

# RADICAL ACCP SEN CONFERENCE



Coventry University  
15th and 16th of June 2015

# Radical Open Access Conference

Two days of critical discussion and debate in support of an 'alternative' vision for open access and scholarly communication. The aim of the conference is to explore some of the intellectually and politically exciting ways of understanding open access that are currently available internationally. A particular emphasis is placed on those that have emerged in recent years in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

## Speakers:

An Uncertain Commons, Janneke Adema, Dominique Babini, Armin Beverungen, Mercedes Bunz, Marcus Burkhardt, Joe Deville, Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Christian Fuchs, Rupert Gatti, Jonathan Gray, Gary Hall, David Harvie, John Holmwood, Sigi Jöttkandt, Eileen Joy, Chris Kelty, Sarah Kember, Andreas Kirchner, Christopher Land, Stuart Lawson, Tara McPherson, David Ottina, Nate Tkacz, Marisol Sandoval, Felix Stalder, Stephen Shukaitis, Joanna Zylińska

## Projects and Presses:

Culture Machine, CLACSO, Discover Society, Ephemera, Goldsmiths Press, Journal of Peer Production, Journal of Radical Librarianship, Limn, Mattering Press, MayFly Books, MediaCommons Press, MLA Commons, Meson Press, Minor Compositions, Open Humanities Press, Open Knowledge Foundation, Photomediations Machine, Punctum Books, Scalar, Spheres, tripleC, Vectors

# Schedule

## Day 1

10:30-11:00	Registration and Refreshments
11:00-11:15	Welcome and Introduction
11:15-13:15	Panel 1. A Multitude of Models: Radical Open Access in Practice
13:15-14:15	Lunch
14:15-15:45	Panel 2. Affirmative Disruption: Diamond Open Access, the Academic Gift Economy and the Common
15:45-16:15	Coffee Break
16:15-17:45	Panel 3. Radical Accountability

## Day 2

9:30-10:00	Coffee and Refreshments
10:00-11:30	Panel 4. 'Open': Alternative Genealogies
11:30-13:00	Panel 5. Chains of Equivalence: From Open Knowledge to Internet Piracy
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:00	Panel 6. Radical Open Access: Towards a Critical, Experimental and Processual Posthumanities
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-17:30	Closing remarks: Is A Radical Open Access Network Possible?

## Concept

There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another. A historical materialist therefore dissociates himself from it as far as possible. He regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.

(Walter Benjamin, Theses on the Philosophy of History)

While open access has at long last entered the mainstream in the global West and North, it is a particular version of open access that is being taken up so widely. Open access is currently being positioned and promoted by policy makers, funders and commercial publishers alike primarily as a means of serving the knowledge economy and helping to stimulate market competition. This version has become so dominant that even those on the left of the political spectrum who are critical of open access are presenting it in much the same terms: as merely assisting with the ongoing process of privatising knowledge, research and the university.

Rather than 'working with the grain' of neoliberalism's co-option of open access, the Radical Open Access conference will reclaim it by asking: what is the potential for supporting and taking further some of the different, more intellectually and politically exciting, ways of understanding open access that are currently available internationally? A particular emphasis will be placed on those that have emerged in recent years, in the arts, humanities and social sciences especially. Radical Open Access will thus provide the impetus for bringing together many of those currently involved in experimenting with 'alternative' forms of open access: both to discuss the long, multifaceted critical tradition of open access, its history and genealogies; and to examine a broad range of radical open access models.

As part of its refusal to concede open access, the conference will endeavour to strengthen alliances between the open access movement and other struggles concerned with the right to access, copy, distribute, sell and (re)use artistic, literary, cultural and academic research works and other materials (FLOSS, p2p, internet piracy etc.); and to stimulate the creation of a network of publishers, theorists, scholars, librarians, technology specialists, activists and others, from different fields and backgrounds, both inside and outside of the university. In particular, the conference will explore a vision of open access that is characterised by a spirit of on-going creative experimentation, and a willingness to subject some of our most established scholarly communication and publishing practices, together with the institutions that sustain them (the library, publishing house etc.), to rigorous critique. Included in the latter will be the asking of important questions about our notions of authorship, authority, originality, quality, credibility, sustainability, intellectual property, fixity and the book - questions that lie at the heart of what scholarship is and what the university can be in the 21st century

## Panel 1. A Multitude of Models: Radical Open Access in Practice

This panel will showcase a number of projects that are currently experimenting with alternative models for open academic and scholarly publishing. Some are scholar-led; others are exploring the boundaries between the 'inside' and 'outside' of the university through being deliberately and provocatively 'para-academic'; while others again have been explicitly designed to emphasise the ethics of publishing and the responsibility it places on us to radically rethink the material practices and social relations of scholarly communication. In their 'working against the grain', many of these projects diverge quite significantly from the importance that is generally attached in mainstream open access debates to the development of centralised platforms, interoperable archives, APCs and sustainable business models. (As Armin Beverungen and Helge Peters point out, the emphasis on 'having a business model' has only really emerged in the last 10 years or so.) Brought together like this these projects will present their ongoing work as part of the conference's overall discussion of the exciting intellectual and political potential of open access. This first panel will thus start the conference by deliberately highlighting the diversity of methods, models and approaches that are available for the communication and sharing of research.

### Speakers:

Meson Press: Mercedes Bunz (University of Westminster) - Skype  
Marcus Burkhardt (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)  
Andreas Kirchner (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

Mattering Press: Joe Deville (Goldsmiths)

MayFly Books: Christopher Land (University of Leicester)

The Goldsmiths Press: Sarah Kember (Goldsmiths)

Punctum: Eileen Joy (BABEL Working Group) - Skype

Chaired by: Rupert Gatti (Cambridge University/Open Book Publishers)

## Panel 2. Affirmative Disruption: Diamond Open Access, the Academic Gift Economy and the Common

For many advocates, open access represents a radical alternative to the kind of business ethics that underpins the disruptive innovation of global capitalism's knowledge economy. At the same time they are only too aware that open access is currently being made to serve the need for further commercialization of knowledge and research. While being careful to take into account problems such as that concerning free labour, this panel will investigate the extent to which a range of different concepts, values, methods and practices of open access provide a means of affirmatively disrupting the current political economy of scholarly publishing. They include those associated with 'diamond' open access, the academic gift economy, and the common (as distinct from the public, which has been often used to reduce the space of the common).

### Speakers:

Christian Fuchs (University of Westminster)

Marisol Sandoval (City University London)

John Holmwood (The University of Nottingham)

Armin Beverungen (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

Chaired by: Joanna Zylinska (Goldsmiths)

## Panel 3. Radical Accountability

The Radical Accountability panel will concentrate on different ways in which policy makers, funders, institutions and presses can be made more accountable, not least by uncovering the true costs of academic publishing through Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and collective forms of data gathering and sharing. It will take as its focus those open access advocates who have exerted pressure for a greater degree of responsibility and transparency on the part of funders, publishers and institutions. These advocates have done so by comparing the cost of closed print to open access publishing; by revealing the huge profits that are being made by the commercial publishing conglomerates (many of which are still involved in aggressively avoiding paying the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK); and by means of boycotts such as the Cost of Knowledge campaign.

### Speakers:

Stuart Lawson

David Harvie (University of Leicester)

Gary Hall (Coventry University)

Chaired by: Kathleen Fitzpatrick (MLA/Coventry University)



#### Panel 4. 'Open': Alternative Genealogies

This panel will explore the genealogies of 'open' – including open society, open science, open education, open government etc. – in order to arrive at a more nuanced and rigorous understanding of the contemporary discourses surrounding open access. To be sure, an important feature of its historical development is the way different groups have envisioned open access in different ways. Open access is even seen by some as having predated the digital. This is especially the case when the politics of publishing are taken into account, such as those apparent in the production of artists' books, radical pamphlets and working papers (e.g. those of the CCCS at the University of Birmingham). What, then, are the specific values, methods, practices and material- discursive performances that have shaped open access in its present incarnations?

##### Speakers:

Nate Tkacz (Warwick University)  
Janneke Adema (Coventry University)  
Christopher Kelty (UCLA)

Chaired by: Joe Deville (Mattering Press)

#### Panel 5. Chains of Equivalence: From Open Knowledge to Internet Piracy

Panel 5 will discuss the extent to which the open access movement is capable of establishing what the political philosopher Ernesto Laclau called 'chains of equivalence' with other movements and struggles also dealing with aspects of openness – not just those associated with open knowledge, science and data, grey literature, altmetrics and so on, but also those areas in the arts, humanities and social sciences that conceive digital media more explicitly in terms of power, conflict and violence. Those associated with critical media theory, p2p networks and so-called 'internet piracy', for example. Can open access entertain the idea of establishing chains of equivalence without succumbing to fantasies of consensus, the sharing of standards and even interoperability? Would interoperability, in which a multitude of distributed systems, platforms and repositories are indexed and linked, so that their contents can be located by all the main search engines and harvesters, not render undesirable the idea of having a plurality of open movements, theories and philosophies that may at times conflict and contradict one another, but which can nevertheless contribute to the construction of a common, oppositional horizon?

##### Speakers:

Nate Tkacz (Warwick University)  
Janneke Adema (Coventry University)  
Christopher Kelty (UCLA)

Chaired by: Gary Hall (Coventry University)

#### Panel 6. Radical Open Access: Towards a Critical, Experimental and Processual Posthumanities

Open access is for many an important first step in the development of new, collaborative, processual and multimodal forms of knowledge and research. But it is very much only a first step. The ability to reuse and remix research works and other materials requires a far more radical engagement with ideas of openness than one concerned mainly with increasing access. It is just such a radical engagement with 'open' that this last panel will work towards. It will do so by drawing attention to a number of projects that are already experimenting critically and creatively with aspects of publishing that have been inherited from the era of writing and printing on paper - ideas of the fixed and finished book, for example - in an attempt to rethink what publishing is and what it can be. As part of this Panel 7 will engage with subjects that are still seen as taboo in academia, such as plagiarism and piracy. It will also explore the agential relations of the very platforms on which we publish. What kind of active roles do software tools such as WordPress and OJS play in our academic and scholarly networks when it comes to what and how we read, write, record, analyse? Do we need an 'image liberation front', as Joanna Zylińska suggests in her project on nonhuman photography? And given that ideas of the human, originality, intellectual property and the book are of such fundamental importance to the humanities, to what extent is any such rethinking of what publishing is to be understood in terms of a possible 'posthumanities'?

##### Speakers:

Kathleen Fitzpatrick (MLA/Coventry University)  
Joanna Zylińska (Goldsmiths)  
An Uncertain Commons - Skype  
Tara McPherson (USC) – Skype

Chaired by: Janneke Adema (Coventry University)

#### Closing Remarks: Is a Radical Open Access Network Possible?

##### Speakers:

Janneke Adema (Coventry University)  
Gary Hall (Coventry University/Open Humanities Press)  
Sigi Jottkandt (UNSW/Open Humanities Press) - Skype  
David Ottina (Open Humanities Press) – Skype

Respondent: Jonathan Gray (Open Knowledge Foundation)

# Venue



Ellen Terry Building  
Room 34 (ETG34)  
Jordan Well  
CV1 5RW Coventry



Short Stay Parking	Long Stay Parking	Public Services Key	Transport Key	Key Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 West Orchard</li> <li>2 Barracks</li> <li>3 Belgrade Plaza</li> <li>4 Lower Precinct</li> <li>5 Cox St</li> <li>6 Manor House</li> <li>7 Bishop St</li> <li>8 Christchurch</li> <li>9 White St</li> <li>10 Salt Lane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Grove St</li> <li>2 Gosford St</li> <li>3 Lower Ford St</li> <li>5 Manor House</li> <li>6 New Union St</li> <li>7 Lincoln St</li> <li>8 Cheylesmore</li> <li>9 Grosvenor Rd</li> <li>10 Whitefriars</li> <li>11 Moat St</li> <li>12 Leicester Row</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedestrianised / Shopping Area</li> <li>Cathedral Quarter</li> <li>Park and Gardens</li> <li>Visitor Information Centre</li> <li>Police Station</li> <li>Post Office</li> <li>Toilet</li> <li>Toilet (Disabled facilities)</li> <li>Shop Mobility</li> <li>University</li> <li>Leisure Centre</li> <li>Council House</li> <li>Library</li> <li>Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Car Park (Long Stay)</li> <li>2 Car Park (Short Stay)</li> <li>3 Car Park (other)</li> <li>4 Car Park Entrance</li> <li>5 One Way Street</li> <li>6 Park &amp; Ride – set down / pick up point</li> <li>7 Park &amp; Ride North</li> <li>8 Park &amp; Ride South</li> <li>9 Bus Station &amp; Coach Park</li> <li>10 Train Station</li> <li>11 Coach – set down point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Train Station</li> <li>2 Ellen Terry</li> </ul>
				<b>Key Routes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train Station To Ellen Terry</li> </ul>

Organisation:

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[www.radicalopenaccess.disruptivemedia.org.uk](http://www.radicalopenaccess.disruptivemedia.org.uk)

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