WORKING OUTSIDE OF "CONTAINED SPACES": OPEN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN THE TEACHING OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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Working Outside of "Contained Spaces":

Open Educational Practices in the Teaching of Anthropology

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To my friends and family for their unwavering support,
the faculty who believed in this project
the academics who believe in the possibility of this work,
and all the students for their willingness to work openly.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the incorporation of open educational practices into the teaching of Anthropology at a medium-sized, Canadian postsecondary institution. By taking a research-creation approach, I examine the process of co-designing an Open Educational Resource with faculty members and students. I also reflect on the implementation of non-disposable assignments to encourage students to engage with scholarly knowledge production, and how this impacts their relationship with knowledge in postsecondary education. Through this process of co-inquiry with both faculty and students, I examine how three concerns of accessibility in postsecondary education can be addressed using open educational practices. Throughout this thesis, I reflect on the challenges and successes of these practices and provide insight to interested practitioners on how open educational practices can be integrated into their own teaching.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OER	Open Educational Resource
NDA	Non-disposable assignment
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
TA	Teaching Assistant

LIST OF PORTFOLIO ITEM LINKS

An Open Introduction to Anthropology at the University of Lethbridge	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/
Medical Anthropology Chapter	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/chapter/medical-anthropology/
Find the Learning Objectives Assignment Example	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/chapter/language/
Find an Anthropologist Assignment Example	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/chapter/introduction-to-anthropology/
Black Anthropology Chapter	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/chapter/321/
Digital Anthropology Chapter	https://openeducationalberta.ca/anth/chapter/digital-anthropology/

CHAPTER 1: DEFINING OPEN IN THE TEACHING OF ANTHROPOLOGY

1.1 Why Won't We Make the Familiar Strange? Research on the Teaching of Anthropology

"Anthropology is…rendered a transforming discipline with consequences for its practitioners (staff as well as students) which are expected to go beyond mere accumulation of knowledge; they spill over into questions about self, perception, identity, consciousness and personhood."

- Simon Coleman and Bob Simpson, *Unintended Consequences? Anthropology, pedagogy and personhood* (1999, p. 6).

Since its development as a discipline, anthropology has been interested in the process of teaching and learning. Anthropology's focus on culture – in particular, the way it is learned and conveyed to others – makes education a natural area of disciplinary research (Pelissier 1991; Levinson 1999). Teaching and learning are in fact quite critical to our fundamental ethnographic method – in the study of cultural phenomena, we rely heavily on our relationships with our interlocutors during our fieldwork. Our fieldwork is made possible by their willingness to enter a learning partnership with us, arguably making our interlocutors our most important teachers. However, while significant work has been done to acknowledge the role of our interlocutors in our own learning, very rarely does the discipline acknowledge our own role in teaching. While anthropologists have examined an array of educational topics, attention towards higher education is recent (Coleman & Simpson 1999; Higgins 1985; Mazur-Stommen 2006; Shumar 2004). Even less attention is given to the specific pedagogical approaches in the teaching of anthropology in postsecondary classrooms and their potential impacts on students (Mazur-Stommen 2006). Despite many anthropologists employed at postsecondary institutions spending significant time

teaching in classrooms, the discipline has appeared disinterested in applying the disciplinary motto of 'making the familiar strange' to the very institutions we are trained in and employed by.

Reluctance to expand research beyond K-12 schooling into higher education is not unique to anthropology; the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) developed in the 1990's as a multidisciplinary effort to reconcile the divide between teaching and research that was seen at most institutions (Chick n.d.). However, anthropologists who have engaged in research within postsecondary institutions have speculated on reasons unique to the discipline. Comitas and Dolgin (1978) argued the limited research was the result of echoes of the early disciplinary struggles to establish itself as a scientific discipline. Postsecondary institutions often do not emphasize or support anthropology in the same way they do our sister social science disciplines, and so anthropologists have dismissed higher education as an area of study in favour of other research topics that better suit disciplinary interests. Shumar and Mir (2011) speculated that this incongruity is a potential result of the roots of our ethnographic method; they reflect that "if the other is the self, then that sometimes means that anthropology as a field does not know what to do with that voice" (p. 447). When discussing the limited disciplinary literature available on higher education, Susan Blum reached a similar conclusion:

> Analysis of our own situations may be threatening to anthropologists as teachers, employees and even parents…our fieldwork and funding often rely on sponsoring academic institutions and colleagues…once something familiar becomes strange, we must question it. Seeing the strangeness of schooling practices may force us to examine our own pedagogical tactics, which we largely emulate from our own apprenticeship in schools (2019, p. 644).

Blum expanded on Shumar and Mir's argument, reflecting that a lack of attention could be more than just its commonality and the discomfort of turning the lens back on us as educators – teaching itself often becomes negligible in the heavy workloads of faculty embedded in institutions that emphasize the production of scholarly knowledge. With higher education positioned as an area of scholarly inquiry for a small handful of specialists in the discipline, anthropologists interested in examining our pedagogical practices often find more success in circulating their work to other disciplines (Blum 2019; Shumar & Mir 2011).

And yet, despite previous dismissal, our institutions are sites rich with many of the research topics contemporary anthropologists are concerned with. Postsecondary education has become increasingly more available to an incredibly diverse student and faculty population since its early beginnings; despite this, many of our institutions are still firmly grounded in their Eurocentric roots that can make them unfamiliar and even inhospitable to their marginalized students and educators (Shumar & Mir 2011). Higher education is also becoming increasingly commodified, threatening this broadening of access as neoliberalism continues to overtake the notion of higher education as a public good. Wesley Shumar (2004) argued that anthropologists should turn their attention to postsecondary institutions in response to Laura Nader's (1972) assertion to "study up", contending that:

> It is imperative that we turn our critical lens on the very institutions where many of us work and see that the forces of globalism are not only operating directly on the institutions we inhabit, they are transforming the way we produce knowledge and are infiltrating our very consciousness (p. 37).

Anthropology's place in academia itself is experiencing its own crisis alongside this; many postsecondary institutions are reducing or eliminating anthropology departments (Haldane,

Ullinger & Giblin 2022; Loker & Wolf 2022; Watson 2019). Unsupported departments coupled with persistent marketing of anthropology as a major to disregard, with low salary and high unemployment rates (Goudreau 2012), further deter students from pursuing anthropology as a major. Students are faced with mounting tuition costs and living expenses and the pressure to select majors that will provide the closest guarantee for employment postgraduation. They often enter postsecondary education hyper-focused on professional development and employability rather than inquiry driven by curiosity, expanding world views, and self-improvement (Kaul 2022). If students encounter anthropology at all in postsecondary, it is often because of liberal education breadth requirements, and most will not continue on to be majors (Loker & Wolf 2022). However, the way that we teach, particularly in our introductory classrooms, is often in conflict with the discipline's understanding of learning, in which individuals often learn more effectively by participating and having space for both curiosity and the mistakes that come along with it (Blum 2021). Large class sizes, lack of teaching support, and students who are primarily interested in satisfying their liberal education requirements so that they can focus on their major can often suffocate desire for innovation in teaching (Kissel & Blum 2021). Because of this, and the current state of academia, many anthropologists are arguing that it is more important than ever to pay attention to our pedagogy, because "our jobs are not simply to reach the 10% of students who have actively chosen to be in the introductory course, but also to demonstrate to the rest of the class that anthropology is something that can be meaningful for their own college – and personal – goals" (Kissel & Blum 2021, p. 2).

My own research began as a response to such assertions. As an undergraduate during the global lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I experienced a rather unique and unexpected transitionary period during the last year and a half of my degree in which the

delivery method of my education changed quite radically. As a student who had almost entirely only experienced in-person learning, the emergency transition to the remote delivery model in Canada in March 2020 came with the many of the same challenges most students and faculty experienced. Along with the educational challenges came – like for many students, faculty, and their loved ones – permanent health complications that would fundamentally alter my relationship with education.

As lockdown protocols and health concerns forced shifts in my living situation, my capacity for work, and my ability to maintain relationships with others, I suddenly found myself primarily housebound in the basement of my childhood home – a position that many students shared. This coincidentally overlapped with my recent decision to add anthropology as a second major to my undergraduate degree. While I had always been interested in learning, I was a somewhat apathetic student for the first few years of postsecondary education; these life changes, alongside my newly discovered love of anthropology, repositioned my education to be quite central in my life. I found myself far more passionate about my learning after years of a tepid relationship with my first major and significantly engaged with my courses because they were a source of connection with the peers I had been forced to relocate away from.

I was not unique in my sudden preoccupation with education; concerns about long term consequences of the closing of in-person schools and the transition to remote delivery increased the longer we remained in lockdown. Most of my peers lamented the disruption in their own postsecondary education and struggled to adjust to the unfamiliar learning environment while isolated from their peers, family, and friends; many of the faculty I encountered were honest with their students about their own difficulties transitioning their teaching to online delivery. Concerns about potential ‘learning loss’ in elementary and secondary students became frequent

in our news cycles: inhibited social development (Ewing 2020), delayed or even complete loss in areas such as reading literacy and comprehension (Johnson 2021) or mathematics (Chen et. al 2021), and the steady decrease in grades and academic achievement witnessed as students struggled to connect with their teachers and peers and learn new academic habits within their own homes (Alphonso 2021) all became areas of concern.

While marginalized students were found to be at an even higher risk of suffering the negative consequences of the remote delivery method (Ewing 2020), many who cited the disadvantages that marginalized students were facing – and were beginning to impact even advantaged students the longer we remained in lockdown – as a reason to return to 'normal' often failed to take into account the many complexities that accompanied the idea of returning to in-person learning. While a lack of access to the technology required by remote learning and limited support and/or resources within their homes and communities further increased the gap between marginalized students and their counterparts, these students and their families were often at a higher risk of being impacted by COVID-19 in some way, making the return to in-person activities disproportionately more dangerous (Kantamneni 2020).

We frequently circled back to these complexities in my anthropology classes. I also often found myself pulling from my anthropological theory as I saw these repeated fears around learning loss. How could we properly define such loss in a time when other losses seemed so much greater? Who was determining which loss of knowledge was worth lamenting? Should we have been focused as a society on the losses of knowledge witnessed in formal education, or the other losses students were simultaneously experiencing (Thompson 2021)? Receiving a mediocre grade on a paper because I was struggling to keep up with my assigned readings while working from home felt fairly inconsequential in comparison to the changes in my own health, the surges

in COVID-19 related deaths, the rise in Anti-Asian racism (Haynes 2020), or the protests sparked by the death of George Floyd, police brutality towards people of colour, and the significantly higher rate of negative pandemic consequences on ethnic minorities (Voytko 2020). I found myself constantly drawing on my anthropological training to make sense of the dramatic shifts I was experiencing both in my personal life and at a global level.

Coleman and Simpson (1999) addressed the significant gap in anthropological literature on how students utilize anthropological knowledge. While they had different research interests – Coleman's research expertise is on new religious movements, while Simpson examined shifts in kinship and family due to new reproductive technologies – both recognized through their interaction with students in their classrooms that anthropology as a discipline had not attended to how "knowledge is appropriated by students within and beyond the classroom" (1999, p. 3). Drawing on anecdotal experiences in their own teaching, they concluded that students typically utilized anthropological knowledge in three ways:

1. Anthropology as an instrument – students engaged minimally with anthropological knowledge within their courses solely for the purpose of eventually obtaining a degree
2. Anthropology as spiritual bricolage – students use anthropological knowledge from their courses to better develop and strengthen their own personal beliefs and worldviews, particularly if they are considered culturally unconventional
3. Anthropology as a bridge to personal development – students find both liberation and agency through the discovery of new experiences, worldviews, and ideas by engaging with anthropological knowledge

I can attest that I was definitely the third type of student during my undergraduate degree. Anthropology profoundly changed how I engaged with the world around me. It became a critical component of my identity the longer I was immersed in it – I had received what one of my mentors lovingly referred to as the 'anthropological curse': my way of thinking about the world had been irrevocably transformed, for better or for worse. This was also not unique to me; little literature exists on student experiences with anthropology, but what can be found reflects Coleman and Simpson's anecdotal evidence about the positive personal and intellectual growth because of anthropology's theoretical framework and its reflexive nature (Kitchin et al. 2023). What was perhaps unique to me was my exposure to SoTL research through my involvement in a student co-inquiry project in an introductory anthropology course as an undergraduate tutor. Like the anthropologists interested in higher education before me, I found myself expanding beyond just anthropological theory to better understand the intricacies of the educational experiences around me – of my own, of my peers, and of the students I was tasked with overseeing as a peer tutor.

Through student co-inquiry (and its branches throughout SoTL research), I stumbled across an expanding area of research about open educational practices in postsecondary education (Al Abri & Dabbagh 2019; Azzam et al. 2017; Belli et al. 2019; Bennet & Watson 2006; Cronin & Maclaren 2018; DeRosa & Jhangiani 2017). Open pedagogy has been defined in many ways across the literature, but at its core, is a pedagogical approach that decentres the educator as the sole holder of expert knowledge and encourages students to take on the role of knowledge producer themselves (Baran & AlZoubi 2019; DeRosa & Robinson 2017; Hegarty 2015). Literature demonstrates that students experience a fundamental shift from knowledge consumer to knowledge producer when they are provided agency over their work and the process

of knowledge production in postsecondary institutions is opened beyond traditional experts. (DeRosa 2016; Hoffman et al. 2020; Katz & Van Allen 2020). This literature was particularly captivating to me as I experienced this specific transition from passive knowledge consumer to knowledge producer through my position as an undergraduate tutor. Not only was I fascinated by the possibilities of the positive shifts in teaching practices – I was specifically fascinated by the possibilities in anthropology in the wake of Ryan Cecil Jobson's 2020 essay "The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn", in which Jobson calls for practitioners to recognize that anthropology as a discipline needs to not only recognize our place in continued systematic harm in our educational institutions, but move beyond simple acknowledgement to action.

The compounding of crises can be daunting, if not entirely disheartening; however, in 2023, we are also at another period of transition as COVID-19 mitigations lapse and we return to a primarily in-person education once again. During the period of remote learning in the height of the pandemic, I was surrounded by undergraduate peers who were conducting fascinating and important local research who confided that they feared their work would never 'matter' because it was completed at the undergraduate level. I remember sharing similar trepidation; I was preoccupied with both the knowledge of erasure of marginalized scholars from our disciplinary canon from a recent course. Jobson's essay only further highlighted the institutional structures that discouraged the production of knowledge from marginalized scholars that the discipline continued to be complicit in. Yet I was inspired as I watched my peers continue to be committed to their research despite resignation that it would quickly be forgotten as I conducted my own review of literature on open educational practices, and wondered if there was a way to feel as if our student work was meaningful. There had to be a way to make our work 'matter' despite our position as junior scholars.

In response to Jobson's essay, Leniqueca A. Welcome acknowledges the momentous amount of work ahead of us both as educators and anthropologists, while also recognizing the hopeful labor of those already embedded within this practice.

> …the world is on fire, anthropology as a discipline tethered to whiteness is on fire, and while some within the discipline throw buckets of water on the flames with futility, and some sit idly by yet are choking on the smoke, others are already involved in building reciprocal relations of learning and pedagogy rooted in care that will persist when the ash and rubble are cleared (Welcome 2020, para. 7).

I situate my own fieldwork in a similar space: with recognition of the rebuilding that can come from burning. Though the preceding years have been extremely challenging, and the future ahead often feels dismal at best, I see a unique opportunity to shift our pedagogical practices to better support the students entering our postsecondary institutions, and our anthropology classrooms through the incorporation of open educational practices Through collaboration with faculty, staff, and students, there are many opportunities to recognize the inherent value of student work and contributions in our institutions.

Inspired by my peers, students, and faculty committed to best teaching practices, and drawing on the hope from anthropologists committed to anti-colonial, abolitionist and accessibility work in our institutions, my research centers on the incorporation of open educational practices into the teaching of anthropology. This was done both through the building of an open educational resource (OER) for the Department of Anthropology at the University of Lethbridge in collaboration with faculty and students and the incorporation of non-disposable assignments into 5 different anthropology courses. Through my research, I intended to explore the viability of open educational practices in teaching for faculty, the impact of these practices on

students, and how engaging students as co-inquirers in educational research is fundamental in developing our understanding of best teaching practices in postsecondary institutions.

1.2 Why Open?

Before moving into relevant literature, I first want to establish my specific researcher positionality. Fieldwork is often a deeply personal experience, and it is especially important that I explore some of the aspects of my own identity that led to the development of my research. Some of this has already been discussed above, but I take the time to discuss it further here because these aspects profoundly shaped my research interests, questions, and approaches.

While not unique, but certainly still not the norm in anthropology, my research was done at 'home': at the university I completed my undergraduate degree at, where I was currently enrolled as a graduate student, and in my home department of Anthropology. Doing my fieldwork within a department I was familiar with and whose faculty were familiar with me, deeply impacted my research. In many ways, it opened a plethora of opportunities with my faculty collaborators. I spent a fraction of the time most anthropologists do building the necessary rapport with the faculty members I worked with; others knew me well from my years as an undergraduate student, and provided further connections and recommendations for potential faculty collaborators. Locating faculty who were willing to allow me to do my fieldwork within their classrooms because of this familiarity was much easier than I anticipate it would have been had I entered a new university as an unknown graduate student. This provided more opportunities for co-inquiry with faculty.

It also automatically established me in a different light to students within the classrooms. To new students, I was introduced to them as teaching assistant who had been at the university for a substantial period of time between both degrees, and therefore someone with a significant

amount of knowledge about the courses, faculty instructors, and university itself. Students often approached me with questions about the department based on my experiences, or for advice on navigation of the university system alongside support for in-class concepts. In other cases, I had pre-established connections with some of the students in the senior-level courses because of shared time in other undergraduate courses, meaning that I was a familiar face when I entered the classroom as a researcher. This often created more willingness on their part around my research, as we had already developed rapport with each other. Conducting my research at my home university also impacted how *I* viewed with and interacted with the students; I had once been them, in older iterations of the very same classes, sometimes even taught by the same faculty member, so there was very rarely a significant sense of distance between us. They were not just my interlocutors or student co-creators – they were also my peers. While I was a researcher, I was first and foremost a student.

Often, I found myself wearing many 'hats', and had to rapidly switch between them – I was a student, a researcher, a teaching assistant (TA), and a collaborator (with both faculty and students) at any given time of day, and often within the same space. As a graduate student, I occupied a unique liminal space throughout my research. As a new scholar, I still very much had my training wheels on to faculty with far more training and experience than I. In contrast, undergraduate students often regarded me as higher up on the academic ladder, as if the transition between undergraduate in the spring to graduate student that fall had somehow magically bestowed me with a breadth of knowledge they didn't possess – all while I was watching undergraduates in the department produce far more insightful, thoughtful, and impactful research than I ever had. This 'switching' of roles shaped how I approached co-inquiry – the way I approached it with my graduate supervisor differed from other faculty members

within the department, just as it differed with undergraduate students I had personal connections with compared to new students as their TA. While this was sometimes challenging – for example, balancing my responsibilities as a researcher in the same classroom where I was a TA, which sometimes could lead to moments of conflict between the two roles that I had to mediate – it also provided me a unique perspective on the research. It allowed me to explore different, often intersecting, levels of co-inquiry that I would not have been able to experience without this liminality.

There were other aspects of my personal identity that also shaped a significant component of my research. As a queer and disabled student, I often wished to see more representation of scholars who were 'like me' in my courses. Postsecondary education's history with delegitimizing the work of marginalized scholars is hardly a secret; in 1998, Córdova asserted that "the University as an institution is a key arena where 'legitimate' knowledge is established...Indeed, the process of determining what is 'legitimate knowledge' and for what purpose that knowledge should be produced is a political debate that rages in the University" (p. 18). Building on Córdova's work, Bernal and Villalpando argued that, by favouring Eurocentric epistemologies and subsequently delegitimizing all others, postsecondary institutions had created barriers to scholars of colour by creating an "apartheid of knowledge" (2002, p. 177) within academia. Disabled and queer scholars often grapple with "'coming out' and the complex issue of representation…[as] a double-edged sword" (Gilberg 2020, p. 13), in which they must negotiate the personal impacts of asserting their identity for representation and the possible negative consequences of doing so (Brown & Leigh 2018; Davies & Neustifter 2023). This is by no means limited to scholars; in a recent study, Michalski, Cunningham and Henry (2017) urged

that postsecondary institutions needed to do more than just increase physical space for higher rates of student enrollment, reflecting that:

> the main narrative of higher education in Canada largely parallels the one currently being written in the United States (and elsewhere): that the students populating institutions of higher learning are more diverse than ever, even though some groups continue to be disadvantaged, struggle with equal access, and must confront a host of challenges to have success (p. 81).

These questions of 'access' to knowledge were present in the early stages of my research for numerous reasons. I was also acutely aware of the 'old dead white guy' problem that plagued many postsecondary disciplines, including anthropology – the tendency for white, cis male scholars to be seen as key figures in disciplinary canon, often at the expense of other scholars of various identities. I grappled often with my identity as disabled and queer scholar throughout the entirety of my research. Admitting to my disability felt like admitting to a personal failure, a reason why my colleagues should pity me, and why students shouldn't take me seriously. Disclosing my queerness felt trepidatious, and, in the current political climate of southern Alberta at the time of writing, outright dangerous. Yet, I acutely remembered desperately wishing to see more work by queer and disabled scholars during my undergraduate degree, desperate to see these facets of my identity reflected in my courses and assigned readings. 'Coming out' indeed felt like a double-edged sword, so focusing my efforts on knowledge access felt like an appropriate way to find the representation for students while providing the breathing room I needed to find comfort and confidence in my own identity. These personal aspects of my identity that had influenced my own undergraduate experience in postsecondary, coupled with

my connection to my very personal connection with my field site, led me to open educational practices and co-inquiry as the anchors of my research.

1.3 Literature Review

"Fifty Shades of Open": Defining 'Open'

In their attempt to understand the use of the term 'open' in academic literature, Pomerantz and Peek determined that there are quite literally "fifty shades of open" (2016). Open learning, open educational practices, open educational resources, open pedagogy, open source — these are just a few of the most popular uses of open terminology in the last decade. This usage reflects a growing interest in these ideas in education, particularly in postsecondary institutions in the Global North (Bozkurt, Koseeoglu & Singh 2019). However, while the explosion of openness in academic literature seems fairly recent, the use of the term 'open' to refer to a shared resource is in fact centuries old. Use of the word 'open' to refer to unenclosed, common spaces that everyone can access began to emerge in the fifteenth century (Pomerantz & Peek 2016). Its roots in academia began in the 1980's, when increased access to rapidly developing technology inspired the 'free software movement', in which programmers were increasingly advocating for freedom in development and use of the technology in their personal lives rather than being at the mercy of the original developers (Free Software Foundation n.d.). Rather than being about the reduction of price, programmers instead called for what they called the "four essential freedoms" (Free Software Foundation n.d.) of software, which would allow them to modify and distribute the software after purchase. The term 'open source' was coined by Bruce Perens and Eric Raymond in 1998 to shift away from the use of the term 'free' to avoid confusion around cost to access (Pomerantz & Peek 2016). This both officially introduced the use of the term 'open' around software and resources and established the tradition of utilizing available technology in the name of openness.

The Free Software Movement was not the only reaction to what many viewed as too restrictive copyright laws. While they argued that one should have the freedom to use their purchased resources as they saw fit, there was an increasing recognition of and reaction to the idea that traditional copyright laws often reproduced structures of power around knowledge, preventing many from being able to access it at all (Goss 2007). The world was becoming increasingly digitalized and traditional copyright laws left many grey areas in this new technological era (Goss 2007). Whether the resource was privately or publicly owned, this new era of dissemination meant that copyright could not be monitored and enforced as it once was (Pomerantz & Peek 2016).

The Creative Commons[1], founded in 2001, is another example of the initiatives that developed in response to this. Rooted in the idea of the commons, open took on a new meaning: rather than being strictly about freedom after purchase, this was instead an issue of rights once content was released. Rather than resisting and fearing the loss of control, open licenses encouraged creators to embrace it while retaining some rights to their content, allowing the circulation of knowledge to develop alongside technology. The Creative Commons licenses exploded in popularity not long after their release, particularly because they expanded the ability to license any material or resource openly rather than being limited to just software. They also provided a globally understood way to license digital materials. While the approach differed, both uses of open are ultimately about the same thing: access. Without access to the original

[1] For more information on the history of the Creative Commons, see https://web.archive.org/web/20111007165253/http://creativecommons.org/about/history.

content, there is no need for freedom to modify, and no need to establish rights for users around modification[2].

This concern of access is what led to the next use of open, and its true establishment in academic spaces: Open Access. The Budapest Open Initiative provided the first definition for Open Access in 2002, citing it as any academic literature that has

> …free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles…. without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself (para. 3).

This definition followed on the heels of the beginning of open source and yielded collaboratively produced sources of knowledge such as Wikipedia. Launched in 2001 as a way for authors to engage in peer review processes before publishing openly licensed articles, Wikipedia has grown to become arguably the best-known source of openly licensed knowledge. Subsequent Open Access initiatives emphasized this idea that available technology should be utilized to increase public access to scientific knowledge. Specifically, it focused on reducing two major barriers of access: the prices of purchase and permission from the author to access and retain a copy (Pomerantz & Peek 2016). The use of 'open' in these movements primarily referred to traditional academic publications such as journal articles or scholarly books. Advocates of Open Access argued that communication around scientific knowledge would improve if it was readily available online and free of charge (Suber 2012; Abadal 2013).

[2] The ability to modify under Creative Commons license is specific to which version of the license is applied. For more information, see https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/cclicenses/.

The Open Access initiatives, along with the previous examples, further exemplify the confusion and divide around openness in the academic community. Is openness about freedom? Distribution? Access? If so, how do we define these ideas – is it about the freedom of the user or the rights of the creator? Are we truly enacting openness if others with higher financial resources can pay to have access before others? How do we factor in knowledge co-creation into this, particularly when we consider open's roots in collaborative software development? The emergence of Open Access initiatives, it became clear that increasing access, while a step in the right direction, was not enough. Rapidly developing technology is continuously shifting the landscape of postsecondary education; these are no longer just questions of who can access knowledge, but how we can utilize technology to increase collaboration in its creation and dissemination.

Opening Knowledge Dissemination: Open Educational Resources

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are any educational resources that are openly licensed, usually using a Creative Commons license (Hoffman et al. 2020). While OERs typically take the form of digital textbooks, they can also include other resources such as videos, podcasts, journal articles, presentation material, course outlines/syllabi, course lectures, and supplementary material such as quiz banks, assignment guidelines or workbooks (Moist n.d.). Known for their accessibility and their adaptability, OERs allow anyone to participate in what David Wiley (2021), the founder of the Open Content Project[3] and a key figure in the development of open educational practices in academia, termed the 5R activities:

[3] The Open Content Project published the Open Content License, which was one of the first copyright licenses available to the public intended for documents rather than software. The Open Content Project was closed in 2003. For more information, see https://opencontent.org/blog/archives/42.

1. “Retain - make, own, and control a copy of the resource (e.g., download and keep your own copy)
2. Revise - edit, adapt, and modify your copy of the resource (e.g., translate into another language)
3. Remix - combine your original or revised copy of the resource with other existing material to create something new (e.g., make a mashup)
4. Reuse - use your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource publicly (e.g., on a website, in a presentation, in a class)
5. Redistribute - share copies of your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource with others (e.g., post a copy online or give one to a friend)”

The ability to participate in the 5R activities greatly expands what is possible with educational resources, both in terms of who can access them and who can produce them, as these are often typically restricted to the author and/or copyright holder (Pomerantz & Peek 2016). Copyright laws also often vary between countries and the circulation of digital materials is even further muddled, which makes the sharing or revising of traditionally copyrighted materials complicated and confusing (Todorova et al. 2017; Wahid & Abdul Ghani Azmi 2020). While open licenses can vary in the extend of permitted uses, they are primarily standardized globally through initiatives such as Creative Commons and greatly increase access to sharing and creation of materials (Amiel & Soraes 2019).

Individuals in higher education have a variety of motivations behind involvement in the use and creation of OERs, such as ethical or social justice reasons, increasing the rate of publishing, or increasing access to academic knowledge for those within and outside of postsecondary institutions (Jackson & Anderson 2014). Many educators become interested in OERs because they are free to access, which can greatly reduce increasingly egregious textbook costs for students (Hilton et al., 2014; Ikahihifo et al., 2017). However, the more one engages

with OERs, the more apparent it becomes that "openness may also afford new modes and approaches to teaching and learning" (Paskevicius & Irvine 2019, p. 1). Implementing OERs into courses often causes educators to reconsider existing assignment structures, which can lead to a shift in pedagogy (Katz & Van Allen 2020; Paskevicius & Irvine 2019; DeRosa & Robinson 2017).

How Openly Do We Allow Students to Work?: Open Pedagogy vs. Open Educational Practices

Like the term "open" it draws from, a shared definition within the literature of open pedagogy is ambiguous at best, and nearly impossible at worst. Literature reviews on open pedagogy have demonstrated that its definition is just as flexible and adaptable as the educational resources it frequently utilizes (Clinton-Lissel 2021). OERs and the use of open licensing are generally considered critical to this pedagogical approach (Conole 2010), meaning that students must be involved in the ongoing creation of openly licensed knowledge. It was defined in 2013 in a blog post by David Wiley as "only possible in the context of the free access and 4R permissions characteristic of open educational resources" (para. 18; this was later expanded to 5R permissions to include "retain"). However, others began to disagree the requirement of open licensing of student work; not all students were able to work openly, whether it was because of comfort or safety (Orozco 2020). Others raised concerns about the ethics of requiring students to work openly when they may feel pressured to do so to complete their courses or may not understand the full implications of the licensing choices they are making (Seraphin et al. 2019; Al Abri & Dabbagh 2019). Other educators wanted to utilize open pedagogy's more student-centered approach and encourage collaborative and open circulation of knowledge but did not necessarily require students to engage with open licensing because of these concerns (Hegarty

2015). Others further argued that a student-centered pedagogy that emphasized knowledge dissemination was only possible *because* of open licensing, because "knowledge consumption and knowledge creation are not separate but parallel processes, as knowledge is co-constructed, contextualized, cumulative, iterative and recursive**"** (DeRosa & Jhangiani 2017, p. 13). This only further muddled understandings of open pedagogy, and eventually led to a divide between open educational practices (Cronin & MacLauren 2018) and a more precise OER-enabled pedagogy, as defined by Wiley & Hinton in 2018.

Open educational practices has its roots in the late 1990's to early 2000's struggle to conceptualize openness. In its early stages, open educational practices was defined as educational practices that "involve students in active, constructive engagement with content, tools and services in the learning process, and promote learners' self-management, creativity and working in teams" (Geser 2007, p. 37). Rooted in constructivist pedagogy, open educational practices are learner-focused, emphasize collaboration, and encourage the building of skills and the development of knowledge through creation (Paskevicius & Irvine 2019). This approach, also influenced by feminist pedagogy, destabilizes the traditional hierarchy of the educator as the holder of expert knowledge and positions students as important sources of knowledge who are capable of quality creation and dissemination (Koseoglu & Bozkurt 2018). This is not to say that open educational practices do not utilize OERs; they often, in fact, go hand-in-hand, with practitioners recognizing that openly licensed content and technological development have provided the opportunity to develop new pedagogical approaches. In fact, when working to define open educational practices, many recognize that attempts to separate the movement to incorporate openness in educational practices from the use and creation of OERs is often impossible, as they are deeply intertwined (Hegarty 2015). The most important thing to notice

with the use of open educational practices is its flexibility; the term is often in flux and constantly being adapted to incorporate new ideas of what it means to practice openness in education. Educators are often more interested in innovation, creativity, knowledge accessibility, and empowering learners rather than directly focused on the generation of OERs (Paskevicius & Irvine 2019). While OERs are often a critical component of this, open educational practices ultimately "seek to reconfigure traditional learning topologies from top-down knowledge transfers to a collaborative praxis which positions students as central participants in the knowledge sharing process" (Croft & Brown 2020, p. 157). Overlapping understandings of open educational practices and open pedagogy demonstrates how difficult it is to pin down definitions of these practices.

OER-enabled pedagogy, on the other hand, is a far more rigid definition. Generated in response to the discourse of what it means to practice open pedagogy, Wiley and Hinton (2018) define it as "a set of teaching and learning practices that are only possible or practical in terms of the 5R's" (p. 135). It is a pedagogical approach that relies entirely on what students learn through engaging with and creating OERs themselves, often through the creation of what Wiley termed renewable assignments. These assignments have value beyond the creator's learning, are made public, and are openly licensed for future iterations (2013). Wiley argued that terms such as open pedagogy and OER have come to be understood in so many ways that coming to a consensus is impossible, but that it was important to pay attention to a fundamental idea in understanding the place of OERs in pedagogy: the role of copyright (2021). He reasoned that because humans learn by participating, and copyright can restrict both what we are permitted to participate in – and subsequently learn – it is only through using open licensing that open pedagogy is possible. Because of this, engaging with and creating openly licensed material was the driving force

behind opening our educational practices, meaning OERs are a required factor. OER-enabled pedagogy requires the specific context of students and educators engaging in the 5R activities and how they can transform our teaching and learning (Wiley 2021).

Despite these two separate approaches, both open educational practices and OER-enabled pedagogy have one critical commonality: they are both "a method for students to be knowledge creators rather than only knowledge consumers" (Clinton-Lissel 2021, p. 256)

Renewable or Non-Disposable? Finding Value in Student Assignments

Like open pedagogy, non-disposable assignments (NDAs) have a variety of definitions. One point of contention is the place of open licensing. Renewable assignments, as termed by Wiley, are assignments completed by students that extend beyond their own learning by being made publicly available (Wiley & Hilton 2018). The critical component of renewable assignments is that they are openly licensed, typically through a CC license, so that the wider public may also access and learn from the student's completed work.

Renewable assignments contrast with traditional, or what are often called 'disposable' assignments – named for their 'throwaway' nature. Despite significant time spent by students creating these assignments and educators grading them, they are almost always discarded once the semester ends (Wiley & Hilton 2018). These assignments are solitary and only shared between student and educator for the sole purpose of evaluation, effectively closing off the sharing of any knowledge that is produced in its completion with outside parties (Wiley et al. 2017). Because of their closed nature, the knowledge required to complete it is often discarded alongside the assignment. Bennett and Watson (2006) determined that

> these projects are discarded at the end of the semester because they create little or no real world value…[they] are produced in a closed loop where no regard is given to what came before or what will come after (p. 288).

For the purpose of my research, I prefer Seraphin et al.'s (2019) conception of non-disposable assignments: any assignment within the classroom that both promotes student learning according to the course learning outcomes and "provides impact or value outside of the traditional student-teacher dyad" (p. 85). NDAs encourage engagement with knowledge that "extend[s] beyond the end of an academic semester" (Bennett & Watson 2006, p. 288), are often collaborative, and are designed to be openly shared, allowing knowledge to circulate amongst students, faculty, and communities without the requirement of an open license (Weth & Williams 2021; McGeary, Ganeshan & Guder 2020; Hutton, Di Valentino & Musgrave 2020). Rather than working within explicit boundaries, NDAs can be "defined by their openness and, accordingly, their ability to reach others, even beyond classroom boundaries" (Seraphin et al. 2019, p. 84). These assignments have been found to foster critical engagement with course content (Al Abri & Dabbagh 2019), increase student motivation (Hutton, Di Valentino & Musgrave 2020), improve student capacity for independently driven productivity (Seraphin & Stock 2020), and increase the circulation of knowledge both inside and outside of postsecondary institutions (Azzam et al. 2017). Students are provided the opportunity to engage in several important academic activities such as navigating critical research and source examination, understanding copyright, developing digital literacy, peer reviewing, and making decisions around the publishing of their work that encourages their growth as scholars (McGeary, Ganeshan, & Guder 2020). They also foster the development of skills that are critical to career success beyond academia, such as creativity, self-efficacy, technological literacy, and the ability to engage effectively in collaborative work

(Seraphin et al. 2019). Bennett and Watson also argue that, unlike traditional assignments, NDAs better prepare students for the workforce, where they will often be collaborating in teams on inherited, iterative projects rather than completing independent work on projects completely untouched by others (2006).

While NDAs can take the form of written assignments, they allow space for creating knowledge in other modalities, providing students with agency over how they both create and disseminate their knowledge. Postsecondary institutions still view written text as the most legitimate form of disseminating knowledge, which favours Eurocentric understandings of what counts as knowledge (Chin 2017). This is reflected in the predominance of written tests and papers in postsecondary institutions. Videos, performances, podcasts, photography, and art creation are all valid and encouraged assignment structures in NDAs. Student agency in assignment formats allows them to explore their own passions and interests, cultural backgrounds, and social contexts, which has produced a demonstrably greater sense of ownership of and motivation around their work (Paskevicius & Irvine 2019). Opening the frameworks of assignments "both attends to the diverse ways of knowing the human experience and advances an expanding array of tools, practices, and concepts to share these understandings" (Westmoreland 2022, p. 174).

Learning through Partnership: Students as Partners in Educational Research

Open educational practices rely on relationality – between educators and students and between students themselves. However, emphasis on relationships is not unique to open educational practices. Engaging students as partners in teaching and learning has been an emerging trend in the SoTL literature for the past three decades, gaining increasing international traction in the mid-2010's (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2014; Holen et al. 2021; Mercer-

Mapstone et al. 2017; Weller et al. 2013). Like open educational practices, students as partners in SoTL is a process-driven pedagogy or research methodology in which the traditional roles of a student as a passive knowledge receiver and the educator as the one to transmit knowledge to students are altered (Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017). This is distinguished from increasing student engagement with specific educational activities by a partnership in which "staff and students [are] learning and working together to foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement…It is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome in itself" (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2014, p. 7). This difference is important to note because SoTL research that emphasizes only increasing student engagement often relies on measures of improved learning outcomes determined by the educators rather than direct consultation with students to collaborate towards the development of education (Holen et al. 2021; Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017; Matthews 2016).

Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten (2014), three prominent SoTL scholars that explore the incorporation of students in SoTL research, outline three principles that are critical to the foundation of student-educator partnerships:

1. Respect – essential to the development of any partnership is mutual respect between parties. Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten argue that a partnership cannot fully form without respect, as it is fundamental to communication, trust, and engagement.
2. Reciprocity – reciprocity shapes the interactions within a partnership through equity; this is especially important for the exchanging of perspectives and experiences between students and educators about teaching and learning.
3. Responsibility – student-educator partnerships fundamentally alter academic responsibilities for both parties. Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten contend that engaging

> in partnerships grant students "some responsibility for pedagogy and faculty…some responsibility for learning" (p. 5). This shift in responsibility also allows for produced research to become a more collaborative and communal product.

Incorporating students into partnerships for teaching and learning brings a unique perspective to research; as the recipients of pedagogical practices, students offer the most direct feedback about successes and failures of our teaching, providing key insight into where improvement is needed (Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felten 2014; Cook-Sather & Alter 2011; Felten et al. 2013; Kay, Dunne & Hutchinson 2010). Students also attend to different aspects of teaching and learning than educators, bringing a very different form of expertise to pedagogy that is easy to neglect in traditional teaching (Lubicz-Nawrocka 2018). These partnerships are also a way to redistribute the hierarchy of power within traditional classrooms, allowing for a better inclusion of diverse perspectives into pedagogical practices (Felten et al. 2013). As the landscape of postsecondary education continues to develop and shift rapidly, so do the demographics and needs of our students. It is critical as educators to consider this as we seek to develop best practices in teaching, and this cannot be properly accomplished without the inclusion of student perspectives.

1.4 Research Goals

'We Want Our Work to Matter': Opening the Teaching of Anthropology

As previously established, properly defining the best version of 'open' to bring into teaching is complex. This was perhaps the biggest challenge – and the biggest discovery – of my research. I quickly learned that open was defined by not just myself, my supervisor, the literature, or the faculty I partnered with – the students were a significant part of not only shaping my understanding of what constitutes 'open' in the classroom, but the emotional and intellectual labor that accompanies such a shift in pedagogical practices for those participating in the class. Despite being a student myself (and a recent graduate from my own undergraduate degree from

the same institution), the students provided a different level of insight into the classrooms I worked in. Like many anthropologists, I entered the field with a collection of presumptions, further complicated by conducting my fieldwork at home – in many of the same classrooms, courses and even alongside some of the professors I encountered in my undergraduate degree. However, I quickly learned that as the composition of the students changed, so did the structure and composition of the courses – and what I had defined as open for one did not necessarily fit the next. For the purpose of my research, open will be defined as any changes in faculty approach that took into account the perspective of students while positioning them as individuals capable of producing meaningful scholarly work. With an acknowledgement that there was no perfect fit for each classroom, or even each student within it, I still choose to use the term open because of the willingness of students to engage with me and my faculty partners provided far more insight into effective ways of broadening pedagogical approaches than relying on my assumptions. I use open both in acknowledgement of the literature and of the openness this research required from myself, faculty, and the students within our classrooms that many of us were unaccustomed to. My research would not have been possible without the willingness to be 'open' – for myself as a researcher in open communication with interlocutors, for faculty who were open and sometimes even vulnerable as they acknowledged and reflected on the very personal aspect of their teaching practices, and for students who were open-minded about shifting away from the traditional assignment structures they had become comfortable with. In her 1994 book *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, bell hooks reflects on the importance of acknowledging shifting classroom dynamics, asserting that:

> …any radical pedagogy must insist that everyone's presence is acknowledged…there must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences

> the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources. Used constructively they enhance the capacity of any class to create an open learning community (p. 8).

It is with hooks' idea of 'ongoing recognition' that I frame my research. The research began with a recognition of how something could be different and continued to morph and develop in response to the faculty and students I worked alongside. It is with this recognition that I have decided to divide my research into three separate case studies, covering three distinct approaches to open in teaching. All case studies will have accompanying documents to provide research context, relevant literature, and my own reflections and conclusions about the experience from the perspective of the researcher alongside appropriate portfolio items that have been carefully selected to best represent the findings of my research and provide insight to interested practitioners about the experience of integrating open educational practices into the teaching of anthropology.

1.5 Portfolio Structure

In addition to the introduction, this thesis is divided into three chapters, with accompanying portfolio items with each chapter. Below, I outline the structure of each chapter and the included portfolio items.

Chapter 2: OER Design and Co-Creation with Faculty

In this chapter, I address considerations and challenges that accompany incorporating open educational practices into teaching through the process of building an OER for the department. This chapter focuses on collaborating with faculty during the design of the OER, the role of students in co-design, and three different ways I considered accessibility during the design process. The goal of this chapter is to both inform and acknowledge the substantial undertaking OER creation can be while also demonstrating small, but significant ways students

can inform this process in order to address questions of access in postsecondary educational resources.

Portfolio items for this chapter include:

1. Medical Anthropology – original chapter written for the OER by Dr. Steve Ferzacca to introduce ANTH 1000 students to the subfield of medical anthropology

Chapter 3: Students as Co-Inquirers – Learning to be Open with Students

Here, I discuss the process of engaging with students through open educational practices. This chapter focuses heavily on the design and use of non-disposable assignments in five of the anthropology classrooms I conducted fieldwork in. In this chapter, I address the student experience of being involved in open educational practices, including three perceived shifts in student relationships with knowledge production.

Portfolio items for this chapter include:

1. Trace a Path Assignment Design and Student Example
2. Find an Anthropologist Assignment Design and Student Example
3. Find the Learning Objective Assignment Design and Student Examples

Chapter 4: Students as Knowledge Producers

In the final chapter, I discuss two significant projects in which students took on the role of knowledge producers. First, I explore the co-creation of an original chapter for the OER with an undergraduate student that addresses the one of the major concerns for diversity in anthropology: the erasure of Black anthropologists from the disciplinary canon. Second, I discuss the process of co-designing a second-year anthropology course with the intention of incorporating open educational practices. Student assignments were scaffolded to emphasize

skill development and support hands-on student experience with ethnographic fieldwork. Their assignments were then incorporated into an original chapter for the OER on digital anthropology. This chapter was the first to be co-written by a faculty member, myself, and students. Finally, this chapter addresses the questions and concerns of labour involved in open educational practices.

Portfolio items for this chapter includes:

1. Black Anthropology – an original chapter for the OER written by Julisha Roache
2. Digital Anthropology Chapter – original chapter for the OER written by Dr. Amy Mack, Alyssa White, and the students of ANTH 2850: Digital Anthropology

This thesis is then concluded with a final chapter that includes a list of recommendations for faculty interested in OERs and open educational practices.

CHAPTER 2: OER DESIGN AND CO-CREATION WITH FACULTY

2.1 Introduction

Design Anthropology in Education: Are We Asking the Right Questions?

Much of my research was shaped by design anthropology. While design anthropology is typically associated with the creation of product or services for businesses, it is increasingly expanding into other institutions such as government and education systems, particularly as new ways of knowledge dissemination develop alongside technology (Belli et al. 2019). Design anthropology is about problem solving, or as Kimbell (2011) summarizes, it is about "ask[ing] 'what if?' questions to imagine future scenarios rather than accepting the way things are done now" (p. 287). In this way, design anthropology situates humans co-creating potential futures at the heart of design rather than the possibilities around technological development. Design anthropology's methodology is "collaborative, plural, participatory, and distributed" (Escobar 2018, p. 2). Collaboration in knowledge production is baked into design practices, allowing for the incorporation of multiple voices in both the process of creation and the final product. It utilizes iterative co-creation during the design process to improve a future product or service (Murphy & Marcus 2020), which better reflects the core values of "open" by positioning students as valuable contributors to the creation of OER and the development of open educational practices than traditional ethnographic fieldwork. When approached from the perspective of a design anthropologist, Gunn and Løgstrup (2014) suggest that:

> …you are not conducting a study *of* or *about* people, but *with* them. This involves entering into a dialogic context of interaction with people, enabling action, emergent collaborative forms, co-analysis of field materials and engagement with, as opposed to capturing or trying to represent the other's point of view (p. 431).

This idea of collaboration during the creation process has also been taken up in many areas of SoTL research, such as student co-inquiry (Werder et al. 2016; Allin 2014) and aligns with the way I conducted my research. Rather than conducting ethnographic fieldwork *about* or *on* students and faculty members engaging in open pedagogical practices, I conducted research alongside them as we co-created the OER. My research was situated as understanding the design problem of the co-creation of pedagogical openness rather than the study of subjects engaged in open practices. To properly understand the impact of openness on teaching, the analysis and understanding of faculty and students was just as valuable as my own.

Design anthropology as a methodology was also central to my work because of its emphasis on emergent work. Design anthropology's approach to knowledge production is especially significant because it engages with something that does not yet exist; it is just as interested in the co-creation of knowledge that occurs during the design process as it is the finished project. Centering the design process allows for engaging with emergent, contemporary concerns and "a shift away from purely analyzing and preserving practices towards facilitating and crafting" (Kilbourn 2020, p. 72). Halse (2020) reflects that "the very point of designing is a process of bringing into being something that does not yet exist…the object of design is not available during the practice of design: it is in the making" (p. 182). This approach towards knowledge production allows for an openness that traditional ethnography does not always provide. Rather than producing a finalized analysis at the end of the fieldwork period, design anthropology allows for both active engagement during the research process that builds toward potential futures and for the notion of uncertainty. Design anthropology is liminal and iterative work that actively seeks to construct a future that differs from the present. Design anthropology's emphasis on the potential of creation provides space for the research of something that has yet to

be fully realized. Because my research is centered on creation, an analysis of the design process allowed me to better understand the product that was created and provide recommendations to future implementation of both OERs and open educational practices in medium-sized postsecondary institutions. Arturo Escobar argued that: "in designing tools, we are creating ways of being" (2018, p. 4). The collaborative design of the OER was a tool to better understand ways of producing openness in postsecondary institutions.

Because of my emphasis on the process of creating an OER, my work can best be understood as being shaped by the methodology of research-creation. Chapman and Sawchuk (2012) define research-creation as research that

> typically integrate a creative process, experimental aesthetic component, or an artistic work as an integral part of the study. Topics are selected and investigated that could not be addressed without engaging in some form of creative practice… research-creation can thus be read as a methodological and epistemological challenge to the argumentative form(s) that have typified much academic scholarship (p. 6).

It is important to note that despite the creative component, this approach is not about the product produced, but the analysis of the creative process. Research creation emphasizes what is learned during the process of creation. As Caitlin Fischer succinctly explained, this type of work is "research *through* creation not research *and* creation" (2015, p. 48).

This is another reason why I chose a design anthropology approach as opposed to traditional ethnographic research. While I still engaged in many core components of ethnographic fieldwork – such as participant-observation, empirical description through detailed fieldnotes, and working closely with interlocutors to determine their understandings of OERs and

open educational practices – this research was ultimately a study of the design process rather than a study of a produced object. The produced object itself is still in development at the completion of my project, and it is the process of its design that is more valuable to understanding the impact of open educational practices on teaching. The emphasis in design anthropology on ethnographic fieldwork in creating social change aligns best with my fieldwork, as open educational practices encourage the creation of work that can be used iteratively. OERs are licensed in ways that encourage futurity, allowing further development long after the original piece has been constructed. This positions OERs as materials constantly in flux – multiple futures are possible for these resources depending on who is involved and what supports are behind its improvement. Design anthropology's embracing of the unknown, and its recognition that "not knowing where they [are] going all of the time [is] an important part of their inquiry" (Gunn & Løgstrup 2014, p. 434) provides an opportunity for the incorporation of creativity that traditional anthropology does not always have room for by "finding ways of working with incompleteness" (Gunn & Løgstrup 2014, p. 436). Ultimately, because of its focus on futurity, my research grapples with this idea of incompleteness. Research-creation also exists in this space of experimental flux as an "opportunity to re-envision and re-craft—to re-story—our disciplinary practices…research-creation marshals new methods that allow us to tell new stories, stories that demand new research literacies and outputs" (Loveless 2015, p. 53).

My research is only one example of engaging with openness within a postsecondary institution; at the end of this document are recommendations for practitioners interested in open educational practices based on the experiences of myself and my faculty partners. However, as I discussed in my introduction, I want to emphasize the importance of individual faculty and classroom context. Across this project, what worked in one iteration of a course or for one

instructor did not necessarily suit another. What was possible in one semester may not have been appropriate for the next. The flexibility of openness can exist as a double-edged sword for instructors during the design process. In the following, I consider what I encountered co-designing an OER to show the importance of incorporating both student and faculty perspectives during the process.

2.2 Chapter Context

This chapter will address the complexities I encountered while co-designing the OER used in my research. The OER was designed for the introductory anthropology course at the University of Lethbridge, with the intent of being accessible to postsecondary students new to anthropology while also demonstrating the breadth and depth of the discipline. Along with support for the course, it also drew on local research through the integration of student and faculty research as local case studies. Finally, the OER was also designed with both open educational practices and accessibility in mind. I draw on the principles of design anthropology while exploring my experience of collaborating with faculty and students in both building and utilizing the OER in teaching. Design of the OER began in 2021, with its first use occurring that year. The OER was subsequently modified for two more iterations of the introductory course at instructor request (2022 and 2023), with the OER being used for three different offerings of the introductory course by three different faculty members.

Each offering of the introductory course had a different instructor and occurred in a different semester. This course is a prerequisite requirement for all other anthropology courses at the university. While there is typically a small number of majors or minors enrolled in the course each semester, most of the students who enroll in this course are nonmajors looking to fulfill a social science liberal education breadth requirement. This means that the student population can differ dramatically between each course offering in terms of disciplinary background,

postsecondary experience, and personal academic goals. Because of this, the course is structured to teach students a brief disciplinary history, basic research methodology, and a sample of disciplinary threshold topics such as cultural relativism, cross-cultural comparison, and reflexivity. Students are also introduced to ethnographic fieldwork and writing, which is typically a new form of scholarly work for introductory students. Class size ranges from approximately 180 to 250 students, with an average of 190 students per course; this course is also typically lecture-driven, with a blend of multiple-choice tests and/or written assignments for assessment depending on instructor discretion.

In terms of positionality, it is important to recognize that I occupied a dual role within these classrooms. While I was conducting research within the classrooms, I was also the teaching assistant (TA) for the course. I identified myself to students as both a researcher and a TA, and students were informed of the nature of my research and its goals. Students were also informed that although I was involved in assessment and grading, their decision to participate in research would not affect their grades. Each of the instructors structured their courses differently, which added an additional layer to the participant-observation I conducted in the classroom; I often found myself taking notes and studying course concepts the way I would have as an undergraduate to properly support the students in the courses. I emphasize my role in the classroom both to provide context to my identity as a researcher but also to echo previous SoTL literature that encourages the inclusion of student voices because of their diverse perspectives and experiences within postsecondary education. The experience of the undergraduates and my own as a graduate student combined provided different student perspectives of the classroom that differed from the faculty instructors.

2.3 OER Design

Pressbooks

The OER has been hosted on Pressbooks since its inception. The decision to use Pressbooks as our host platform was twofold. First, the University of Lethbridge is part of a five-year collaborative publishing service initiated by the University of Alberta, Mount Royal University, the University of Calgary, MacEwan University, the University of Lethbridge, and the Southern Albertan Institute of Technology that became available to all postsecondary institutions in Alberta in 2020. Open Education Alberta, which has 15 participating institutions at the time of writing, was created to support the development of open educational resources in Albertan institutions.[4] The University of Lethbridge's collaboration agreement with Open Education Alberta covering April 2020 to April 2025 provides any interested university member with access to Pressbooks without individual financial investment. Secondly, Pressbooks is intentionally designed to be user-friendly and accessible to individuals with limited or no coding knowledge, while having the option to modify components for individuals who do have experience with coding. With its higher rates of accessibility compared to other platforms and with any faculty member's ability to access Pressbooks, it became a natural platform choice to host the OER on Pressbooks[5], as a Canadian-based company that is highly utilized by many postsecondary institutions both nationally and internationally, also provided a streamlined process for 'remixing' existing material for the OER. In the beginning stages of the OER, we primarily utilized openly licensed material from other existing Pressbooks and open access journals to provide a framework for the OER. It also gave me as the researcher the opportunity to

[4] For more information, see https://openeducationalberta.ca/.
[5] For more information, see https://pressbooks.com/about/.

further immerse myself in the access, use, and dissemination of openly licensed materials before delving into co-creation of original material.

2.4 Designing for Students

Design thinking is ultimately grounded in the needs of the user (Gottlieb et al. 2016). While designing the OER, there were two primary 'user' groups: the students who would be utilizing the OER as their primary class text, and those involved in the instructional component of the course (myself and the course instructors). While the needs of these two groups often overlapped, there were distinct needs that pertained only to the students. Because the creation of the OER ultimately began to better meet the needs of our introductory anthropology students, and in the spirit of design thinking, I will first discuss the first user group: the students.

Initially, the primary driving factor for designing the OER was similar to what has been discussed in previous literature. Their flexibility in access due to their digital nature and the reduction of costs for students is appealing to instructors who are cognizant of the increasing costs of postsecondary education (Bozkurt, Koseoglu & Singh 2019; DeRosa 2016; DeRosa & Robinson 2017; Hegarty 2015; Hilton et al. 2014; Ikahihifo et al. 2017). This became even more true during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many students and faculty lost physical access to their institutions (and subsequently their campus bookstores), and many students faced intense financial precarity due to the closing of non-essential businesses for the three months of provincial emergency status. Students who could not access campus to pick up physical textbooks had to rely on shipments that did not always arrive for the beginning of classes, leaving them disadvantaged in completing their readings. Even more, students could not afford their textbooks due to financial instability from reduced working hours or temporary job loss. Isolated from their campus libraries and class peers, students could no longer rely on borrowed

copies to access learning materials they could not afford (Gumb 2020). OERs seemed to be a potential solution to this: not only would they be free for students to access, but students who had relocated due to the pandemic could access their course readings without relying on physical shipments from their university campus.

While my interest in OERs began with these potential solutions to these problems, I began to see more potential in creation the longer I researched them. This is discussed as a common outcome the longer one engages with literature and OER creation. Like many before me, I became enamored with the possibility of what could be created through the utilization and dissemination of openly licensed content. DeRosa (2020) argues that the potential for OERs is so much more than a way to save costs for students, as "open is a shift in mindset more than a shift in cost". That 'shift' occurred for me as I began to encounter student co-creation in OER design. This was not only a way to make student work 'matter', but a way to streamline the addressing of contemporary topics in the discipline without relying on amendments and reprints of physical textbooks. This was a way to better open disciplinary knowledge to students – both for them to produce it, and for them to engage with it.

2.5 Course Description

Anthropology OER

Before the OER design began, two introductory anthropology courses that had utilized a pre-existing OER were surveyed on OER use (subsequently referred to as Class 2020 and Class 2021-A). Students were surveyed on this initial OER to gauge initial interest in continuing to use one after the return to in-person learning. Additionally, I surveyed students on the use of this pre-existing OER because we would utilize much of its content for the initial design of our own OER (referred to as the Anthropology OER) due to the remix principle available through its particular CC license.

Students from two of the offerings of the introductory courses that utilized the Anthropology OER (referred to as Class 2021-B and Class 2022) were involved in its design process in varying degrees. These courses were also surveyed on their perception of the OER.[6] A third introductory course was not involved in OER design and was not surveyed but did use it as their main class text.

Student Perception of the OER

Student reception to the use of the OER as the primary class text was overwhelmingly positive across all four courses. Preliminary research from Class 2020 and Class 2021-A indicated that students overall preferred using a digital textbook that could be accessed free of cost over a physical copy they would have to purchase. Out of the 131 responses from Class 2020 and 2021-A, 79.3% of students agreed that they preferred access to the digital OER free of cost, while 12.2% of students were indifferent. Only 3.1% of students disagreed. This trend continued when the Anthropology OER was used in Class 2021-B and Class 2022 once we returned to in-person learning. Out of the 213 student responses between the two classes, 91.5% of students agreed that they preferred the use of the OER over a physical copy, while 5.2% were neutral to its use. The percentage of students who disagreed with its use remained close at 3.3%.

The most significant impact for students was reduction of financial stress. When asked what aspects of the OER they enjoyed, the number one selection was always no cost to access the textbook across all four surveys. While this is hardly surprising, it has deeper implications beyond just saving students money. In the written response section on the surveys, several students reflected on the fact that undergraduate students are often forced to pick between taking on additional work responsibilities to afford their course textbooks or taking the course without

[6] All survey questions and responses can be found in Appendix 1.

it. Students consistently discussed that not having to be concerned about the cost of a textbook was a significant reduction in their stress about the course.

> "I think the textbook being free is an enormous benefit. Personally I usually don't buy textbooks if it isn't vital for the class because I can't justify spending the amount of money it costs to buy one. With this book, I can get all the supplemental info without worrying about finances as much."
>
> -Student Survey Response 1

> "The fact that the textbook was free was a huge weight lifted off my shoulders since I do struggle financially and not having to spend another $200 on a textbook was so nice."
>
> -Student Survey Response 2

> "This is my first year of university and using the OER gave me one less thing to stress about, like the cost of textbooks."
>
> -Student Survey Response 3

> "Not only did I not have to purchase a textbook but it was always so easy to access the readings! I would definitely want to use an OER in other classes I take in the future."
>
> -Student Survey Response 4

> "i really enjoyed having the free access to all readings for this class as university is a very expensive time, any cost that can be removed in some way is super helpful and appreciated."
>
> -Student Survey Response 5

> "OER helps a lot of students who would normally have to work extra hours to pay textbook fees on top of their tuition and rent. Should be used more often."
>
> -Student Survey Response 6

The rising cost of textbooks in postsecondary education is well-known (Essay 2014; Ross, Hendricks and Mowat 2018; Spica and Biddix 2021). What isn't acknowledged as often as the financial cost is the cost of time that students spend trying to obtain affordable textbooks (Katz 2019) and does not often expand to include the other time costs students may take on to purchase textbooks through increased working hours, leaving students with reduced time to attend to their studies. Even more concerning is that textbook costs have been found to directly impact student decisions around academic behaviour. It has been reported that a significant number of students have chosen not to purchase required textbooks at all due to their cost (Martin et al. 2017; Wittkower & Lo 2020). Students have also reported taking fewer courses in a semester, dropping courses upon seeing textbook costs and even withdrawing during the semester because of the financial impact of textbook costs and their ability to perform successfully in the course without one (Stein et al. 2017; Senak & Donoghue 2016). All these decisions made around textbook costs alone have significant, often negative impacts on student education. Between the three introductory courses that used the Anthropology OER (Class 2021-B, Class 2022, and Class 2023), 543 introductory anthropology students did not have to pay for a course textbook. [7]

There may have been additional benefits from the use of the OER. Interestingly, we saw a shift in student responses once we introduced the Anthropology OER that had been designed specifically for the introductory course at the university. In Class 2021-B and Class 2022, we saw an increase in students who agreed with its use, and a drop in students who were neutral. This decrease in students who neither agree nor disagree suggests an interesting shift away from

[7] This number does not include the students from Class 2020 and Class 2021-A. By rough estimations, this is another 260 students who did not have to pay for a course textbook for the introductory course. This means approximately 803 introductory anthropology students were saved textbook costs through OER use.

apathy about course materials. There are two possible reasons for this. First, that students found the readings more engaging because they had been specifically curated to support lecture content. The instructors and I selected and modified readings accordingly to best support the concepts students would be expected to learn in the course. Second, students may have felt more strongly about the course text because they had been integrated into conversations about it. Students were told about the purpose of the OER and the goals of my research at the beginning of each semester and encouraged to be in contact with me about any questions, concerns, or suggestions they had about its improvement. Students in Class 2021-B had frequent in-class check-ins about the format, types of, and accessibility of the readings being used in the OER. Class 2022 was directly involved in generating content for the OER through in-class assignments (to be discussed further in chapter 3). Both classes were asked in a survey if they felt that the OER supported their understanding of course content, with most students affirming that it did. In Class 2021-B, out of the 88 respondents, 95.5% of students agreed that the OER supported their understanding, while only 4.5% were neutral. None of the students in Class 2021-B disagreed that the OER was beneficial to their understanding of course material. In Class 2022, out of 127 respondents, 77.2% of students agreed, and 17.3% were neutral. 5.5% of the respondents disagreed that the OER supported their understanding of course material. Students were also asked to provide their opinion on style of readings, if they would have been interested in learning from local case studies, and if they would be interested in learning from research conducted by their peers at the university for future iterations of the Anthropology OER.

This ongoing dialogue throughout the semester around the design of course readings alongside their content most likely supported higher rates of student reflection about them. Students in both classes were encouraged to be honest about their experiences with the OER with

the intention of improving it for future introductory students, positioning them as individuals with valuable insight that could impact their peers' educational experience.

Not all aspects of OERs were received favorably. While many students appreciated the digital format, many discussed missing the ability to highlight or annotate their readings, a feature that Pressbooks does not support without the use of the collaborative annotation tool Hypothesis. When initially considering this on my own as a solution to this problem, I was concerned that adding an additional digital tool that students would need to learn could be overwhelming, particularly for introductory students. Hypothesis requires the creation of a free account, even when being used in Pressbooks, which was an additional step for students who were already having to learn how to navigate the OER. There was also the possibility that faculty could disagree on its use in a shared resource; it was unclear to me during my initial research if removing annotations was possible if an instructor did not wish to use them. Annotations through Hypothesis are set to public viewing by default and cannot be modified or removed by Pressbooks users; this can only be done by Hypothesis staff. This created a situation where students unfamiliar with the technology could easily make accidental public annotations that the instructor and I would be unable to delete. While we did consider the use of Hypothesis and were interested in the idea of collaborative annotation in both Class 2021-B and Class 2022, the instructors and I shared trepidation about unnecessary complexity for students and the inability to remove unnecessary, incorrect, or inappropriate annotations. Students were able to request a PDF copy from myself in both Class 2021-B and Class 2022. However, after receiving student feedback that having a PDF copy readily available would be preferable and upon realizing I may have inadvertently created an accessibility barrier through this system, a PDF copy was made available to all students in Class 2023. While this did eliminate the necessity for an internet

connection to access the textbook and allowed students to digitally highlight and annotate, it still meant that students needed to use a device to complete their readings. It also meant that students who preferred physical copies would have to cover the cost of printing. While not a perfect solution, it did at least give students the choice of incurring financial costs to access a physical copy.

Overwhelmingly, across all four courses surveyed, students reported that the aspect they liked the least about the OER was the increased digital screentime. I initially thought this might be a result of the online learning format; however, students still indicated this was the most disliked factor for both remote and in-person course delivery courses. While some students discussed the benefits of being able to access their readings from a device, many discussed that the increased screen time was a challenge. Both this and the inability to effectively annotate are not unique to OERs; literature examining the use of digital textbooks has documented limited annotation tools as potential drawbacks of the use of digital reading material (Rowlands et al. 2007; Millar & Schrier 2015; Jhangiani et al. 2018). Interestingly, the physical impact of increased screen time has not been effectively addressed in this literature. It is important to note that our students may have been feeling the impact of this to an even higher degree due to their experiences with online learning and the subsequent integration of blended learning in classrooms due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the steady increase in financial cost of textbooks and postsecondary education, students may be more willing to compromise on less desirable aspects of digital textbooks to avoid the financial burden of print copies, leading to them highly preferring the OER over purchasing a physical copy.[8]

[8] It is vital to note that, while it was not a concern in our own classrooms during my research, access to an appropriate device can be a significant barrier in the use of digital and/or online reading materials. For more information, see Hill and Lawton's (2018) *Universities, the digital divide, and global inequality*.

2.6 Students as Teachers: Expanding Access

> *Condensing [definitions] of OERs and open pedagogy was tough at first, but I did finally manage to make it short, but cohesive (or at least I hope I did…). Accessibility was much tougher to tackle. This is such a broad issue with so many different aspects…but it really has forced me to confront what I mean by accessibility when I talk about my research. Am I talking about access to knowledge? The ability to create it? Increasing access for students with different learning and support needs? Presenting information in a way that is digestible for intro students and the broader community outside of postsecondary? Making space for different modes of knowledge? Increasing access to knowledge creation through collaborative and creative processes and diversifying who can do so? I think it's a little bit of all of the above? Maybe I haven't actually figured this out…*
>
> (Field notes, 11 November 2021)

Perhaps one of the most complex – and yet fulfilling – aspect of OER design was the input from the students. While they provided very concrete feedback on practical components of design – useability, desired features, comprehension of selected readings – the students were also key in shaping my understanding of accessibility in OER design. When I began my research, one of my goals was to increase 'accessibility' in the introductory course through OER use. What I quickly discovered through student feedback and conversations was that defining, understanding, and communicating about 'accessibility' was incredibly complex, and incredibly challenging.

Like most of my research, the students provided critically important feedback that shaped my understanding of this concept. were key in shaping my understanding of this.

Accessibility, as it is typically understood by postsecondary institutions and the world at large, refers to the ability to utilize a product or service regardless of how someone encounters it. When accessibility is discussed broadly, it typically refers to increasing 'access' to products, services, or spaces for individuals with disabilities. It has broadened somewhat in education to also address access to postsecondary education in two ways: "first, by how many spaces there are in the system to accommodate everyone who wants to attend, and second, by who gets in" (Deller, Kaufman & Tamburri 2019, p. 6). While I was concerned with increasing general accessibility to the OER, and I was very cognizant of barriers of access to postsecondary, I also found that my research was just as much about access to knowledge – both who could quite literally access it to consume it, but also who had access to produce it in a way deemed legitimate by postsecondary institutions.

As I continued to grapple with ideas of accessibility, I found that I often broke it into three 'categories': learner accessibility, access to consume knowledge, and access to produce knowledge.

Accessibility?????

1. *Learner accessibility*
    - *Screen reading software*
    - *Text accessibility*
    - *Image descriptions*
    - *Link descriptions to videos (for screen reading?)*
    - *Navigation of OER and Pressbooks*
2. *Knowledge consumption*
    - *Reduce cost barriers*
    - *Reduce content barriers*
    - *More modes of knowledge*
    - *Local/cultural context*

- *Public/academic divide*

3. *Knowledge production*
    - *Role of student/junior scholars?*
    - *Intersectionality*
    - *Institutional knowledge?*
    - *Who makes it far enough to produce – and why?*

(Field notes, 3 November 2021)

While all three of these categories could fit under the umbrella understanding of 'accessibility' in academia, for the purpose of my research, and for clarity's sake, I will refer to these three categories as accessibility, increasing access to knowledge consumption, and expanding access to knowledge production.

Accessibility

For this category, I share the more universal understanding of accessibility. This addresses any aspect of OER design that worked to ensure that any student who used the OER could do so effectively and efficiently. During the initial design, the ways in which I tried to address this included incorporating image alt text, providing support to students for navigating the Pressbooks site, providing PDFs of the OER to students who requested it, and ensuring original videos had captions.

My initial efforts were admittedly quite mediocre for someone who was conducting research on accessibility. I encountered many instances where learner accessibility became a concern during OER design. Most of these were flagged by the students themselves, either through in-class conversations or in response to surveys. Text size and colour were common areas of concern, as was the possibility of integrating screen-reading software. Other students pointed to longer sections of text within chapters as potential barriers for individuals with visual or attention difficulties. Time and time again, I had a student point out another way the OER

could be modified to increase its accessibility. I became increasingly aware of how inherently, infrastructurally inaccessible course materials could be to a diverse classroom of students.

> *I had another student talk to me during class about the OER today. They had tried out a free text-to-speech software for the readings, and found it quite glitchy, as the browser extension struggled to distinguish which text to read between the Pressbooks header, actual chapter, and the copyright licenses at the bottom. Free text-to-speech software also doesn't handle alt text very well, if at all, and the kind she used only read the image captions. I tried a different version myself today, and she was right. It was kind of glitchy, but adequate enough for students who process information better verbally. I have no idea how well a screen reader would utilize the alt text. Still can't figure out a way to increase the text size for the reader; the button in the corner Pressbooks has doesn't work. I feel like shit telling students to 'just use ctrl+'. They deserve better than kind of glitchy and 'just use', but I can't teach myself all of this overnight. I can't teach myself features that don't exist.*
>
> (Field notes, 22 September 2021)

I regret to say that at the time of writing, the OER still has a long way to go to be considered a fully accessible text. While quite intuitive to new users, Pressbooks' streamlining of features means that OER designers are limited to pre-determined features and layouts, unless they have enough coding knowledge to customize an OER. While it can usually be integrated more smoothly into assistive technologies, access to these technologies varies considerably, and students from middle or low-income families often face substantial barriers obtaining them (Durocher et al. 2019).

It is imperative that instructors and institutions consider potential ways to modify course materials to increase accessibility for students who cannot access these technologies, even if the improvements are only marginal. Gannon (2020) addresses what can often feel like an insurmountable task when trying to improve accessibility in the classroom, reminding instructors that

> …you aren't able to embed every practice in each of your courses right now, but you can pick one thing with which to start, then do it. Then pick another. Rinse, repeat…this consistency in doing *something* is, quite simply, committing to your *praxis* (p. 81).

Increasing Access to Knowledge Consumption

My research was arguably sparked by the question of who can obtain academic knowledge, and what infrastructural and institutional barriers might exist to prevent this access for individuals. I have already discussed cost at length, though this is not a unique problem for just students in postsecondary. Access to academic knowledge is also a problem outside of postsecondary institutions. There is a significant divide between public and academic spheres of knowledge, with a significant portion of academic knowledge locked away behind journal paywalls or the cost of academic books and texts. Students and faculty may enjoy institutional access to academic knowledge during their time in postsecondary but will quickly find those privileges revoked upon leaving the institution.

OERs, in part, serve as a bridge between the public and academic knowledge spheres. Most obviously, being free to access means that there is no financial barrier for those who wish to obtain the knowledge in them. OERs are also not tied to institutional access. Anyone within the community can not only access openly licensed materials, but distribute, modify, and utilize

them as they see fit. The use of open licenses greatly increases both knowledge obtainability, as well as he ability for an individual to participate in knowledge production themselves. Open licenses make attaining the role of knowledge producer far more accessible than traditional academic publishing routes.

Another consideration during my research for increasing access to knowledge consumption was both its content and delivery. Academic communication can be complex and inaccessible to wider audiences due to technical writing and the use of both academic and disciplinary-specific jargon. While this is often thought to be a problem in the hard sciences, the social sciences and humanities are not immune to this either, as "many economists, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists desire the prestige awarded to 'hard scientists,' and in that pursuit write as if they can frame theories that can be tested against controlled observations" (Schechner 1995, p. 8). As an anthropologist, this was particularly an area of concern for me due to the discipline's close working relationship with communities outside of academia. Special attention was paid to selecting readings during the design of the OER to address this. Students were consulted to determine if the readings felt comprehensible as introductory anthropology students. Another way to address accessibility to knowledge consumption is being mindful of the way it is disseminated. Broadening the formats in which knowledge can be created and shared beyond the typical Eurocentric emphasis on written text increases the amount of people who can effectively obtain and consume knowledge.

Expanding Access to Knowledge Production

Finally, the third area of accessibility that became prominent in my research was the attainability of being a knowledge producer. As previously discussed, there are multiple factors that can act as barriers to the process of producing legitimate knowledge within academia. First-

generation, junior or emerging scholars, scholars of colour, disabled scholars, non-male scholars, 2SLGTBQIA+ scholars, and scholars of non-Christian faiths are traditionally marginalized in our academic systems, and this is reflected in our publications, our citations, and our course materials. Gannon (2020) discusses how this doesn't just impact faculty scholars, but our students:

> …the materials we put in front of them…are for most of them the first glimpse of the 'face of the discipline'. The textbook authors, or experts in videos, or examples in the case studies: these are the people who we hold up as the experts who produce knowledge for, and who participate in the scholarly conversations within, our discipline…many of our students have not seen themselves reflected in the course materials they are required to use (p. 61).

Gannon further discusses how failing to diversify our course resources and materials is a failure to capture the diversity and complexity of our disciplines. In anthropology – a discipline that celebrates its commitment to diversity, to seeking out the perspectives of those other disciplines have neglected – it is especially important that we commit ourselves to ensuring our scholarly work reflects these values by opening up who is able to produce legitimate knowledge. This is also crucial *because* of our working relationships with the community outside of our institutions. Opening up who is capable of producing legitimate knowledge is critical to combating the discipline's history of harmful extractive research practices (Bejarano et al. 2019) and acknowledging the critical role that our interlocutors play in our knowledge production process (Dattareyan & Marrero-Guillamón 2019).

While this was an important component of the OER design process, I will address the idea of knowledge production further in chapters 3 and 4, in which I examine the process of expanding knowledge production by engaging in co-creation with students.

"What does accessibility mean to you?"

Figure 1. 'Accessibility' word cloud generated by the students in Class 2021-B.

Based on my research, I highly recommend consulting with students around questions of accessibility.[9] The students within my classrooms arguably taught me more about accessibility considerations than the literature I consulted. It was their recommendations that improved accessibility for each iteration of the introductory class, and they are still being considered today

[9] While it was regrettably not within the scope of this project, I also recommend consultation with institutional accommodations services and teaching/learning centres for support on increasing accessibility of course materials.

in the current design of the OER. They have also been vital in shaping considerations around increasing access to knowledge consumption, and, as will be discussed in chapters 3 and 4, indispensable to my research on the process of expanding access to knowledge production.

2.7 Designing with Faculty

Faculty Co-Creation

Co-creation with faculty for the OER happened in two significant ways. First, and most significantly, faculty worked with me to select appropriate readings for the OER. These readings were modified when licensing permitted it to best suit each offering of the introductory course.[10] Second, in two cases where appropriate material that was openly licensed was not readily available, I worked with faculty to design original chapters to fill these gaps. During co-creation with faculty, I once again occupied a different, somewhat unique role than I did during co-creation with students. While I held more of a mentorship role when educating students about OERs, I entered a partnership with the faculty members as described by Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten (2014). In this partnership, faculty members regarded me as the 'expert' on OERs and open educational practices, while they supplied pedagogical knowledge and insight into appropriate handling of course concepts from years of teaching experience. It was through this blending of knowledge and experience that we were able to select appropriate readings for students during the design process. Despite being the 'experts' on teaching the introductory course, faculty members also incorporated my suggestions around my understanding of contemporary anthropology. I was able to provide insight into topics I found engaging or impactful, and areas I felt were important to cover as a recent alum of their undergraduate program. Like Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten discuss, this sharing of responsibility within the

[10] In the introductory course, while the topics addressed are typically consistent, how and to what extent the instructor chooses to address them may vary.

partnership meant that I as a student took on some responsibility for pedagogy, while faculty took on the responsibility for earners while engaging with new topics and pedagogical practices. This reciprocal exchange of knowledge, experiences, and perspectives led to an eventual synthesis of content that was then used as the guiding framework for the design of the Anthropology OER.

During the initial stages, faculty provided guidance on what type of content they needed to support student engagement with lecture material. We worked together to select and remix existing OER content to integrate into our OER. Faculty would indicate what sections were appropriate for the structure of their course, and I conducted the importing and editing of this content. Additionally, faculty gave me the opportunity to seek out reading content that I deemed appropriate for the introductory course. Because I was better versed on copyright laws from my initial research, I was able to identify what openly licensed materials could be incorporated into the OER to provide examples of ethnographic fieldwork for students. I was also able to determine if older anthropological writing had entered the public domain, and if classic pieces could be incorporated with proper attribution.

However, as we progressed through the design process, it became clear that appropriate content did not exist for every section of the course. Finding quality, disciplinary work that is openly licensed has been documented as one of the biggest challenges for faculty in OER adoption (Jhangiani et al. 2016; Doan 2017). Anthropology as a discipline does not have high rates of OER adoption or creation. When searching well-known OER repositories, anthropology almost always had the lowest number of resources compared to other social science disciplines.[11]

[11] Repositories searched included OER Commons, the Mason OER Metafinder, MERLOT, and OASIS.

While we had initially conceptualized the OER to showcase student research, I realized that faculty expertise could further expand the anthropological knowledge for introductory students. This was also a way for introductory students to engage with subdisciplines that they could later encounter in senior level courses at the university.

2.8 Medical Anthropology

The first item in my portfolio is an original chapter written by one of the professors in the Anthropology Department, Dr. Steve Ferzacca. One of the most popular senior courses in the department was a course dedicated to the subdiscipline of medical anthropology – an area of expertise for Dr. Ferzacca. With Dr. Ferzacca's impending retirement at the time of my research, the course would no longer be offered at the university for the foreseeable future.

To address this loss, Dr. Ferzacca was kind enough to work with me to create an original chapter for the OER that outlined many of the concepts covered in the medical anthropology course. Dr. Ferzacca was responsible for the bulk of content generation, including both original writing, course materials, and selected media for the chapter. My role during this design process was primarily the integration of this content into Pressbooks. Finally, an undergraduate anthropology student also provided original content for this chapter through interviews with students in the department who had conducted undergraduate research related to medical anthropology.[12] While we collaborated on interview questions, she was responsible for conducting, recording, and editing these interviews.

Many of the areas I have outlined above were encountered in this design process. Because the Medical Anthropology course was originally a third-year course, we had to discuss

[12] More information about this particular student will be provided in chapter 4, as she was an integral part of the student co-creation process.

how to educate introductory students about core concepts without overwhelming them. I tackled translating existing materials from the course provided to me (such as Powerpoint slides) into the OER while trying to be mindful of accessibility. I worked to integrate other modes of knowledge beyond written text using images, video, and interactive slides to increase knowledge obtainability. Finally, to expand access to knowledge production – and using feedback from students from Class 2021-B about interest in learning through the inclusion of local case studies – the interviews of students from the department were used as examples of local research in medical anthropology. Upon completion of the chapter, students in Class 2022 were asked to provide feedback about their comprehension of the chapter as new anthropology students.

This portfolio item was the first attempt at integrating multiple levels of co-design with faculty and students in generating OER content. Different avenues of co-creation of OER content with students will be addressed in chapters 3, while chapter 4 will address two semester-long projects of co-design with faculty and students.

To maintain the circulation of knowledge in OERs, the Medical Anthropology chapter can be viewed for my portfolio in Pressbooks here.

2.9 Tackling Open: How 'Open' Do I Have to Be?

One of the most important conclusions from the process of co-designing the OER with both students and faculty has been the expansion of my understanding of open. When I first began my research, my understanding of open was quite rigid, and revolved around OER creation where all course material was both original and openly licensed. As I have spent more time in the field and been in contact with faculty and students, it became increasingly clear that adhering to fixed ideas of what needed to be attained before we could be working openly only limited positive pedagogical shifts. It also placed unnecessary stress on those involved when we

lacked the resources to do open the ‘right’ way. As my research progressed, I began to develop a more flexible, adaptive approach in which my focus on producing openly licensed materials transitioned to utilizing OERs and open educational practices to increases student engagement, encourage the diversification of course materials and resources, reflect upon assessment, and encourage students to reconsider that their roles in education could be more than just depositories for knowledge. Ultimately, the strongest recommendation I can provide to any interested practitioner is to consider your course, your learning objectives, your student demographic, and the resources available to you to incorporate open practices into your teaching in a way that is suitable for yourself and your students. There is an intense labour that accompanies openness in teaching that cannot be ignored. This will be further addressed in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3: STUDENTS AS CO-INQUIRERS: LEARNING TO BE OPEN WITH STUDENTS

"Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other."

– Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970, p. 45).

3.1 Student Co-Inquiry: Changing Student Relationships with Knowledge

Inquiry is etymologically rooted in the Middle English *enquiry*, which denotes an act of seeking – typically, for information. It was also traditionally used to imply questioning; by asking questions, one could discover new truths. Inquiry has also been taken up as a way of teaching, particularly in elementary and secondary schooling, though its uptake in higher education has been slower (Spronken-Smith & Walker 2010). Inquiry in teaching is understood as

> a range of teaching approaches in which learning is stimulated by a question or issue, learning is based on constructing new knowledge and understanding, the teacher's role is one of a facilitator, and there is a move towards self-directed learning (Spronken-Smith et al. 2011, p. 15).

This form of learning directly contrasts the more common 'banking' model of education, as described by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian philosopher of education who was fundamental in the critical pedagogy movement. In this model of education, students are positioned as passive recipients, with their own knowledge sets typically dismissed, into which educators, who are considered the authoritative source of knowledge, 'deposit' knowledge. This method of teaching

strips students of any capacity for creation and inquiry, as it relies on rote memorization of knowledge delivered by educators rather than encouraging students to engage critically with the material they are 'depositing'(Freire 1970).

Inquiry is considered a fundamental value in SoTL, both in pedagogical and research approaches (Spronken-Smith & Walker 2010; Spronken-Smith et al. 2011; Healey 2005). Like the students as partners approach, co-inquiry with students in SoTL research is understood as an active approach to student learning, in which students are integrated into the research process as important collaborators. However, co-inquiry is distinguished by its emphasis on questioning. Werder et al. (2016) define it as "a shared conceptualizing process involving the co-development of questions to explore…that allows students to critically analyze information by asking their own questions" (p. 22).

The idea of inquiry, educators being guiding figures in learning, and students playing active roles of knowledge creation are all key values in open educational practices. While the terminology varies around this pedagogical approach – inquiry-based learning, learner-generated, constructivist pedagogy are only a few that utilize these values – there is a consensus that students' learning, engagement with knowledge, and understanding of course concepts increases significantly when they are tasked with creating knowledge in some form as opposed to being reduced to 'receptacles' (Healey 2005; Baran & AlZoubi 2019; DeRosa & Robinson 2017; Hegarty 2015; Hoffman et al. 2020; Katz & Van Allen 2020; Al Abri & Dabbagh 2019; Hutton, Di Valentino & Musgrave 2020).

As I have discussed previously, it was the question of the inherent worth of student knowledge that initially led me to these practices. I also experienced a shift during my own research of them. My research on open educational practices began in my undergraduate as a

research project independent from any of my courses. I had never completed research outside of my courses. Dr. Newberry had initially suggested the research topic to me inspired by her own previous research on co-inquiry, and while she provided guidance on the development of my research project, I began to take on the role of educator as well. While we naturally attended to different aspects of the research due to positionality, roles, and experience, the further we delved into research, the more her initial questions were broadened by my own as I engaged further with the literature. This quickly became a collaborative process of inquiry. The duality of our roles – hers as researcher/instructor and mine as researcher-student – allowed for a type of breadth in the research that would not have been possible for a sole researcher. This research was also conducted with the intent of sharing it with other instructors, and rather than producing a final written paper, I suggested a presentation that could be easily distributed and viewed by others rather than sharing a lengthy document that many did not have the time to read. It was not the first time I had been given options in choosing the modality of knowledge for dissemination, but it was the first time that its viewing by others besides my course instructor became a possibility. It was the first time I was forced to think about the way I engaged with and produced knowledge could have an impact beyond receiving a grade or passing a course.

This project was my first experience with co-inquiry with research and with making important decisions as a scholar about research. Because of my transition to knowledge producer, and the undertaking of co-inquiry, the way I understood and engaged with knowledge in my courses was fundamentally altered. Learning was suddenly broadened beyond just completing an assigned task in exchange for grade. Learning suddenly felt meaningful rather than just a means to an end to receive my degree. This experience also shaped my graduate

research significantly; not only had I found a topic, but I also wanted other students to experience the same shift in knowledge engagement that I had been lucky to have.

3.2 Chapter Context

This chapter will address the process of introducing students to the role of knowledge producer using non-disposable assignments (NDAs). Based on my observations and interactions with students completing these assignments, I outline three major conclusions about the benefits of these assignment structures. I also discuss the process of co-inquiry in creating an OER chapter with an undergraduate student. Finally, I address student reception and potential challenges of these assignment formats.

3.2 Course Details

The research for this chapter occurred in four different courses, with two different instructors. Below, I briefly outline the courses and associated instructors.

1. ANTH 2210 – a second year anthropology course with rotating topics that introduce students to a culture or region that reflects the instructor's research specialty. During the time of my research, this course was taught by Dr. Jan Newberry, and covered both historical and contemporary ethnographic research in North America, with particular attention to children and youth, in North America. While this course is a requirement for anthropology majors, it is not uncommon to have non-majors completing liberal education breadth requirements enrolled. Forty-five students were enrolled in this course during my research.
2. ANTH 3280 – a third year anthropology course that examines both the historical and contemporary theoretical understandings and methodological approach of anthropologists conducting research within urban cities, with particular attention to the local, national, and global contexts. This course was also taught by Dr. Jan Newberry. This course is also

popular amongst non-majors, particularly geography and/or urban and regional studies students. This class had 31 students enrolled during my research.

3. ANTH 3000 – a third year anthropology course that explores significant disciplinary concepts, theories and approaches within anthropology. As an incredibly theory-heavy class, this course is typically dominated by anthropology majors and minors. At the time of my research, this course was taught by Dr. Jan Newberry. This course had 37 students at the time of my research.
4. Class 2022 – the introductory anthropology course at the university. The iteration addressed in this case study is the same Class 2022 from chapter 2 and was taught by Dr. Jodie Asselin. At the time of my research, 184 students were enrolled in the course.

While working with Dr. Newberry and Dr. Asselin on assignment design, I discovered that many of the assignments previously used by both instructors would be suitable as NDAs with appropriate adjustments. Almost all the assignments discussed in the case studies are therefore modified versions of previously existing assignments. This is noteworthy because entirely new assignments did not necessarily need to be designed to encourage students to engage with knowledge production, which significantly reduced the front-end labour of incorporating open educational practices into the instructor's pedagogy.[13]

Another interesting thing to note about modifying existing course material is that many of the principles that are considered fundamental to open educational practices were already present in the courses I participated in. This is most likely a result of the type of instructors I conducted fieldwork alongside (their willingness to allow my presence and input into their courses already

[13] I make this note because the labour required to incorporate open educational practices is significant and will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

speaks to their attention to and care for their teaching practices). However, during my fieldwork and from conversations with other faculty members about my research, I have found anecdotally that many instructors *do* incorporate aspects of learner-generated assignments into their teaching without strong knowledge of the associated SoTL literature. As I moved further into my research, I quickly realized that just producing content for the OER was not always feasible. What became more important was designing assignments that assisted students in considering and perhaps even rethinking their relationship with knowledge in postsecondary education.

Whether they were involved in creating original content for the OER or not, the hope was that the assignments would encourage students to reconsider their understanding of knowledge consumption, production, and dissemination in postsecondary institutions, and their role within that as students. For some assignments, this was very explicit. Students were overtly told their completed work could potentially be placed in the OER for future students to learn from, or assignment instructions clearly stated to consider future students as potential viewers of their work. In others, it was more implicit; students were encouraged to think more critically about the types of knowledge they were encountering, who was producing it, and how this connected back to their course. Assignments also varied in the way they were completed; some were group assignments, while others were completed individually, and some had group and individual components. The incorporation of group work was a way for students to work "outside of the traditional student-teacher dyad" (Seraphin et al. 2019, p. 85) when they were not generating content with the clear idea that future students would view it. It was also another form of co-inquiry that occurred at multiple levels: instructor-student, researcher-interlocutor, and peer-to-peer level.

3.3 Student Relationship to Knowledge

Though I distinguish three conclusions from my research, they can all be considered a change in students' relationship with knowledge in some way. While the structure, goals, and even formats of the assignments varied (and will be discussed in further detail below), the common goal for all of them was to prompt student reflection on their relationship with the knowledge shared in their classrooms. The use of NDAs encouraged a noticeable change in how students engaged with and discussed the knowledge they were encountering. The longstanding consequences of this are impossible for me to determine. For many students, this may have only been a temporary transition; however, it is my hope that students will carry these considerations into other aspects of their postsecondary career.

Trace a Path – ANTH 2210

The first item included in my portfolio is the assignment guidelines and an example of the Trace a Path assignment from ANTH 2210. Because of the course focus, Dr. Newberry and I decided it was most appropriate for students to consider local Indigenous groups specifically for the assignment. The assignment was divided into two parts: an in-class, group assignment in which students explored a pre-selected, non-academic resource created by and/or with Indigenous groups, and an individual assignment where students were tasked with finding a comparable, academically legitimate resource within the university library. The students were guided during the in-class group assignment by questions that prompted them to consider the resource's author and/or owner, intended audience, who was presented as the holder of authoritative knowledge, how the knowledge was conveyed (i.e. written text, images, video, etc.), and if they considered the resource 'credible'. Students were also asked to brainstorm possible key words to use in their search for a comparable academic source for their individual assignment. In the individual assignment, students were asked to document their search for their

resource, provide an APA citation of their chosen source, and write a short reflection on the differences between it and the first source they examined during their group work. While students were free to document and present their search in whatever format they were most comfortable with, the final assignment was required to be digitally submitted. Students were also provided a visual example for the individual assignment, and many chose to adhere to that format.

This assignment was incredibly interesting to implement personally because it is an iteration of an assignment I completed for the same course in my undergraduate degree. The assignment, designed by Dr. Newberry, was originally created to prompt students to familiarize themselves with the university library, practice searching for literature, and expand upon their citation skills. Because this course is a second-year course, many of the students are first- and second-year university students who are just beginning to develop these fundamental research skills.[14] This assignment was also designed to encourage students to be reflexive of their engagement with literature by documenting the process through fieldnotes, essentially 'tracing a path' of their search. This allowed students to engage in a mimicked form of 'fieldwork', which is essential to knowledge production in anthropology. I completed this assignment as a fifth year undergraduate, so what was most impactful for me was the emphasis on reflexivity. I had never spent much time dwelling on the process of searching for literature, never mind reflecting on who had produced it; the primary training I received around literature emphasized the use of primary and secondary sources and the importance of peer review. The author did not receive

[14] This is disciplinary and student specific depending on chosen electives. However, many first-year courses at the university, especially in the social sciences, are larger and lecture-based, with tests as the primary assessment tool.

significant attention unless they were important in disciplinary canon. Very rarely was I ever encouraged to consider who was producing the knowledge – and consequently, who was not.

A few weeks before the students would be completing the assignment, I asked them how they found academically 'legitimate' sources to cite in their coursework. I was curious to see if any students would suggest avenues outside of what I had been trained in during my undergraduate. When asked, students provided the following list:

- *Similar authors*
- *Google Scholar*
- *Library website*
- *JSTOR*
- *Vetted news sites*
- *Citations in class readings*
- *Looking at other publications by a relevant author*

- Field notes (1 November, 2022)

This discussion with the students gave me an important baseline for their understanding of what constituted places to find legitimate knowledge for their coursework. This list was used to deliberately design the assignment to encourage students to reconsider their conceptions around knowledge production. The goal for this assignment beyond skill building in literature review was for students to consider how academic ideas of who can produce legitimate knowledge and in what modes it can exist create barriers around knowledge consumption and production, as I discussed in chapter 2. I wanted students to consider the author, who they perceived the intended audience to be, and how the information was conveyed in their chosen sources.

For most of the students in the class, there was a clear demonstration of the shift in their relationship to knowledge that I hoped to see. Within their fieldnotes and reflections, many students demonstrated reflection on the nature of their sources, the idea of authority in knowledge production, and barriers to knowledge access for individuals outside (and sometimes even within) postsecondary institutions. Many students also spent significant time researching the authors of their academic sources, considered citational practices, and even questioned their own assumptions about scholarly sources and the idea of legitimate knowledge. Students also demonstrated clear engagement with course content through connections to concepts and theoretical practices from the course.

> "Something about this source felt unconventional to me and made me hesitant to use it. (In feeling this way, I am reminded of the whole point of the assignment: Why doesn't this source 'feel' as credible as others? Who am I to dictate who is and is not a reliable author? Does the production of an article in a conventional way by default grant it greater authoritative knowledge?"
>
> -Student 1 assignment excerpt

> "While institutions often claim to value diverse study, I find it is always easy to access sources written by "traditional" scholars and more challenging when searching for academic sources from a diverse authorship. The accessibility of 'traditional' scholars likewise gives them greater authoritative knowledge. They use western methods of research and are easier to learn more about, granting them credibility in their familiarity and convenience."
>
> -Student 2 assignment excerpt

> "From class and assignment it occurred to me that in university we are only taught to use the library, and that that is the only credible source. If I were to find websites like the ones presented in this project I would probably struggle because I don't know what is credible beyond the library or Professors telling us so. Inference: the authority of the university is reproducing and reinforcing notions of what is credible knowledge."
>
> -Student 3 assignment excerpt

> "There was great difficulty in finding a good resource…There were even papers with restrictions behind paywalls, or those unavailable through the University of Lethbridge Library database…This does impress the importance of community-based and free resources…which offer some free insight into community issues, gatherings, and other related news."
>
> -Student 4 assignment excerpt

These reflections not only demonstrated a clear critical engagement with the sources students were encountering, but a broader reflection on the nature of how knowledge is produced and disseminated within institutions. This reflexivity around knowledge also created space for student reflections around uncertainty, anxiety, and confusion as they moved through their assignment. While this is often reflected in conversations around assignments, received from students in assignments, this emphasis on reflexivity conveyed a much stronger sense of student agency and personality. During the grading process, while I was mindful of assignment requirements such as connections to course content and proper APA citation, I found myself engaging with the work very similarly to the way I would a colleague. These were not just student assignments to assign a number to – for me, this was an important, reflexive conversation between scholars, one that would shape the development of my research questions moving forward. Unknowingly, the design of this assignment itself became a process of co-inquiry, with the students' ideas, reflections, and questions fundamental to the development of my own.

The modification of the assignment itself was also a process of co-inquiry between Dr. Newberry and me. She took seriously a conversation about how I valued the assignment as an undergraduate because of the way it challenged me to be reflexive about the nature of scholarly sources as a reason to replace a second short essay in the course with the Trace a Path assignment. While the assignment did exist prior to my research, its redesign was a very collaborative process. It was also a process of mediation. While we had many shared questions

and goals for the assignment, the nature of my research led me to be narrowly focused on specific ideas that I did not always translate successfully into assignment guidelines. I relied heavily on her teaching expertise and experience with assignment design while she was considerate of and provided me the freedom to address my specific research concerns under her guidance. Through our shared inquiry, we were able to facilitate inquiry for students as well that produced more impactful engagement with both course content and the broader educational system they were embedded in.

3.4 Understanding their Roles as Educators: Students as Peer Teachers

The second result of using NDAs in my research was the moments where students not only took on the role of knowledge producer but were also capable educators to others. Many of the NDAs within my research project positioned students in the role of a peer teacher: they were completing assignments in which they were responsible for educating a future student about a course concept or reading. These assignments were structured to encourage students to be thoughtful about the nature of the content they were generating: were their definitions clear enough that they would be accessible to other students who were new to the concepts? Were their communications bogged down by unnecessary over explanations? Could they apply their knowledge to examples appropriately to better support their peer learning? These types of considerations are not typically necessary when student assignments will only be viewed by the instructor, who is usually well-versed in course content. By understanding their intended audience as someone unfamiliar with the material, students were responsible for both their own understanding of it and communicating it effectively to others. This reflects a different responsibility around pedagogy, as discussed by Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten (2014). By providing the opportunity for students to take on some of this responsibility, I hoped it would encourage them to consequentially see themselves as capable of teaching their peers.

Design an Assignment – Anth 3280

One way students took on the role of educators was an in-class group assignment in ANTH 3280. Students were asked to propose a research project for future students in the course through the answering of guided questions developed by Dr. Newberry and myself. Students were also informed that, if the course was not taught at the university again, their research proposals would be shared as possible projects for students in the Community Bridge Lab, an interdisciplinary lab that supported students through qualitative, community-engaged research at the university.[15] Being informed that their proposals would be viewed by others beside Dr. Newberry and myself, and that their proposals did need to be realistic for students such as themselves to complete, forced students to consider seriously the scope of their projects. By shifting who their intended audience would be (i.e. beyond the instructor of the course), students demonstrated a clear change in how they were considering their knowledge and how it would be received by others.

> *Once students reached the question about methodology, most groups went back to reconsider and revise their research questions – it was thinking about their methodologies that prompted them to think more seriously about their research question, and the feasibility of it. A lot of them realized the initial question they had proposed was far too broad, or even too vague as a starting point for others to take up in the future. It was super interesting to see it – that kind of* aha *moment where it clicked for them – this wasn't just about completing an assignment for themselves while working with others. This was also about thinking about others beyond the course itself, students they might never know or meet. They had no guarantee that students would be operating with the exact same set of concepts that they were drawing on from the class. I think this was new for most, if not all of the students – this idea of looking forward, of where their work* could *go, even if they aren't there to see how it transforms. I don't know if any of them had ever been forced to seriously consider the extension of knowledge beyond getting the grade and completing the course in an assignment before.*
>
> - Field notes (27 April 2022)

[15] For more information about the Community Bridge Lab, please visit https://www.ulethbridge.ca/liberal-education/community-bridge-lab-university-lethbridge.

This 'aha' moment I reference in my field notes is a prime example of this shift in student relationship to knowledge, even if it only occurred temporarily within this specific course. By asking students to consider a different audience beyond their instructor, they were required to consider themselves as knowledge producers. What was perhaps even more impactful is the students were required to think of themselves as individuals capable of teaching their peers. Rather than producing work that would only be viewed by their instructor, students were forced to conceptualize an audience beyond that traditional, closed student-teacher exchange, and utilize the course knowledge they had gained by applying it to a local context.

I choose not to spend a significant amount of time on this assignment because both its design and execution were greatly impacted by two significant interruptions to the course.[16] However, I still think this assignment is worth reflecting on both because of its extraordinary circumstances, student responses to new assignment formats (which will be elaborated on further down), and because of the specific design of the assignment itself. While it was not executed how Dr. Newberry and I had initially envisioned it, it did encourage me to utilize the idea of designing assignments around educating peers again.

Explain a Concept – Anth 3000

For this assignment, I introduced students to the concept of OERs through a lecture during class time. After being introduced to the idea of OERs, open educational practices, and co-inquiry, students wrote a short 'entry' for the OER that defined a theoretical approach or

[16] A surge in COVID-19 cases forced the university community back into the emergency remote learning model after a single semester back on campus. The semester was also interrupted due to the University of Lethbridge Faculty Association's decision to begin strike action and the university's subsequent lockout of faculty in response. After successful negotiations ended the strike, the remainder of the course was ultimately conducted online to prevent any further disruption to students, meaning that we could not ask students to spend any time physically in the location they would be proposing research about.

concept they had learned in the course. After defining it, students applied their chosen concept to a real-world case to demonstrate to introductory students how anthropological concepts are utilized to understand the world around them. Students were also introduced to the idea of different modes of knowledge and provided examples of how to incorporate multimodality into their assignments but were not required to actually learn how to embed this media directly into their assignments due to the circumstances of the semester. Instead, I asked them to reflect briefly on how their entries could be multimodal. I retained this as part of the assignment guidelines to encourage student consideration of how broadening the way knowledge is shared outside of written text can increase the ability for others to obtain it.

This assignment was the first attempt at having students generate original content for the OER. I was able to gain valuable insight into student perception of completing work fully intended to be viewed by others. For most (if not all) of the students, this was not only their first exposure to an assignment designed with this goal, but their first introduction to the idea of OERs and NDAs.

> *There is a lot of student anxiety around this assignment, and I suspect most of this is the fear of the unknown – students have no idea what an OER is, and why they would be writing for one. Part of this will be alleviated with my own introductory lecture. I suspect this is also just this insanely weird semester (or, realistically, past few years) we have been experiencing. It's hard to see students struggling so much with stress around new types of assignments when I'm trying to design them for their benefit (or what I think is their benefit…). I'm hoping the framing of my lecture will not only spark engagement with not only the idea of peer learning and multimodality, but also that this assignment is really about thinking through how we share anthropological knowledge in the academy, and what this means for the theories within our discipline. They're capable of doing this. I just need to figure out a way to convince them that they are…*
>
> - Field notes (23 April, 2022)

This thread of student anxiety was shared amongst almost all the NDAs in my research. However, it became even more apparent when students were asked to generate content specifically for the OER. It was especially apparent during this assignment design, in which many of the students had not even personally interacted with the OER they were asked to be creating content for. Even if it was a result of the circumstances of the semester, it was still an unreasonable ask on my part as the researcher.

One way that Dr. Newberry and I mediated this problem was separating the assignment into two components, with in-class group that supported the completion of the individual assignment. Students were given examples of concepts they could define, and how they could be applied to examples effectively to demonstrate their understanding and better support future student learning. Students then worked in groups to brainstorm an appropriate concept or approach, define it, and identify possible examples it could be applied to. Students were also asked to consider in their groups what kind of supports an introductory student would require to successfully engage with their entry, and how they could incorporate multimodality into their assignments. These specific activities were chosen for the group work because students quickly realized how well they actually grasped a concept when they were put into a position where they had to explain it to their group members. Students then used this collective group work as an outline for their individual entry. While most students closely followed the outline generated by their groups, there were also several students who chose completely new concepts and examples for their individual assignments.

Again, while I chose not to incorporate this assignment directly into my portfolio, I choose to address it because it provided much of the initial insight I needed to create more successful assignment design in the latter half of my research. This assignment was also just as

much of a 'brainstorming' exercise for Dr. Newberry and me as it was for the students. Their answers during the group assignment were carefully analyzed for gaps in my own assumptions about OER design. While these students did not necessarily interact with the OER themselves, and while their entries were never incorporated into it because of a variety of unanticipated circumstances, these students were also key in identifying ways to support introductory students while learning about anthropology from the OER, many of which I had not considered myself.

Find the Learning Objectives – Introductory Class 2022

For this assignment, which was known as the Student Review assignment, students were asked to sign up for a specific portion of the OER to review. For some students, this was an entire chapter; longer chapters were divided into multiple sections. These divisions were made with the intent that all students would be reviewing roughly the same length of text for their assignment to avoid unintentional penalizing for student sign-up choices. Students were then tasked with reviewing their chosen section and writing a very brief (200-250 words) 'learning objectives' section that summarized key terms, ideas, and individuals mentioned within their section. Students were encouraged to "imagine your submission being placed at the beginning of a reading to provide a roadmap for students before they begin reading" (Asselin 2022).[17] In order to pass the assignment, students needed to adhere to the word limit, successfully pull key ideas from their section and summarize them appropriately, identify any potential challenging concepts that students should review carefully, and provide at least one connection to other course content. The goal for this assignment was to encourage thoughtful engagement with course readings,

[17] Quotation taken from assignment guidelines. The full assignment guideline can be found within the portfolio.

develop student reading comprehension skills, and provide students the opportunity to practice summative writing skills.

For this assignment, I was inspired by DeRosa (2016)'s discussion around the creation of an OER with one iteration of her American survey literature course. Upon realizing that most of the work her students were engaging with was freely available in the public domain, DeRosa decided to compile the pieces into an OER to save her students the cost of the physical anthology they had been previously required to purchase. Once the initial framework was completed, DeRosa found that, while adequately providing students access to the required readings, the OER was far from complete.

> What the book still lacked, which my undergraduates really wanted, was the front matter that is conventionally included at the beginning of each text, which generally provides historical and biographical context to help students engage more fully with the primary documents. So students in the course signed up to create these introductions…generally, they submitted them in time for the class to use them when we covered the text in the syllabus, but they also often revised them after we discussed the text in class if they thought they could improve them (DeRosa 2016, para. 6).

This discussion around how students found supplementary material meaningful was interesting, but particularly intriguing to me for two reasons. First, the students were generating the content they felt the OER lacked, with the specific intention of filling the gaps in the resource that they saw as students. Secondly, students had the opportunity to revise their assignments after the first attempt, providing them with both the opportunity to improve upon their work after its initial completion and the agency to be able to make the decision to do so. The idea to have students

generate supplemental material through their engagement with assigned course readings, which would later be used for their peers in future iterations of the course, seemed like an ideal framing for an NDA that would encourage the students to consider themselves as capable of teaching their peers without the pressure of creating content that was composed of their own original ideas.

Two different NDAs with this format were used in Class 2022. This course was different than previously discussed examples for a few reasons. First, I had the experience of designing the three previous assignments, which informed the way I approached the assignment design in this course. Second, students were also using the OER as their course text, meaning that they had the direct interaction with the resource beyond lectures I provided, as had been the case previously. Third, the students were not required to complete the assignments to pass the course due to the labour-based grading system used by Dr. Asselin.[18] Fourth, the assignments were graded through a pass/fail system, with two possible attempts at the assignment. This meant that students could fail their first attempt, receive constructive feedback, and resubmit their revised version and still successfully receive full credit. A pass/fail grading system is often used with labour-based grading, as this system emphasizes the time and effort put into learning while completing an assignment rather than grading the assignment based on the perceived quality of it.

Like other classes involved in the NDA research, students were informed of the nature and goals of my research, as well as my dual role as researcher and TA within the classroom.

[18] As part of a larger experiment with pedagogical approaches, Dr. Asselin had opted to use labour-based grading. It was possible for students to pass the course based on attendance and completion of weekly quizzes; opting into the writing assignments allowed students to obtain a letter grade above a B-. For more information on labour-based grading, please visit https://wac.colostate.edu/books/perspectives/labor/.

Students were also explicitly told that their decision to complete the writing assignments did not necessarily mean that they would be consenting to having them integrated into the OER. While I wanted students to complete their assignments with a wider audience in mind (i.e., future introductory students), I wanted to mediate some of the anxiety we had seen with previous students about engaging with new assignment structures. Students were also informed that, if I approached them about including their assignment into the OER, there was no risk to their grade should they decline.

Out of the 123 Student Review assignments completed in the course, I selected 19 that were appropriate for inclusion in the OER. During my selection criteria, I examined proper selection and summary of key points, effective and clear communication within their writing, and strong connections to course content that would support future student learning. These 19 students were each sent an email with a detailed recruitment letter and a letter of consent to be signed should they be interested. During this process, students were also given the opportunity to have their first name and the first letter of their last name attached to their work or remain anonymous. Students were also given the opportunity to revise their assignment before the end of the semester before it would be viewed by other students. Five students agreed to have their assignments included in the OER. All 5 students wished to have their named attached to their assignment, and all 5 declined the opportunity to revise their assignment before its inclusion into the OER.[19]

[19] While I cannot conclusively say this was a factor, I do suspect that the low response rate and decision not to revise the assignment may have been related to the time the invitations were sent out. Due to personal illness, invitations to participate in the research were sent out during the last week of the semester, an incredibly busy time for students completing last assignments and preparing for finals. This was a regrettable but unavoidable hiccup in my research.

This assignment did have its fair share of difficulties for students. First, upon reflection, Dr. Asselin and I realized that the assignment instructions could have been clearer. While the assignment instructions did include a checklist of objectives for the students, I believe that the students required more support to understand how to approach this assignment and its intention to inform future readers. On my part, there was an underlying assumption that students in the course had engaged with some kind of text with similar introductory sections, which may not have been the case due to the demographic of our students. This was a definite mistake on our part both because of the new assignment format and because of the higher number of first- and second-year students in our course. However, this was also most likely a challenging assignment because of its summative nature within such a concise word limit. Students were given a submission deadline after their chapter content would be discussed in lecture, giving them the opportunity to adjust their assignment before submission based on what they learned in class.

It was, however, an important learning experience for my research in particular because it spoke to the larger uncertainty that students often experienced with NDAs, and the importance of providing thorough instructions and support during their completion as students learn to approach their assignments differently. It also led to another significant conclusion of this work, in which students demonstrated the incredible power of the two-attempt structure. While this was an accidental discovery due to the labour-based grading style, it did provide the opportunity to examine how iterative work can be done with student assignments. Not only did students simply have the ability to correct any mistakes around the requirements of the assignment – I also found that student writing, definition, and summarization skills often typically improved on their second attempt after they incorporated my feedback.

When asked about the use of the NDAs in the classroom, students also primarily responded positively because of their ability to utilize their course knowledge in a way that felt meaningful to them.

> "The assignments forced me to apply what I had been learning in a stress free manor [sic] which I enjoyed!"
>
> -Student Survey Response 1

> "I can actually enjoy learning the subject without stressing about completing things. I feel like because of that I am able to focus on the quality of the assignments more than I previously was able to."
>
> -Student Survey Response 2

> "I'm able to actually take a breath and learn what I want to learn instead of forcing information into my brain and hoping it sticks."
>
> -Student Survey Response 3

Overall, while I did not have as many students participate in including content into the OER as I had initially hoped, I still view this assignment as a success. While there was not a large amount of content added to the OER because of this specific assignment, it was successful in reducing student anxiety as they completed an assignment that positioned them as capable of teaching others. The strong connection to assigned course readings and a checklist of objectives seemed to provide more structure for students compared to the previously discussed assignments. It was also the first serious step into incorporating student-generated content into the OER. Both the assignment guidelines and an example of the student-generated section within the OER chapter are included as part of the portfolio at the end of this chapter.

3.4 Varying Perspectives: The Role of Students in Addressing Gaps in Diversity

Both OERs and open educational practices are typically rooted in social justice, particularly equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) movements, and the question of access is a significant one. As discussed in chapter 2, one of the key aspects of open educational practices is the expansion of who can produce knowledge in academia. With the creation of the Anthropology OER, I wanted to expand upon representation of various identities of knowledge producers in our introductory course. The students who enter our classrooms encompass a range of beautifully complex identities that are often not captured in our disciplinary canons, assigned readings, and course materials. Variations in cultural heritage, race or ethnic backgrounds, gender and sexual identity, religious faith, physical and mental ability, socioeconomic class, geographical location, and national identity are often poorly reflected in our courses, particularly in authors of assigned readings. These ideas will be further explored in chapter 4, but one way that we diversified our OER was by having students conduct research on diverse anthropologists.

Find an Anthropologist – Introductory Class 2022

The second NDA completed in Class 2022 was the Anthropology Bio assignment. In this assignment, students were tasked with researching and writing a short (350-500 words) biography about an anthropologist that was not already featured in the OER. Students were strongly encouraged to consider diversity in their selection. In order to successfully pass the assignment, students were asked to provide key biographical information (full name, origin, research specialty, geographical location of their fieldwork, and when they conducted their research), as well as making note of their key contributions to the discipline. Students were also required to properly cite two key works by the author. The goals of this assignment – beyond introducing students to other, lesser-known anthropologists and diversifying representation within the OER – was to give students the opportunity to practice basic research and writing

skills. For example, in this short writing assignment, students were tasked with locating an anthropologist, conducting brief biographical research about them, finding and properly citing two of their publications, and ensuring that they properly cited all of their information. The act of citation was a challenge for many students, who had very limited or no experience with academic citation styles. Other students struggled with the proper citations of publications by their chosen anthropologists, particularly those who had conducted their research before the popularization of digital publications. Students who completed the assignment also reflected on its difficulty because of limited information around anthropologists who were not prominent in the disciplinary canon. Some students discussed visiting other university websites to find an appropriate anthropologist, because general searches for anthropologists not already mentioned in the OER were not fruitful.

> "I haven't finished the Anthropology Bio yet, but I think it's a great assignment. It took me awhile and some perusing through other universities anthropology departments to find someone I found interesting but also was considered an anthropologist. As I could not find an easy list of non-white/famous anthropologist."
>
> -Student Survey Response

Uptake by students on the Anthropology Bio assignment was lower than the student review assignment. Seventy-eight assignments were completed, though the number of students involved was higher, as students could work in groups of up to three. While I cannot say for certain, I suspect that this was for two primary reasons: the deadline for this assignment was later in the semester, meaning that students were feeling more pressure from their courses overall, and their initial priorities around completing assignments to obtain a higher letter grade for the course

may have shifted to compensate accordingly.[20] Secondly, this assignment did require a higher commitment compared to the previous writing assignments due to its research requirements. Despite this, 22 students were invited to integrate their assignment in the OER. Of these 22 students, 7 consented to having their assignment included. Like the Student Review assignment, all students wished to have authorship credit using their names, and none of the students chose to revise their assignment before its inclusion into the OER. Selection criteria for students invited was similar to the Student Review. Assignments needed the appropriate details, proper citations, and clear, concise communication in their writing to best support future introductory students in learning about the breadth of diverse scholars in our discipline.

One of the most surprising, and arguably the most delightful, results of this assignment was the knowledge that Dr. Asselin and I also gained from these assignments. Out of all the assignments submitted, I was only familiar with a handful of the anthropologists that students researched. Dr. Asselin also commented to me on how much she enjoyed learning about scholars she was unfamiliar with through the grading of the student assignments. This is not a necessarily new conclusion from my research, but it is an important one: when students are given the opportunity to explore within their courses, they often return with new, impactful information for their instructors. Through the design and grading of this assignment, I learned just as much as the students did about a range of incredible scholars in anthropology that I might not have encountered otherwise.

> *This assignment is so interesting to grade. While there's of course been some more standard names that I know that just aren't referenced in the OER, students really took to the task of finding 'unknown' scholars. I think the idea of searching university department websites is so so interesting – and not something first-year*

[20] Students could obtain an A- with proper attendance, completion of weekly quizzes, and two writing assignments. This most likely made completing the last two assignments (which included the Anthropology Bio) only a priority for extremely engaged students.

students are probably typically doing. I don't think I would have thought to look at other university departments until I heard about people finding supervisors that way for grad school. It's also made me think about the idea of more 'contemporary' scholars in intro. Students typically only learn about 'staples' in our discipline in intro unless the prof chooses to expand on that. We miss so much by not consistently bringing in more recent scholars into the course. I know we can't teach it all, especially in intro, but it does make me wonder if students who only take intro for GLER [liberal education breadth requirement] courses and then never take another anth class again think of anth as these traditional ethnographies, with these older methodologies, with this collection of scholars who aren't particularly diverse.

- Field notes (23 November, 2022)

Like the Student Review assignment, students who completed this assignment primarily responded positively. When asked about the completion of NDAs in the course, 96.9% of 127 respondents confirmed that they had completed at least one of the assignments in the course. When asked if they found the assignments beneficial for their understanding of course material, 39.4% of students reported that the NDAs had greatly improved their understanding. 46.5% of students agreed that it had somewhat improved their understanding, while 7.9% reported that the assignments had no impact on their understanding. Only 0.8% of the student respondents reported that the NDAs did not improve their understanding of course material. In the written responses, students demonstrated appreciation for the ability to utilize their course knowledge outside of non-disposable assignments.

"I was able to maintain the information I learned instead of just memorizing, using on exams, then forgetting."

-Student Survey Response 1

"I feel like the material understanding is the priority instead of memorization of terms."

-Student Survey Response 2

Overall, with 85.9% of students agreeing that the NDAs supported their understanding to some degree, I also consider this assignment a success, even though there was only a small number of assignments that were included in the OER. The assignment instructions and an example chapter of the OER that includes this assignment have been included as part of my portfolio at the end of this chapter.

3.5 Conclusion: Can Students Work Openly?

The low number of assignments selected as appropriate for the OER from the Class 2022 may lead to some skepticism about the effectiveness of these assignment designs. It also calls into question if students, particularly first-years who are just beginning to learn how to navigate university, have enough postsecondary experience to be considered capable of producing legitimate knowledge. This is not something I examined within my research enough to draw any significant conclusions. At best, all I have is speculations, though I am not necessarily unconvinced that introductory students are not capable based on my experiences. What I can certainly attest to based on my research is that I did see a higher level of engagement with assignments and quality of work from students in senior level classes. However, this type of engagement and quality was also witnessed in second-year classes, as discussed in the Trace a Path assignment from ANTH 2210. In chapter 4, I will discuss another semester-long NDA that occurred in a second-year course. Because of these two research experiences in particular, second-year students have demonstrated capability for this type of work after having their first year to orient themselves within postsecondary education.

3.6 Portfolio Items

Trace a Path

Included in this section of the portfolio are the group assignment guidelines, the individual assignment guidelines, and an example of how one student approached the completion of the individual component of this assignment.

Group Assignment:

PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT INDIGENOUS NORTH AMERICA

You will first work with your team on a particular resource. For your written assignment, you will do a comparison with another source from the University of Lethbridge library

TEAMWORK:

Working within your group, you will explore a resource created by and/or with the Indigenous group it seeks to educate others about. The in-class teamwork is intended to prepare you for your individual writing assignment, for which you will find and compare a resource found from the University library (see more details below).

First, you must agree as a group on which website you wish to explore. The links to the websites can be found below:

The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture

The Siksika Nation

The Blackfeet Nation

After you have selected your resource, work together to answer the questions provided on Google Docs linked below. **Please make sure to record the names of everyone present for the teamwork on the document.**

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES:

Building on the work you completed in-class, search for a source from the University library about the Indigenous group you researched (Métis, the Siksika Nation, or the Blackfeet Nation). This source must be an academically legitimate source (a published book or an article from a peer-reviewed academic journal).

The goal of this assignment is to trace the path of your research by keeping fieldnotes on your search process. So, it will be important to record the details of your searches and the choices you made (the databases you are searching, key words you are using, how you filter your searches, failures and successes, why you made the decisions you did, etc.)

Your final assignment will have three components:

1. The fieldnotes of your search. These notes must be legible for marking purposes and your assignment must be submitted in a word document, so handwritten notes must be typed up.

2. An APA citation of your found academic resource.

3. A short reflection (approximately 500 words, double-spaced) on the differences between the source you explored in-class and your found academic source. Consider some of the questions you examined during your in-class work (ex: how is the information presented, who is the intended audience, what is the intention, who has authoritative knowledge). What do the two resources have in common? What major differences do they have? If you had difficulty finding a resource, reflect on why that might be so? What did this exercise tell you about how and who produces knowledge about Indigenous people in North America? Be sure to make clear connections to course concepts and themes in this reflection.

Your individual written assignment will be due by midnight on Friday, December 2nd. You will upload your documents through Moodle.

Assignment Example

Find the Learning Objectives

For this portfolio item, both the assignment guidelines and a student example within the OER are included.

This assignment consists of a review of a reading for this course and producing a written document that summarizes key areas of importance. Imagine your submission being placed at the beginning of a reading to provide a roadmap for students before they begin reading.

What to review: You must sign up for a section to review in order to complete this assignment. The sign up page is on Moodle. No more than 5 students can sign up to any one section without permission.

Due date: each section has its own due date. Once you have signed up, that is your due date. It is not guaranteed that a later section will be available to you if you fail to meet your deadline. It is strongly recommended you sign up early and meet your deadline.

Instructions:
In order to receive a pass for this assignment, your submission must have the following elements:

- 200-250 words. (some point form is welcome, but the entire submission cannot be point form)
- The most important arguments presented in the reading
- Key concepts and a brief description of what they mean
- Challenging concepts - things students might find difficult or easily misunderstand
- Connections to other course material.

For Example:

Here you would introduce your reading, saying that this reading is about x, y, and z. You might then go on to say that the most important thing to take away from this reading is how it handles x concept, and introduces y theorist or theory. You might then state that important concepts and people include

- X, and then write one sentence about what this means
- Y, and then write one sentence about what this means
- Z, an anthropologist who was important because of ….

You might then write that students may find x concept challenging because of …..
You might then write that these concepts clearly tie back to x chapter, where (a person, theory, concept, example) connects to this one.

Assignment Example

Find an Anthropologist

For this portfolio item, both the assignment guidelines and a link to an example of the completed student work within the OER are included.

Instructions Noted on your Syllabus:

> Anthropology Bio: submit a biography of an anthropologist not otherwise noted in the textbook. Diversity is encouraged. Instructions on Moodle. In order to receive marks for this assignment you must have completed Finding Anthropology and Student Review.

To pass this assignment:

- 350-500 words
- Word doc
- Include anthropologist's full name, origin, where they did fieldwork, area of specialization, when (when did their research occur, are they still alive?)
- Key contributions (what did this anthropologist add to the field)
- Key works (fully cite at least two important papers or books this anthropologist wrote)
- Submit on Moodle before due date
- Include the full names of all people who contributed to this assignment (max 3)
- **CITATIONS MUST BE INCLUDED.** Feel free to use whichever citational style you feel comfortable with. In-text citations must be used for direct quotations, and a reference page must be included at the end of your assignment. If you need assistance with learning citational styles, you can contact the Academic Writing Centre on campus for resources.

Assignment Example

CHAPTER 4: STUDENTS AS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCERS

4.1 Introduction: Student Agency in Open Educational Practices

Previous chapters have addressed the process of OER creation with both faculty co-creators and students in the form of in-class NDAs. In this chapter, I will discuss two times in my fieldwork where students had increased agency over their contributions to the OER. This increased agency led to a much deeper, and subsequently richer, level of engagement for students, and so the contributions they produced for the OER were differed significantly from the previously discussed examples. These two examples also demonstrate a closer alignment to the collaboration and open circulation of knowledge fundamental to open educational practices. In the following, I first discuss the co-creation of an OER chapter on Black anthropologists with another undergraduate student. Second, I outline the co-creation of an OER chapter on digital anthropology that was the result of a semester-long course project. Finally, to close this chapter, which describes two significant projects requiring more labour by both faculty and students, I discuss the rarely examined labour of OER and open educational practices.

4.2 Student Co-inquiry: Addressing the Gaps

> **Julisha:** Yeah, so I think anthropology has always been rooted in colonialism and notions of white supremacy, you know? So you have all these like white anthropologists who are, you know, going out to all these different cultures around the world with the goal of like studying 'the Other', you know? And often their work was, you know, used to uphold and reinforce structures of white supremacy. So I think whiteness is just deeply tied to the history of anthropology just in that sense.
> **Alyssa:** Right.
> **Julisha:** But I think it also applies when talking about our teaching, you know, about the teaching of the history of the discipline. These are the anthropologists whose contributions that are focused on. You know what I mean? You have the Franz Boas, the Margaret Mead, the Malinowski's, right? And while these people are very important – you know, I think we should be talking about them, to some extent – I think it's also important to acknowledge that anthropology, from its beginning, has *always* involved the work of anthropologists of colour, and specifically Black anthropologists, you know? I think talking about this not only prevents the erasure of these contributions, these scholars, but I think it just

disrupts the canon and tries to decenter whiteness, you know, when talking about anthropology.
Alyssa: Mhm.
Julisha: You know, and on a separate note, I think it also provides the opportunity for students of colour to like see themselves. You know what I mean? And to know that anthropology is for them too. It's – it's never been a white discipline in the sense that only white people or white anthropologists were doing it. It's just like who we talk about – who we focus on. So I think it's important for them [students of colour] to know they have a place here too, you know?
Alyssa: No, absolutely. I think it's, um – and we've talked about this before – but I think it's really troubling – and I think it's changing, which is really great to see and we especially have faculty here I think too at the university who are very conscious of that – um, but it is very troubling that we don't hear a lot about, um, like scholars of colour who are doing this really important work until we hit those upper levels in a discipline that is so focused on humanness and the importance of understanding others and the importance of embracing and including others and we are still are not seeing that in our teaching necessarily all of the time.

- Interview 3 with Julisha Roache, 03 September, 2022

As mentioned in previous chapters, one of the goals of incorporating open educational practices into teaching is the potential for expanding the attainability of who can produce legitimate knowledge within postsecondary institutions. A significant component of this is the scholars who are introduced to students within their courses, and whose work they are required to read. While selecting course readings is often viewed as a very neutral act, or simply the best reflection of disciplinary history, Sara Ahmed argues that this act is in fact political. A feminist scholar who situates herself at "the intersection of feminist, queer and race studies" (Ahmed n.d.[21]), Ahmed argues that our academic citational practices often become "ways of making certain bodies and thematics core to the discipline, and others not even part" (2013, para. 4). By choosing to attend to certain types of scholars in our disciplines, particularly in our teaching, Ahmed contends that we often, even if it is unconsciously, reproduce the colonial history embedded in the early development of our disciplines that caters to white male privilege. Despite

[21] For more information about Sara Ahmed, visit https://www.saranahmed.com/bio-cv.

numerous calls to address this, disciplinary canons often still do not fully account for the scholars who have been systematically erased. Core disciplinary figures and readings still tend to cater to the white male gaze of their origins, and these are further reproduced in assigned course readings.

> I was once asked to contribute to a sociology course, for example, and found that all the core readings were by male writers. I pointed this out and the course convener implied that "that" was simply a reflection of the history of the discipline. Well: this is a very selective history! (Ahmed 2013, para. 4).

Ruth Benedict's well-known quote "the purpose of anthropology is to make the world safe for human difference"[22] demonstrates anthropology's attention to human difference. In a discipline as vastly diverse as anthropology, in which its practitioners often reflect upon the importance of accurately capturing it, the failure to demonstrate such diversity in our course materials is a significant one. Anthropology, like most social science disciplines (and arguably most postsecondary disciplines) also has deep roots in colonial history. Often referred to as the 'handmaiden' of colonialism, particularly in the 1960's and 70's, the discipline has had to reconcile its deep ties to Eurocentric thought and scholarly practices. Asad (1973) described anthropology's emergence as "efforts [that] were devoted to a description and analysis – carried out by Europeans, for a European audience – of non-European societies dominated by European power" (p. 18). While significant efforts have been made to acknowledge and address this disciplinary history, its impact is still felt by many today. One of the most significant ways is in

[22] The full quote attributed to Ruth Benedict is "the purpose of anthropology is to make the world safe for human difference." Citational attribution for the quote appears to belong to William Haviland. For more information, see Haviland, William A. (2005). *Cultural Anthropology: The Human Challenge*. 11th ed. Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth.

the teaching of the discipline, and in our citational practices. In a discipline that has committed to using its tools, methodology and perspectives to "make the world safe for human difference", marginalized scholars still do not exist in the same prominence in our disciplinary canon (Smith & Garrett-Scott 2021; Craven 2021; Lasco 2023; Davis & Mula 2023; Das 2021). After recounting an experience in her undergraduate degree in which she asked her instructor why none of the assigned course readings in her introductory anthropology course were authored by a Black scholar, Christen A. Smith went on to reflect that she:

> learned why my question had left my professor flustered: Black people, and specifically Black women, had indeed been historically erased from the canon in anthropology despite conducting far-reaching ethnographic work and writing…it appears that despite our scholarly production, training, practice, and prolific writing as anthropologists, we go either unnoticed or unremarked. Although Black women are productive archaeologists, bioanthropologists, ethnographers, linguists, and sociocultural anthropological theorists, *our non-Black colleagues are not citing our work with any measurable consistency*. We are not named (Smith & Garrett-Scott 2021, p. 20).

Smith went on to recount the importance of encountering work authored by other Black scholars in the discipline as an undergraduate, reflecting that reading these works "reassured me that anthropology could be for me" (Smith & Garrett-Scott 2021, p. 19). In discussing concerns around the lack of proper citation of marginalized scholars to include them into our canons, Das (2021) urged that these conversations were critical to our work as scholars, arguing that:

> Conversations about how to appropriately cite scholarship index previous conversations about problems of inequity and exclusion in the academy, and pave

> the way for future conversations around issues of racism, sexism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination to be held and to be challenged (p. 336).

I felt the impact of this myself in different ways during my time as a settler undergraduate student due to other aspects of my own identity. I shared many conversations with my peers from a variety of different backgrounds and identities who shared this sentiment. It is one that is fundamentally felt by many students, especially those from traditionally marginalized groups.

These conversations are happening amongst faculty, and are beginning to emerge within classrooms, but there is still significant amount of work to be done to begin to dismantle the barriers that marginalized scholars face producing legitimate knowledge within postsecondary institutions. Diversifying course readings and taking care to cite marginalized scholars is only the beginning steps of this process. By opening up our pedagogical practices, we also have the opportunity to open our bibliographical practices as well. Farrow (2015), drawing from Freire's (1970) arguments against the banking model of education, maintains that open educational practices should be intertwined with critical pedagogy, asserting that:

> By democratizing the processes through which educational materials and processes are designed and delivered, open education allows a greater plurality of voices to be heard and to contribute, and the experiences of groups who are often marginalized may be better heard: perhaps this is what we should really mean when we refer to education as 'open' (p. 143).

Open educational practices' emphasis on learner-generated content contributes to the "plurality" of voices Farrow refers to. Below, I discuss a critical example in my research of how expanding

access to knowledge production created greater space for marginalized scholars in the introductory anthropology course through the co-creation of an original OER chapter.

4.3 "I want to know all the forgotten voices": Black Anthropology

> **Julisha:** I didn't see myself in the discipline or the department for like, a long time, you know? It's [presented as] a very white discipline. I kind of felt like…you know, now one else is going to do this work right now, so I might as well do this. I want to know about all the forgotten voices and the OER gives the opportunity to share it rather than working in contained spaces. This work is bigger than myself…highlighting these people who have been forgotten, or not acknowledged is an amazing opportunity. It's scary, you know what I mean? It's, you know, pretty scary to know, sometimes, that other students will see it. But it's worth it, you know? This work is so amazing – like, done for students, by students? This opportunity to take hold of our own learning, we don't normally get to see that in academia, you know? So, um, yeah. I feel pretty anxious sometimes about it, but I also have all this motivation because this work can continue after I'm done. And it's going to be seen by others, not just my prof, you know, so like I'm motivated to work really hard on it, maybe even more than I would be on a regular assignment. And I think, um, I think the collaboration, you know, like you and me working together on this, is a really big benefit to this type of work. And we're actually doing something, you know, like, actually addressing something in a more practical way. Rather than just talking about issues of access, we're expanding that access.

- Interview 1 with Julisha Roache (20 February 2022)

One of the items included in my portfolio for this chapter is an entirely original chapter written for the OER by undergraduate student Julisha Roache (Bachelor of Arts, University of Lethbridge, 2022). Julisha was arguably the biggest student contributor to the OER overall and was unique in her contributions because they were done outside of a structured course. Julisha instead participated in co-creation through her own independent research, which afforded her a higher degree of agency in shaping her contributions. Julisha generated content for the OER in two major ways: by conducting student interviews about their own independent research, which were incorporated into the OER as case studies, and through the writing of her own chapter, which she titled Black Anthropology.

The idea for this chapter originally began with a course both Julisha and I took during our undergraduate degree. In 2020, we took a fourth-year seminar on decolonizing ethnography, taught by Dr. Jan Newberry. This course reflected on the renewed calls to decolonize the discipline in the wake of "The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn" (Jobson 2020), as well as highlighting scholars that had traditionally been neglected or erased entirely from the discipline canon.

> **Julisha:** I think I talked to Jan about it, too, I think I mentioned it…I think she did a small section in 4000, I think it was in decolonization. And she like mentioned a Haitian anthropologist [from earlier in the discipline history] –
> **Alyssa:** Mhm
> **Julisha:** – she talked about that. And I literally was like so kind of like affected that I had to thank her. I was like 'thank you for this' – I didn't even know that I *needed* that until I heard it, you know what I mean? I was like 'whoa', because you know – like, obviously you know there are anthropologists of colour and Black anthropologists doing things, but to hear that like – we've been here from the start? It's something that I just had never heard before that point. It provided such a sense of kind of motivation for me – to be like, 'whoa, I can do it too'.
> **Alyssa:** No – I think that, like, that decolonizing seminar…I know you and I have talked a bunch about how it radically changed us and how I wish we could see that sooner – and I wish she would teach that seminar again because it made such an impact, I think, as a whole for the class, I think everybody pretty much felt that way –
> **Julisha:** For sure.
> **Alyssa:** – but a lot of those scholars that we were reading that we had never heard of before that were scholars of colour until what was my fifth year [of my undergraduate degree] –
> **Julisha:** Yeah, right.
> **Alyssa:** – and in my major! And I was all of a sudden like 'look at all of these people I had never heard of before! This is kind of insane'. Like…that we don't seem to talk about these people because they were doing similar, or the same, type of work, at the same time, from the beginning, like you said, but we just don't talk about them.
> **Julisha:** It's interesting because, it's like it was never malicious [in our courses]? It was never like people intentionally excluding. It was just like…you don't think to include them. Which I guess it's like erasure was not just like 'I'm not going to talk about them' – it's just like 'I don't even think to do that', you know?
>
> - Interview 3 with Julisha Roache, 03 September, 2022

Based on her experience in the seminar, Julisha expressed interest in creating content for the OER that would ensure introductory students who used the OER as their course text would learn about the contributions of Black anthropologists during the development of anthropology as a discipline. This work would serve as a springboard to Julisha's further independent research in the form of her honor's thesis "I don't really have a choice": The Complexities of Being Black in Canada for the Caribbean Diaspora.

Julisha's contributions to the OER are notable for several reasons. First, the Black Anthropology chapter began to bridge one of the many gaps that exist in our class resources for scholars of colour, as noted above. The creation of this chapter was entirely driven by Julisha's desire to not only conduct further research about early Black anthropologists, but also to share this knowledge with other students. By including a chapter in the OER for the introductory course, Julisha hoped to let other Black students "know they have a place [here] too" (Interview, 03 September 2022) – reminiscent of Smith's assertion that reading work by Black scholars assured her that she had a place in anthropology as well.

Second, this process of creation was a process of co-inquiry between us as students. Julisha and I completed most of our undergraduate degree together and shared many classes. We began this process on equal footing compared to my other experiences with co-creation. As noted in the introduction, I often found myself transitioning rapidly between different roles during co-creation, and most of them, despite attempts to deconstruct it, did hold some inherent hierarchy due to the widely understood connotations associated with the roles (i.e., faculty-student, graduate student-undergraduate student, researcher-interlocutor, TA-student). With Julisha, I found that we entered the creation process as equals despite our individual research specialties. I am grateful to say we finished the process not only as close collaborators, but as

friends. I learned so much during the co-creation process, both in terms of expanding my knowledge on the contributions of Black anthropologists to the discipline and my role as a student researcher.

> **Julisha:** [During my research] I was able to get certain stories and perspectives that I might not have been able to get because of that certain positionality that I shared [with my interlocutors].
> **Alyssa:** Yeah, no, I think it's interesting – and um, I think I'm also curious too because, um, I think about that a lot as my position as…even though I am a graduate student, I'm still a student, researching how students are producing knowledge. Um, and so even though I am slightly positioned differently, I'm still not a faculty member, um, so I still have to approach it [as a student] – and also a recently graduated undergraduate as well.
> **Julisha:** Mhm.
> **Alyssa:** So I'm curious too, to see like the way that you and I work together, I imagine, would be very different than if I had been Jan, for example, or Steve, or any of our faculty members. If you worked with a faculty member, the way that we talked about doing our work together, the way that we related to each other, the way that we conversed is very different because of that position of sort of being an 'insider' still [as a student] …
> **Julisha:** And I think that sense of familiarity is just so important. One, it makes you more passionate about the work, I think, when you have that personal connection. 'Cuz you are a student, you care so much about students, you know what I mean? 'Cuz it's like – not to say that profs don't, but [they're] kind of far removed, in that sense. But I think it also creates a sense of responsibility as a researcher, 'cuz you're…not doing it for them, in the sense, but you have this new sense of responsibility because these are your people. The students are your people.

- Interview 2 with Julisha Roache (26 May 2022)

Finally, this was the first and only student NDA that was entirely driven by a student's personal research interest, and the first in which a student had full agency over the direction and format of their contribution. This was the first student creation to expand beyond one isolated course assignment. This differed from the other NDAs described in chapter 3, in which students were still given assignment structures to guide their work that would be viewed by others. As noted above, the idea for this chapter was sparked by Julisha's own experiences, positionality,

and research interests – very much like my own research. This co-creation process occurred primarily over a full semester, with follow-up interviews after the completion of the chapter. Because this work was conducted outside of a course, she was afforded far more freedom to shape her research and chapter as she saw fit compared to the other students involved in co-creation. It remains unique in that way and is the best example of true co-inquiry with another student in my research. Because this chapter was written earlier on in my fieldwork, and was Julisha's first experience with independent research, there was a plethora of decisions that we both had to make about our research projects and that were informed by one other. While Julisha had to make decisions about the scope of her research, I had to make decisions around how I could make suggestions from what I was learning from my own research to support her without infringing on her agency as primary researcher. When I had questions about multimodality and wanted to emphasize the incorporation of multiple modes of knowledge within the OER, Julisha had to decide what could be appropriately incorporated into her chapter, and what she had the capacity for as the author while also balancing her other academic and personal responsibilities. After she produced her first draft, I had to negotiate how to provide constructive feedback as a collaborator without accidentally exercising any kind of authority as the researcher and co-creator of the OER. In turn, she had to decide how – and to what extent – she would incorporate my suggestions as the chapter's author. There was a degree of 'messiness' in this process as we learned together how to collaborate on this shared project in which we held different positions and different research interests. However, my work with Julisha demonstrated the level of thoughtful scholarship that could be produced from student work when given space beyond a single assignment to engage with their ideas.

Upon its completion, the Black anthropology section was used in two iterations of the introductory course. Julisha's work provided the opportunity for in-class discussions that

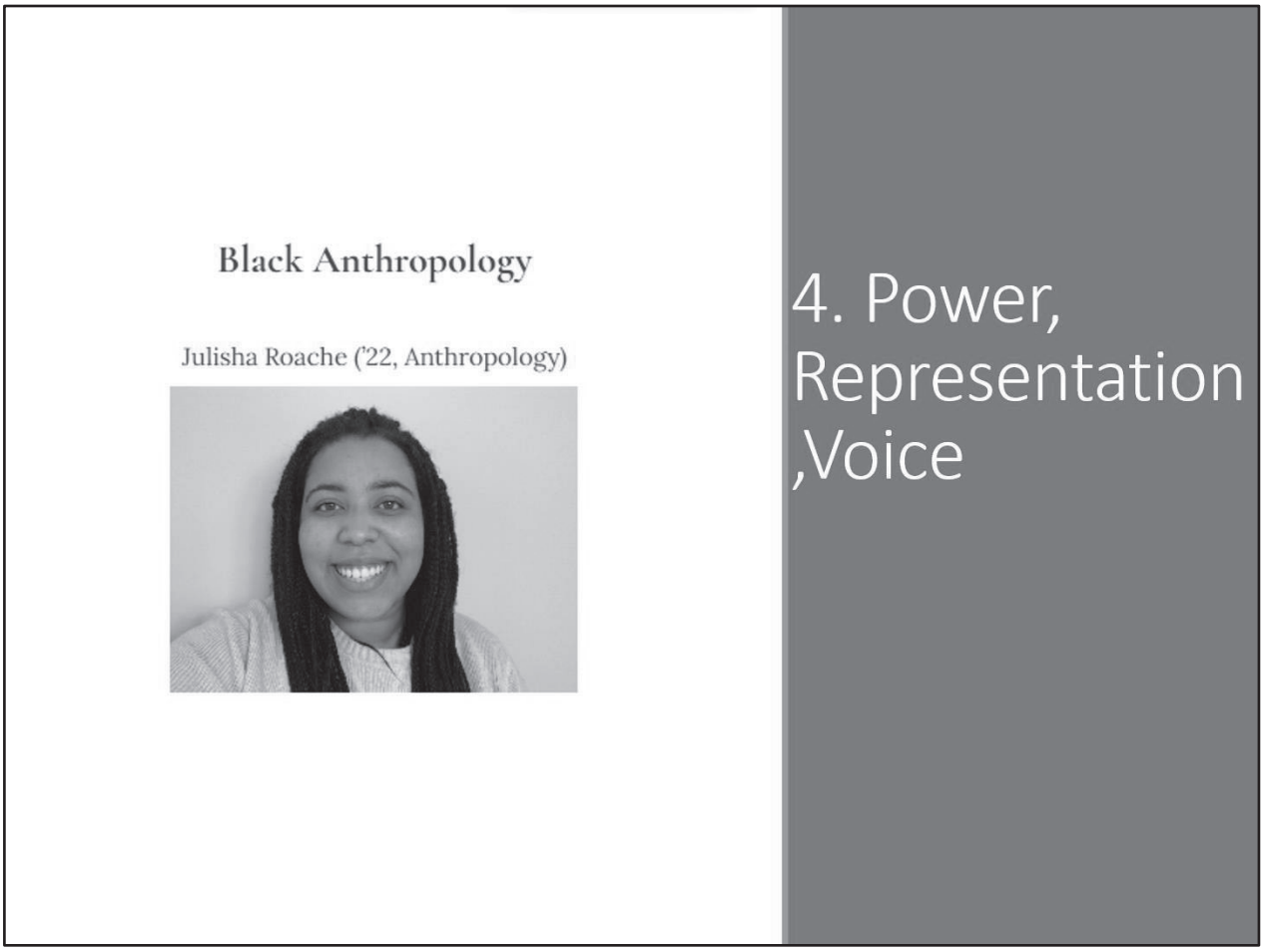

Figure 2. The slide used in Class 2022 to discuss representation and erasure in the discipline, featuring Julisha's Black Anthropology. Slide credit belongs to Dr. Jodie Asselin.

It also provided the opportunity for students to consider the idea that legitimate knowledge is not solely produced by high-ranked academics, and how the locking of academically produced knowledge behind paywalls often further increases the divide between academia and the wider community.

> **Julisha:** The fact that you have to pay for knowledge creates that separation and hierarchy that we see in academia. It just becomes academics writing for other academics. But the OER, this is about students writing for other students.

- Interview 1 with Julisha Roache (20 February 2022)

Through my work with Julisha, I began to truly see how open educational practices could be a promising way to answer calls for accessibility, diversity, equity, and decolonization coming from within both anthropology and postsecondary education. I also learned a significant amount about how to engage with students during the co-creation process. I utilized much of what I learned from and with Julisha to inform further student co-creation in my research. In particular, the idea of providing students with more agency in how they engaged with knowledge production and providing them the opportunity to make important decisions as scholars about the topic of their research was incredibly important. Secondly, through this work, I recognized the value of providing students with an appropriate amount of time to participate as scholars. These two ideas became central to the co-design of a course in which students participated in a semester-long research project that led to the co-writing of a chapter for the OER by the class instructor, myself, and the students.

Most notably, however, was learning how both open educational practices and co-inquiry can be used to address concerns of accessibility in postsecondary education. In chapter 2, I discussed in detail how conversations with students provided important feedback for increasing learner accessibility in the design of the OER. Julisha's work is a significant example of how open educational practices can be utilized to expand access to knowledge production, creating space for marginalized voices that are often suppressed or lost entirely in disciplinary canons. It also demonstrates how co-inquiry restructures power dynamics within classrooms. By having students take on the roles of legitimate knowledge producers, the inherent assumption that the faculty instructor is the sole holder of knowledge – the assumption that comes from the same systemic structures that create barriers for marginalized scholars – can be unsettled entirely.

4.4 Increasing Student Agency: Engaging with Students as Scholars in Digital Anthropology

In chapter 3, I discussed many of the ways students were involved in co-creation in the form of in-class, non-disposable assignments. With these assignments, all students were provided guidelines and a topic to engage with rather than having agency over these choices. These assignments were meant to shift students' understandings of themselves as being capable of producing knowledge, and they were designed to support students in grappling with this change. The co-creation process with Julisha – and, in particular, our subsequent interviews where we discussed this process in depth – caused a change in my own understanding of how NDAs could be utilized in the latter half of my fieldwork. Instead of using them to 'convince' students that they could produce legitimate knowledge, I decided it may be more meaningful to design assignments operating under the assumption that students *did* view themselves as capable – and instead provide any needed support they would require to make decisions around their work as legitimate scholars. Instead of encouraging students to simply *think* of themselves as scholars for a single assignment, I instead wanted to engage with them in a similar way that I did Julisha – as capable scholars for whom I provided guidance as they navigated this process for the first time.

Engaging students in this manner required more than just one, even two, small assignments within the wider context of their course. Instead, I wanted to provide students with the length of time required to engage thoughtfully with their chosen research and the space to make subsequent decisions around it. I was incredibly lucky to have the opportunity to co-design a second-year course on digital anthropology from scratch with Dr. Amy Mack. As a topics course, which are usually designed by instructors to reflect their research interests, it was the first (and, depending on future faculty involved, potentially the last) time a full course on digital anthropology would be taught at the university. Because this was not a pre-existing course, like

the other classes in which I had conducted fieldwork, there was the opportunity to design a series of smaller assignments that would guide students throughout the semester in the process of conducting their own fieldwork, allowing them to scaffold their knowledge and skills across the assignments. While Dr. Mack provided the lecture content and weekly structure of the course, I was given the freedom to tackle the pedagogical aspects of how students would utilize their course knowledge through their course assignments.

> **Alyssa:** What was the process of codesigning the course with me like? Benefits? Challenges? You won't hurt my feelings with this [if there are any negative aspects].
>
> **Amy:** One of the things I've learned as a new instructor is that universities do not do a great job of teaching us how to teach. For context, I had a one-week course in my MA and a two-week course in my PhD. That's it. So, for the digital anthropology course, I was a content expert, but not necessarily a pedagogy expert. I really enjoy reading feminist pedagogical approaches – bell hooks for example informs how I *feel* about teaching and the sort of space I want to foster – but when it comes to the nitty gritty of assignment development, that's not a space I'm well trained in. Having your skill set there was invaluable. Every course should have a built-in pedagogy expert. It was also great to have someone to bounce ideas off of in a way that didn't contravene ethics.

- Interview with Dr. Amy Mack (4 October, 2023)

As their final assignment, students would work in assigned groups to write a short (minimum 5 pages) case study about their research as digital anthropologists. While students were provided a field site (Twitch.tv), and guidelines around what needed to be addressed in their case study[23], students were given complete agency over their chosen topic (research on a game by examining multiple streamers or conducting research on a single streamer), how they would complete and incorporate their fieldnotes into their final assignment and were tasked with identifying at least one theme that could be connected to course content based on their observations. Students were also given the freedom to explore other relevant sites for their

[23] See Appendix 2 for assignment guidelines.

research, such as their chosen streamer's social media. To do this, students were tasked with doing fieldwork in two ways: one hour of personal fieldwork in which they had to produce individual fieldnotes[24], and dedicated class time every week in which they conducted fieldwork

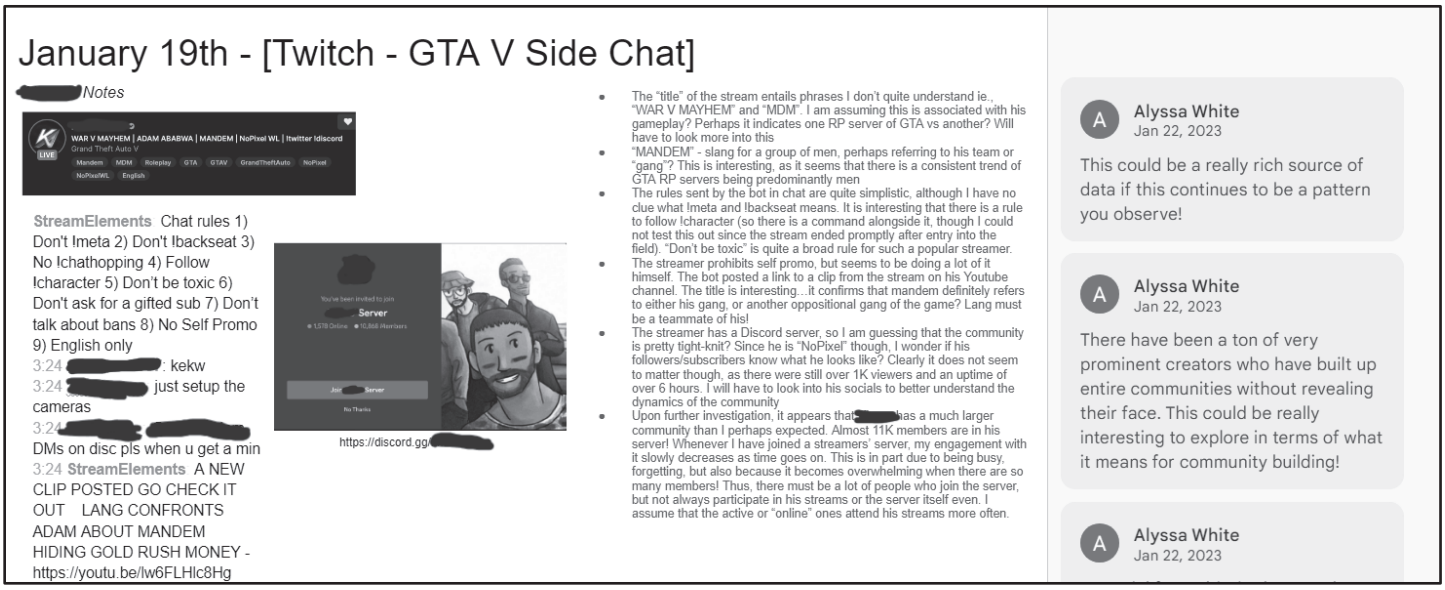

Figure 3. Screenshot of student fieldnotes with comment suggestions from myself.

In-class time alternated between free time to do fieldwork and structured, small in-course assignments that would allow them to practice appropriate skills needed to write their final case studies. Examples of this include article analysis, searching for relevant literature and producing thematic mind maps to encourage the development of their case study themes. Students were also given in-class time dedicated to writing their case studies, during which they were given a list of suggested ideas to cover in each section of their case study. In the end, students produced the short group case study in which they identified and explained their field site and chosen topic, detailed their methodology, identified a relevant theme, and provided examples from their

[24] Students were encouraged to use this time to contribute to their group case study by conducting fieldwork on the same topic but were also given the agency to conduct research on games/streamers that personally interested them if they wished.

fieldwork while connecting it to course content, and wrote a short conclusion on their experiences as digital anthropologists throughout the semester.

> **Alyssa:** What do you think were the successes of this course/assignment design?
>
> **Amy:** I think one of the key successes for the course design was getting students to actually "do" anthropology at such an early stage. So often students don't realize that they have the capacity to conduct their own research and steer it towards their individual interests until the third or fourth year – and they usually do these in the form of independent or applied studies at first and then maybe an honours thesis.[25] This course provided a taste of this experience with many safety nets built into their work. I also think students really understood how these skills could be used in future careers outside of academic research. With so many New Media students, it was obvious the gears were turning in their minds about how to put this into practice as creatives!
>
> **Alyssa:** Do you think it is important for students to have the opportunity to complete student research – specifically that contributes beyond an individual research paper?
>
> **Amy:** Absolutely. Library-based research is an important skill, but having this hands-on ethnographic experience is important too! This approach really had students grappling with the ethical implications of research in a way that's hard to get at without actually *doing* it yourself. We also live in an increasingly collaborative world. It's rare for folks to work individually in most industries so having the collaborative research skills is so important. I think some groups also really understood the value of a "divide and conquer" approach that let them cast a broader net than they could have before. I'm not convinced most of them really care about the end product, that is the case studies included in the digital anthropology chapter, but I think they found value – and dare I say fun?! – in the fieldwork.

- Interview with Dr. Amy Mack (4 October 2023)

Like the other NDAs, students were informed at the beginning of the course that their final case studies could be used in the writing of a chapter for the OER on digital anthropology. However, as we progressed throughout the semester, it became increasingly clear through both the personal and group fieldwork that students were producing insightful, detailed, thorough examinations of their chosen topic within the time given to them. Because of this, my conceptualization of the OER chapter began to change. Rather than a chapter co-written between

[25] The University of Lethbridge prides itself on the increased opportunity for students to engage in independent undergraduate research in various ways. For more information, visit: https://www.ulethbridge.ca/research/students

Dr. Mack and myself, with the occasional section of a student case study implemented to exemplify what we had written, I began to see the cases studies as much more central to the chapter. However, the incorporation of significant student content hinged upon students agreeing to include their work in the chapter. Rather than reaching out to chosen groups upon identifying their assignment as appropriate, the entire class was invited to incorporate their work into the OER. Astonishingly enough to me – and entirely unique to this course – the entire class agreed to have their work featured, meaning that 42 students contributed in some degree to the creation of this chapter.[26]This was particularly astounding to me because our class was not populated by Anthropology majors – Anthropology majors and minors remained in the minority compared to the New Media majors who took the course as a social science liberal education breadth requirement.

In the resulting chapter, large sections of the case studies were used to provide examples of common areas of interest to digital anthropologists, such as gender or social movements and online communities, as well as providing examples of methodology utilized by digital anthropologists. Screenshots of group fieldnotes were also used to provide visual examples to future students about anthropological methodology. Upon writing the chapter, I am happy to say that student-generated content provided approximately half of the content for the chapter, with Dr. Mack and I writing primarily supplementary material to introduce digital anthropology as a subdiscipline and provide context for the student work.

While I can't know for certain, I personally like to think that student willingness to have their work incorporated into the OER was increased for two reasons. One, the case study was the product of an entire semester of work, one in which they dedicated a substantial amount of time

[26] The Digital Anthropology chapter can be found at the end of this chapter as part of my portfolio.

and effort. Because of the weekly independent fieldwork and in-class time dedicated to their case studies, students were receiving frequent feedback from myself and Dr. Mack that could be used to improve their final assignment, rather than simply receiving a grade and feedback after the completion of the assignment. Second, because of the assignment design that treated them as competent digital anthropologists during the course and constant provision of feedback and engagement from myself and Dr. Mack, there was a different level of rapport developed for the entire class.

> **Amy:** It was, for me at least, a fun class. The topics ranged from light and funny to really dark and heavy, but the students always took up the content with an eagerness that I found so refreshing. They were also open to new ideas. Many students had their minds initially set about what anthropology is "really like" but they warmed to alternative approaches eventually. Others were also just so keen to get credit to watch video games, you know? And I think in an increasingly stressful world where students have to manage full course loads, part-time (if not full-time) jobs, family obligations, and social lives, alongside a slew of economic crises, it was nice to have a course that for some was the thing they looked forward to. One student told me it was the only one he didn't hate and dread going to, which might also be a reflection on his other courses. We still managed to cover a lot, learn a lot, and grow a lot, without putting students through the meat grinder (even if we felt a bit like that was our experience [as instructor and TA]!).

- Interview with Dr. Amy Mack (4 October 2023)

> "Of all my classes this semester this is going to be one of the ones I talk about throughout my degree. As we all know I am a New Media major and I didn't think I would take so much away from this class that I can use in my degree and future profession. My whole thought process of digital media is now different. I know about the tech and process of making games but something I never thought of was how things that I might make in the future will affect so many people in different ways. The sexism and racism in games is pretty apparent to genre sadly however I had not really thought about the communities [sic] that are on the internet that even I am a part of"

- End-of-the-semester Student reflection

> *Sometimes I feel this weird almost-jealousy of the students when I am working with them during class as they do their fieldwork. Jealousy probably isn't the*

> *right word, but it is a type of envy, in a way. I think it's mostly of the project – of being given the opportunity to do actual research in a class outside of a paper no one ever really thinks about again, especially in a 2nd year class I always thought that was something for 4th years or grad students. But I think it's also what Amy and I – hopefully – are telling them through this final assignment. The 'go and do it, because I know you can' sort of thing. The 'you're capable of this' idea that I hope they are getting. No one really ever told me that until the last few years of my undergrad. And even then, it wasn't even really until I was in my last year that I actually did any kind of work that made me believe it. Maybe it's a bit narcissistic, but I hope they carry that with them. I hope it helps them, when they have that test or paper or project that feels like it will kill them. I hope they kind of have that in the back of their mind, even if they don't realize it. Even if they never retain anything about the course content or even the assignment, I hope they at least learn they are more than capable of producing knowledge that means something. Maybe I'm a little jealous of them having that sooner than I did, but that's also a big part of why I did this research in the future. I want students to have that sooner. I think I'm more proud of them than I ever will be jealous.*
>
> - Field notes (7 March 2023)

The creation of the Digital Anthropology chapter for the OER is a powerful example of how students can be incorporated into the co-creation process more substantially than with small, individual assignments. Though those assignments absolutely have their value – and are a far more accessible way to incorporate open educational practices into teaching than designing a semester-long project that requires so much input from the instructor – the Digital Anthropology chapter is a significant example of what can be created by incorporating students into the process as capable knowledge producers. Having the entire semester to develop significant rapport with students in a different way than I experienced with smaller assignments produced a very different product and level of student willingness to engage in open educational practices. However, I cannot talk about all the positives of this assignment design without addressing its challenges. I use this specific assignment to consider the intense labour that is involved in open educational practices, because while it was present in all my fieldwork, this was where I felt it the most intensely as a researcher.

4.5 The Labour of Opening Up

> **Alyssa:** Any comments you want to make on the labour of this course?
>
> **Amy:** Oh my goodness. Do not try this without a TA or two. Three would be even better. This course had so many moving parts that built on one another and so I was constantly stressed that if "Domino A" didn't fall exactly right, "Domino F" would fail. I also think that this sort of a course – compared to, say, a standard lecture style – meant that I was closer to my students. This is great for rapport and getting them to open up about fieldwork, but it also means they open up about other issues in their lives and classes beyond mine. This meant there was a lot of emotional labour happening after class. This might also be because I'm a young woman and maybe more approachable than other professors, but it meant more office hours and many more emails.

- Interview with Dr. Amy Mack (4 October 2023)

It is impossible to talk about open educational practices without acknowledging the mental, emotional, and time-intensive labour that accompanies them. Labour surrounding open educational practices and OERs has been documented to a degree in the literature. Potential barriers for faculty include limited or lack of knowledge around copyright licensing and navigating copyright laws, concerns around quality assurance of openly licensed materials compared to traditional academic publishing routes, worries about sustainability, and a lack of infrastructural support due to limited or no institutional policies (Hylén 2020; Smith & Casserly 2006; Sclater 2011). Lack of access to appropriate technological tools for creation, limited or no incentives for creation compared to traditional academic publishing, high labour and time investment, and even financial cost for and creation and maintenance of OERs are also major concerns (McGreary, Guder & Ganeshan 2021; Yuan, MacNeill & Kraan 2008; Kursun, Cagiltay & Can 2014; Murphy 2013; Roberts 2018). The emotional labour involved in open educational practices, while not well-documented, has also appeared in literature (Batte 2020).

However, while this labour has been mentioned in the literature, it often does not address it explicitly, or provide concrete details about the actual amount of labour required to implement

and maintain these practices. In a literature review that examined OER efficiency through a critical pedagogy lens, McDermott (2020) concluded that

> Rarest of all is the study that provides details about the academic labor required for OER initiatives. Adopting an OER textbook may require a significant amount of work for a single professor teaching a single section. The number of people only increases for large, multi-section courses reliant on course management software. Very few studies detail the personnel involved or the costs required (para. 20).

Hendricks et al. (2017) make similar assertions, reflecting that "the literature on open textbooks related to cost focuses on cost savings to students, but it's important to keep in mind the possible costs for faculty and institutions in terms of time and support when using open textbooks" (p. 94). This lack of transparency regarding the 'costs' involved in the production of OERs and the use of open educational practices, particularly when this labour falls to graduate students, administrative staff or the one designated librarian in the institution (if such a position even exists), is a serious concern that should be addressed more clearly, particularly when connected to pedagogical approaches that preach the value of an open circulation of knowledge. In discussing the literature's tendency to skirt these concerns, Crissinger cautions "how openness, when disconnected from its political underpinnings, could become as exploitative as the traditional system it had replaced" (2015, para. 2).

Crissinger goes on to discuss how, in most universities, involvement with and publication of openly licensed content is often not considered legitimate during the pursuit of tenure, meaning that faculty without these positions risk further career instability if they do not follow the more traditional academic publishing route. This lack of support from institutions is

troubling, particularly in terms of financial and infrastructural resources. This becomes even more concerning when postsecondary institutions rely on this 'hidden' labour. In discussing the way this labour is often acknowledged when beneficial, but rarely sustained by institutions, Roxanne Shirazi wrote:

> The institution is more than willing to reap the prestige of successful grants and digital projects, but when it comes to financially and structurally supporting the sustained work of the individuals behind them? Well, you know the story (2015, para. 5).

Matthew Cheney further argues that this inattention to cost and labour is dangerous, asserting that:

> It's that "no cost" that seems to me dangerous — the idea that there is no cost. Of course there's a cost. There's the cost of labor, first of all, with somebody working, either for free or not (and if for free then how are they paying their bills?). But then there are all the other things: the cost of bandwidth and of technological infrastructure, for instance.
>
> *Somebody* is paying, even if it's not you (2015; para. 5-6).

I use these series of quotes not only to illustrate how active practitioners discuss the labour involved in these practices, but also to make another point: from the quotes above, outside of one dedicated open access, open peer reviewed journal (*In the Library with the Lead Pipe*), most of these discussions are happening on personal academic blogs, on social media sites, and occasionally, in certain sessions at dedicated conferences between practitioners who are already

aware of these costs. These conversations are simply not happening within the more well-circulated OER and open educational practices literature, where faculty new to these ideas are most likely to begin their research around them. This masking of labour is particularly troubling given the values of both OER and open educational practices. The limited circulation of alterative knowledge practices in sources designated as legitimate (i.e. peer-reviewed journals and scholarly book publications), particularly in terms of the labour they require, is an interesting echo of how the labour of marginalized scholars is not acknowledged through our citational practices (Smith & Garrett-Scott 2021).

Many of these concerns raised in literature also came up during my research. During my fieldwork, there was no institutional funding or policies around the adaptation of existing or the creation of original materials for OERs.[27] This meant that the investment of time, labour, and financial resources came from myself and supportive faculty. This was a significant concern for faculty who already had preestablished courses and readings to select from. All technology used to create the OER, including devices to access and design, were personal devices that belonged to me and my faculty collaborators. At the time of writing, sustainability is an unanswered question, as I am the primary holder of knowledge for Pressbooks as a platform, copyright licensing information, and OERS and open educational practices for this project.[28] As I approach the end of my degree program, the fate of the OER remains precarious. Some faculty have expressed hesitancy around the project due to concerns about quality assurance and a lack of

[27] I say this because no direct funding was received from the university specifically for the creation of the OER. I was lucky enough to receive supplemental funding to support the development from personal faculty research funds. The only direct institutional support received was the involvement in the Open Education Alberta initiative that provided access to Pressbooks.

[28] This is not to say that others on campus that have this knowledge do not exist. However, a lack of infrastructural support and institutional policy means we primarily work in isolation and with little or no knowledge of others on campus. Finding our colleagues is another time sink that we did not have the space for during the project.

rigorous peer review process for publication of OERs. Available openly licensed materials in the discipline are difficult to find, particularly full ethnographies. These are all questions and concerns I cannot provide concrete answers for based on my own research, but I can echo the sentiment that true OER adoption and integration is not possible without proper support from institutions for interested faculty and other institutional team members (Cox & Trotter 2016; Hylén 2020).

The investment of time and labour cannot also be undercut in terms of assignment design and assessment. While the assignments demonstrated better student understanding and engagement overall, and often provided the opportunity for more detailed, constructive feedback that students could utilize to improve future work, the amount of time and grading labour was quite significant. Faculty who had NDAs in their classrooms all expressed to me that the required labour for design, implementation, and appropriate grading would not be feasible or sustainable without my assistance (or the assistance of another TA) to share the workload with. While I was a paid TA in almost all the courses that used NDAs, I easily exceeded my allotted hours due to the amount of time required for grading and thoughtful feedback. While I justified this in the name of my research, this still could too easily become, as Crissinger (2015) warns, exploitative to others, regardless of their passion for these pedagogical approaches. I, in fact, was one of the lucky ones who was able to secure funding for my research either in the form of grants or paid opportunities. The scope of my project – while admittedly a bit extensive for a Masters thesis – would not have been possible without this funding. This is especially the case when maintenance and upkeep of these practices often fall to junior scholars, librarians, and even students, who, if they are paid, are hired at reduced rates because of their student status. The issue of underpaid labour in academia is significant (Bhattacharya 2023; Shirazi 2015; McKeen 2018; Eidinger

2019), and not unique to OER or open educational practices by any means but acknowledging the increase in labour required by these practices means also acknowledging *who* is most likely to be disproportionately affected by the cost of this labour. It also demonstrates how challenging it can be to open up practices without falling into these pitfalls of disproportionate costs.

Another area of labour the literature fails to address is the labour of students involved in OER creation and open educational practices. As I have demonstrated, NDAs do require a different level of labour from students compared to more traditional assessments. While this labour does (hopefully) provide benefits to the students in many ways – specifically in the development of skills that students may not need to use in other assessments and the agency to make decisions around how they engage in scholarly knowledge consumption and production – students who complete work in the name of OER-creation may not necessarily see any other benefits for themselves outside of the grade they receive for the completed assignment. This can entirely rely on the individual student, as they may value the creation and sharing of knowledge differently, and the faculty practitioner, as they may take the extra time and space to emphasize to students the skills they are building from these assignments (which is, again, an additional time and labour cost for the faculty member). However, it does bring into question the ethics of utilizing student labour in this way. If students are not given the agency to make the decision if their work is used in OER, if they feel pressured or if their grade may be impacted in some way, or even if students are simply not interested and/or capable of the time, mental, and emotional labour that NDAs often require in a course they may not be able to withdraw from, there is certainly many ways this pedagogical approach could become unethical, even if it is unintentional. Additionally, asking students to engage in unfamiliar pedagogical practices and

assignment design can add an additional layer of emotional and mental labour for the students as they learn how to navigate them.

> **Alyssa:** What were some of the challenges of this course design?
> **Amy:** Administration. With the weekly field notes and in-class assignments on Thursday, it felt like we had a never ending pile of grading. I also really care about giving feedback to students and using Google Slides. Also the comment function gave students the opportunity to respond to our notes and suggestions. This just meant we had a lot of threads to hold onto at any given moment in addition to developing lectures and multiple choice exams. With the TBL approach we also had to navigate the student-student relationships, and some of the groups meshed better than others. We didn't have any big blow ups, but some students wanted to go in one direction for their case studies while others wanted to go in a different one. We were also asking students to do a lot in-class but outside of class as well with the weekly fieldwork. We purposefully reduced readings, but it was still more unconventional work than many were accustomed to, apparently. We were also dealing with second semester fatigue, and it was for some students the first time they had back to back in person instruction since before the 2020 pandemic. I think they forgot how much work in person work can be! Add in the unconventional assignments and it seemed to be a lot for them.

- Interview with Dr. Amy Mack (4 October 2023)

Throughout this thesis, I've alluded to several moments where students experienced discomfort, confusion, or even anxiety around the completion of these assignments. While I initially wondered if this was the result of external circumstances for the university (such as with the Design an Assignment and the Explain a Concept assignments), this discomfort was still present in other semesters. Through discussions with students and my faculty collaborators, I began to recognize this discomfort could be a consequence of shifting expectations as students transitioned from passive knowledge consumer to active knowledge producer. However, it is also possible that I was witnessing similar levels of anxiety that students experience in traditional pedagogical approaches. It was just far more visible to me because of the use of open educational practices. Because of the nature of the assignments, there was often more consistent dialogue between the students and myself, and a deeper rapport established between us. This could have

also been the result of my status as the class TA, or even just as a younger woman closer to their age, making me more approachable to students than the professor, but it did significantly increase the emotional labour around assignment design, grading, and feedback for myself.

This discomfort students can experience has been documented in some of the literature around open educational practices, though it is not a thoroughly discussed aspect of this pedagogical approach (Hollister 2020; Seraphin et al. 2019). Regrettably, much of the literature addresses student anxiety around the dissemination of their work using open license rather than exploring the fundamental discomfort behind engaging with unfamiliar assignment formats. While much of the literature discusses the need to support students as they engage with new pedagogical practices, there does not seem to be much attention to *why* students experience such intense anxiety. It is because of this lack of attention to motivational factors that leads me to make note of this anxiety.

Every time I was confronted with this anxiety, it was an important reminder that, as a researcher, I was neglecting my own role as facilitator in their learning. Often, in this liminal role where I wore many different 'hats' (sometimes rapidly switching between them, or even wearing multiple at once), it was easy to forget that the students often viewed me in a similar light as the course instructor. In the context of these assignments especially, my role was not just researcher; arguably, my role as educator, guide, and facilitator became even more critical than my role as a researcher during moments of student anxiety. In the throes of my research, spinning off in a million different 'galaxies', as Dr. Newberry often referred to it as, it was easy to forget that what was new and exciting to me as a seasoned student entranced by the possibility of doing something differently was something to view with suspicion or even fear for students who were still familiarizing themselves with the way things were traditionally done. In an educational

culture in which the ultimate goal is achieving grades, credits for course completion, and, ultimately a degree, rather than engaging with learning for the sake of curiosity and inquiry, it should not have been surprising to me that students reacted with anxiety when presented with assignment formats that could threaten their academic goals because of their unfamiliarity.

I address this both to document the types of emotional labour that accompany these practices as the practitioner, but as reminder to myself and any future interested practitioners of the importance of recognizing the significance of this ask for many students. While the literature commonly addresses the strain of open educational practices in terms of labour for faculty, it also (ironically enough, given its student-centered approach) tends to neglect the direct voices of students regarding these practices. Literature tends to focus on improved learning outcomes, student engagement, and improved student agency and ownership in their scholarship, but does not often address some of the challenges students face when they engage with these practices. Particularly, it does not address the difficulty of asking students to work outside of the educational systems they have been socialized into. I encourage instructors to remember that this is a mutual learning process, and to approach these practices with care, grace, and the incorporation of appropriate support for their students. I especially make note of this because of the conclusions of my own research, but also because of my responsibility to other students due to my role as a student researcher.[29]

As OERs and open educational practices become more widely known, the literature that does address the ethics of open practices caution that these concerns of cost and labour for all involved are not lost in the promise of increasing accessibility of postsecondary education

[29] For more information on this recommendation, please see the recommendations section in the concluding document of this thesis.

(Farrow 2016). This statement may seem counterintuitive to everything I have laid out in support of OER and open educational practices in my previous chapters. To be explicitly clear, I still believe in the inherent value of many of these practices. I believe wholeheartedly in the increase of knowledge circulation, particularly outside of the academy, and the power of engaging students as capable scholars in their own right through assessment. I have seen evidence of how this positively impacts students both through skill development and learning outcomes, much of which I have discussed in previous chapters. However, it would be entirely unethical – and not particularly 'open' of me – to erase or minimize these significant concerns for everyone involved in these practices.[30] My research produces no significant answers to address this. In fact, I do not know if there are any particularly *right* or practical answers as long as postsecondary institutions remain embedded within and further perpetuate neoliberalism ideology (Cheney 2015; Shirazi 2015). However, having these honest conversations is at least a way to begin to acknowledge how this labour has been and continues to primarily remain unrecognized and understudied. As Matthew Cheney (2015) appropriately says in his critique of the current OER and open educational practice movements, "OER is not no-cost, it's a movement of cost from one place to another" (para. 7). Acknowledging where and to whom this cost is shifted needs to be a critical component of conversations around OER and open educational practices when looking at the future of these movements.

[30] I primarily discuss faculty instructors and students because of the nature of my fieldwork, but this of course includes the librarians, administrative staff, instructional designers, non-academic staff, and technologists that support these practices, and are often even less-acknowledged in literature.

4.6 Portfolio Items

For this section of the portfolio, direct links to the two original chapters created that were discussed in this chapter can be found below.

Black Anthropology

Digital Anthropology

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have explored multiple ways that I was involved in the incorporation of open educational practices in the teaching of anthropology. I experienced both the way they succeeded and the way that they challenged those involved. My observations are particularly important because of my unique liminal position as researcher, student, and educator, as discussed in the introduction. In this final concluding chapter, I provide a list of recommendations to any faculty intrigued by the possibilities of open educational practices, and how they can be incorporated into their own teaching. As I have discussed previously, there is no universal way to be 'open' in teaching, and providing exact guidelines that are guaranteed to succeed is impossible. Based on my research, integrating open educational practices into teaching can best be understood as Julisha described as working outside of "contained spaces" – outside of contained resources, outside of contained classrooms, and outside of contained institutions. Any effort to move beyond the strict boundaries of traditional lecture-style courses, in which students are not asked to engage with course knowledge critically as scholars, and any effort to increase the circulation of student-generated content as legitimate academic knowledge, is a way to incorporate open educational practices into teaching. How this is manifested is entirely dependent on the instructor, the classroom, and the students within it.

Within this thesis, and the portfolio items selected for it, I have demonstrated several ways open educational practices can be incorporated into teaching. First, through OER creation, I have demonstrated how concerns around accessibility in postsecondary education – particularly learner accessibility, access to knowledge, and access to knowledge production – can be addressed. Second, I have demonstrated how including students in the process of knowledge

production using NDAs is another way to address issues of accessibility, especially when it comes to expanding the types of voices prominent within institutions. Third, by increasing student agency over their work, I have demonstrated the powerful work students can produce when they engage with scholarly knowledge production as scholars themselves. Open educational practices and the process of co-inquiry with students provide an opportunity for impactful shifts in student relationship to knowledge, power dynamics in our institutions, and issues of access within postsecondary institutions.

The following recommendations are drawn from my participant-observation during research, from conversations with student co-creators, and from my experiences co-designing with faculty. This list was created to share concise information with interested practitioners who do not have significant time to delve into an expansive literature review, but would like preliminary information about OERs, open educational practices, and recommendations. The intention of this list is to educate without asking for significant amount of labour from faculty who are just beginning to engage with these ideas.

5.2 Recommendation 1
Start Small

Completely overhauling courses to produce OERs or include students in co-design is time-consuming, challenging and often overwhelming depending on the resources at your disposal. Faculty face increasing workloads, higher rates of job instability, and lack of infrastructural support due to budget cuts and the increasing pressure to further to adhere to the neoliberal ‘consumer’ model of education rather than being driven by scholarly inquiry. Create smaller, realistic goals to make this achievable on a timeline that suits your needs.

5.3 Recommendation 2
Scaffold

Scaffolding assignments and providing constructive feedback will help guide students as they take on the role of knowledge producer. For many students, this process will be entirely foreign, and at times, anxiety-inducing as they engage with new pedagogical approaches. As you step away from the 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side', students will be looking to you for mentoring to improve their scholarly skills and engage more critically with the knowledge they are consuming and producing. Designing assignments that scaffold on these new skills and providing feedback that can be used to improve on upcoming work encourages richer, more authentic work, and allows students to grow into their roles as new scholars. It also can be an effective tool to mitigate student anxiety around new teaching and assignment formats.

5.4 Recommendation 3
Be Communicative and Clear

Many of these ideas are new to students. In fact, curriculum and pedagogy is often a mystery to students, particularly those new to postsecondary. Being clear to students about reasons behind assignment design, course material selections, and the importance of threshold concepts during your teaching can help clear away some of the mystery and give students an understanding of what skills assessments are trying to build. Communicating expectations effectively also supports students grappling with new pedagogical approaches or assessment types.

5.5 Recommendation 4
Model Openness

It is unfair to ask students to work openly – however that is defined for your classroom – if educators refuse to do the same. Having space within the classroom for ongoing dialogue,

questions, and communication around pedagogical choices encourages students to think more critically about the work they are asked to complete for your courses.

5.6 Recommendation 5
Create Space

Classrooms can feel unfamiliar, uncomfortable, or even inhospitable depending on the student. Create 'space' for them in the classroom by diversifying class materials, providing examples of different types of knowledge producers, and incorporating as many diverse voices as possible in classrooms. Familiarizing yourself and attending to accessibility needs whenever possible further opens up our classrooms to all types of learners.

5.7 Recommendation 6
Be Flexible

Mistakes, hiccups, and challenges should be expected when incorporating openness into your classrooms. Being mindful of when ideas, approaches, or systems are not working as intended, and being willing to accommodate students appropriately can help smooth out the process. Not every implementation of open will be appropriate for your classroom.

5.8 Recommendation 7
Be Brave

This is not easy work. It is often very intensive and requires a much larger investment of time and labour to be executed effectively. Incorporating openness into teaching often requires a level of vulnerability and reflexivity about an educator's identity and how that is reflected in their pedagogical practices. Being open to shifting away from familiar practices, especially when it is labour-intensive and there is no guarantee of its immediate success, requires courage, but your students will be so much better for it.

5.9 Recommendation 8
Be Curious

This is just as much of a learning process for educators as it is for students. Remaining open to learning further, especially from colleagues and students, is an essential part of incorporating openness into teaching. It is inspiring to see what students can teach us when given the space and freedom to do so. Allow yourself to be curious to see what work can be done outside of the contained spaces of our traditional pedagogical approaches.

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APPENDIX A

OER Surveys and Responses

A.1 Class 2020

A.2 Survey Questions

1. I took ANTH 1000 as:
    a. A Major requirement
    b. A minor requirement
    c. A GLER
    d. Because of interest in the discipline
    e. Other
2. Out of the topics that were covered in class, the ones I found the most engaging were:
    a. The origin and evolution of Anthropology and its methodology
    b. Culture and Communication
    c. Livelihood and Economy
    d. Politics and Social Stratification
    e. Family, Kinship, and Marriage
    f. Race, Ethnicity, and Colonialism
    g. Sex and Gender
    h. Belief Systems
3. I preferred the use of the digital, open-access textbook over having to purchase and use a print copy.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Unsure
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
4. I found the open-access textbook accessible and easy to navigate.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
5. I found that utilizing the textbook readings supported my learning and increased my success in the class.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

f. I did not feel it was necessary to complete the readings in order to be successful in this class.

6. Please select all aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you liked.
   a. The digital format
   b. No financial cost to access it
   c. Readings were enjoyable
   d. The use of a contemporary textbook
   e. Accessibility
7. Please select all the aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you disliked.
   a. The digital format
   b. Readings were not enjoyable
   c. Navigation of the online format
   d. Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it
   e. Increased digital screen time
8. I would consider taking another anthropology class in the future.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Unsure
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
9. I feel like I understand some of the different ways anthropology can be used in everyday life after taking this class.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

A.3 Survey Responses

I took ANTH 1000 as:	N	%
a Major requirement	5	11.9%
a Minor requirement	1	2.4%
a GLER	14	33.3%
because of interest in the discipline	13	31.0%
Other	9	21.4%
Out of the topics that were covered in class, the ones I found the most engaging were:		
The origin and evolution of Anthropology and its methodology	1	2.4%
Culture and Communication	12	28.6%
Livelihood and Economy	0	0%
Politics and Social Stratification	2	4.8%
Family, Kinship, and Marriage	13	31.0%
Race, Ethnicity and Colonialism	4	9.5%
Sex and Gender	6	14.3%

Belief Systems	4	9.5%
I preferred the use of the digital, open-access textbook over having to purchase and use a print copy.		
Strongly agree	29	69.0%
Agree	6	14.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	5	11.9%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	2	4.8%
I found the open-access textbook accessible and easy to navigate.		
Strongly agree	29	69.0%
Agree	7	16.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	7.1%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	2	4.8%
I found that utilizing the textbook readings supported my learning and increased my success in the class.		
Strongly agree	21	50.0%
Agree	15	35.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	2.4%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
I did not feel it was necessary to complete the readings in order to be successful in the class.	4	9.5%
Please select all aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you liked.		
The digital format	17	13.5%
No financial cost to access it	40	31.7%
Readings were enjoyable	16	12.7%
The use of a contemporary textbook	19	15.1%
Accessibility	34	27.0%
Please select all the aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you disliked.		
The digital format	8	20.0%
Readings were not enjoyable	4	10.0%
Navigation of the online format	7	17.5%
Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it	1	2.5%
Increased digital screen time	20	50.0%
I would consider taking another anthropology class in the future.		
Strongly agree	19	42.5%
Agree	19	42.5%
Unsure	3	7.1%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
I feel like I understand some of the different ways anthropology can be used in everyday life after taking this class.		
Strongly agree	29	69.0%
Agree	13	31.0%

Neither agree nor disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%

A.4 Class 2021-A

A.5 Survey Questions

1. I am currently in my:
    a. First year
    b. Second year
    c. Third year
    d. Fourth year or above
2. I am taking ANTH 1000 because of:
    a. A Major requirement
    b. A minor requirement
    c. A GLER
    d. Interest in the discipline
    e. Other
3. Out of the topics we have covered so far in class, the one I have found the most engaging is:
    a. The origin and evolution of Anthropology
    b. Fieldwork and methodology
    c. Theories of culture
    d. Race and ethnicity
    e. Language
    f. Religion, belief, and ritual
    g. Kinship
    h. No preference
4. The topic I am most excited to learn about in the future is:
    a. Gender and sexuality
    b. Subsistence
    c. Economics
    d. Globalization
    e. No preference
5. I am enjoying using the digital, open-access textbook in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Unsure
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
6. I find the open-access textbook accessible and easy to navigate.
    a. Strongly agree

b. Agree
c. Neither agree nor disagree
d. Disagree
e. Strongly disagree
f. I do not feel it is necessary to complete the readings in order to be successful in this class

7. Please select all aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you like.
   a. The digital format
   b. No financial cost to access it
   c. Readings were enjoyable
   d. The use of a contemporary textbook
   e. Accessibility
8. Please select all the aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you dislike.
   a. The digital format
   b. Readings were not enjoyable
   c. Navigation of the online format
   d. Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it
   e. Increased digital screen time
9. I consider the peer learning that occurs in my team valuable.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
10. I feel as if the resources I have access to (tutors/T.A., tutorials) support my success in this class.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
11. I would consider taking another anthropology class in the future.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Unsure
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

A.6 Survey Responses

I am currently in my:	N	%
First year	55	61.8%
Second year	15	16.9%
Third year	7	7.9%
Fourth year or above	12	13.5%
I took ANTH 1000 as:		

a Major requirement	8	9.0%
a Minor requirement	2	2.2%
a GLER	25	28.1%
because of interest in the discipline	45	50.6%
Other	9	10.1%
Out of the topics that we have covered in class so far, the one have I found the most engaging is:		
The origin and evolution of Anthropology	2	2.2%
Fieldwork and methodology	9	10.1%
Theories of culture	7	7.9%
Race and ethnicity	14	15.7%
Language	12	13.5%
Religion, belief and ritual	20	22.5%
Kinship	9	10.1%
No preference	16	18.0%
The topic I am most excited to learn about in the future is:		
Gender and sexuality	39	43.8%
Subsistence	4	4.5%
Economics	8	9.0%
Globalization	16	18.0%
No preference	22	24.7%
I am enjoying using the digital, open-access textbook in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy.		
Strongly agree	51	57.3%
Agree	18	20.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	11	12.4%
Disagree	7	7.9%
Strongly Disagree	2	2.2%
I find the open-access textbook accessible and easy to navigate.		
Strongly agree	45	50.6%
Agree	29	32.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	10	11.2%
Disagree	2	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
I do not feel it is necessary to complete the readings in order to be successful in this class	3	3.4%
Please select all aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you like.		
The digital format	49	17.4%
No financial cost to access it	85	30.1%
Readings were enjoyable	39	13.8%
The use of a contemporary textbook	39	13.8%
Accessibility	70	24.8%
Please select all the aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you dislike.		
The digital format	27	26.2%
Readings were not enjoyable	16	15.5%

Navigation of the online format	11	10.7%
Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it	2	1.9%
Increased digital screen time	47	45.6%
I consider the peer learning that occurs in my team valuable.		
Strongly agree	58	65.2%
Agree	29	32.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	2.2%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
I feel as if the resources I have access to (tutors/T.A., tutorials) support my success in this class.		
Strongly agree	65	73.0%
Agree	20	22.5.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	4.5%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
I would consider taking another anthropology class in the future.		
Strongly agree	39	43.8%
Agree	34	38.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	11	12.4%
Disagree	4	4.5%
Strongly disagree	1	1.1%

A.7 Class 2021-B

A.8 Survey Questions

1. I am currently in my:
    a. First year
    b. Second year
    c. Third year
    d. Fourth year or above
2. Before this class, I have used Open Educational Resources (OERs) in postsecondary:
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Unsure
3. I have enjoyed using the digital OER in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
4. Throughout the course, I felt it was necessary to
    a. Always complete the readings
    b. Sometimes complete the readings

c. Never complete the readings

5. To access my readings, I
   a. Only used the links provided on Moodle
   b. Moved between chapters on the Pressbooks site and found it easy to navigate
   c. Moved between chapters on the Pressbook site and found it difficult to navigate
6. I feel that the OER supported my overall learning and understanding of course material.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
7. Please select all aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you like.
   a. The digital format
   b. No financial cost to access it
   c. Readings were accessible as an introductory anthropology student
   d. Readings were enjoyable
   e. The use of a contemporary textbook
8. Please select all the aspect(s) of the open-access textbook that you dislike.
   a. The digital-only format
   b. Readings felt inaccessible as an introductory anthropology student
   c. Readings were not enjoyable
   d. Navigation of the online format
   e. Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it
   f. Increased digital screentime
9. The OER included both textbook-style support chapters and pieces written by anthropologists. Did you
   a. Prefer the textbook-style chapters
   b. Prefer the pieces written by anthropologists
   c. Enjoy having both styles of readings in the textbook
10. I would be interested in seeing student-created work as case studies or examples of anthropological work in the OER.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
11. An important characteristic of OERs is the opportunity to increase accessibility for all students. Were there any aspects that you felt could be added to improve accessibility (i.e. providing PDFs to print, bigger or different font sizes, inclusion of local case studies, more diverse representation in readings)?
12. Do you have any suggestions, comments, or feedback about your experience using the OER in this class (either positive or negative)?

A.9 Survey Responses

I am currently in my:	N	%
First year	48	54.5%
Second year	21	23.9%
Third year	12	13.5%
Fourth year or above	7	8.0%
Before this class, I have used Open Educational Resources (OERs) in postsecondary.		
Yes	10	11.4%
No	73	83.0%
Unsure	5	5.7%
I have enjoyed using the digital OER in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy.		
Strongly agree	65	73.9%
Agree	16	18.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	6	6.8%
Disagree	1	1.1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Throughout the course, I felt it was necessary to		
Always complete the readings	56	63.6%
Sometimes complete the readings	32	36.4%
Never complete the readings	0	0%
To access my readings, I		
Only used the links provided on Moodle	81	92.0%
Moved between chapters on the Pressbooks site and found it easy to navigate	7	8.0%
Moved between chapters on the Pressbooks site and found it difficult to navigate	0	0%
I feel that the OER supported my overall learning and understanding of course material		
Strongly agree	37	42.0%
Agree	47	53.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	4.5%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Please select all aspect(s) of the OER that you have liked.		
The digital format	65	21.5%
No financial cost to access it	86	28.5%
Readings were accessible as an introductory anthropology student	76	25.2%
Readings were enjoyable	33	11.0%
The use of a contemporary textbook	42	13.9%
Please select all aspect(s) of the OER that you have disliked.		
Digital-only format	19	23.5%
Readings felt inaccessible as an introductory anthropology student	1	1.2%

Readings were not enjoyable	19	23.5%
Navigation of the online format	6	7.4%
Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it	5	6.2%
Increased digital screen time	31	38.3%
The OER included both textbook-style support chapters and pieces written by anthropologists. Did you		
Prefer the textbook-style chapters	23	26.4%
Prefer the pieces written by anthropologists	12	13.8%
Enjoy having both styles of readings in the textbook	52	60.0%
I would be interested in seeing student-created work as case studies or examples of anthropological work in the OER.		
Strongly agree	19	21.6%
Agree	39	44.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	27	30.7%
Disagree	3	3.4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%

A.10 Class 2022

A.11 Survey Questions

1. I have enjoyed using the free, digital textbook in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
2. So far in the course, I have felt it was necessary to
   a. Always complete the assigned readings
   b. Sometimes complete the assigned readings
   c. Never complete the assigned readings
3. I felt that the class textbook has supported my overall learning and understanding of course material.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
4. Please select all aspect(s) of the class textbook that you like.
   a. The digital format
   b. No financial cost to access it
   c. Readings are accessible as an introductory anthropology student
   d. Readings are enjoyable
   e. The use of a contemporary textbook

5. Please select all the aspect(s) of the class textbook that you dislike.
    a. The digital-only format
    b. Readings feel inaccessible as an introductory anthropology student
    c. Readings are not enjoyable
    d. Navigation of the online format
    e. Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it
    f. Increased digital screentime
6. I have completed/plan to complete the following assignments
    a. Finding Anthropology
    b. Student Review
    c. Anthropology Bio
    d. Class Reflection
7. I like having the second attempt at quizzes and assignments.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
8. I have found that completing the writing assignments
    a. Greatly improved my understanding of course material
    b. Somewhat improved my understanding of course material
    c. Had no impact on my understanding of course material
    d. Did not improve my understanding of course material
    e. I have not completed any of the writing assignments

9. Part of the reason why the class textbook was created was to increase accessibility for all students. Were there any aspects that you felt could be added to improve accessibility (i.e. providing PDFs, more representation in readings, etc.)?
10. Is there anything you would like your professor and TA to know about the textbook, quizzes or assignments?

A.12 Survey Responses

I have enjoyed using the free, digital textbook in this course over having to purchase and use a print copy:	N	%
Strongly agree	97	76.4%
Agree	17	13.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.9%
Disagree	1	0.8%
Strongly disagree	5	3.9
So far in the course, I have felt it was necessary to		
Always complete the assigned readings	34	26.8%
Sometimes complete the assigned readings	84	66.1%
Never complete the assigned readings	8	6.3%

I feel that the class textbook has supported my overall learning and understanding of course material.		
Strongly agree	31	24.4%
Agree	67	52.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	17.3%
Disagree	4	3.2%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.4%
Disagree	0	0%
Please select all aspect(s) of the class textbook that you like.		
The digital format	83	65.3%
No financial cost to access it	124	97.6%
Readings were accessible as an introductory anthropology student	103	81.1%
Readings were enjoyable	55	43.3%
The use of a contemporary textbook	55	43.3%
Please select all aspect(s) of the class textbook that you dislike.		
Digital-only format	33	26.0%
Readings felt inaccessible as an introductory anthropology student	0	0%
Readings were not enjoyable	18	14.2%
Navigation of the online format	13	10.2%
Lack of access to proper technology in order to use it	6	4.7%
Increased digital screen time	43	33.9%
I have completed/plan to complete the following assignments		
Finding Anthropology	118	92.9%
Student Review	101	79.5%
Anthropology Bio	94	74.0%
Class Reflection	69	54.3%
I like having the second attempt at quizzes and assignments.		
Strongly agree	96	75.6%
Agree	16	12.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	11	8.7%
Disagree	1	0.8%
Strongly disagree	1	0.8%
I have found that completing the writing assignments		
Greatly improved my understanding of course material	50	39.4%
Somewhat improved my understanding of course material	59	46.5%
Had no impact on my understanding of course material	10	7.9%
Did not improve my understanding of course material	1	0.8%
I have not completed any of the writing assignments	4	3.2%

APPENDIX B

Digital Anthropology Case Study Assignment Guidelines

Throughout this course you will work with your group to conduct a digital ethnography of your own through the platform Twitch. You will pick a specific streamer/gamer or a game. This means you will either study the community the forms around an individual who may play multiple games or study the community the forms around a specific game. You will need to reflect on the pros and cons of each approach, as well as the research topics you are interested in exploring.

As a **group**, you will be tasked with:

- identifying other field sites of interest (i.e., wikis, forums, social media posts)
- collecting and storing data
- taking field notes
- analyzing your findings

As an **individual**, you will be tasked with:

- conducting short periods of field work outside of class (1hr/week)
- reflecting on your experiences "in" the field in your field notes

This will allow you to co-develop your skills alongside your group members and put them into practice on your own. From this work, you will—as a group—write up a short case study describing your field site, the people you observed, and the themes that emerged. It should conform generally to the following outline:

- Introduction (1pg)
  - Describe your field site and community
  - Describe any secondary field sites you visited
- Game/Streamer
  - Describe the video game or the gamer you chose to focus on
- Methodology (1pg)
  - What did you do in the field? What was it like?
  - How did you collect your data? How did you store it? Analyze it?
  - Describe the pros and cons of your choices
- Themes (2pgs)
  - Describe 2-3 different themes, ideas, concepts, or interesting aspects of your digital space. What do you want other people to know about your work?
- Reflections and conclusions (1pg)
  - Describe your experience "doing" digital ethnography
  - What did you learn? What would you do differently?