


concrete consideration of possible OA business models, transition options, lessons from other OA projects, and assessments of how crucial exclusive access to AAA journals and AN is in attracting and maintaining AAA members. To that end, a short-term AAA OA Task Force (6-month term) could research business models and present a report on options and probable impacts to the Committee on the Future of Print and Electronic Publishing and the AAA Executive Board. The general findings of this report could then be presented publicly at an executive board-sponsored public policy forum at the next AAA Annual Meeting, where we could host experts from several publishing entities and experts on OA policy. Sections, journals and other AAA communities can discuss OA and

express their general positions through their AAA representation. These steps can help us determine whether OA is a AAA priority. Reading through mission, ethics and planning statements on the AAA website, you will likely find that many objectives would be advanced by an OA anthropology. The question for most of us then will turn on the details of OA alternatives and their impact on our finances and other priorities. How we approach that assessment, however, will depend on our knowledge and the framing concerns, concepts and assumptions we bring to the analysis. The contributions to this In Focus series invite us to rethink our possible OA futures and their compatibility with AAA and its partnerships. So let's get informed and creative. 

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ly completing a JD at Duke Law School, specializing in intellectual property and access to knowledge.



What do you think?

This In Focus series will be accessible through the new AAA website at www.aaanet.org, launched in early February. Recognizing that open access is of great interest to AAA members and larger anthropological communities, www.aaanet.org will now feature a blog where members and non-members alike can offer both their reactions to the In Focus series and their general thoughts on the open access issue.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Mission Improbable and the Possible Mission

LEE D BAKER
DUKE U

The most coveted real estate on any English language website is the upper left hand corner. On the AAA site, our logo—with its prominent “Founded in 1902”—graces that spot. The first tab, right below the logo, is a section called “About AAA.” Click it, and you are presented in boldface type with the Mission and Goals of this storied organization dating back over a century.



Lee D Baker

As I was preparing to write this short essay on the value of open access, I thought that I would use our mission statement for a little rhetorical purchase to help me make a persuasive argument that we are not in the business of selling anthropological knowledge, but we choose to associate in order to disseminate this knowledge to solve human problems. As posted on our website, the statement reads:

Section 1. The purposes of the Association shall be to advance anthropology as the science that studies humankind in all its aspects, through archeological, biological, ethnological, and linguistic research; and to further the professional interests of American anthropologists; including the dissemination of anthropological knowledge and its use to solve human problems.

Section 2. To advance the science of anthropology, the Association shall: Foster and support the development of special anthropological societies. . . Publish and promote the publication of anthropological monographs and journals. . .

As a footnote on the web page explicitly states, this statement is “taken from” the original constitution, as published in *American Anthropologist* (5[2] in 1903). The statement, however, did not sound the way WJ McGee, Franz Boas, and George Dorsey would have penned it over a century ago. It was too explicitly four field, too concerned with professionalization, and the gender neutral “humankind” was a dead give away that it was not taken verbatim from the organi-

zation’s original constitution. So, I checked.

As a faculty member at a major research university, I can get the 1903 volume of AA online through my library’s home page, and as a member of AAA I can access it online through AnthroSource. I

simply input the volume, year, and issue. Instantaneously, I have full access to all of that volume’s content. It is easy access, but not open. My university pays for the former and I pay for the latter.

To my chagrin and dismay, the mission statement was not there. As is often the case, I naively assumed that the person who posted the statement simply got the volume or year wrong and took the editorial license to change mankind to the more felicitous humankind. So, I began to search for key phrases. I chose “The purposes of the Association shall”, “the dissemination of anthropological knowledge,” and “foster and support the development of special anthropological.” I thought these key phrases were unique and distinctive enough to the statement that a search of *American Anthropologist*

between 1900-1910 would locate it. Nothing. It was not there.

I eventually tracked it down, in 1903 (5[1]:178-190). It is an anonymous article simply titled “American Anthropological Association,” which recounted the association’s founding and concluded with a copy of its first constitution. There is no mission statement, but under Article II the constitution addresses the objects of the association, which sort of sounds like the mission

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statement so prominently placed on the association’s website. For the record it reads, in full:

The objects of the Association are to promote the science of Anthropology; to stimulate the efforts of American anthropologists; to coordinate anthropology with other sciences; to foster local and other societies devoted to Anthropology; to serve as a bond of union among American anthropologists and American anthropological organizations present and prospective; and to publish and encourage the publication of matter pertaining to Anthropology.

Within the span of 15 minutes, I was able to verify that the citation of the AAA Mission

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Statement was wrong, and it was not an accurate rendition of the original. I feel strongly that what we write today is tomorrow's historical record, and that the ability to set the record straight should not be limited to students and faculty at elite institutions or those who can pay AAA membership dues to access this record through AnthroSource. The historical record should be open and everyone should have access.

Open access is a goal and principle that should guide the future of AAA publishing programs. The Long Rang Planning Committee should make this an explicit priority. It is not only the right thing to do, it's in our association's best

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interest to get ahead of this inevitable trend as quickly as possible. It will, however, take time.

As chair of the allocations subcommittee of the Committee on the Future of Print and Electronic

Publishing, and a member of the recently retired Governance Commission, I must emphasize "the future of AAA publishing" because I realize, in mind-numbing detail, that currently, sections and the AAA are dependent upon revenue generated through AAA's publishing programs. It is a complex issue that will take creative and forward thinking. It is also an issue that will require strong, and inclusive leadership. Opening access to our anthropological knowledge is needed and necessary. We must develop bold goals, create sustainable strategies, and set strict time-tables. Open access is an important goal worth working toward. ☐

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Organizing for Access

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To access articles digitally instead of (or in addition to) in already bound journals may by now seem rather mundane and expected. Similarly, the AAA's transition of its publications into a digital environment with the deployment of AnthroSource may seem a simple matter of moving from one format to another. In reality, however, this move has had convulsive effects on the association particularly as felt by the sections grappling with a significantly changed financial context. As Jason Cross suggests (this issue), the short-term financial benefits of the Wiley-Blackwell contract crystallize a valuable opportunity to step back and reconsider the nature and structure of AAA as a member organization, and in particular the role of the publication program within the association.



Melissa Cefkin

Specifically, I see in sharp relief a basic question: What is the nature of these things we call "publications"? Are they products, produced by the labor (much unpaid though perhaps otherwise compensated by reputation

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and status) of staff and scholars, owned by the association, and now disseminated by way of a digital channel? Or are they components of and vehicles for services, knowledge and community services that constitute the fabric of the work of anthropologists and scholars more broadly? Should AnthroSource be thought of as a product-supply channel or a service-provisioning platform?

Products and Services

Although in many ways overly simplistic, as a tool to think with, the product-service dichotomy is instructive. Consider the telephone. The hardware of a telephone, the product, quickly became commoditized because what really mattered was the service it enabled—the ability to communicate in real time across distances. Even in the day of star product (aka the iPhone), what distin-

guishes the product, the phone, in many ways is the range and variety of services it allows you to access and integrate. Indeed, many mobile service providers give the phone away to get you to subscribe to their service.

Now clearly scholarly articles are not cell phones (being both of greater and lesser significance). But I think this case is illustrative for the following reasons. A focus on service means focusing not on the thing itself but that which the thing enables. A focus on services

technical and economic dynamics are driving participation in many different forms of knowledge production and exchange, and these dynamics do not stop at the boundaries of a single organization such as AAA. (See, eg, Golub's Dec 2005 AN piece, "AnthroSource—Actually Useful?" 46[9]:12-14.) Dedication to open access (OA) itself opens up a range of questions, as Kelty describes in this issue. Choices about how to direct our efforts with AnthroSource and other AAA digital presences are

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also encourages that we recognize the user-provider relationship necessary to coproduce the service value.

To ask whether our publications are more products or services is in many ways purely a rhetorical question, for the answers are not fully ours to decide. Social,

about *how*, not *whether*, we play in these worlds.

The application of a product—or a services-based philosophy has some very real and potentially immediate implications, crossing both operational boundaries, such as how to link and integrate across technical architectures