

<http://somatosphere.net/2013/05/web-roundup-public-and-private.html>

Web Roundup: Public and Private

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By Melanie Boeckmann

Last month [Matthew Dalstrom](#) linked to web content on [abortion and patent laws](#). The divide between public and private, and questions such as: *Is what's private really always political?* inspire this month's short web roundup.

The [Open Access movement](#) has a vocal political agenda. In academic publishing, and also in anthropology as an academic field, one argument is that what is researched, often with public funds, cannot be hidden behind pay walls once published. [Ryan Anderson](#) of [Anthropology in Public](#) not only has the fitting blog title, but is also really [interested](#) in open access in and about anthropology. He has conducted a series of [interviews](#) for [Savage Minds](#) with [Jason Baird Jackson](#), [Tom Boellstorff](#), and [Keith Hart](#) on the topic. Already from 2011 and 2012, these interviews are now available for download at Ryan's academia account. The [Open Access Now](#) Initiative shares [thoughts](#) on the AAA's decision to go [open access](#).

If anthropology is in the public eye, what is its image? Surely there are many concepts and perceptions of what anthropologists do (inspiring groups such [This Is Anthropology!](#)). But what about the bad press? Anthropology has a [bad reputation](#) argue guest columnists *Ty Matejowsky and Beatriz M. Reyes-Foster* in the [Orlando Sentinel](#). They want anthropologists to reclaim their public "brand" and not have it defined by "others". [Sarah Kendzior](#) talks more about [anthropology's public engagement](#) in another interview over at [Anthropology in Public](#).

Is there anything more public yet private at the same time as social media? How tools may contribute to work on development, and what role anthropology plays, is at the center of a [debate](#) in the [Guardian](#). Also on the topic of blogging for and about international development: [Tobias Denskus and Andrea S. Papan](#)'s reflections. The public activity of blogging would appear to give a voice to those usually unheard: but does it? I'd be interested in hearing more about an anthropology of empowerment through social media, especially in the context of expensive technologies and access. Feel free to leave a comment below. If you are working on issues of digital media and anthropology, there is also currently a [call for papers](#) on the [Ethnography Matters](#) Blog.

Public vs. private: Ethnology and anthropology also play roles in the closed environments of corporations. Working in this field is [Steve Portugal](#), who gives an [interview](#) on [Ethnography Matters](#) on the issue of interviewing users (and his book).

Finally, we all move between and beyond spheres of privacy and the public eye, and sometimes we break the (official or unofficial) rules of what behaviors belong to which sphere. [Krystal D'Costa](#) has written a short but fascinating piece on [crying in the workspace](#). Her conclusion: While the workplace might be too restricted a place to let it all out, "neutral" public spheres like sidewalks or the subway are legitimate spaces to be both private and public. Do you find her division accurate? Please share your ideas on private and public spaces in the comments.

AMA citation

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