Crowder, Jerome W., Mike Fortun, Rachel Besara, and Lindsay Poirier (eds.) 2020. *Anthropological data in the digital age: new possibilities, new challenges.* **Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. 270 pp. Hb.: €99.99. ISBN: 9783030249243.**

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It has been observed that anthropology's method consists in generating an excess of data, the import of which may only come into focus later, if ever. But what do anthropologists do with their data in this anticipatory meantime? The present collection takes up this question in a digital context, marked by the ease of duplicating and transmitting research data as well as the difficulty of controlling its circulation. If previous conjunctures of concern about anthropological data were tied to the preservation of paper-based records, then this volume shows that digital abundance means making choices about what to retain and how to make it usable, both for one's own research and—increasingly—by others. One of its recurring themes is the need for collaboration between anthropologists and information professionals, who must learn from each other how to "think in different categories" (p. 196). The volume's origins can be traced to just such a collaboration: conceived as a panel at the 2016 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association by Crowder and the anthropology librarian Richard Freeman, it was completed by a team of coeditors after Freeman's untimely death in 2017.

While the editors are to be commended for carrying the project across the finish line, the volume's internal organisation is a bit unwieldy. The first section considers "technical aspects of data management" (p. 9), but is less tailored to anthropology than it ought to be. The second section features reviews of specific projects by the researchers who conducted them, but the volume's

introduction does little to draw out throughlines across them. It also sidesteps questions about the social conditions that have given rise to contemporary efforts at opening up research data: while the introduction asserts that "we can no longer expect to guard our data with clenched fists and locked boxes" (p. 8), it falls to an interview with a longtime program officer at the U.S. National Science Foundation to explore the interplay of policy developments and personal motivations.

The project reviews at the heart of the volume might, for instance, be productively compared in terms of the importance they place on common standards for describing data and making it discoverable. The two projects working with archaeological data apply such standards most extensively, and the chapter by Edward Schortman and colleagues gives an inspiring example of the reuse that this permits by undergraduate students. At the other end of the spectrum, visual anthropologist Sarah Franzen uses her own judgment to extract clips to be shared from her raw video footage, in keeping with the needs of her interlocutors as well as her editing instincts as a filmmaker. The dynamics of cocreation with source communities are central to two further chapters: Sean Bruna offers guiding questions for sharing data with tribal nations, while Diana Marsh and Ricardo Punzalan pilot methodologies for meaningful measures of impact.

The standout chapter of the collection, by Lindsay Poirier and colleagues, undertakes a reading of cultural anthropology's "data ideologies" (p. 213) against the backdrop of the authors' engagement with an international initiative that aims to enable data sharing and reuse across the disciplines. Poirier and colleagues allow that the initiative's members tend to fetishise openness and to center issues of reproducibility that do not apply to all forms of inquiry, but they also note the sense of enthusiasm and excitement about new possibilities for research that is palpable at the initiative's events. They wryly observe: "Enthusiasm and excitement are not the first words we would think of if asked to characterize cultural anthropology's own disciplinary culture when it

comes to data and its sharing; caution, reticence, and worry are more fitting descriptors, in our experience" (p. 218). This observation squares with how data management has been discussed in the pages of this publication (see Pels *et al.* 2018), and it anchors the chapter's incisive analysis of taken-for-granted assumptions about treating all data as equally sensitive and denying interpretive insight to anyone other than the original fieldworker.

Poirier and colleagues want to see anthropologists set aside these unhelpful assumptions and embrace an ethos of reinterpretation, understood as a process of multiplying insights about a body of data in the service of richer, more participatory analysis. Indeed, the volume as a whole may be said to pose the question of just how far this interpretive circle can be extended. As its chapters show, the answer does not have to be "indefinitely" for the task to be worth taking up.

REFERENCE

Pels, P., I. Boog, J. Henrike Florusbosch, Z. Kripe, T. Minter, M. Postma, M. Sleeboom-Faulkner, *et al.* 2018. 'Data management in anthropology: the next phase in ethics governance?', *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* 26: 391–413. https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12526.