An Introduction to <u>D</u>emocratic <u>O</u>penbook <u>H</u>umanism and LODLIBs

Simple Instructions to Create a Free Global Library, Elevate the World's Intelligence, Democratize Digital Power, Free Your Mind and Creativity, and Make a Shitload of Money

v.1.6

Doh! Yes, you got me. Homer Simpson inspired the title. And yes, damnit, COVID-19 sucks. It's kept me holed up in my house for months now. One of the ways I've tried to cope is by writing. Shout out here needs to go to one of my mentees, Marco Moreno, a CSU Fullerton Anthropology grad, Peace Corps volunteer, artist, philosopher, poet, humanitarian… Marco inspired and encouraged me to focus on writing as a way of processing my thoughts and expressing myself. He told me several times how much writing has meant to him. He's a brilliant, beautiful, amazing person.

You may have heard that I came up with the five hypotheses necessary to uncover and reconstruct the very first Gospel for the first time ever in recorded history, and that in the process I built the proofs that show how we can sequence interdependent human historical texts. All that sounds crazy and really hard to believe—especially for those who know what a dumbass I am sometimes—but it's true.

It might sound hard to develop the theorem for connecting and sequencing all interdependent human texts across time, but it actually wasn't. It was elegant and simple actually, just applying to human writings the basic principles of how radios work (signals), how music works (acoustics), and how physical recordings work (and degrade). Triangulatory signal-based tech is everywhere, from EKGs to GIS.

Time and space are both just dimensions. Sometimes the same principles and methods that work in one also work in the other. Put interdependent historical texts in groups of three, carefully sample their parallels, apply three different tag types to the samples, and we can confirm which came first, second, and third in historical sequence. We humans are intrinsic creators, and we generate a potential infinity of signals, always in a constant process of synthesizing the signals we have heard in the past. Once you learn how to trace our synthesizing processes, and then account and correct for signal degradation, well, you've got the dream Digital Humanities toolkit.

You all really could have come up with the historical texts signal triangulation theorem yourselves. It's not really that complicated. I have no idea why I'm the guy who figured it out, because all of you are just as awesome as I am. Actually you're probably way more awesome. You all are amazing, so amazing. Did you know that? So one of you really should have beat me to it. But whatever.

Now that I have this platform, though, I'd like to give you a second set of hypotheses. These ones might make an even bigger difference than my first set of hypotheses.

The cool thing is, you don't need me to show you the proofs. You can build them yourselves. I'm always happy to help, though. After all, I'm a librarian. That's what we do. [libraryreppin]

Hypothesis 1. If we humans create and share LODLIBs for free with the world, those books will make us free individually.

Hypothesis 2. If we humans connect our LODLIBs with each other's LODLIBs, that will make us free socially.

Hypothesis 3. If we humans demand that enslaved digital books become LODLIBs, too, then that will make the whole world and almost all of its knowledge free.

Put all three into practice, and the vast majority of scientific and cultural knowledge can truly become universal, which is exactly what it should be. That's one of the foundational principles of librarianship. [libraryreppin]

What's a LODLIB, you ask? Great reference question. Let me tell you.

A **LODLIB** is a **L**inked **O**pen **D**ata **L**iving **I**nformational **B**ook.

A LODLIB is something you:

1) **make/curate** by yourself or with your friends or colleagues or family members or whoever you want to. Totally up to you.

2) **upload/update** to Zenodo.org or a similar free publicly hosted Open Science repository that provides interconnected DOIs every time you upload updates to your book. No matter how many new versions you create and DOIs you make, all of them will always be connected back to your book's BASE DOI. Think of your BASE DOI as a personal broadcast station for your LODLIB. That's usually the one you want to cite and share with others, unless you're getting real technical with your research and analysis. But you can always make new LODLIBS and start new book BASE DOI broadcasting stations.

3) **share/distribute** with others however you want for free. It's your own personal digital property. Not Facebook's. Not LinkedIn's. Not Amazon's. Not Twitter's. Not WordPress's. Not any News Organization or Media Company. Just yours. You own it, and the world gets to enjoy it with you.

If you want to see a sample of a LODLIB, take a look at my first [LODLIB](#), maybe the first LODLIB ever. Not sure. You can always correct me if I'm wrong, and I'll correct that information in this LODLIB. See why LODLIBs are cool?

It has nice formatting. Really cool ideas. Different languages that I like to study. Some of my poetry. Tables. Some links. Some shout outs. Some advice. An open library with links to most of my books and articles. It's EXACTLY what I want it to be in EXACTLY the format I want it to be.

Once you start working with a LODLIB, a lot of social media and communication platforms are going to seem like digital knowledge slavery and digital identity slavery in comparison. Fitting us into little boxes with limits on characters. Sacrificing critical thinking for soundbites. Promoting instant gratification in place of deep reflection. Stealing and mining our private data for profit and exploiting our connections with family and friends. Fomenting disinformation and discord and cashing in the entire time. Zuckerberg wasn't kidding at all when he called all of his users dumb****s for giving him all our private data for free. Data is the new power, and Zuck was more than happy to suck it all up for himself. Three billion FB knowledge slaves and counting…

[LODLIB 1](#) was born from a scientific purpose, but it became a Creative Commons experiment in its own right. The more I worked on my book proposal, the more I enjoyed the freedom it offered. I could say whatever I want. Express it however I want. Format it however I want. Transform it however and whenever I want.

And I didn't have to be connected to the web to do any of that. I could unplug for hours, days if I wanted, work on my book. Then reconnect to the internet, upload my update, boom. New version.

The versioning makes it totally adaptable and very much like software. That's one reason I'd suggest you be intentional about labeling your versions inside your books and in the metadata on Zenodo.

A LODLIB is a brand new kind of digital property. And let me tell you, people, it's going to make a lot of really unethical big tech companies quiver. Because if LODLIBs go viral, then those unethical companies—who do not see you as humans, but only think of your eyes as dollar signs and your fingers and thumbs as clickers—they can't easily control you or monetize you any more.

How about that? Freedom through writing and sharing books.

That's a very, very old idea. Humans have been writing for some 5000 years. But it's taken us a long time as a whole species to learn how to read and be literary creators ourselves. For

example, according to my UVA *Doctorvater* Harry Gamble [wahoowa], only 10% of people in Jesus' day knew how to read, and Jesus probably wasn't one of them.

Modern libraries and literacy campaigns over the last century have helped realize nearly universal literacy, at least in the United States. And that's an amazing achievement to celebrate.

But what are we actually doing with this amazing ability to read and write that we've taught ourselves?

It sure seems we spend a lot of it in online warfare: getting angry at each other, trolling each other, defending each other, taking sides, having arguments, and generally writing literary garbage.

I wonder if big tech corporations like this situation, like us fighting with each other on the platforms they created. I wonder if we are just digital mandigo fighters to them.

Did you know that's how slaves were controlled on and across plantations back in the day? Pit them against each other. A beautiful, brilliant black friend of mine suggested that I read Frederick Douglass's *Autobiography*. So I got a copy and read it. Only cost a few bucks. But wow, was it eye-opening, and yet horrifying at the same time.

Plantation slavery and modern scientific knowledge slavery are massively different, of course, but the parallels are truly eery in regard to how systems of control and exploitation of human labor and knowledge work. Douglass taught himself to read as a child by tricking his white neighbor kids into teaching him. Today it seems like we have to be nearly as conniving just to get access to a lot of scientific knowledge.

I'd strongly you to read Douglass's *Autobiography*, too. It's nothing less than a brilliant, beautiful human being showing us how to fight and struggle for our own damn minds, how to become strong and powerful through determined, relentless self-education. There may be no more beautiful Humanist treatise in history.

I'd also encourage you to read Jeremy Rifkin's and Andrew Yang's books. They predicted this day, when the Creator economy would emerge as the new global norm. Before you buy their books, why don't you ask them to make them available for free online? Those guys are brilliant and saw what was coming. They should join us in this new Creative Commons Digital Library that we will build one book at a time.

This day was also built into the very creation of the internet at its inception, something digital prophets like Tim-Berners Lee and Brewster Kahle saw at the beginning. Read their works, too. It's thanks to Brewster that millions of books are already free! [By the way, four

publishers are trying to destroy the Internet Archive—a non-profit public library in the State of California. If you care about the freedom of knowledge and human minds, speak up and take collective action to stop them.]

If humans advocate persistently, strategically, and creatively enough for open content, that content will eventually open. Three intentional steps can get us there together, far quicker than we might imagine if they go viral:

Step 1. Self-archive LODLIBs. Use a free, Open Science repository such as Zenodo.org, the same site used by CERN and researchers around the world to archive their data. Self-archive LODLIBs by yourself or together with friends. It might be best to start your book with something that has to do with Science, whether it's an original idea or not. Be sure to apply a CC (Creative Commons) license both *within* the book and as part of the upload metadata.

Step 2. Connect your LODLIBs using an ORCID iD. If you are a researcher or author, get a 16-digit ORCID iD for free. By the way, ORCID is a non-profit company that supports an International Standards Organization standard for reliable, permanent global identification, like an ISBN for authors. Having an ORCID iD makes it super simple for the whole world to follow your work and get updates whenever you publish them. Be sure to fill out your ORCID record as much as possible and keep it up to date.

Step 3. Read, Share, and Link. Think Oprah's book club, just for the whole world. Read whatever interests you, take notes or journal about it in your LODLIB, and start building global communities of interest around books—yours and others—by reading and linking to each other's LODLIBs.

Note to Advertisers and Literary-Political Pragmatists (Dolla Dolla Bills yall)

In case readers hadn't previously realized it, as a new kind of digital property, LODLIBs are what Kim and Mauborgne call a "Blue Ocean Strategy."

As an influencer with a massive amount of followers, Will Smith can make over $100,000 for a single post on Instagram.

Now imagine a LODLIB with millions of views and millions of downloads.

How much money could be made using LODLIBs as digital properties?

How much artistic creativity could be realized using LODLIBs as digital properties?

How much reader engagement could be realized using LODLIBs as digital properties?

What makes a LODLIB different than other kinds of digital marketing?

- Fully versionable (think of a LODLIB as literary software for humans)
- Fully programmable (each book is a wave of signals from your broadcast station)
- Fully extensible (each book can always be expanded and multiplied)
- Fully customizable (limitless options for format, font, color, layout, etc.)
- Fully immersive (each book is a world in which users can get lost for hours)
- Fully printable (a book can be created in a printer-friendly format)

Digital marketing has become a fight just to get a split second of user's attention, a never-ending spree of attempts at distraction. Media companies have now learned to leverage this "marketing through perpetual annoyance" digital space by playing both sides: monetizing piecemeal ads all the while offering subscriptions as a panacea to avoid the hassle of ads as distractions.

The real Bradbury-esque beauty of LODLIBs is that the power to browse, to peruse, to linger, to relish, to memorize each word or image is *up to the reader*. The reader is ultimately in control, both of *what to read and how to read*. Yes, clever marketers and graphic designers can and will find techniques and spaces within LODLIBs to shape reader behavior, but compare to other kinds of digital spaces LODLIBs are a far more fair, equitable, and respectful playing field for both *creator* and *reader*, where both have far more *freedom and control over the placement, role, and purpose of advertising*. By controlling the channel of distribution, by using a LODLIB as a digital *book broadcasting station*, an author (individual or collective) has far more leverage than in typical media and online spaces that are controlled by massive corporations.

Lest Open Science purists complain about using a platform like Zenodo.org as a platform for LODLIB advertising, remember that the big scientific/academic publisher monopolies are *already advertising* in these archives, especially through the branding of their published journal articles.

Think about that, Authors' Guild.

Maybe it's time to stop kicking against the goads of the inevitable Open Data / Open Science / Open Access / Open Book future and rethink book production and distribution in our new Linked Open Data world.

Author Driven Open Access Book Unlatching and a Personal Thank You

For those interested in the outcomes of my previous protestations against publishers whose closed/toll access has curbed my research and the progress of science, yesterday I received an email from representatives at Brepols Publishers and the University of Strasbourg with terms for a crowd-funding campaign to flip my published dissertation (*As the Bandit Will I Confess You*), to open access.

Thank you, Mr. Sterkens. Thank you, Mr. Gounelle. I am grateful and elated!

The campaign will be about $3100. Brepols has about 85 copies in stock, and reaching the crowdfunding goal will result in all of those books being shipped to me. Hooray!

I'm already thinking about the opportunity this presents me as an author to self-advocate through crowd-funding and build my reader base.

Here's what I'm thinking so far: each person or organization who donates $100 to the campaign will receive a signed copy of my book through the mail (if the USPS still exists, please god, let it exist).

Knowledge Unlatched and other companies are doing great work as mediators and negotiators to achieve book flipping at scale.

More and more publishers—especially university publishers—are flipping journals and book series to an Open Access model.

One of the key missing ingredients in the Open Access revolution is to have authors join *en masse* as self-interested yet enlightened participants.

I hope my story and experience with Brepols—and the realization of a very quick and successful crowd-funding campaign—will serve as an example of what authors can and should do to increase their readership and even their personal revenues.