



Dr. Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick

# Firsts in Open Access

By Martha Adkins

Libraries are champions of freedom of access to information, and Copley Library has long been a strong supporter of open access scholarship and resources. Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick, Assistant Professor in the Kroc School of Peace Studies, recently made open access the backbone of the scholarship lifecycle with the publication of his book, *The Good Drone: How Social Movements Democratize Surveillance*. It is a first in the world of open access scholarly work, being not only published as an open book, but having gone through open peer review.

What resulted in this book, which will be published in 2020 by MIT Press, began with the collaborative collection and analysis of open sources of data by Dr. Choi-Fitzpatrick and students. This project resulted in a report, which currently resides, with the accompanying data set, in our institutional repository, Digital USD (<https://digital.sandiego.edu/gdl2016report/>). From there, the project grew to a manuscript presented through an open platform on the web for open peer review, and it will be available as an open access PDF when released for publication (alongside traditional print copies for sale). The topic of research, the democratization of surveillance, was one driving force for the simultaneous pursuit of openness in the process of publication and dissemination of knowledge, says Dr. Choi-Fitzpatrick. Although the project was

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not initially conceived as one which would be open at each point in its lifecycle, conscious choices were made to make each component open. The choices made along the life of this piece

of scholarship reflect Dr. Choi-Fitzpatrick's commitment to knowledge being free, transparent, and in the end open for engagement with the public and for the greater good.

Many USD faculty support open access initiatives, using open educational resources in their courses, seeking out open access journals for their research, promoting open access resources to their students, and seeking to publish their own scholarship in open access publications. Embracing open access can be intimidating, as it is a move beyond the traditional model of research, scholarship, and publication. Dr. Choi-Fitzpatrick has some words of advice: first, for the academics who value open access, he encourages us to be creative in the way we imagine the production and distribution of knowledge; second, for institutions, he encourages the commitment to finding new ways to reward that creativity. While it may seem a significant step outside one's comfort zone to work toward publication in such an open way, neither the integrity nor the impact of scholarly work are affected. As Dr. Choi-Fitzpatrick describes his experience with *The Good Drone*, "All of it was different, but none of it hurt."

You can find out more about *The Good Drone* and the open peer review of the work at <https://thegooddrone.pubpub.org>