more human-centred perspective and a focus on micro-scale urban processes that binary algorithms cannot grasp (Batty et al. 2012). The development of resilient urban solutions requires a holistic view of a city and the social processes that are taking place. If we want to zoom in, dive into a particular valley of a city and smell a flower, we need alternative methods that can be applied when looking for answers to questions starting with a *why*.

The *Urban Archiving* research theme (also reported on in Nilsson & Wiman 2015a; Nilsson & Wiman 2015b) in the Living Archives project focuses on urban data archives that may provide input when answering questions starting with a *why*. The urban data we explore is of the kind generated on cultural practices and the cultural heritage of a city. It might seem misleading to use the term *data* when referring to this kind of material since data conventionally is more known as raw, unprocessed material (numbers and characters) and potentially informational (Markham 2013). Even if the material that we focus on is of a richer kind, we still choose to use the expression urban data. This data can also be described somewhat as 'raw' since it requires interpretation and analysis in order to make sense of it in the context of urban development. To avoid confusion, from now on we will refer to the data generated as part of our project as *intangible urban data* to distinguish between it and the kind of urban data automatically generated by network technologies. All digital data can be described as intangible due to its digital nature, but what we refer to is the source from where the data is generated.

That is, 'intangible urban data' is not data derived from counting cars or energy, but data generated on cultural practices and cultural heritage.

An assumption also guiding our research is the claim that the development of resilient cities includes inviting marginalised groups to the discussion and encouraging citizen participation on all levels (Ehn, Nilsson & Topgaard 2014). Our attention is thus directed towards marginalised communities that rarely are invited to have a say in matters of urban development. What we here refer to as 'marginalised communities' are not necessarily communities considered as weaker, but, rather, as underrepresented voices in the public debate. Our focus is put on intangible urban data generated by people that are not so visible for various reasons—cultural backgrounds, language skills, education—but nevertheless ought to be included in urban archives.

As put forward by Derrida (1995), an archive affirms the past, present and future; it preserves the records of the past, and it embodies the promise of the present to the future. The voices not heard and the kinds of material that cannot be accommodated by the archive are excluded from our historical record. Further on, he argues that "[e]ffective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution and its interpretation" (ibid., p. 29). What if alternative urban archiving practices can contribute to processes of democratisation and to creating a more holistic view of our cities and urban processes by inviting the underrepresented to contribute to urban archives?

Research approach and process

To summarise, the aim of Urban Archiving is to explore and prototype urban archiving practices generating intangible urban data, that is, urban data that potentially can give us insights and deeper understanding of urban matters and human behaviour.

Our research approach is guided by principles and methods from the field of participatory design (Halse et al. 2011; Simonsen et al. 2013). In short, the participatory design approach can be described as a diverse collection of principles and practices aimed at creating alternative futures, supporting democratic changes by involving the users in co-design processes. Instead of designing *for* the users, the designer works *with* the user. Our approach is also informed by artistic and curatorial practices and research (Kester 2004; Thomson 2012) suggesting alternative models of citizen participation, methods and tools for urban development. In line with Thompson, we have the view that “symbolic gestures can be powerful and effective methods for change” (Thomson 2012, p. 18).

The research process consists of a series of interventions conducted in the form of design activities and artistic actions or gestures. The process results in a collection of prototyped urban archiving practices. The tools and methods are developed together with the communities and artists we are collaborating with, and new tools and methods are continuously added.

Urban gardening communities as urban archives

Our activities are situated in urban contexts, which offer a wide range of entry points for research. In order to narrow down the window of exploration, we initially focus on the phenomenon of *urban gardens*, which lately has gained an increased attention as a means to attain resilient cities (Dziedzic & Zott 2012). Conceptually, the assumption is that an urban gardening community can be ‘read’ as an urban archive collecting, storing and sharing data about that particular community. The urban garden is perceived as a *performed* memory expressed through the cultural background and experiences of the gardeners.

The urban archiving practices prototyped so far are designed to collect, store, and share these performed memories of the gardening communities and form new urban archive material.

Fig. 2 Visual overview of the project outline and process

In the following, a collection of urban archiving practices generating intangible urban data via urban gardens is briefly described: *Eat a Memory*, *Plant your History*, *Memory Game* and *Soil Memories*.

*Fig 3. Left: Performing memories (CC:BY-NC);
Right: A table of performed memories (CC:BY-NC)*

*Fig 4. Urban gardeners planting
histories (CC:BY-NC)*

Prototyped urban archiving practices

Eat a Memory is an urban archiving practice where eatables from urban gardens are part of exploring food and meals as performed memories and cooking as archiving practice. A joint meal in the form of a potluck is applied as a platform for generating intangible urban data on communities and urban areas. Through the act of cooking and eating, memories are collected, stored and shared in various formats, such as recipes, a taste, a smell and visual representations. The practical implementation is that community members and other agents, for example, urban developers, gather for a meal to which everybody brings a dish from their childhood memories. At the gatherings, the participants perform their memories; that is, they prepare their dishes and serve them along with the background stories. The sharing of memories and cultural heritage are re-enacted through more than one sense; for example, the taste and smell of a specific moment in history are shared.

To test and prototype the possibilities of applying such an approach, we have up to now arranged sessions in collaboration with two communities (in Sweden and in the U.S.). Since the focus is on urban gardens, the theme of the sessions prototyped so far has been 'your grandparents' garden'. The following is an excerpt from the invite sent to the community members:

Plant your History explores the notion of the urban garden as performed memory, and in what ways urban gardens manifest the cultural heritage of communities and residents in a neighbourhood. The planting of histories is thought of as being an urban archiving practice that invites community members to share their

"Bring a dish from your family memories. An ingredient, a vegetable, a fruit, a soup, a dessert—something that your grandparents (or any other important person from your childhood) served you when you were a child. If they had a garden, bring something that could have grown in their backyard. If they lived in the city, bring something that they got for you in the grocery store. The gathering is about performing memories by tasting flavours from your childhoods, and sharing these memories by sharing a meal together. The meal becomes a performed memory, preserving history, as an archive that travels through time and place, from mouth to mouth."

cultural heritage and backgrounds. Using the urban garden as 'language', and not only relying on spoken or written language, opens up the archiving practice for people who otherwise would be excluded due to lack of language knowledge.

Two urban gardening communities were invited to test the idea and to explore whether their personal history could actually be planted in a garden and in what ways a garden can share stories beyond words about them, their family and their community. Since the growing season has still not finished, we have yet to harvest the urban data generated and result of the design process, us prototyping together with and learning from the communities and their practices.

Memory Game is a card game (a remake of the classic memory game) designed to work as a framework for collecting, storing and sharing memories and histories. The game was developed in collaboration with an artist collective and played together with community members. The game consists of a deck of cards with an image on one side and a blank reverse side. In the first round of a gaming session, the participants are asked to take an empty card and write down a memory relating to their urban gardens. In the second round, they are invited to play the game. All the cards are put into a box, and each participant picks a card, reads it, lays it down and relates it to another card, reading the flowing text out loud. The gameplay builds upon an associative play between the players, and thus memories are performed.

Soil Memories is an act of collective storytelling and an archiving practice intended for looking at soil as medium-generating multi-layered urban data. The materiality of soil offers a tactile and sensory starting point for talking about notions of being, belonging and home. Moreover, [2015 is the International Year of Soils](#). Soil Memories is a tribute to soil as a carrier of cultural heritage, life and memories connecting the present with the past and the future. It takes several thousand years to build a thin layer of fertile topsoil, but only an hour of heavy rain to lose it.

Urban data in the making (CC:BY-NC)

At a Soil Memories gathering, the participants bring a scoop of soil from a place that is important to them. All contributions are collected in a big pot, forming a new mixture of 'land' consisting of fragments from the participants' individual histories. The participants are also asked to share their memories of the place where the soil is taken and how it relates to its new 'home'. Besides being a tribute to soil as material and a container of urban data, the intervention is thought of as being an experimental archiving practice aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of an urban place and the community that refers to this place as home.

Capturing intangible urban data and creating new urban archives

To return to the aim of the research interventions here described—that is, to explore and prototype urban archiving practices for collecting, storing and sharing intangible urban data—the assumption is that such urban archiving practices can contribute to a more holistic view of cities, provide deeper insights on urban matters and become a complement, or maybe even a provocation, to the image of an urban area outlined by urban data generated by network technologies. We are obviously not the first exploring such thoughts, nor are we the first to have conducted experiments on how to archive the intangible cultural heritage of a city. An important question explored within the Living Archives project (see, for example, the work by Jacek Smolicki) is how to overcome the passive generation of data coming from all sorts of network technologies by turning to more sensible techniques anchored in human experiences.

The urban archiving practices prototyped up to now can be described as a collection of methods and tools for a more intimate kind of urban archiving practice. We attempt to develop concrete prototypes for generating intangible urban data without losing its immaterial, and sometimes poetic, nature. Further, the interventions and prototypes are an attempt to create conditions for underrepresented communities to contribute to the discussion about urban development and to encourage participation. Since the urban archiving practices prototyped allow for the involvement of many senses, we describe them as democratic and inclusive conversation tools generating urban data in a highly structured, but still personal, way.

Our experiences from participating in the interventions are that the set-ups created intimate atmospheres and encouraged participation in conversations about cultural heritage and urban space in a natural way.

Everyone gets an allotted time to perform and share their memories and cultural backgrounds, through their food, via a garden, a game or a scoop of soil, with or without words, regardless of the level of language skills.

Based on the outcome of the interventions, we suggest that the urban archiving practices prototyped can be used as tools for accessing and sharing new and diverse background stories about communities and urban areas and for studying urban complexity. These alternative forms of urban archiving practices can potentially be applied by professionals in the field of urban development as a tool for recruiting community members and residents that are not comfortable in attending formal planning meetings with urban developers, but whose contributions nevertheless ought to be included in urban archives. Again, as argued by Derrida (1995), the voices not heard and the kinds of material that cannot be accommodated by the archive are excluded from our historical record.

Up to now, our main effort has been to generate and collect intangible urban data. The next step focuses on storing and sharing these sources and on turning them into open urban data sources, which can be freely used, reused and distributed. However, transforming personal memories and heritage into open urban data sources raises serious questions about exposure and the privacy of personal data. An important issue that is still unsolved is how to balance matters of privacy with the call for increased participation in contributing to open urban archives for democratic reasons and for improving our chances of finding answers to urban problems starting with why.

About the author

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Friction Atlas

Paolo Patelli

Giuditta Vendrame

'Place' as an open framework

Neha Sayed

Friction Atlas

Redefining public space as the visible surface of a playing field

Paolo Patelli

Giuditta Vendrame

The scripts of law are drafted into our public bodies. They imprint upon flesh a quiet definition of movements and gestures, unconscious reactions, behaviours and anticipations. Law is often out of sight, although always implicitly present, throughout our urban experience. Regulations make use of symbols, conventions, abstractions, and have the power of persuading human beings to act. They are sets of instructions that incorporate power—an invisible structural force that plays through into everyday life. In the city, the laws regulating the uses of space emerge through a synchronised routine of elaborate moves on public surfaces: a choreography.

It is not uncommon in the media, for example, to spot demonstrators keeping their march to one line, standing on the sidewalk, in Washington, D.C. Any reading or picnic gathering over twenty persons in one of New York City's parks requires a special event permit. In Sweden, you might need to apply for a permit to dance in public. In Cairo, one is allowed to spontaneously discuss public matters only if there are fewer than ten people. Some regulations surely sound sensible, some bizarre; many are contested and strongly conflictual.

What happens when the laws become a game? What happens when we redefine the rules as the visible surface of a playing field, blurring the distinction between unthinking movement and a conscious submission as participants?

We logged into a Friction Atlas some of the rules and constraints that regulate the circulation of citizens within urban space; we translated them into full-scale diagrams, drawn onto the pavements of Ljubljana, Athens and Melbourne; we then organised and followed a series of crossings of the city, we invited the public to perform staged choreographies, enacting and embodying selected rules on the uses of public spaces, while discussing issues of public space, law and legibility.

Friction Atlas focused on the disciplinary aspects of the control of movement, giving visible shape to its traces and paths. It addresses openness (and lack thereof) of public space in relation to the legal codification of its uses, in particular for public assembly. Turning public space into a visible playing field, it represents openness by subverting the often opaque legal code and bringing its bare rules into the foreground, open for scrutiny and debate.

The project plays on a double entendre of the notion of “legibility”. On one hand, it shows how the public and the publics, the behaviours of citizens—users, customers, consumers—are represented and made legible by any government through simplified relations, which in turn inform what people can do. On the other hand, it reshapes laws into fully visible agents through graphical devices and performative practices, providing possible models for opening up to new forms of civic and aesthetic engagement with hidden or abstract

*Figure 1. Intervention:
Friction Atlas (Melbourne, 2015)*

layers of the city. Arranged situations and experiences within the urban environment activate an awareness that can be operationalized, to enable reprogramming, hacking, and deconstructing.

The video (single frame above) documents some of those who tried to cross the urban space of Melbourne, giving shape to a number of performative choreographies, ready-made, found objects in the legal codes of our cities.

Friction Atlas is a project by Paolo Patelli and Giuditta Vendrame (La Jetée) initiated at BIO 50, the 24th Biennial of Design in Ljubljana (2014) and further developed for Adhocracy Athens (2015) and Performing Mobilities in Melbourne (2015).

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'Place' as an open framework

Neha Sayed

'Openness' in a broad sense suggests accessibility and freedom of participation. It is a state of being that allows itself to alter and evolve through active participation. This phenomenon is temporal, iterating itself as it evolves, gathering information, generating new frameworks, becoming dynamic. Our everyday life is dominated by events that allow us to be in this state. These events are constructed in places that are carefully chosen by us. They are calibrated for our comfort. These places are also frameworks, open for interpretation, open for alteration, evolving with us. If these open frameworks can be mapped, we can generate an understanding of how openness evolves.

The place in consideration here is the urban architectural place. Being an architect I am interested in studying an augmented space and the evolution of 'place' within such a space. This work is a quest for developing a visual progressive mapping of a 'place', which will enable us to see it as a set of open frameworks. In this text I explain my approach towards 'place-making' and create a basis for the visual representation of the frameworks presented in the video.

Place as an open framework

We are constantly surrounded by space. We assign meanings to these spaces, an identity consciously built over time. These spaces thus become places, having specific character. In our daily life, we experience different places, such as a home, a work place and many more.

The discipline of Urban Design and Architecture offers elaborate definitions of place based on different criteria, such as function. In the last twenty years or so, designers in the field of CSCW (Computer Supported Cooperative Work) have considered the notion of place, distinguishing it from space. Dourish and Harrison (1996), in their path-breaking article "Re-Place-ing Space: The Roles of Place and Space in Collaborative Systems", introduced a distinction between place and space. They took a designerly perspective at place, suggesting that

"Space is the opportunity; place is the understood reality"

(p. 67).

This perspective provides a useful insight in looking at place as a distinct phenomenon that occurs in space.

A space can be seen as a physical configuration of materiality that has been deliberately created for human need. We as humans choose a particular composition of space such that it supports our actions. In short, the space on its own, without our interaction, is a dead space. It is only through interaction it evolves, changes, gets enriched and becomes a place. This does not mean that the physicality is unimportant; rather, the physicality is an equal participant in the phenomenon of 'place-making'.

Karen Barad's posthumanist ontology affords us to understand these interactions as intra-actions, where the human body does not pre-exist the interaction with the space but achieves meaning and identity only through the interaction with the material world (Barad 2007). The material world and the human body are co-constituted in the intra-action, bringing each other to life (read: acquire meaning). The intra-action is a progressive phenomenon of reciprocal exchanges where the openness of the space is negotiated as it gets defined. This negotiated space can be seen as an open framework, where place will evolve through intra-activity.

The inherent socio-political aspects of interaction enrich this open framework. We as humans and the space that

we inhabit are embedded with rich cultural information, and so is the place. Architect Bernard Tschumi emphasises the need of conceiving the architectural space as a cultural narrative (Tschumi 1994). According to him, 'place' is a continuous evolution constituted through events. He talks about a system made of space, event, and activity. The events have a temporal existence and are situated.

Similarly, Harrison and Tatar (2008) propose an idea of place, which is dynamically constructed through three elements: 'People', 'Events' and 'Loci'. The 'Loci' is a perceived notion of a place, constructed through the activities performed by 'People', leading to the formation of an 'Event'. The 'Loci' is a temporal framework, evolving as 'People' construct 'Events'. The phenomenon of reciprocal exchange (i.e., intra-activity) as stated above can be seen as a temporal event. The body interacts with a space by interpreting it, thus formulating an event. The conception of place as a series of temporal events that embed cultural narratives in space helps to visualise the evolution of a place. The open framework of a place, then, can be seen as constructed by a series of temporal events.

Participant observations in a social place

The temporality of events and the resulting 'place-making' can vividly be seen in a social place, for example, in a public garden. It is dynamic in nature with multiple activities taking place simultaneously. In a public garden there are smaller events such as groups of people chatting with each other, kids are playing nearby, couples seat detached from the crowd. But they are all part of a larger place called a garden. There are thin boundaries between the smaller events, which are private, and the larger one, which is public.

Since May 2015, I have studied various social places such as public gardens, streets, and a lakefront. I finally chose to work on a lakefront because there I could observe the 'place-making' more dynamically compared to other social places.

At this point it is necessary to state my position in this research and why I chose the methodology that I adopted. My approach of looking at place was to see it as a series of events. If it was a phenomenon to be observed, the best thing was to be a participant. I adopted the ethnographic method of participant observations, situating myself in the event. I decided to do observations at a regular interval of time throughout a day on a fixed spot. Observing a fixed spot was useful to produce a progressive map of temporal events over time. I chose to visit the same spot on weekdays and on weekends to observe variations. Marking a spot on the ground, I took thirty-second videos from the same spot every thirty minutes. When I was not filming, I sat around, ate, wrote, hanged out with friends around the same place, bought things that were sold; I was ultimately being part of the events taking shape. There were tourists on the lakefront taking videos, selfies, photos—and I was doing the same. Before I talk about the maps that I present in the video, it would be good to know more about the lake.

Lakefront: Talav-Pali

Lake Talav-Pali is located in Thane, a suburb of Mumbai, India. The lakefront—being a large, open public space in the heart of the suburb—has become the most vibrant 'place', changing its identity throughout the day. The periphery of the lakefront has a varied character. It has some important landmarks, like the

statue of a famous local king protruding from the periphery into the lake. There is a temple in the middle of the lake. Part of the lakefront is closed-off by buildings that house a boat club, an auditorium, an administrative building and a swimming pool. From this particular edge of the lake, one cannot see water and hence it is only used by passers-by. This part of the lakefront has no seats; the footpath becomes narrow. But, the other part of the lakefront is open. It is open to water; it is wider and has fixed seats. It is in this part a lot of action happens during the day. The openness of the space allows many different events to take place. It changes drastically per hour.

In the morning, people use it as a jogging track; vegetable vendors use it as a parking lot for loading vegetables, and the elderly use it as a place to just meet and chat. In the afternoon, it is used by the passers-by to rest. People prefer to wait here rather than in the administrative buildings, while their work is in progress. The edge of the footpath becomes a place to park private vehicles. It is during afternoon the street hawkers start to come and settle on spots they have carefully chosen. These are tattoo makers, ear cleaners, snack salesmen, and so on. In the early afternoon, when the school hours are over, teenagers come in pairs or in groups and seat near the hawkers to eat snacks or just to chat. In the late evening, people of all ages come either in families or alone to seat and be part of the changing place as it starts to become more active. Slowly, the edge of the footpath gets lined with hawker carts stationing themselves on the spots that they have selected over many years. The horse carts start to come; they circulate around the lake and charge for each trip. Families with kids come after office hours and the lakefront changes completely as it gets crowded with people. People spend hours walking along the lakefront engaging in different activities until midnight.

Progressive mapping of an open framework

Traditionally, maps are cartographic representations of statistical data about a location which is politically defined. The cartographic maps have been instruments of generating quantitative information about geography for defining or enforcing political powers. J. B. Harley (1989), by arguing the validity of such maps, has discussed the importance of deconstructing their relationship with power structures. Harley proposes to re-frame the discourse within which maps have been conceived historically.

My pursuit of mapping 'place' through a visual narrative and exploring its character is an attempt on the similar lines. The maps that I present in the video are aimed at establishing the evolution of a place. Hence, the mapping depicts an evolution achieved through the layering of temporal events.

Rather than focusing on the politics of how and why particular events evolve, I have chosen to put emphasis on how the space allows layering of varied events, leading to the formation of place.

In the maps, I have used graphics to illustrate how an event is constructed; what are its constituents and how one can see a body-space relationship. The maps are indicative of events constructed on a spot over a day. I present them in series as they change from morning to evening. In each map, I start with a spot at a particular time, calling it just a 'space', then highlighting the immediate surrounding within which the event will evolve. I call this the 'event framework' of a 'place'. Within this framework, the ground is highlighted as if it was a stage on which activities are taking shape. In the end, I highlight bodies making sense of the 'event'. Towards the end of the map, I have illustrated a layering of all the events of the day on top of each other. This is the 'place', finally achieved through the construction of series of events. In the video, presented herewith, I start with justifying why I chose the particular spots to work on

around the lake. This is presented through activity mapping around the lake. I chose two spots to work on around the lake where I saw dense activity throughout the day. I present a map for each spot.

A beginning

Through the mapping of 'place' as layering of events, one can see how 'openness' of space is seen as defined by the formation of a 'place'. I have attempted to formulate the 'place' framework, which is open-ended. This work marks the beginning of my quest in investigating 'place'. I would not like to conclude it now. My observations presented here in the video format helped me to create a basic understanding about 'place'. There is more to 'place-making' than I have touched upon in this work—my approach to look at 'place' as an open framework is just scratching the surface of it.

The videos that I took over three weeks on the lakefront were taken without the consent of the people. They were however aware of my presence and that I was recording. I was not stopped and questioned. But, I felt many times that I might be questioned by the police rather than by the people. As for them, I am not recording the people but the place. Soon, for security reasons, the lakefront will get surveillance cameras like many other public places in Mumbai. The methodology of recording in public place the way I did might not be possible in the future. I would like to pursue this work by making my methodology more open-ended, by letting people participate in it, by taking their inferences, thereby justifying the call for 'openness'. I will continue exploring 'place' further with this approach.

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About the author

Neha Sayed is an Architect from Mumbai, India. She did her Masters in Experience Design from Konstfack, Sweden, in 2009. She has done a combination of teaching, research and architectural practice since 2000. Her research interests include social interaction and co-design methodologies. She is currently working on exploring the phenomena of 'place-making' through varied perspectives.