



**THE ACADEMIC  
BOOK  
OF THE FUTURE**

**Marilyn Deegan**

**Academic Book  
of the Future  
Project Report**

**June 2017**

**A Report to the AHRC & the British Library**

## Imprint



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### **The Academic Book of the Future Project Report**

A Report to the AHRC and the British Library

Marilyn Deegan

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This report, written by Professor Marilyn Deegan, is one of two final outputs from the Arts and Humanities Research Council/ British Library Academic Book of the Future Project, (2014-16) and explores the many strands of project activity. It forms a companion to Dr Michael Jubb's *Academic Books and Their Future Report*. The two reports complement each other, and reflect the wide set of communities and contexts the Project engaged with, highlighting positive collaborations, creative solutions and business models, and ongoing research tackling the tensions that surround academic book production, dissemination, consumption, and conservation.

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## Executive summary

1. The Academic Book of the Future Project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Library (BL) in response to widespread concerns about books, publishing, libraries and the academy. The Project was led by Dr Samantha Rayner (UCL) as Principal Investigator, with the Co-Investigators Nick Canty (UCL), Professor Marilyn Deegan (KCL) and Professor Simon Tanner (KCL). Dr Michael Jubb was the Project's principal consultant and Rebecca Lyons was the Project's Research Associate.
2. At the end of this two-year project, a significant number of deliverables have been produced: reports, blog posts, Storified tweets, articles, a Palgrave Pivot book. Many workshops have been held, talks given, and there have been three major conferences: on bookselling, on university presses, and on the situation of the academic book in the global South. One crowning achievement has been the establishment of Academic Book Week which has been run twice, and it is set to continue into the future. The outputs of our work are all listed at [academicbookfuture.org](http://academicbookfuture.org). In particular, we should like to draw attention to the innovative publication produced by UCL Press: BOOC (Book as Open Online Content, [www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press/browse-books/academic-book-of-the-future](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press/browse-books/academic-book-of-the-future)). This presents peer-reviewed content generated by the project in a range of formats (articles, reports, blogs, videos) on a dynamic, evolving open platform. It is intended that BOOC will continue the conversations around the academic book and its futures, and UCL Press will provide a stable home for this to grow and thrive.
3. The present report pulls together all these strands into a narrative of the project's diverse activities and the responses to it, particularly from the academic world, and attempts to give some pointers to what the academic book might evolve into in the future. A

companion Policy Report (Jubb, 2017) looks in detail at the academic book from the perspectives of publishers, libraries and intermediaries, in particular analysing the policy implications of new developments in the funding and assessment regimes currently affecting academe, and the changes in publishing and libraries necessitated by the onward march of the digital, funding constraints, and the proposed shift towards open access for books submitted to the Research Excellence Framework.

4. We begin this report with an examination of the policy context within which academics write, produce and read academic books, and the effect these have upon research and teaching. We then move to a detailed analysis of what we actually mean by an academic book, and describe many of the forms and formats of long-form publications that might be included under this rubric. Next we consider the enduring value of books in the academy, how they are used and appreciated at all levels in research and teaching, but also the constraints upon them.
5. One of our key aims in this project was to engage as broad a community as possible in our deliberations, drawn from the academy, publishers, libraries, and booksellers. The next section outlines our community-building work, and is followed by a summary of the activities we engaged in. This is dealt with in much more detail in Jubb (2017).
6. One strategy that we proposed to the funders was that we should not assign all our funding before the project began, but that we should be free to commission activities and pieces of research as we uncovered promising areas of investigation. This has allowed us to be agile in our approach, and some important and substantial reports have been produced for the Project by both our team and our collaborators. We commissioned major reports on research outputs, especially books, submitted to the REF2014; the role of the editor

from publisher perspectives; academic book discovery, evaluation and access; the Academic Book in North America; peer review; altmetrics and the humanities; and technical issues in academic book production, presentation, and use.

7. The next section looks to the future: with so many new ideas and new technologies for the book, what might the academic book become? This section examines in detail some of the new developments for books in the UK and USA in particular: there are many new experimental partnerships between academics, libraries, and publishers to push the concept of the book beyond its covers. At the same time, there is a continuing (indeed resurging) preference for print for sustained reading and reflection.

### *Conclusions*

8. At the end of this project, we have found that the academic book/monograph is still greatly valued in the academy for many reasons: the ability to produce a sustained argument within a more capacious framework than that permitted by the article format; the engagement of the reader at a deep level with such arguments; its central place in career progression in the arts and humanities; its reach beyond the academy (for some titles) into bookshops and into the hands of a wider public. It seems that the future is likely to be a mixed economy of print, e-versions of print, and networked enhanced monographs of greater or lesser complexity.
9. One of the most significant achievements of the Project that our community has reiterated many times has been the collaboration and communication across the different sectors of activity. This looks likely to continue with a number of initiatives already in planning: Academic Book Week, BOOC, and the university presses conferences, for instance. Having established a new framework for cooperation, it is essential that the communities continue the cross-boundary activities.

10. We have also identified a number of challenges during the course of the Project:

- The pressure of ever-increasing teaching loads and time-consuming assessment regimes has reduced the capacity of many academics for the sustained research and thinking needed to produce the very best monographs. This is added to by the timing of REF cycles and the fact that a book only equates to two articles, despite needing much more input and time. However, we have been informed that many REF panels are more likely to award higher grades to books than to articles. The policy makers and institutions perhaps need to address these issues in time for the next REF.
- The REF panels are enjoined to be format and publisher neutral, but institutions and departments still insist that scholars publish with the more established and reputable academic and university presses. Academics themselves generally seek out publication in such venues, and the REF2014 data showed that 46% of all books submitted were from only ten publishers, the three clear leaders being Oxford University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, and Cambridge University Press. The prestige that these presses bring is still valued, despite the instructions to REF panels.
- While there is a general acceptance among academics about the many benefits of open access, we found much confusion and anxiety about the open access agenda and the policy that open access for books will be mandated for the REF from the mid 2020s. Jubb (2017) details the



many benefits and challenges, and we (in accord with Jubb) wish to endorse Crossick and the 2016 OAPEN Report when they suggest that open access should proceed cautiously. It also seems that the publishing world is far from ready to move into Gold open access for monographs in time for the mid-2020s, and that Green open access, while possible, will only be able to offer accepted manuscripts for access, not published versions, and that discoverability is likely to be a problem.

- As we show in Section 8 here, there are many forms and formats of experimental enhanced books and monographs being developed. This is to be welcomed. However, there is no certainty about which formats might become general standards (if indeed any should) which poses challenges for library access, delivery, discovery, and long-term preservation.

## Preface

11. The AHRC/ British Library Academic Book of the Future Project was a two-year research project managed by a core project team from University College London and King's College London, with consultancy support from Dr Michael Jubb. The Project explored and investigated the academic book in its current and emerging contexts from a range of perspectives, and considered a variety of issues.
12. Over the course of the Project, the team investigated the academic book with the support of a community coalition made up of its main stakeholders—collaborators from academia, libraries, bookselling, publishing, and policy makers. In addition, we were able to draw upon expertise and advice from an Advisory Board, also made up of representatives from the different communities and disciplines the Project explored, and a Strategy Board, appointed by the funders, which acted as another source for feedback and guidance. This report draws together many of the strands of activity, it draws upon a whole range of documents written for the project: mini project reports, blogs, articles etc. These are all listed in the bibliography and are signalled in the text. We gratefully acknowledge the input of so many experts. A separate Policy Report (Jubb, 2017) analyses in detail the perspectives of publishers, libraries, and intermediaries, and the policy implications of complex new developments.
13. The Project happened at a significant moment for the world of academe: political and technological changes were calling into question some of the professional norms and practices we had for many decades taken for granted, both in the UK and in a wider international context. Our partners and collaborators welcomed the opportunity to interrogate a wide range of issues that cut across all the various communities, and engaged with us in a diverse set of activities: this Report and the Jubb Report are only two of the outputs generated, and cannot possibly capture the full range of

what has been achieved. Our website is a repository for more of these individual and group responses, as is BOOC, our experimental publication with UCL Press. In addition, the Project's success in creating new dialogues between communities is evidenced by the fact that Academic Book Week, co-ordinated by the Project team in 2015, looks now to be a part of the academic landscape, managed by a team of stakeholders who want to continue its existence: the second Week took place in January 2017.

14. The legacy of this Project, I hope, is that we have created a strong set of foundations for further research and partnerships to build upon. The Project has reached far, but in two years can only pack in so much: 2014-16 threw new challenges to the contexts in which the academic book operates which meant working flexibly to include relevant reports launched during this time by Jisc, OAPEN, HEFCE, and the Mellon Foundation. Add to that uncertainties about the future shape of the REF, HEFCE, and research funding, and it is clear that we are still in the eye of a storm of complex, often competing, agendas. However, what this Project has, above all, proved with emphatic and unequivocal evidence, is that those communities of practice which connect through the academic book are willing to work together to continue to bring research to readers as quality-controlled, accessible content. The value of the academic book, in all its many forms, is still very much a key currency in arts and humanities research. As one of our collaborators remarked:

”Discussion of the future of academic publishing has too often failed to transcend the self-interest of individual groups of stakeholders: publishers, authors, librarians, readers, funders, intermediaries, bookshops. One of the most significant contributions of The Academic Book of

the Future project has been to bring these various communities together to develop a shared understanding of where we are now and of what might, or indeed might not, happen next.

*Anthony Cond, Managing Director, Liverpool University Press, IPG Frankfurt Book Fair Academic and Professional Publisher of the Year 2015 and The Bookseller Independent Academic, Educational and Professional Publisher of the Year 2015*

*Dr Samantha Rayner,*

*Director, Centre for Publishing, UCL*

## Acknowledgements

15. This Project was, from the start, a collaborative one: the shared vision in our initial bid was to catalyse connections between the communities who are linked by the academic book. Networks and networking lie at the heart of what has been achieved, and it has been an inspirational experience to work with so many people who have supported this Project so generously.
16. Thanks are due, first of all, to the AHRC and the British Library for making this project call: it is clear that such research was needed, given the various contexts the academic book currently exists in, and I hope that we have provided plenty of scope for future research focus in this area. In particular I would like to thank Mark Llewelyn, Andrew Prescott, and Paula Rothwell from the AHRC, as well as Maja Maricevic from the British Library, for their advice and support in the past two years. Our two Boards have provided us with feedback at crucial points in the Project's life, and have helped us to navigate sometimes bumpy passages where different contexts collided. Very special thanks are due to the Chair of our Advisory Board, Kathryn Sutherland, whose efforts to support the team and the wider Project have been unstinting and whose integrity has kept us on point throughout; thanks also to Anne Jarvis, the Chair of the Strategy Board, for her encouragement. We have been extremely fortunate in those groups who have helped to oversee this Project.
17. To all those people who connected with us through events large and small, through undertaking commissioned research, or via focus groups and interviews, a thank you does not begin to cover the debt this Project—and the academic book of the future more generally—owes to you. It is your commitment to the themes that we explored that makes us confident that a positive future for the academic book lies ahead. It may take some time before that future is more clearly defined, but the dedication to academic research in the arts and

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humanities that has been highlighted, and the openness with which different communities are willing to discuss change, are very hopeful signs indeed.

18. Finally, I would like to thank the rest of our core team (Marilyn Deegan, Simon Tanner, Nick Canty, Michael Jubb, and Rebecca Lyons), and our interns (Kate Griffiths and Marcel Knöchelmann) for making this journey such a memorable and productive one. Managing a Project of this size and scope could not have been done without their respective superskills to hold the whole thing together.
19. Indeed, without the heroic work of Marilyn and Michael, who were commissioned to write the final Reports, pulling everything together coherently would have been an impossible task: the final result reflects the extraordinary range of issues and opinions at work within the arts and humanities academic book world, and points to some ways in which the future of that world will be shaped and explored.

*Dr Samantha Rayner,*

*Director, Centre for Publishing, UCL*

## 1. Introduction: The Project

21. The Academic Book of the Future Project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Library (BL) in response to widespread concerns about books, publishing, libraries, and the academy. Declining monograph sales, rising serials prices, funding problems, rapidly-changing new technologies, shifting policy landscapes, increasing pressure on academics to do more with less, all contributed to a sense of unease about the health of the academic book in the arts and humanities, and indeed about the health of the disciplines themselves. This was the background against which the funders issued a call for proposals in early 2014, seeking a team to work with all the concerned communities and stakeholders.
22. The Centre for Publishing at University College London (UCL), together with the Department of Digital Humanities at King's College London (KCL) and the Research Information Network (RIN), was successful in securing the Project with a proposal called *Communities of Practice: the Academic Book of the Future*. The Project was led by Dr Samantha Rayner (UCL) as Principal Investigator, with the Co-Investigators Nick Canty (UCL), Professor Marilyn Deegan (KCL), and Professor Simon Tanner (KCL). Dr Michael Jubb was the Project's principal consultant for RIN; Rebecca Lyons was appointed as the Project Research Associate at UCL. The funders established a Strategy Board, chaired by Anne Jarvis, Cambridge University Librarian, to guide the Project, and the Project set up its own Advisory Board, chaired by Professor Kathryn Sutherland, University of Oxford, with members from across the academic, publishing, library, and bookselling communities.
23. This report is offered as a narrative of the activities and outputs of the project; it is accompanied by a policy report by Michael Jubb (2017). It does not, and cannot, report on all the many activities and events that took place over the past two years; this is a representative

selection. The Project's legacy website has links, reports, and blog posts that give more detail of the activities and the membership of the two Boards.



## 2. Preparatory work

### 2.1 Methodology

24. There have been two key parts to the Project: in Phase 1 the key aim was to establish a wide-ranging process of consultation and engagement, acknowledging that in an area as complex as that of the academic book, the diverse, interlocking communities of practice in academia, in publishing, and in libraries and other intermediaries must be addressed as in an integrated way. In Phase 2, we moved to test the findings and explore with deeper analysis via four key blocks of activity: further consultation and data gathering; discipline-based events; events with the wider communities; project outputs.
25. During Phase 1, following the production of an initial literature review covering all the key aspects of the project, RIN focused on publishing, libraries, the supply chain, and sales; and on academic books in the form of monographs, edited collections and scholarly editions. RIN's investigations involved semi-structured interviews and focus groups with publishers, librarians, and intermediaries in the supply chain; and intensive desk research. More than two dozen publishers, a similar number of librarians, along with twenty intermediaries, funders, policy-makers, and academics have made individual contributions to the work.
26. This work continued in Phase 2, augmented by work on trends in sales of academic books, which has involved gathering and analysing data available in the public domain from the UK and the US, and on SCONUL statistics, and from Nielsen BookScan, sets of data on retail sales in the UK of academic. Analysis of this data is to be found in Jubb (2017).
27. The rest of the core team concentrated on connecting with the communities of practice around academic books to evoke responses via more detailed pieces of commissioned research, symposia,

workshops, and conferences. During Phase 1 of the Project, proposals were sought from these communities for activities they believed to be important: this resulted in a suite of different mini-projects that gathered data via a variety of routes during Phase 2.

28. We commissioned reports on aspects such as Editing, Peer Review, the American University Press context, Altmetrics, Book Discoverability, and new technical developments in academic books, as well as the role of the Intermediary, Creative Writing PhDs, and what can be learned from the REF 2014 data. Other reports came as the result of Project-generated activity, like the Book of the South conference at the British Library (generously supported financially by the Library), or the University Press conference in Liverpool. These more formal outputs were complemented by a programme of guest blog posts, hosted on our Project website, which appeared at regular intervals over the two years, and which covered a whole range of topics, from Musical Scholarship to Multimodal Phds, OA to the pleasures of reading Real Books. Over fifty blog posts were generated. The Project's social media presence, in particular interactions and mentions on Twitter, were also monitored, and key threads Storified. As part of our research-in-practice experiment, BOOC (Books as Open Online Content), published by UCL Press, is exploring how viable these more informal outputs are as peer-reviewed pieces of work.
29. In addition, the team undertook outreach to the different communities by giving talks and facilitating discussions and debates on their home grounds. In this way, the Project generated feedback from groups such as academic librarians (RLUK, WHELF), publishers (the ALPSP, the IPG, Futurebook, the London Book Fair, UKSG), booksellers (The Booksellers Association), and academics (eg the AHRC Subject Associations Events, the Milton Conference, Arthurian Conference, British Association for Religious Studies Conference, the Digital Humanities Congress, AHRC Digital Transformations

meetings, the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing). Further bespoke events were supported, for instance, workshops with PhD students and ECRs: these were held in Stirling, De Montfort, the British Library and at the London Book Fair. Others brought together media researchers (Lincoln's Impossible Constellation conference), art historians and archaeologists (York), and music scholars (Goldsmiths). To ensure we stretched the Project scope more widely still, Academic Book Week was created.

## **2.2 Research questions**

30. The funders established some initial research questions that we refined during the course of the first year of the project in order to establish the parameters for our research. Issues we have interrogated included:

- the definition of an academic book;
- peer review and recognition;
- discoverability and access;
- the processes of producing academic books by authors and publishers;
- the complex supply chains that brings books to readers and readers to books;
- the changing roles of libraries;
- rapidly evolving technologies;
- rights and legal issues;
- the policy landscape;

- economic concerns;
- Open Access;
- broad international perspectives;
- academic careers.

### 2.3 Building the community

31. The funders required that there be extensive community engagement in the Project, and we decided from the start that the optimum way to ensure this was to establish a small central team which would engage with a larger community coalition across the whole complex ecology of academic writing and publishing, interrogating a wide range of cross-cutting themes. The tasks we set ourselves were challenging, but we believe the results have shown that the approach worked: our reach has been broad and we have engaged organisations and individuals across the communities in different activities. The communities we worked with during the project were academics across the arts and humanities at all career stages, publishers, both university and trade, librarians, booksellers, and policy-makers. Though we have been a UK-based project, reporting on issues of key concern to academics here, we took account of many projects outside the UK offering useful models and perspectives to consider. In the US, where concerns about the position of the monograph in the academy are equally pressing, a whole range of pertinent reports have appeared in the last few years. US university presses, facing severe financial challenges with declining sales, are making new alliances between the press, the library, and the wider university, and are exploring other reshaping initiatives. The Andrew W Mellon Foundation has been instrumental in encouraging and funding new developments to enhance the capacity for the production of (enhanced) monographs, most of which have library and faculty involvement in the publishing

process. In Europe, too, there is concern about the place of the monograph in the scholarly landscape, with a particular emphasis on open access. The OAPEN project (OA Publishing in European Networks), hosted from the National Library in The Hague, is dedicated to open access, peer-reviewed books, and has published useful reports and surveys. OAPEN-UK, a collaborative research project gathering evidence to help stakeholders make informed decisions on the future of OA scholarly monograph publishing in the humanities and social sciences, carried out an extensive survey of UK academics in 2014, and released its final report in 2016. The OAPEN-UK survey has greatly informed our work on OA during this project, as has the HEFCE report, *Monographs and Open Access*, produced by Geoffrey Crossick (2015).

#### **2.4 Initial literature review**

32. The first substantive investigation and report of the project was the initial literature review carried out by the Research Information Network (RIN, 2015). This mapped out the landscape within which we would be operating, and was extensive but, given the scope of the topic, could not hope to be comprehensive.
33. The review covered a number of different bodies of literature, each with its own priorities, methods, assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses. In order to keep a tight focus it was necessary to be relatively selective about the studies considered, which ranged from large-scale surveys of academics to qualitative studies involving just a handful of subjects; and from individual case studies to large scale bibliometric analyses. However, this provided us with a wealth of data and information to inform our work.

#### **2.5 Open Access (OA)**

34. While not a project specifically concerned with OA per se, OA issues form a thread running through all our activities; in all our events and projects OA has been discussed as a major issue. Jubb (2017, Section

10) examines OA in detail and outlines the many benefits but also the great complexity of moving forward, and the current paucity of scalable business models. The HEFCE report, *Monographs and Open Access*, became available in January 2015; the OAPEN UK report was released in January 2016. We were fortunate that the data from the 2014 OAPEN UK survey of academics was also available. We have drawn heavily on these resources throughout the Project.

## 3 The Wider Context

### 3.1 The policy landscape

35. As Sutherland points out, the context of the Project is one of rapid change and anxiety about change in the educational landscape, in career structures, in funding models, and in technology (Sutherland, 2017). The Nurse Review of the research councils in December 2014 (Nurse, 2015) and the Higher Education Green Paper, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice* both highlight large-scale changes in the university system. The introduction of a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the Stern Review of the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the establishment of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) as a single strategic body, bringing together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and the research and knowledge exchange functions of HEFCE, will affect the higher education and research sectors dramatically. Such moves have engendered unease in the academic community in general, and the absence of any mention of the arts and humanities in the government's higher education and research white paper *Success as a Knowledge Economy* is a cause for concern. It is currently impossible to predict the effect these new developments will have on academic institutions, and on academic research and publication practice. In the closing stages of the Project we have also learnt that in the US the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities are to be eliminated by the new administration. Given that the the UK and US humanities and publishing landscapes are closely related, there are certain to be consequences for research in both countries.

### 3.2 Research in the arts and humanities disciplines

36. The Nurse Review begins with a strong statement of the value of research across the whole academic landscape:

Research in all disciplines, including the natural and social sciences, medicine, mathematics, technologies, the arts and the humanities, produces knowledge that enhances our culture and civilisation and can be used for the public good. It is aimed at generating knowledge of the natural world and of ourselves, and also at developing that knowledge into useful applications, including driving innovation for sustainable productive economic growth and better public services, improving health, prosperity and the quality of life, and protecting the environment. (Nurse, 2015, p.2)

37. Nurse places great emphasis on research in the sciences, but also points out the human and commercial benefits of culture and the creative industries, and he acknowledges that different disciplines have different research methods.
38. In other areas of the research landscape, such as the social sciences and the humanities where the subject matter is human beings and the societies they have created, formal hypothesis testing is not always possible or appropriate, so other research approaches are used. However all research methods share common features: theories built on previous research; empirical testing through the gathering of evidence; impartial and accurate observation; careful collection of relevant data and its rigorous analysis; openness to challenge from other experts; transparency of the whole process. (Nurse, 2015, p.4).
39. The total annual research budget of the UK research councils is around £3 billion; the AHRC accounts for just 3% of this total. Though a small proportion of the overall research funding allocation, £100 million is still a substantial sum of public money, and one key AHRC focus is on demonstrating the impact of arts and humanities research, both within the academy and in the wider world, to justify this expenditure. Projects are expected to demonstrate the potential for impact, and there has been a great deal of creative thinking and



practice in taking up this challenge and in promoting the arts and humanities more widely; this feeds directly into academic publishing practices. The AHRC has used a number of instruments to help show benefits and impacts, including the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Fellowships, impact case studies, and regularly-produced impact reports (AHRC, 2015). Memory organisations also draw on academic research in their collections to encourage public awareness and engagement. The UK national libraries have major outreach projects and programmes, with extensive impact in education and in the wider public sphere. For example, the British Library's on-going Discovering Literature Programme draws together digitised sources in Romantic and Victorian Literature (recently extended to twentieth-century literature and Shakespeare) from their own and other collections, accompanied by commentaries from leading academics. Discovering Literature is already an established resource by which academic commentary linked to museum and library objects makes the latest research accessible to schools and to adult lifelong learners. The National Library of Wales launched the Welsh Experience of World War I in 2014, a collection of texts, images, and artefacts from institutions across the country, with the support of Welsh universities and media. The National Library of Scotland's Wee Windaes site charts the printed history of the Scots language over the last 600 years. In the US, the Humanities Indicators published annually by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences measures how people engage in humanistic activities, looking at such things as museum attendance, but they admit that 'public perception of the place of the humanities in daily life is more difficult to assess'.

40. Many humanists have felt for some time that their discipline is under threat, and there have been vigorous defences mounted for the value of the humanities in public life, see for example, Bate's 2011 *The Public Value of the Humanities*; Small's 2013 *The Value of the Humanities*; the 2012 collection published by the *Arts and*

*Humanities in Higher Education, The Necessity of the Humanities*, Collini's *What are Universities For?* and numerous articles in defence of humanistic education such as Marina Warner's *London Review of Books* 2015 article *Learning my Lesson*, to name but a few. These perceived threats affect all aspects of academic work and publication.

41. As the AHRC acknowledges, there are no precise definitions that one could offer for the subject domain of arts and humanities: the AHRC funds 'high-quality research and postgraduate training in a huge range of subjects from history to English literature to design and dance.' Examination of the list of subject areas supported by the AHRC demonstrates the wide range of sub-disciplines that might fall into the definition of arts and humanities, far too many to enumerate here, and impossible for a two-year project to cover in depth.
42. Research practices differ across the disciplines; indeed, they cross boundaries with subjects outside the arts and humanities: there are many commonalities with the social sciences and even, in some cases, the STEM disciplines. Within individual disciplines, too, there are differences in research and publication practices: according to the AHRC, for instance, visual art and design can be broken down into 32 individual categories, with different methods and practices; music includes composition and performance, history and criticism of music, ethnomusicology, theory and analysis; English language and literature, a massive field, has around 20 categories. In history, economic historians might have more in common with social scientists; some aspects of archaeology share methods and practices with history, other areas are closer to scientific disciplines. The AHRC also states, however, that it is not possible to define the arts and humanities by methodologies, and they take the stance that there is a conjunction between the approach adopted, the wider context in which research question or problems are located and the methodologies used.

43. Though methods and practice are diverse and broad, humanities research is generally not carried out by means of experimentation. It relies for the most part on the close investigation and analysis of sources and artefacts: historical documents; literary works; texts; languages; art and museum objects; buildings; archaeological sites; film; music; performances; people in situ (in the case of anthropology and ethnography). Humanistic source-based research is still largely undertaken by individual investigators rather than carried out in teams, though team-based research is increasing, crossing disciplinary and geographic boundaries. These larger projects more often than not attract significant grant funding; much humanities research by individual scholars is done as part of their regular work as academics, funded by their institutions in the form of sabbatical leave (supported by the QR element of block grants), or by smaller grants that pay for replacement teaching. That much research is still individual is evidenced by the large number of single-authored works submitted to the REF: of 8,513 books submitted to Panel D in 2014, around one quarter were identified as having more than one author, so we can assume that a large proportion of the rest were single-authored.
44. In the performative and creative arts, there is debate over whether composition and the production of creative works can be counted as research, as for example in the debate over musical composition and performance reported by Pace (2015). Creative writing is now an established subject in many universities and colleges, and a significant number of creative works (novels, plays, poems) were submitted to the 2014 REF, as were musical compositions and performances. In the plastic arts, and in the dramatic and performing arts disciplines, the developments of creative and performative works are held to be research.
45. One discipline that has been influential in developing innovative modes of research and publications is digital humanities (DH). DH

(formerly humanities computing) was initially a niche area, concerned in the early stages with the manipulation of text and symbols, given that was what early computers did best; the range of materials that could be studied, and the available tools, have developed in step with advances in hardware and software capabilities. DH has grown very rapidly in recent years, though some dispute whether it is a discipline in its own right, or a para-discipline that cuts across all other subject areas as a set of enabling tools, techniques and methods. A key characteristic of DH is the cultivation of a two-way relationship between the humanities and the digital, both in employing technology in the pursuit of humanities research and in subjecting technology to humanistic questioning and interrogation. DH projects are generally innovative and collaborative, and have in the past attracted significant funding from foundations and research councils. In the US, the main humanities research council (soon to be eliminated) the National Endowment for the Humanities, has an Office for Digital Humanities which offers grants specifically for Digital Advancement. Besides the Digital Transformations and other digital programmes, the AHRC has supported projects with digital components over many years through its responsive mode funding programmes, and has also had a major role in the promotion of methods and standards with its support of the Arts and Humanities Data Service and the ICT Methods Network. There are now departments and centres of DH around the world, and some humanities departments have faculty members whose posts include DH as part of their teaching and research areas.

46. Despite the enthusiasm for and engagement in DH, it is difficult to evaluate its impact across the wider humanities: the digital is pervasive and there are many scholars in departments using digital tools and methods who would not call themselves digital humanists. The degree to which the widespread adoption of digital methods can

be attributed to DH rather than being part of general trends is nigh on impossible to determine. And though there are many good examples of DH research products and publications, they are still only a small proportion of the overall range of outputs from humanities research, and there are as yet few models that are scalable. This is to be expected in a discipline developing against a background of rapidly moving technologies: it is essential that many different possibilities are tried and evaluated, in full knowledge that they may not all survive. These developments offer exciting new directions for arts and humanities publication, and we discuss a number of innovative digital projects, publications, and possible funding and business models in Section 8 below.

## 4. The Academic Book

### 4.1 Definitions

48. The Project had a mandate to examine the academic book in the arts and humanities, but academic books of many kinds are produced across all disciplines: the social sciences and STEM subjects as well as the arts and humanities, and much of what we say here is likely to be generally applicable. Tanner's analysis of the data from the 2014 REF showed that across all disciplines, books (monographs) accounted for 9-25% of submissions across all panels; 16% of submissions across panel D, rising to 21% if edited volumes and scholarly editions are included.
49. What exactly do we mean by an academic book? This is as difficult as defining the academic disciplines. The conventional definition is that it is a long-form publication, a monograph, the result of in-depth academic research, often over a period of many years, making an original contribution to a field of study, and typically of 80-100,000 words in length. Articles, in contrast, are shorter (7-10,000 words) and usually less wide-ranging. However, the distinctions are becoming increasingly blurred, as digital publishing means that many of the restrictions imposed by print no longer apply. As Sian Harris points out,
- the distinction between these two methods of communication arises from the way things were done in the heyday of print publishing. With an eye on traditional costs of printing and distribution, there was an obvious reason for wanting either to package research amongst many others in a journal or to produce something that is large enough to sell as a stand-alone product. (Harris, 2012/3)
50. Monographs are fundamental means to share the fruits of research in the humanities; they are deeply woven into the way that academics think about themselves as scholars. One reason for this is training:

the traditional route to a humanities PhD has been the writing of a book-length thesis, often (but not always) turned into a scholar's first monograph. Other book-length outputs, such as critical editions, are also significant, and non-print formats including performances, film, musical compositions are key research outputs in certain disciplines, but the monograph remains central. Many factors, technical, political, and economic, have called into question the ways we understand the writing, publication, and reading process, and the diverse and complex routes that a book can take on its journey from writer to reader. PhDs, too, are evolving, and, as we discuss below, there are now other routes to doctoral accreditation than a conventional thesis. However, if we wish the training model for the PhD student to change and, specifically, to change to reflect the opportunities of new technologies, then there will need to be a massive refiguration in teaching doctoral research methods. At the moment, the system can offer new style PhDs as a kind of novelty; but to repurpose graduate training in line with new, non-print ecologies will require major change and investment.

51. The rapid advance of digital technologies has changed the publication process and loosened the bonds between text and print, making it possible to think of the 'book' as a different entity, something that can exist in a variety of forms: on a shelf, on a computer, in a smartphone. In turn, this has opened up all sorts of other possibilities for communication, sharing, and enhancement around the central concept of the book. However, there is a concern that pressures on academics to do more teaching, more research, and more administration—and to respond to more assessment regimes—might have eroded their capacity for sustained writing. In this environment, is the monograph—in whatever form it might exist—still viable? We are pleased to report that the answer is a resounding 'yes', with more titles being published than ever before (though worryingly sales from each title are declining, see Jubb,

2017, Section 8), and a continuing belief in the monograph as central to the humanities. Print is still (indeed, increasingly), evidence shows, preferred by readers for sustained reading, though ebooks are valued for accessibility. Most monographs are now made available as ebooks, usually with little added functionality, and there have been exciting experiments in the development of enhanced monographs, marrying text with data and multimedia content. But while such enhancements suggest exciting possibilities for one of the futures for the book, they are as yet a minor development in comparison to the overwhelming proportion of long-form publications still in monograph form, though often now delivered as ebooks or via print-on-demand.

52. Collections of essays printed as books can be included in the category of academic book. These are an aggregate of journal-length pieces, each written by a different author, and, as collections that cohere around a subject or a critical perspective can sometimes be considered as a monograph by multiple authors, though more often they are akin to a journal special issue. These collections are falling out of favour with publishers, but continue to be a popular form for academics, often as outputs from conferences. In the OAPEN 2014 survey, around half of academics surveyed across all disciplines had published in edited collections at some point, and the REF 2014 data shows that across the arts and humanities, 20-40% of scholars had published in this format during the assessment period. Note however that Esposito and Barch (2017) expressly exclude such collections from their survey of US monographs.
53. Scholarly editions remain highly significant in the humanities. Some might argue that the complex challenges they pose for the presentation of research findings make them pioneer witnesses for the possible futures for the academic book. By long convention, these present the text of a primary source, transcribed from its earliest witness or witnesses and embedded in a network of explanatory



materials (glossaries, variant readings, translations, notes, etc), interpretations, and analyses. Print has, over several centuries, reached a high level of sophistication in the presentation of scholarly editions; since the 1980s computers have been used extensively to prepare materials for editions, and latterly to present them in a variety of digital and online formats. As the MLA Committee on Scholarly Editions points out,

a *scholarly* edition is one that follows scholarly method and purpose, that is undertaken with professional critical judgment and the fullest possible understanding of the relevant primary materials, and that provides clear documentary evidence of the relations and contexts of those primary materials.

54. Scholarly editions need to be reliable and stable; again, according to the MLA

all editions are mediations of some kind: they are a medium through which we encounter some text or document and through which we can study it. In this sense an edition is a re-presentation, a representational apparatus, and as such it carries the responsibility not only to achieve that mediation but also to explain it: to make the apparatus visible and accessible to criticism (Young, 2015).

55. Editions are often the means through which scholars interact with primary sources: literary texts, historical sources, collections of musical manuscripts, etc, rather than interrogating them in their unmediated forms in libraries and archives. They are fundamental to humanities scholarship. The OAPEN 2014 survey data shows that in history (15%), English literature (19%), modern languages (26%), music (7%), and classics (16%), the scholarly edition is a significant output. In the 2014 REF, the figures are lower than these for editions, as the REF data gives a snapshot of five years of activity, while OAPEN looks at the whole span of careers. Note that we need to be a little cautious with these figures with both OAPEN and the REF data,

as there is no indication of what *kind* of edition is being published: editions can range from say a Penguin Classics volume of a relatively accessible and single-witness text and with critical rather than textual annotation to a major new examination of works with multiple textual witnesses which might run to many volumes: the *New Oxford Shakespeare*, for instance.

56. Outside the print-based disciplines there is much experimentation in long-form publication in other media: in her essay in the Project's Palgrave Pivot publication, Sarah Barrow explored the possibility of publishing outside the textual framework, looking at the importance in some subject areas of the video essay/essay film and arguing that, despite the many challenges that non-textual formats pose (storage, conservation, referencing, archiving, for example), these must be faced in order to move beyond the printed word when exploring non-print creative media. These issues were debated at a workshop at the British Library in May 2016, looking at issues around PhD theses. See Section 8 below.
57. The Project funded a symposium at the University of Lincoln in October 2015, [im]Possible Constellations: Publishing in the Digital Age, which considered possibilities for the circulation, publication, and exhibition of new ideas around non-print publication, aiming to challenge and expand current perceptions of what high quality research outputs might look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly for those working in media subjects. The keynote speaker was Catherine Grant (University of Sussex) who examined current multimodal approaches to research and digital publishing in film and media studies and argued that not only would film and media studies benefit from moving 'Beyond the Book' as a presentational mode, but also from embracing the new networked and digitally enriched research methods and processes that lead to these enriched scholarly media forms, too.

58. In art history and museum studies, exhibition or museum/gallery catalogues are key publication outputs, with images of works displayed alongside critical essays that are the result of research. In the OAPEN survey, 25% of the 75 respondents had produced or contributed to exhibition catalogues, and this figure is almost the same for the submissions to the 2014 REF: around 25% of submissions to UoA 34 (Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory) were exhibitions. Research photography and film have been recognised for more than 50 years as research products in areas such as anthropology, film studies, photography studies, performance studies. In archaeology, the field report, which incorporates maps, graphs, sketches, photographs, etc is a significant research output. Rather different, but still in contention to be called academic books are book apps like the Faber/Touch Press versions of *The Waste Land* and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. These integrate manuscripts, editions, critical commentary, and performances and readings to create an entirely new experience of the works presented.
59. It is not just in the digital world that there is innovation in book production, though clearly some advanced developments in physical formats are driven by responses to the digital. Visual Editions, a London-based book publisher, is publishing books and producing apps and events to create 'Great Looking Stories'. They produce books both on and off the screen that tell stories in a visual way, making for new kinds of reading experiences. Not all are academic books, but some certainly are. Their first publication was a new edition of that notoriously quirky and difficult work, *Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, which, as the review in the *New York Times* points out, 'is filled with visual jokes: a closed door is illustrated by a folded page; beads of sweat by spots of varnish; and the famous "black page" in the original book is replaced by two pages on which the text is over-printed in black.'

60. It is difficult to know what to call this next example, The Icebook version of *Macbeth* created by Davy and Kristin McGuire. The McGuires are artists who have invented a new medium by integrating digital projection mapping, paper craft, book art, theatre, performance and animation. The development was supported by the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Pervasive Media Studio Bristol, the University of Exeter and the University of Birmingham, and was part of the REACT-Hub, one of four Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy funded by the AHRC. *Macbeth* is

a battery powered cinematic pop-up book. The book includes 6 pop-up pages designed like sets on a stage with actors projected onto the paper scenery. All technical equipment such as a pico projector and micro computer, batteries, loudspeakers and mirroring devices are integrated into the cover of the book in order to create a stand alone story telling device mixing the formats of books and theatre stages (McGuire, n.d).

#### 4.2 Academic Books of the Past

61. Concerned though we are with the academic book of the future, we need also to consider the huge influence on academic disciplines of the remediation of the books and other cultural artefacts of the past. As Sutherland points out: 'Digitisation has brought back to life much dead print' (Sutherland, 2017), citing the enormous activity in scanning and making available hundreds of years of newspapers, catalogues, journals, and books, in particular Google Books. And it is not just print that has been so massively converted; memory institutions around the world have made available millions of images, sound recordings, films, which are increasingly aggregated into national and international collections such as the Digital Public Library of America ([dp.la](http://dp.la)) and Europeana ([www.europeana.eu](http://www.europeana.eu)) with almost 60 million images of artworks, artefacts, books, videos, and sounds from across Europe. These large-scale resources are more

like archives than academic books, but they have considerable influence on what scholars and students choose to research, which in its turn affects the books they produce. Access to resources has always influenced choice of research area: the discipline of art history, for example, was born out of photography (Preziosi, 1989). For Sutherland, the easy availability of such a plethora of sources has occasioned a shift in the research priorities in her discipline of English Studies towards on the one hand, a kind of neo-antiquarianism, and on the other more broad-based sociological studies.

62. Publishers too have been converting their backlists into digital collections, breathing new life into (sometimes long-) out-of-print academic books. Oxford Scholarship Online integrates over 13,000 titles published over the last 50 years, while Cambridge Core provides access to over 30,000 ebooks and 360 journals, going back as far as the beginning of the twentieth century.

### **4.3 PhD theses**

63. The PhD thesis is important in its own right as a long-form research output, as well as being the route to professional accreditation and a first publication for early career researchers. The British Library's EthOS online thesis service makes available 450,000 records representing theses awarded by 139 institutions, around 200,000 of these are full text; those not available as full text can be scanned and supplied quickly. The ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global Service includes 3.8 million works from universities in 88 countries (1.7 million in full text) and adds around 100,000 new volumes each year. While most theses are still produced and submitted in print form, this is not necessarily the most suitable format for practice-based disciplines. A research project carried out on the EthOS service by Coral Manton found a growing trend for researchers to include multimedia and non-text research outputs in their theses. Of the

theses represented on EThOS, only approximately 1% is known to have multimedia or non-text elements, but some 302 different file formats are represented, including audio, image, film, data, and others (Manton, 2016). Manton interviewed a number of researchers in different disciplines working on non-textual elements of PhD theses. We report below (Section 8) on a British Library workshop where the various issues around non-textual PhD theses were discussed.

#### **4.4 The enduring value of the academic book**

64. As Collini points out ‘One of the things that can make a book influential in the humanities—and it is usually a book, since a fairly wide canvas is needed to display the pattern in all its persuasive detail—is that the pattern which it proposes becomes the framework for much subsequent scholarship in the particular area’ (Collini, 2012, p.66). Despite the emergence of long-form publications in different media and formats, we have found in our conversations within the academic community that the book, the monograph, is still regarded as the gold standard of research output. This is being challenged and contested, but the large number of books still being produced, valued and read suggest that it will not cease to exist any time soon, even if it is increasingly delivered in other forms.
65. A series of blog posts commissioned by the Project entitled ‘What’s the point of an academic book?’, deriving from a panel of the same name at the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, interrogated not just what academic books are, but why they remain so central. Rebecca Lyons argues from her perspective as an early career researcher that academic books, more than any other resource, have helped her to learn how to construct an argument, and, for her, the longer form of the academic monograph allows her to pursue complex and interlinking ideas to their conclusions, something that shorter forms do not permit. For the historian

Professor Tim Hitchcock, however, academic books are both inefficient and outmoded as they are, in the current environment, produced too quickly to be good scholarship, which needs a long period of maturation. For Hitchcock too, ‘they don’t take advantage of the technologies around us to fulfil the purpose of academic writing more fully’. However, in her piece for the *British Academy Review*, Sutherland (2017), echoing Crossick, emphasises the monograph’s focus on sustained argument and the individual voice of the writer. For both her and Crossick, the monograph makes a contribution that is durable ‘long-term as well as long-form knowledge’.

66. The OAPEN UK 2014 researcher survey found that 95% of academics felt that it was important to publish monographs and 98% to access them. Crossick points out that monographs had not decreased in importance in the REF 2014 submissions, and this is borne out by the Digital Science survey commission by HEFCE which shows almost no change in the proportion of books submitted to the RAE/REF exercises compared with other outputs since 1992. Overall, in the UK and elsewhere, the number of monograph titles being published has steadily increased in recent years, a finding that is confirmed by our interrogation of publication data (see Jubb, 2017, Section 2). As Jubb points out, however, sales of individual titles have diminished.
67. Tanner’s investigation of the 2014 REF data confirms the importance of monographs. This data, while of great interest, must be viewed with care as it does not represent the totality of academic book publication: there will be scholarly books written in the UK that were not submitted, there are academic monographs written by scholars outside the academy, and scholars from outside the UK publish with UK publishers. As we point out above, authored books account for an overall average in Panel D of 16.6% of submissions. Tanner also found that more outputs (including books), are published in the final year before the census date, undoubtedly putting a strain on

authorial and publishing processes. In over 95% of the books, the primary language is English, with the rest spread across a range of other languages, the major European languages being predominant.

68. In the REF, monograph submissions can be 'double-weighted' that is, of four submissions, if a book is submitted it can count for two out of the four. It has been posited that this could have consequences on the choice of publication output by scholars, but there is as yet no evidence of this. However, a monograph of average length (80-100,000 words) takes far longer to write, and needs to draw upon much more significant research than two articles. The REF has fairly clear criteria for when a monograph can be submitted for double weighting (Tanner, 2016, Section 6.3); most authors writing a high-quality monograph of 80-100,000 words would almost certainly have fulfilled a significant number of these.
69. Crossick reports that scholars feel increasing pressure to publish journal articles over other types of output, 'with time pressures and the effects of research assessments being two commonly cited reasons for this shift. If widespread, this would have damaging consequences for monograph production' (2015, Section 23). Published guidelines and other evidence confirms that books are strongly weighted in assessments of candidates for appointments, tenure and promotions in the US, and Crossick says 'while institutions do not formally require monographs as a criterion for promotion, they were thought to be almost essential in certain disciplines, such as history or English' (2015, Section 22). This has been borne out by many scholars we have spoken to, and Tanner cites the English Association, the Royal Historical Society, and the British Academy who all stress the considerable work that goes into a monograph and the value placed upon them. The British Academy 'is concerned that the in-depth, innovative and disruptive research that is necessarily communicated through monographs is being discouraged by the REF process' (British Academy, 2016). In fact,



monographs submitted to the REF are likely to improve the rating for a department: the Royal Historical Society, in its response to the Stern Review remarked that the history REF panel was more likely to award 4\* ratings to books than to articles, and we have been told confidentially that other sub-panels in main panel D are also more likely to award 4\* ratings to monographs than to articles. The Ithaka UK survey notes that since the last survey in 2012, there has been a substantial increase in the number of academics that claim to shape their research outputs and publication choices to match the criteria they perceive for success in tenure and promotion processes. Again, this is yet to be reflected in any hard data, however, writing and publication cycles for monographs are long, so it may be that these trends have not yet manifested in actual figures.

70. Even if a monograph might be assumed to have a quantitative equivalence to some number of articles, it is *qualitatively* different. Writing a monograph is not merely the reporting of research results, analyses, and interpretations, it *is* the interpretations. Crossick refers to this as ‘thinking through the book’ a process of ‘effectively reintegrating the research into the writing process itself’.

Thinking through and writing a monograph can help the author to give structure to a body of research, to test out and analyse arguments, and to identify links to other areas of research and directions for future exploration.

(Crossick, 2014, Section 18)

71. In a critical and reflective monograph, the *expression* of an idea is just as important as the idea itself, and is very often fundamental to the work’s value. Monographs are creative works as well as reports of research undertaken, and scholars feel a great sense of personal ownership of them, hence the unease around some of the more liberal Creative Commons licenses which allow adaptation and reuse of works and parts of works. Hitchcock refers to the monograph as ‘a great technology of knowing’ (Hitchcock, 2016). A series of articles

written on the same topic might be the way an author works through that topic initially, but the monograph form allows a different perspective and weaves concepts, thoughts, theories, and ideas together with a deeper engagement. Monographs often have much more durable influence on a field than a series of articles, and can reach far beyond their original discipline, often into wider public debate.

72. We have found some differences in the scholarly community about the weight given to venue of publication in the REF. The panels are enjoined to be agnostic about publisher: ‘No output will be privileged or disadvantaged on the basis of the publisher, where it is published or the medium of its publication’ (HEFCE, 2012) but we have been told many times over that scholars are encouraged by their institutions to publish with the major publishers in their field. The REF data showed that 46% of all books submitted were from only ten publishers, the three clear leaders being Oxford University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, and Cambridge University Press. The total number of publishers was 1180; only 39 had published more than 20 books.
73. For Mandler, the biggest threat to the monograph comes mostly from government pressure to produce: the scramble to publish for the REF as it is currently configured leads to a lower-quality product, and threatens to marginalize the book altogether in his opinion (Cambridge University, 2015). Hitchcock also comments upon the expected speed of publication of books for REF and promotion purposes which for him too results in an erosion of quality: they are ‘just too fast to be good scholarship’ (Hitchcock, 2016). The increase in the number of monograph titles noted throughout this report and elsewhere (Jubb, 2017) is driven by pressure to produce more monographs in less time, which is not necessarily of benefit to humanities scholarship, to the careers of the academics, or to the business processes of publishers. The deep thinking and slow

development of ideas that results in the best work is difficult under these conditions.

74. The OAPEN 2014 survey confirmed the importance of monographs to scholars, and the reading habits of the scholars who responded indicate that they largely browse and read monographs in order to further their own research (69-89% of respondents) (OAPEN, 2016). Tenopir et al (2012) found that around 58% of academic book reading was for research purposes. The Tenopir figures apply across all disciplines, not just humanities, which may account for the slightly lower numbers. Tenopir et al also found that around half of the last articles read by humanities researchers were more than 6.5 years old; a quarter were more than 15 years old; and books tend to have relevance for even longer than articles in the humanities.
75. There is a general view that the print book still has longevity: Fisher points out that some 80% of academic book materials are sold in print worldwide (Fisher, 2015). An Academic Book Week debate at the University of Bristol emphasised that
- the process of producing academic outputs needs to remain as rigorous as it ever has been—digital should not be allowed to dilute the integrity of academic research, but rather be used as a tool for assisting with its wider dissemination and engagement—a supplement as opposed to a replacement. (Tether, 2015).
76. The 2015 Ithaka surveys of UK and US academics found in both cases ‘no observable trend’ in a preference for digital over print; preference for print has in fact increased since the last survey cycle (3 years). The US survey also found that scholars generally believe that more recognition should be awarded for traditional research publications, such as journal articles and books, as compared to research products, such as data, images, media, and blog posts.
77. A particular concern with so many assessment regimes is the erosion of time that can be given to sustained research and writing, and there

was an oft-expressed wish to return to slower scholarship, with more time for the deep thinking needed. At a workshop funded by the Project, a group of anthropologists and ethnographers who met in Barcelona in June 2015 to debate the academic book of the future produced a Manifesto in Tweets, number four of which states:

Practice Slow Publishing. The academic book's greatest threat is denial of the time it takes to produce truly insightful and enduring work.

78. The aim of the workshop was to situate the future of the book in the context of broader anthropological engagements with how knowledge circulates, the form knowledge takes, and the ethical questions that these engagements raise. The manifesto neatly highlights the participants' dissatisfaction with the contemporary climate in the UK (and other national contexts) for OA, and acknowledges the limitations and closed nature of many conversations about the circulation of academic texts, which all too often do not really take into account obligations to readers. In an era of 'Impact', they sought to re-centre their focus upon engaging in conversations with the people they work with, the public, and other academics, challenging assumptions about why they may not be understood as one and the same (Towards an Ethics of Circulation, 2015).

#### **4.5 Open Access (OA)**

79. The individual disciplines responded to OA rather differently, and, as Jubb points out (2017, Section 10), survey evidence shows that nearly half of academics in the arts, humanities, and social sciences in the UK express positive attitudes towards the principle of OA, but as he also points out, there are many challenges to be overcome throughout all our connected communities. What we did not find is what Martin Eve suggests is a 'near-universal consensus that OA would be good for humanities books' (Eve, 2017), either in the UK or the US, and we would be interested to see data which would support

this assertion. It is true that scholars (indeed all writers) write to be read and to that extent welcome wide dissemination and access for their work. It is also true that free access to scholarly works is an enormous benefit to research, and to broader communities, including the developing world. But there remain problems that Eve himself admits are 'formidable' and, based on our investigation and the views expressed to us, do not seem to be resolvable in the time-scale (10 years) proposed by HEFCE and endorsed by Professor Eve.

80. One key concern is the Green/Gold OA dichotomy. Eve (2017) argues strongly that 'we are not talking about depositing author-accepted manuscripts' for OA, and Jubb points out that Green OA monographs are likely to differ markedly from the published versions, given that, more than with articles, there can be significant changes between submission and publication; readers may not always be aware of these differences. With Green OA, discoverability is also an issue, as Jubb discusses in detail, and there may also be problems of embargo periods: 24 months is likely to be the permitted embargo period for REF submission, something that may not be acceptable to most publishers. It seems therefore that Green OA will not suffice for academic publishing as a whole, but the implementation of Gold OA for all books submitted to the REF requires nothing less than a revolutionary change in the publishing industry, something that can only be achieved at enormous cost and risk; it will likely take many decades. The case has not yet been made for any business model that can work for OA at the scale required for UK monograph publishing. More than 8,000 books were submitted to the 2014 REF, few were OA (and not all books written in the assessment period were submitted). A vanishingly small proportion of the academic books published in the UK are in fact OA, and major publishers such as Oxford and Cambridge University Presses report very few requests for this from authors in the humanities; while there are interesting

experiments with new university presses and smaller OA-only publishers (see Jubb, 2017), these are on a very small scale.

#### 4.6 Responses from individual disciplines

##### *Art history*

81. In art history, the monograph is still a significant output: in the 2014 REF, 9.3% of submissions to Art and Design, History, Theory and Practice were books, though it is difficult to know the individual weightings within this sub-panel. A recent report on monograph publishing by US university presses (Esposito and Barch, 2017) found that of the 15,000 monographs published in the humanities from 2009 to 2014, 3.4% were in art, though they don't specify whether this was for history or practice. A recent article by Susan Bielstein, an editor at University of Chicago Press, suggests that monograph publication in art history is declining, and that the reading of monographs is no longer seen as primary in the discipline. She carried out a small-scale poll and found that
 

80% of the top books listed by American respondents are not scholarly monographs at all but collections of essays or lectures, short essay-length volumes ... or books lightly synthesized from essays around a clearly stated proposition (Bielstein, 2015).
82. She found a similar trend in Francophone countries.
83. Choice of publisher is crucial, as there can be great variation in how images are presented; critical commentary relies heavily on high quality image presentation. Beyond the monograph, art historians are experimenting with other forms of publication, including enhanced, networked collections and multimedia presentations and performances that marry art history more closely with practice (Frost, 2015). Large-scale projects, lasting many years, publish online resources as research outputs, often with a number of critical monographs deriving from them. There are tensions between the

nature of long-term projects—such as the British Academy’s *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi* or *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture*—which can take decades to complete, and the need to publish for the REF cycle. These projects will be of value to scholars for decades to come, but there is a danger that scholars will not be willing to give the time that they need because of other pressures: it is difficult to fit long-term project publications, the product of ‘slow scholarship’, within the ever-quickenning world of modern publications and the competitive work and REF environments.

84. Rights to images are an issue for art history publications, given the length of time it can take to secure rights (and the possibility of outright refusal) and the costs of permissions. Counter to the general trend of declining sales of monographs, sales of print books in art history have remained high, as many art historians tend to opt for physical books over their digital counterparts, given that problems can often arise with their visual reproductions if, for instance, the screen is not calibrated to the original settings used in image creation. Some publishers tend to be overly cautious because of a concern about being sued. Creative Commons licenses that permit copying and redistribution mean that the circulation of images cannot be controlled in digital formats, and rights owners fear loss of revenue. There is also the problem that licences for publication of images online are generally time-limited and subject to renegotiation when the limit expires, something that becomes increasingly difficult when images are widely dispersed. It has been proposed that only low-resolution images should be attached to monographs in repositories, or indeed no images at all: these would be available only in the print version. Such suggestions have not been welcomed by scholars, who regard them as regressive.

*History*

85. In history, 20% of 2014 REF submissions were books, with 28% book chapters and 44% articles. Esposito and Barch report that 28.5% of US monographs were in history. The UK's Institute of Historical Research at the Institute for Advanced Study, University of London, has been a publisher of history monographs for almost 100 years, and has been at the forefront of innovative digital publishing in history, offering monographs, journals, datasets, primary sources, maps, catalogues, and bibliographies. The IHR also co-manages, together with the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, the newly-established Open Humanities Library which will publish new titles, as well as OA versions of books previously available only in print. See also Section 8 for other innovative publications in history.

*Music*

86. In Music, Drama, Dance, and Performing Arts 11% of REF submissions were monographs, 15% compositions, 20% book chapters, and 29% articles. While books remain central, there are innovations in music publishing which take advantage of the affordances of the web and allow the integration of musical texts and scores with performances, analyses and various tools to interrogate a whole range of sources (see Section 8 below). New encoding languages for music, text and metadata are underpinning the development of sophisticated music databases with bibliographic research tools for music scholars. Issues around OA, and in particular rights and permissions, are a concern, and also impact and esteem for publications not produced by conventional publishers. Despite many interesting innovations, digital is not expected to replace print any time soon, especially for sheet music publication, though 'innovations will continue to push the boundaries' (Lewis, 2016).



*English Language and Literature*

87. Book publication remains high, at 25% of REF-submitted outputs. Book chapters are also significant at 29%, as are journal articles at 37%, and 2% of submissions were scholarly editions. Creative works were accepted for submission, and though these are not displayed separately in the figures, they accounted for large numbers of sales, with Jeanette Winterson's *Why be Happy When You Could be Normal?* a clear leader. Esposito and Barch found that the percentage of humanities publication in literary criticism over a five-year period was 13.5% of the humanities output, though this is not specified as being in English.
88. There are debates in English around the monograph versus the article, with some scholars favouring a more 'science-like' model of fewer monographs but more articles; others are still convinced of the sustained exploration of a topic that the longer form permits. OA and career issues were at the forefront of concern from academics of all career stages, and many were also deeply worried, not just about the future of the academic book, but indeed for the future of the humanities (Specialist perspectives, 2015).

*Religious Studies and Philosophy*

89. In religious studies, the REF data shows that the monograph is still an important output (25% submitted), along with journal articles (51%) and book chapters (25%). An interesting development in religious studies is the highly popular Religious Studies Project which offers weekly podcasts of interviews with leading scholars on the social-scientific study of religion. One of the leaders of this project explained to us that scholars are often so busy that many ideas are not being explored in journals or books, but they are prepared to discuss them in interview. A recent Ithaka survey reports that in religious studies scholars' primary focus remains on traditional scholarly outputs due to the expectations associated with

tenure and promotion. Overall awareness and engagement with open access is low but the perceived importance of more freely sharing work as enabled by social media platforms is high.

90. There is generally a lack of awareness of and engagement with digital research methods, including those associated with the digital humanities, according to Ithaca (Cooper et al, 2017).
91. In philosophy, publication leans much more heavily towards articles (62%) and book chapters (24%) with only 11% of submissions being books. Esposito and Barch report that philosophy represents 9.5% of humanities publications in US university press monograph output.

#### *Archaeology*

92. We don't, unfortunately have the figures from the 2014 REF for archaeology, however colleagues have suggested that REF pressures have led scholars to move towards journal articles and away from synthetic monographs. Excavation and fieldwork report monographs are still considered core publications, with digital publication an important opportunity to present research data alongside textual narrative. A recent example of a hybrid publication is Gilchrist and Green's *Glastonbury Abbey: Archaeological Excavations 1904 – 1979*, published with supplementary digital material online available at the Archaeology Data Service (<http://dx.doi.org/10.5284/1022585>). We have found archaeologists to be generally enthusiastic and wholehearted in their endorsement of the digital and OA.

#### *Modern languages and classics*

93. Modern languages monographs have been in decline for some time, and publishers have been cutting book series. This stems more from the decline in the subject area in the UK rather than to any issues particular to the monograph: numbers of students taking modern foreign language degree courses in the UK fell 16% between 2007-08 and 2013-14. In the REF, 15% of submissions were books, 28% book

chapters and 48% articles. It is not possible to verify a downturn in book production from the figures, given that we do not have the data from previous exercises, and it may take some time for changes to be reflected in publication statistics.

94. In classics, 20% of books were submitted to the REF, 37% of book chapters and 29% articles.

*Medieval studies*

95. Medievalists (like classicists) as a scholarly group have a specialist set of research requirements—often studying content that can only be found in ancient manuscripts, or written in archaic languages such as Latin or Old English. This specialism raises specific issues around the academic book, with the monograph still being a primary output, but with the opportunity to publish in other creative formats welcomed. Access to a range of sources, such as translations of primary materials; digitised versions of rare or delicate manuscripts; or recordings of pronunciations of difficult/specialist/dead words is deemed essential.
96. The Project organised a session at the International Arthurian Society in February 2016, and the Society ran a competition inviting members to write short blog posts to show their reading influences and detail their iconic texts. The entries were varied but all reinforced the need in medieval studies for well-produced editions of primary sources, monographs, good libraries, access to earlier work. The academic book of the past is just as vital to medievalists and other scholars as that of the future: standard texts and editions in this field last for decades and though they may not be consulted by many scholars, they are the cornerstone of research in specialist areas. Importance is not always measured by popularity or current impact. The enduring status of many iconic works is what makes aggregated resources such as Early English Books Online (EEBO) and Oxford Scholarly Editions Online (OSEO) so important.

*Book History*

97. The 2015 SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing) conference in Montreal had the theme Generations and Regenerations of the Book; the Project organised a panel debate which concluded with an acknowledgement that the future of the academic book will be shaped by discipline and technology but that we are likely to exist in a hybrid print and digital world for the foreseeable future, at least until there is an institutional recognition of content taking novel and innovative forms (SHARP, 2015).

**4.7 Early Career Researchers**

98. The Project and its community partners organised a number of events involving early career researchers: a session at the 2016 London Book Fair explored what is changing in the academy and what the next generation of researchers and teachers need from publishers (London Book Fair, 2016). The British Library hosted a workshop in May 2016 to discuss some issues around creative writing theses, in particular their discoverability, which is hampered in a number of ways. While the theses may be deposited in EthOS, the UK E-Theses Online Service, titles are often metaphorical, and may not be explicit, and accompanying metadata is often unclear, or even missing altogether. The thesis can be in two parts—creative work and critical analysis—but this is not always the case; all these issues cause cataloguing problems. There is also the problem that creative theses incorporating a media element cannot currently be deposited in EthOS, and there is a lack of consensus across institutions about terminology: creative writing PhDs can be catalogued and described on EthOS in a number of different ways. Other matters discussed were OA and piracy: trade publishers have been known to refuse publication of a creative writing thesis if it has been made available. Susan Greenberg summarised the issue: ‘Having a pre-existing version anywhere, on any conditions, seems to

be anathema.’ There have also been cases of piracy of materials made available on EthOS. Embargoes can help ease these problems, but long embargo periods were felt to be antithetical to the circulation of research. The ethical situation of certain works can also be a problem, for instance where creative writing theses involve nonfiction accounts of living subjects. Subsequent to the meeting, the British Library and the National Association of Writers in Education developed a set of guidelines for the deposit of PhD theses (NAWE, n.d).

99. Another workshop organised by the British Library’s EthOS team explored how PhD theses might be able to manifest as knowledge that is not necessarily written, and to discuss how multimodal (mixed media) methods could develop an argument within PhD research, and the subsequent difficulties in submitting non-textual work. The participants came mostly from non-textual subject areas, with a preponderance of archaeologists, and they discussed a whole range of multimodal projects, including 3-D reconstructions, archaeological games, visualisations. Problems of access, storage, and long-term survival were also touched on, as were the issues around examination and accreditation (Foxton, 2016).
100. The Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities hosted a series of doctoral training workshops focusing on academic publishing in the Arts and Humanities, co-funded by the Project. These examined in depth a range of issues crucial to academics of the future, including altmetrics, OA, editing, peer review, how to submit journal articles, how to put together edited collections, and copyright and IPR. The students were also encouraged to speculate creatively about the possible future scenarios for academic publishing. Participants discussed the challenges of establishing appropriate publications and platforms to publish their research, for example questioning how to select a journal that will be suitably prestigious and rigorous and an appropriate forum for their particular topics. Several participants

noted some confusion regarding what is valued as a 'legitimate' publication, and also found a tension between journals appropriate to publishing innovative content, and 'established' publication platforms. There were also concerns about anonymity in peer review; participants questioned how far work really can be kept anonymous, particularly in relatively small or niche disciplines. The technicalities and 'hidden costs' of publishing in academic journals/monographs were also explored, for example, the need to pay for image copyrights, and the difficulty of negotiating the use of private data. There were also queries regarding the kinds of publication considered preferable—for example, distinctions between whether monographs or journal articles were considered more prestigious in different disciplines, institutions, and nations. Participants also noted the personal challenges of navigating pressure to publish across different platforms (monograph, journal), and raised practical questions on how to avoid 'self-plagiarism' when developing research. A major concern raised in discussion was the mental health repercussions for postgraduates and postdocs under pressure to achieve a multitude of tasks—teaching, research, publishing—in pursuit of further employment and less precarious positions. It was felt that, while support from peers and colleagues could help with this, greater guidance and support at an institutional level was important to avoid what one participant described as a possible 'mental health crisis' in academia.

101. In May 2016, co\_LAB (The Collaboration Laboratory) at the University of Lincoln undertook an intensive, interdisciplinary workshop that brought together students and staff from across the University to collaborate and innovate in response to a core brief. Participants from Media Production, Psychology, Computer Science, Performing Arts, and Games Computing considered the possibilities for the production and dissemination of academic knowledge in the context of the digital age, aiming to challenge/ expand current

perceptions, and lay the groundwork for a wider view of what might be an appropriate format for the 'book' in the 21st Century. Students considered the purposes that different kinds of academic books are thought to fulfil and the forms that books might take in the world of digital media and OA publishing. The workshop employed a discovery-based learning approach, with students free to develop innovative concepts in a range of media that addressed these issues. After a week of research, discussions and ideation, a central concept was developed:

rather than replacing the book in its current form(s), we wish to develop an interactive, multimodal system for augmenting the book. The principle here is to connect many 'containers' of knowledge (print books, eReaders, journals, etc.) and enable different devices and applications to be integrated in order to deliver a variety of multiplatform / multimedia / multisensory features that can support learning, engagement and comprehension. (CoLAB, 2016)

102. At the University of Nottingham, ten first-year School of English students worked together during Academic Book Week 2015 on a book sprint to write, edit, and publish a book in three days. They succeeded admirably, and produced 'An Insider's Guide to Starting University'—aimed at students going through the experiences that they had gone through themselves just months before. This taught them a great deal about collaborative working, but it was also a valuable lesson for the teacher who had run the sprint, who remarked that 'sometimes as academics, particularly in the Arts and Humanities, we forget about collaboration', and felt that students had shown him the way back to this (Vyniorgu, 2016).

#### 4.7 Reading

103. Besides the writing of academic books, we also considered how academic books are currently being read. We found that there is still a preference for print for sustained reading, and what surprised us

was that this was not a generational issue: students and younger researchers expressed a preference for print, and reported finding the print format more conducive to rereading than the digital. A panel organised by the Project on acts of reading considered a whole range of key questions: have acts of academic reading changed in recent years and are they still changing? What formats and devices are academics reading in and on, and how has this affected their research and writing? What is the future of academic reading, and what consequences will this have for the academic book? How have these changes impacted public consumption of academic research and what might this portend for academia and the public in the future? (Acts of Reading, 2015). This preference for print is borne out by numerous studies within and outside academia. However, we perhaps need a more capacious and nuanced understanding of what we mean by 'reading' in the world of multi-model content. Jabr cites a number of experiments which showed that retention and knowledge creation from long texts was enhanced when participants had read printed texts rather than digital. However, he also suggests that perhaps we are making the wrong comparisons, and that 'when it comes to intensively reading long pieces of plain text, paper and ink may still have the advantage', but this is not the only way to read, and these are not the only kinds of texts we are exposed to (Jabr, 2013). If we are to have innovative enhanced, integrative academic books in the future, we need to access them in new ways with new tools. In this hybrid world, there is no need to reject old forms in favour of new: they can thrive together.



## 5. Community engagement

104. As we discuss above, we engaged with our wider communities through a whole range of activities: conferences, workshops, talks at events, focus groups, desk research, survey analysis, consultations, expert seminars/symposia and public events. We draw attention here to key activities, some of which will continue beyond the life of the project.

### 5.1 Academic Book Week

105. The first Academic Book Week was held in November 2015, with over 70 events and activities—seminars, workshops, debates, symposia, exhibitions (both physical and virtual), writing sprints, competitions, promotions—taking place throughout the UK and internationally. Proposed by the Project, Academic Book Week was taken up enthusiastically by the Publishers' Association and the Booksellers Association, who helped to make it the success that it proved to be. One notable output from the Project for Academic Book Week was a collection of essays in the Palgrave Pivot format containing short contributions from across the communities (Lyons and Rayner, 2015). A somewhat unorthodox activity was the 20 Academic Books that Changed the World competition. The shortlist of books was chosen from a long list of 200 titles submitted by publishers and it contained some unusual choices that one would not normally include in the category of academic book: the works of Shakespeare and Orwell's *1984* for instance. What the competition did was engender a discussion about academic books and their importance across a number of communities, including the general public: there were articles in major national newspapers, and there was huge international interest, with reports on the vote from as far away as Mozambique, South Africa, and Venezuela, as well as across the anglophone world. Lively debates ensued around the definition of the terms 'academic' and 'book'. The vote was a public one, and a

member of the public who contributed a blog to the Academic Book project website suggested that it would be an unusual person who had read all twenty: that is probably as true of the academy as the wider public. Andrew Prescott, Theme Leader Fellow for the AHRC's 'Digital Transformations', commented on the winning title, saying, '*Origin of Species* is the supreme demonstration of why academic books matter', and Tom Mole, from the University of Edinburgh, added: 'The fact that this book was written by a man who never held a university position, and that it was not published by a university press, should remind us of the importance of sustaining academic books in all their forms' (Publishers' Association, 2015). The competition also stimulated publishers themselves to think about the influence their academic books were having, and a number of blogs were written by publishers with suggestions why their publications had changed the world. Oxford University Press was bold enough to suggest five of their own books that might shape the future (Oxford University Press, 2015).

106. Academic Book Week now looks set to be a regular feature in the academic landscape; the partners in this are now the Publishers Association, the Booksellers Association; Midas Public Relations, the British Library, the British Academy, the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Research Libraries UK and University College London. Academic Book Week 2017 has just taken place, with, again, many events being held throughout the UK. This year, the competition was the 20 Academic Books that Made Modern Britain; the winner was John Maynard Keynes' *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, published in 1936.

## 5.2 University Press Redux

107. In March 2016, Liverpool University Press hosted the first ever university press conference in the UK, well-attended by publishers and others from within and outside the UK. A number of new

university presses have been established recently, often as partnerships between the library and the wider institution, and generally as OA. These were well-represented at the conference, along with more established organisations, giving a real breadth to the discussions. And as Alison Muddit pointed out, participation was not just restricted to the publishing community:

Alongside presses, speakers included librarians, faculty, students, policy makers, funders, and various representatives from the information supply chain. I can't remember attending a conference with such broad representation—nor one which included as much constructive and collaborative conversation (Muddit, 2016).

108. Selected papers from the conference were published in a special (OA) issue of *Learned Publishing*. This conference was so successful that the next two have already been planned, in partnership with the Association of Learned and Scholarly Publishing (ALPSP): the next organised by UCL Press in 2018, the following by Cambridge University Press in 2020. As Anthony Cond, Director of Liverpool University Press, told us, 'without question the conference only exists because of the project'.

### 5.3 The Academic Book in the Global South

109. Another major activity initiated by the project will also have a life beyond the end of our work: investigating the position of the academic book in the Global South. This has been an important strand of the project, in partnership with Dr Caroline Davis from Oxford Brookes University, and we engaged a broad community of participants from Africa, India, and the Middle East. With generous additional sponsorship from the British Library, a conference in March 2016 brought together participants from these regions, as well as from the UK (Kitchen, 2016). In accordance with our philosophy of connectedness, these came from the academy, publishing, libraries, and archives, and the discussions were around

the challenges that our colleagues in the South face, some of which accord with our own concerns. One colleague remarked how enlightening it had been 'to realise we have so many different perspectives and, yet, we all share the same goal: promoting knowledge in the South and about the South'. Many also commented that they had never been to an event that drew in people from across the South, rather than from specific regions. An important outcome here has been the firm intention to establish a network to strengthen the connections and promote further work and collaborations across and within national and professional boundaries.

#### **5.4 Future Space of Bookselling Conference**

110. In June 2016, Bangor University hosted this conference on the future of bookselling. The space and place of the bookstore has shifted dramatically over the past fifty years, and the traditional physical space of various kinds of book-selling enterprises now sits alongside virtual stores, eReaders and tablets. This is largely due to digital technologies that have removed problems of distribution and access as well as fundamentally called into question what it is that is being bought and sold, and who owns that item being exchanged. The academic book has always had its own 'space': its own audience, its own distribution networks and its own purposes. Academia depends on the book as a dissemination and teaching medium, yet today many university campuses and towns no longer have bookstores. The academic space of the book has either closed or moved to a new place. This conference considered what these new places may be, the impact this move has had on readers and booksellers, and the changing relationships that have always developed within the space and place of the book (Future Space of Bookselling Conference, 2016).

## 6. Publishing, libraries and intermediaries

112. The Research Information Network took the lead in working with the publishing, library, and intermediary communities, and Jubb (2017) contains in-depth analyses of the changes taking place in the complex processes and relationships via which academic books are commissioned, evaluated, produced, supplied, acquired, catalogued, and discovered by readers. The methods used to interrogate these communities were focus groups, meetings, attendance at conferences and individual interviews. In addition RIN analysed a whole range of sources in depth: data available in the public domain from the UK and the US; SCONUL statistics; Nielsen BookScan sets of data on retail sales in the UK of academic books in relevant subject categories for 2005 and 2014.
113. We found that there is a dearth of comprehensive and reliable data on supply and demand for academic books. However, evidence from the Publishers Association, Nielsen, and a range of other sources makes it clear that while the number of titles published annually has increased in the last decade, sales have not kept pace, and sales per title have fallen significantly. The incentives for authors to produce traditional kinds of books are strong, arising from perceptions of the weight given to such books in assessments of the qualities of individual scholars and departments. Library budgets for book purchases have at best remained static in real terms, and retail sales for all but a small number of academic books are small and declining. Hence the business case for the publication of individual titles is often now based on sales per title of 200 or fewer. Further falls will call into question the value and the viability of the publishing enterprise.
114. The digital revolution has fundamentally changed the context in which libraries operate over the past two decades; and libraries are rethinking and redeveloping their roles. Academic libraries are

increasingly seen as enablers or facilitators in delivering their universities' strategies for teaching and learning and for research. Most academic and research libraries are thus developing new support services for both students and researchers, seeking to add value to the activities and performance of the communities they serve, and to demonstrate that value, in terms not only of take-up and usage, but learning and research outcomes. This sometimes includes engaging in a range of publishing services, and several academic libraries have been instrumental in the establishment of new university presses for their host institutions. National libraries are also rethinking their roles as key elements in national research infrastructures, for the arts and humanities in particular, and their relationships with other research and academic libraries.

115. Managing and developing collections of high-quality books and other scholarly content from high-quality authors and publishers, designed to meet the needs of their users, nevertheless remains a distinguishing characteristic of academic libraries. But there is an increasing focus on selectivity (just-in-time) rather than comprehensiveness (just-in-case) in collection development, and on seeking to ensure that the library acquires and retains the books that are the most relevant to its users' needs.
116. The supply chain for academic books operates in a context almost the mirror image of that for journals: tens of thousands of unique titles; absence of repeat orders; retail as important as institutional sales; low volumes of sales for the vast majority of titles; and the continuing dominance of print alongside a range of digital formats. The array of intermediaries, their roles, and the relationships between them are complex and bring frustration on all sides. The roles of different players in enhancing demand, discoverability and access are difficult to disentangle, with negative effects on efforts to turn potential into effective demand. Seeking and retrieving information about books is often confusing and frustrating. Metadata

quality is variable at best, and there is a need to increase the range of metadata, with more information about the contents of chapters and sections, about authors, and about reviews and social media comments. Publishers, booksellers, and libraries need to invest more in learning about how different categories of readers and purchasers—scholars in different disciplines, as well as students and interested members of the public—operate in online environments, and in improving search and navigation tools to maximise discoverability. Together such changes could help to transform discovery.

117. Finally, we must also reconsider what is meant by ‘publishing’. Publishing is in one sense now easily achieved by anyone with access to the internet. But publishers perform a wide variety of functions—selection, quality assurance, editorial support, design, production, sales, marketing, distribution, copyright protection, and so on—with varying amounts of effort devoted to each of them. A key issue for the future is precisely what publishing services are needed, at what level, and the benefits to be derived from them, for different kinds of ‘book’, digital or print, multimedia or text-only. Clarity on these issues might help to clarify also some current questions about sources of revenues to meet the costs.

## 7. Embedded projects

118. One strategy that we proposed to the funders was that we should not assign all our funding before the project began, but that we should be free to commission activities and pieces of research as we uncovered promising areas of investigation. This has allowed us to be agile in our approach, and some important and substantial reports have been produced for the Project by both our team and our collaborators. We summarise these briefly.

### **7.1 An analysis of the Arts and Humanities submitted research outputs to the REF2014 with a focus on academic books**

119. Simon Tanner investigated in depth the data deriving from the 2014 REF exercise, especially in relation to monographs. We have drawn extensively on this important work throughout this report.

### **7.2 The role of the editor: publisher perspectives**

120. Katharine Reeve, a highly experienced academic publisher, now Subject Leader for Publishing at Bath Spa University, carried out this study on behalf of the project (Reeve, 2016). Reeve sought to uncover the experiences and practices of one group of key players in academic publishing: commissioning (or acquisition) editors. Her study has been informed by the responses of a selection of UK and US publishers directly involved with the commissioning and management of academic arts and humanities books across a wide range of subject areas, and a small number of independent academic and industry commentators involved in discussions of the editorial role and OA. Reeve offers a better understanding of the value of editors' roles now and in the future, highlighting their impact on the curating, shaping, and dissemination of research-based books, and exploring the challenges, difficulties and opportunities of the role moving forwards.



121. Across the various academic publishing companies studied there is a diverse range of working practices, as well as editorial and business priorities, business models, job titles, and interpretations of the editor role. There is a clear distinction between commercial and university press publishers in terms of remit, levels of editorial intervention, and the metrics upon which editors were assessed. All were actively engaged in the digital dissemination of their titles and content to libraries and scholars; few created innovative new approaches to digital content development—and very few editors interviewed were involved in such practice. In fact the editors consulted for this report suggested a lack of involvement with, and in some cases a sense of fear of digital technology, together with a distinct lack of knowledge. No single idea emerged as to what the academic book of the future might look like, but there was interest in being directly involved in it, and enthusiasm for new ways of working with a range of stakeholders, including readers. The editor emerges from this study as the creative powerhouse of academic publishing and a potential collaborator for academics wishing to understand how to share their research more widely, in more innovative forms. As academic publishing and universities face the challenges and opportunities of huge change in how they operate, this could be the moment to work towards developing a blueprint for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century commissioning editor and a new, enhanced approach to content and knowledge development and production.

### **7.3 Academic book discovery, evaluation, and access**

122. This was a small-scale exploratory study by Faherty (2016) to research how humanities academics encounter, evaluate, and gain access to print and ebooks related to their research and teaching. The study sought to understand the total user experience, mapping user journeys to identify aspects of book discovery and access that might be improved. The implications for academic libraries, publishers, and booksellers were considered, as potential

improvements to current systems are mooted, along with opportunities for more disruptive innovation.

123. The study drew on data collected from dedicated interviews with academics and the wider publishing, information studies, and researcher experience literature. The results provide a series of insights and practical design questions intended to prompt innovative thinking across the academic publishing, bookselling, and library sectors.
124. The most significant findings of the study suggest that the journeys academics take to discover academic books, evaluate their relevance or usefulness, and access the content within them are complex, multi-faceted, circuitous, and fragmented. Academics employ multiple search and evaluation strategies, often at the same time, and use both institutional and third-party systems, which sometimes prevent access to desired materials. Online library catalogues are not used for discovering unknown items or for evaluating products, though physical library collections may be. This poses an important dilemma: should academic libraries attempt to improve their discovery mechanisms or move their focus away from this role? Publishers play an important role in discovery and evaluation, but have a limited direct role in access. Academics trust the search functionality and information provided on publisher sites but seek out lower prices, and a smoother purchase transaction, elsewhere, often through Amazon: Amazon is far more significant than any other bookseller in the discovery and supply of academic books.

#### **7.4 The Academic Book in North America: a report on attitudes and initiatives among publishers, libraries, and scholars**

125. This is an extensive and detailed report on the current situation in US academic publishing, with many examples of publishing models

and innovative projects, prepared by Anthony Watkinson, who has spent most of his career in scholarly publishing working for both not-for-profit and commercial publishers (Watkinson, 2016).

126. The main focus of the study was to examine the differences between the US and the UK academic, publishing, and library environments. One key distinguishing feature in the publishing world is the special nature of US university presses, whose directors and staff see themselves as sharing a mission with their institutions and the academics whose scholarly communication they facilitate. To some extent, this belief is shared by many of those who write and talk about solutions to the continuing crisis in monograph publishing. What this means in practical terms is a concentration on a high quality of peer review and the decision-making role of academic committees.
127. For many years, US university presses have mostly been wary of the digital future and new models of financing their programmes, especially those relating to OA. This is now changing, possibly due to recognition in many cases that revenue and unit sales are still declining. One solution to immediate financial problems has been to place university presses under the management of the university libraries. Another driver for new thinking has been the role of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Mellon has funded and is continuing to fund a large number of projects relating both to the infrastructure of the scholarly publishing industry as applied to the problems of small not-for-profit organisation and also to policies looking to a new way of publishing both traditional monographs and other scholarly outputs.
128. Within some areas of the humanities in the US there has been a lack of satisfaction with monographs as currently published as the best way of expressing scholarship developed in a digital environment. Many of the projects discussed by Watkinson are developing

scholarly outputs which are not monographs, but which are creating entirely different products that take advantage of the affordances enabled by new technologies. But a large question mark still remains over the issue of the recognition of such publications for tenure or promotion.

### 7.5 Peer review

129. Peer review is one of the most contentious aspects of academic publishing and frequently generates fierce opinions. However, these are often based on anecdotal evidence without assessing the system on a larger scale. Based at the University of Stirling, the Peer Review Project evaluates contemporary practices in the Arts and Humanities, considering the role and use of peer review in scholarly institutions and publishing processes. The project seeks to address five guiding questions:
- What are contemporary models of peer review?
  - Where does peer review occur in the research and publication process?
  - What is the role of peer review in institutional structures?
  - How are reviewers guided towards writing useful feedback?
  - What could peer review look like in the future?
130. The Peer Review Project has made available a draft report for comment which considers the diverse range of practices that constitute peer review in both publishing and institutional structures, examining the history of peer review, and evaluating how innovative alternative models aim to resolve pressures on the current system. It does so with a particular focus on peer review in the Arts and Humanities, while looking at wider disciplinary and publishing considerations. Peer review is an expansive topic, and the

research has revealed a number of fruitful avenues for future evaluation: these include the selection and crediting of reviewers, the role of peer review in creative practice, the advent of paid review platforms, and the use of metrics as an alternative means of quantifying research value and impact (Butchard et al, 2016).

### **7.6 Altmetrics and the humanities**

131. Nick Canty, Project Co-I, UCL Centre for Publishing, seeks to explain altmetrics (alternative metrics) as relevant to the arts and humanities communities. Altmetrics are non-traditional metrics that cover not just conventional citation counts, but also other methods such as downloads, social media shares, and other measures of research impact like the inclusion of academic work in policy documents. Although the application of altmetrics started in the sciences and had an initial focus on the journal article, recent technological developments among the providers of altmetric indicators, and a widening of the scope of altmetrics to include books and book chapters, makes this a subject with which researchers across arts and humanities disciplines now need to engage.
132. Peer review is the long-established and recognised method of judging academic quality, but the use of metrics is a newer approach that has gained ground in the last 20 years as a way of measuring research quality and impact. Research conducted within the arts and humanities differs from much of the research conducted in the sciences in that it is often published in books and other outputs which are harder to measure quantitatively (e.g. objects, films, and ephemeral works) and as a consequence it is difficult to introduce quantitative metrics to work that is undertaken over a long period of time and is slow to develop, and to work that is often directed at a non-scholarly readership. This is particularly relevant where the impact of a work might be the size of the audience for a production or the reception of a work. Nevertheless, there is increasing pressure

from funders and governmental bodies to evaluate the wider societal impacts and benefits of research as was reflected in REF2014, and altmetrics provide a means of assessing impact beyond the academy. Wider use of quantitative measures is part of a transition to a more open and transparent research system, although how best to use metrics in academic evaluations and management is of considerable debate (Canty, 2016).

### **7.7 Technical issues in academic book production, presentation and use**

133. The move from print to many different digital forms of publication has been a significant thread running through the project. Technology is transforming the dynamics of scholarship, and central to this process is dissemination, and the ways in which scholars and practitioners communicate knowledge and ideas to both their peers and the wider general populace. The influence of the digital on scholarly publishing practices is self-evident, with a growing number of academics beginning to explore alternative forms and models for book publication, and many publishers in the UK and elsewhere developing technically enhanced and networked ebooks, monographs and scholarly editions. The Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield has investigated many of these issues for the Project (O'Sullivan, 2017). Their work has greatly informed Section 8 below.

## 8. The Academic Book of the Future?

### 8.1 Introduction

134. The work reported on so far here and in Jubb (2017) deals, in actuality, far more with the academic book of the past and present, and the vast ecology that supports it, than with what it might be in the near, middle, and distant future. As the famous (and variously attributed) quote goes, predictions are difficult, especially about the future. But there are a number of new developments that may point to diverse futures for different kinds of books. Some of these are infrastructural and hold out promise of sustainable models; others are individual and experimental, and may point to some new and interesting possibilities. We need both, but we must bear in mind that some of the new models will not stand the test of time.
135. The general assumption is that, with a few exceptions, any new models for the book will be digital. The exceptions are the shorter forms that we discuss above, but they don't point in any new directions, they are just offering a broader range of conventional formats. One key finding of the project is an enduring attachment to print that is neither sentimental nor habitual: print just happens to do some things particularly well, and will no doubt continue to do so. The relationship between print and digital technology is a complex one, and the development of non-print book forms of increasing functionality, alongside this enduring popularity and usefulness of the printed book, has been a key research area for the Project. Print books have been produced using largely electronic means for several decades, and in parallel with developments in the commercial world, the academic community, notably in DH, has been influential in the advancement of methods and standards for the conversion and publication of digital text and media, and in producing pioneering innovative resources.

## 8.2 Definitions

136. There are several terms used for books delivered in non-print form—ebooks, enhanced ebooks, enhanced monographs—and it is difficult to distinguish precisely between these. Normally, an ebook is a digital version of print, delivered in a standard publishing format (PDF, ePub, etc); it may have some added features (links, searchability) but little functionality beyond this. Enhanced ebooks have more functionality, and may include maps, diagrams, narration, multimedia, and there have been some publisher experiments with the development of book apps (discussed above, Section 4). It is difficult to know where the boundary between an enhanced ebook/book app and an enhanced monograph lies. There is a continuum of functionality, though enhanced ebooks are more likely to be stand-alone rather than networked. The Mellon Foundation has created a set of features for the (enhanced) monograph of the future (again, assumed to be digital), based on discussions across the humanities in the US—they should:
- be fully interactive and searchable online together with primary sources
  - support platform independent annotation
  - incorporate privacy metrics
  - be preservable for the long term
  - be portable across reader applications
137. They should also be fully peer reviewed and of high quality (Waters, 2016).
138. The adoption of scholarly ebooks and enhanced monographs has been much slower than the adoption of ejournals. Physical books have affordances that enable users to do things that are much more difficult with ebooks (including annotating them, having several



open at the same time, and so on). Numerous recent studies, confirmed by our discussions with scholars, have also shown that mental retention of complex texts is better with print than electronic. See for instance OAPEN 2016 and Myrberg and Wyberg (2015). The Robb (2015) review of *Words Onscreen: The Fate of Reading in a Digital World* by Naomi Baron reports that in a survey of over 300 university students in the U.S., Japan, Germany, and Slovakia they found a near-universal preference for print, especially for serious reading. Baron concludes that 'digital reading is fine for many short pieces or light content we don't intend to analyze or reread', but not for longer pieces that we need to absorb and retain (xii). But see also Jabr (2013) and Section 4 above.

139. There was never any assumption that a new device would be needed for e-journals, but for books there have been many years of development spent in search of something that would mimic as closely as possible the format of the printed book. 1990s experiments in ebook readers were mostly failures because of limited capacity, an uncomfortable reading experience, high price and lack of content. The runaway success has been Amazon's Kindle which achieved market dominance largely through its critical mass of available titles, and its availability as both a standalone device and an app that can run on phones, tablets, etc, with the ability to synchronise the reading experience across all of these. All kinds of books are available, from trade novels to complex academic works. The experience of reading on Kindle and other readers, however, is somewhat linear, which makes novels and other linear formats easy to read, but is not well adapted for more complex works like scholarly monographs. In addition, the ownership of the text remains with the provider, and not with the reader, who can find books withdrawn from their Kindle portfolio any time Amazon decides; see the 2009 case regarding George Orwell's *1984*, for instance (Johnson, 2009). Ebook providers license the books to their customers, and

licensing is not owning. Most scholarly publishers now offer electronic versions of academic books alongside print; as Jubb points out, libraries are increasingly opting for these for a variety of reasons (Jubb, 2017, Section 3).

140. At the same time as the commercial world was seeking an ebook platform, scholars were experimenting with more flexible, interactive, interwoven formats, exploiting new theories and technologies around hypertext. In the early days of humanist engagement with digital tools the printed book, it was suggested, was too linear to represent new forms of thinking about text; only computerised hypertexts could represent new scholarly concepts. However, in the 1990s, when these ideas were taking hold, the practical problems of realising them computationally meant that few actual products appeared, and those that did were often short-lived because of cost, rapidly-moving technologies, and low uptake.

### **8.3 Electronic editions and digital imaging projects**

141. Scholarly editions are a particularly complex category of books, as we discuss above (Section 4), and as such may offer some interesting models for all kinds of academic books of increasing functionality. Computers have been used to prepare and analyse texts and sources for the last two decades, and to present the resultant editions. One huge advantage is the almost limitless capacity of digital technology for including or linking to primary sources. Editors of works that occur in multiple manuscripts (the Bible, Chaucer, various classical and medieval texts for example) have, over centuries, evolved a shorthand for presenting the evidence of the multiple texts in constrained print book form, with the choice of a 'base' text to present in full, and then the use of various kinds of sigla to represent where and how variant texts diverge from the base form. Print editions of primary sources are miracles of ingenuity in the use of the page, with apparatus, notes, variant readings, etc, but the limitations

of printing, and copyright issues, have meant, for example, that images of the manuscript could rarely be presented along with the transcriptions, variants, and analyses. However, editing in the new media releases these constraints, and images of all manuscripts of a text, with full transcriptions and apparatus can be presented alongside the text itself. This has some interesting consequences: 1) editing projects are often much larger than hitherto, given that many more witnesses can be included, and this has led to more collaborative editing, with large teams, often over considerable distances, being responsible for a project; 2) some electronic editions are produced by publishers, most are not; 3) some editions have print versions as well as electronic editions or accompanying archives; 4) there has been intense debate over whether the products of the many online editing projects are editions or archives; 5) in the large teams necessary to produce the editions it is difficult to apportion individual credit for promotions and career advancement. Electronic editions are of huge value to those who create them—otherwise, why would they expend so much time and resource on their production? But there is a degree of disquiet about the electronic format as opposed to print for a number of reasons, as follows.

142. Electronic editions are endlessly mutable and can change from one day to the next; this is claimed as a benefit by many as errors can immediately be corrected, but it is seen as a major disadvantage by others who have concerns about the stability of the scholarly record, something that is not in question with the printed book (and see below for issues of digital preservation). One large scholarly editing project (possibly the world's largest), Oxford Scholarly Editions Online (OSEO) is making available online existing print editions published by Oxford and many other publishers. The editorial board of the project had long and hard discussions about how to deal with errors and corrections in existing works, and the decision was made

to produce the editions exactly as they existed in print, even if they were known to contain errors. Where possible these errors have been annotated, but it was more important to be true to the originals than to correct them. This of course is not just a problem with editions, but with any text delivered in digital format. Version control and fixity are key concerns for scholars.

143. Sondehim et al (2015) summarise many of the views of scholars about the benefits of the new media, who employ a 'rhetoric of digital improvement on the printed page' and they quote Robinson who asked in 2010 'Who would publish a scholarly edition in print, now that the digital medium exists?' But despite the many advantages of digital editions, they have not replaced print altogether. Many readers do not either want or need the mass of evidence that is available in the digital forms; they just want to read the text. There is, too, the problem alluded to above, the stability of reference. The preservation of the digital formats is also still a concern: more on this below. And despite much research into screens and interfaces, a well-produced printed page can present complex information in a format that is both comprehensible and aesthetically pleasing. This of course is vital to all scholarly works, but it is particularly important in the presentation of editions, where there can be several layers of editorial commentary on each page. One claim made for large-scale online editions that are much more like archives is that every reader can create his or her own edition, but there are very few readers who want or need to do that. Most are more than satisfied with a print or ebook edition, produced by trustworthy scholars, so that they can interact with a reliable text with appropriate additional materials.
144. There have been a number of influential projects in classical studies that have developed tools, techniques, and metadata structures that underpin new forms and formats of publications. The earliest and possibly best-known is the Perseus Digital Library at Tufts

University which has been in existence for a little more than 30 years, through many generations of hardware and software, and that now contains a large corpus of Greek and Roman texts and artefacts, as well as materials from other periods. Digital research and digital publication have also transformed the field of papyrology, the study of ancient documents. The Documentary Data Bank of Papyrology at Duke University in the US is more than 30 years old, and gives access to Greek and Latin documents written on papyrus, ostraca, or wooden tablets gathered from all over the world.

145. Great advances have been made in the ability to read and publish ancient documents using new scientific methods. Some, like the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, have used commercial products such as Photoshop to enhance images and reveal hitherto unknown works. Others are using advanced multi-spectral imaging: the Dead Sea Scrolls Project and the Archimedes Palimpsest for example, offer new insights into important ancient texts, and damaged artefacts that were once impossible to read, such as the carbonised papyrus scrolls from Herculaneum, can now be deciphered with the aid of techniques such as x-ray phase contrast tomography (Bukreeva et al, 2016).

#### **8.4 Enhanced monographs**

146. Scholarly monographs, even the simplest of them, and even in print form, have intricate organisational structures, notes, indexes, tables of content, sections, tables, illustrations. Given this, they are not particularly well served by current ebook reading devices; enhanced monographs might represent better the complexities of scholarly argument than the less functional ebook. Current examples of enhanced monographs range from monographs or collections that have a print instantiation and an OA version online, presented in such a way as to permit and encourage annotation, commentary, and blogging from a wider community to highly complex multimedia

presentations with interwoven text, images, and time-based media. Two examples of the former are the second edition of *Debates in the Digital Humanities* and Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy*. We offer some examples of the latter below.

147. An early experiment in enhanced monographs was the Gutenberg-e programme that ran for ten years from 1998 and received around \$1.7 million dollars of funding from the Mellon Foundation. The project was a collaboration between the American Historical Association (AHA) and Columbia University to develop and legitimise new modes of historical scholarship, and to prove a business case for doing so. The programme was judged a failure from the business perspective (see Seaman and Graham, 2012), and 'none of Gutenberg-e's stakeholders considered as their primary objective determining how to create something that scholars actually wanted to read and use'. However, many of the individual monographs themselves have been highly successful in demonstrating the power and possibilities of new developments. As Seaman and Graham point out 'some of the Gutenberg-e authors, in close collaboration with editors and technologists, gave us a brief glimpse of a different future' (282). See for example Lowengard (2006) and Kirkbride (2008) both of which have made excellent use of the digital technologies, and produced something that would not have been possible in printed form. However, Gutenberg-e was an expensive experiment that was not, and never could be, scalable given that not all monographs, extended or otherwise, are supported by large grants from major foundations. Nevertheless, it was highly valuable for the lessons learnt.
148. In order to encourage projects that *would* be scalable and would develop infrastructures for monograph publishing, the Mellon Foundation has funded a number of projects over the last two years to develop capacity in the US; some \$10 million has been disbursed

to 21 projects. A report by John Maxwell and his colleagues at Simon Fraser University (Maxwell et al, 2017) analyses 13 projects funded by Mellon in 2014 and 2015 which are intended to inject capital into changing the monograph landscape in the US. Maxwell et al identify three areas of crisis in monograph publishing in the US, which are probably also applicable to the UK situation. These are an economic crisis, a 'first book' crisis, and an innovation crisis. The third, the innovation crisis, presumes that the monograph is stuck in an old-fashioned print-based groove and has not, unlike journals, taken full advantage of all that the digital has to offer (though we would query whether the majority of journals have taken advantage of innovative digital forms either). One of the Mellon's aims in funding the new programme is to 'incorporate modern digital practices into the publication of scholarship in the humanities and ensure its dissemination to the widest possible audience'. Does this, however, necessarily imply that the monograph needs to be enhanced? And are 'modern digital practices', whatever they may be, and wide dissemination necessarily the same thing? Humanities scholars are in fact well versed in modern digital practices and the use of digital resources is, according to Sutherland (2017) 'altering the contours of humanities scholarship'. But the results of such new tools and techniques does not necessarily yield new forms of output: monographs and journal articles are still the preferred choice of most authors and readers, whether they appear in print or electronic form.

### **8.5 Some examples of enhanced monographs**

149. New York University Libraries and NYU Press are in receipt of a Mellon grant of over \$750,000 for their Enhanced Networked Monographs programme which will bring together communities of readers through commentary and annotation. Publications will be part of a semantic network that offers precise and relevant discovery of concepts within each work, among other functions. The corpus of

monographs to be enhanced includes backlist books from NYU Press and its project partners, University of Michigan Press and University of Minnesota Press, and new books from NYU Press, though as yet there are no precise details of titles.

150. Manifold Scholarship, another Mellon-funded project, is a partnership between the University of Minnesota Press and the City University of New York's GC Digital Scholarship Lab to create enhanced networked monographs. Manifold Scholarship, according to Maxwell, 'is meant to be a hybrid, producing a book but also hosting the iterative discourse contextualizing the book'. A good example of this is the *Debates in Digital Humanities* volume from Minnesota, discussed above, which is made available in an OA networked version for commentary and interaction. Other forms of enhanced monographs situate a text within a network of non-textual materials, for instance, *Enchanting the Desert*, by Nicholas Bauch, intended as one of the first products to be developed under Stanford University's Mellon-funded initiative for the Publishing of Interactive Scholarly Works. This interactive work is a book-length examination of Henry Peabody's 1905 slideshows of the Grand Canyon, which creates a digital prototype for studying cultural and geographical history.
151. There were two interesting, and very different, enhanced monographs produced by Oxford University Press in 2015. The first is *The Ethics of Suicide* by Margaret Pabst Battin (Battin, 2015; see also Anderson, 2015). The print publication is a condensed version which is connected to the online instantiation of the same book using QR codes, which in turn links to online versions of primary sources, or to library catalogue records of print sources, as well as interactive features that allow readers to submit corrections, suggest additional sources, and discuss the issues covered in the book. The digital archive version of the book is produced as a blog, with the full text of the book freely available, plus extensive supporting material. The



production of this work resulted from a close collaboration between the author, the Press and the University of Utah library. The second is *Composition in the Digital World: Conversations with 21st Century American Composers* by Robert Raines (Raines, 2015) which features in-depth interviews with leading composers of contemporary classical music and explores the impact of digital technology on the creative process. Produced and sold as a printed book, OUP have also made available a website where each of the 28 chapters has links to the composer's web page, as well as a whole range of sources: audio, video, scores, Youtube links, and interviews.

152. For archaeologists, given the material nature of the discipline, their scholarly outputs are enhanced with photographs, maps, site plans, drawings, GIS, and scientific data of many different kinds. While books and articles interpreting that data have always been, and still are, of vital importance, the digital has brought new opportunities in enabling scholars to incorporate various kinds and formats of data into the arguments and interpretations. Digital archaeology, according to Colleen Morgan, represents an exciting platform for the work of archaeologists, not only through publications or blogs, but also through digital augmentation of archaeological sites. She points out that digital archaeology moves so fast, if she were to write a book about it, it would be outdated by the time it was published. (Archaeology and Art History, 2016).
153. Art historical research has been enhanced by the availability of good quality online sources such as ArtStor, and there are also innovative digital art historical publications appearing, such as the Getty's Pietro Mellini *Inventory in Verse, 1681*, released in 2015, which presents high-resolution images of the manuscript, an Italian transcription and an English translation, essays, and commentary. Through the Digital Art History initiative, the Getty Foundation is providing support that allows art historians to explore the opportunities and challenges presented by new technologies. There

are many examples that one could cite of online resources in art history, but these tend to be more akin to databases and catalogues than monographs. As we report above (Section 4), the (print) monograph is still largely favoured by art historians.

154. In musical scholarship, the monograph is limited in its ability to represent, on the one hand, the printed sources of music under discussion, and on the other hand any sense of music as sound. We discuss above the OUP experiment in presenting mixed media resources in association with a book on composition; another promising example presents the complex first editions of Chopin's published output: there are now three major linked online resources for these, all developed under the direction of Professor John Rink. In 2010, Rink and Christophe Grabowski published the *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions*, the most ambitious and comprehensive research ever carried out on these works (Grabowski and Rink, 2010). Rink had already begun work on the Chopin First Editions Online (CFEO) resource, with the aim to present as many of the editions as possible in high quality digital form. 5,500 images from more than twenty libraries are available in the edition, and Rink also conceived of the Online Chopin Variorum Edition (OCVE), a diachronic view of Chopin's works. The *Catalogue* is a major work on scholarship in print, and its conversion to digital format, and its integration with CFEO and OCVE have created a wealth of content for both scholars and performers which could never have been achieved in print format.
155. In digitising history, one of the great UK achievements has been the Old Bailey Online and the various projects that have adopted its robust methodologies, for instance, *London Lives 1690-1800: Crime, Poverty and Social Policy in the Metropolis*; *Connected Histories: British History Sources, 1500-1900*. *Connected Histories* now federates search across 25 historical datasets. Are these all monographs? Probably not. But many of them are long-form publications which

took considerable original research to achieve, and which could not have been published in book form; they are heavily used. Old Bailey in particular has had considerable impact in the academic and wider communities: Old Bailey Online material formed the basis of BBC1's hugely successful *Garrow's Law*, which ran for three series between 2009 and 2011, and won the Royal Television Society Award for best drama. It is listed as a key geneological resource by many archives, for example in the Newcastle Local Studies Genealogy Guide.

However, the federating of resources in *Connected Histories* is not without problems—some of the connected databases are protected by firewalls, so are inaccessible to some users.

156. Enhanced monographs offer exciting new ways of presenting scholarship, especially in areas where integration of or links to mixed media data is a crucial part of an argument, or where the presentation of large-scale primary sources is a benefit. However, these kinds of monographs are relatively few in number, compared to those which appear in more conventional print or electronic formats, they are costlier to produce, and they require even more input from already hard-pressed scholars. Costly and time-consuming individual projects may be possible to develop with large research grants, and can be of great scholarly benefit. But this is not a scalable model. Where there does seem to be potential for both scalability and innovation is in the infrastructure developments funded by the Mellon Foundation to provide stable and secure platforms for digital scholarly works, for example the University of Michigan Press collaboration with the university presses at Indiana, Minnesota, Northwestern, and Penn State to build workflows and infrastructure using Hydra/Fedora, a robust and flexible technical framework and repository system.
157. Some of the initiatives discussed here are developing new platforms and workflows for digital book production, in partnership with university presses and libraries. Publishers who are currently

dealing with producing monographs with a range of print and electronic outputs (reader, smartphone, tablet versions, etc) have a different set of challenges, and are having to invest in new and complex (and costly) workflows to allow them to publish across multiple channels from the digital files. Publishers have had to move away from a paradigm in which their business was to produce print and embrace the production of content that may take many forms. This is no easy task. The de facto standard is to use XML, but the DTDs needed for a large publisher dealing with multiple subject areas with different requirements can be large and unwieldy. Output requirements change constantly as the hardware, software, and operating systems change, and though XML is a standard, not all instantiations of a standard are compatible or interoperable with each other. Problems are frequent: a recent scholarly editing project developed by an academic team transcribed all its text using a well-documented TEI DTD, then handed the files to a major UK university press to produce a print version. After two years, the press still had not worked out a way to handle the TEI files and suggested to the editor that perhaps the solution was to print out the transcriptions and have them rekeyed.

### **8.6 New digital developments**

158. Publishers are increasingly experimenting with new ways of delivering content in long and short forms. The Cambridge University Press Cambridge Elements series publishes original, concise, authoritative, and peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific research works, organised into focused collections edited by leading scholars, and providing comprehensive coverage of the key topics in disciplines spanning the arts and sciences. These are regularly updated and developed from the start for a digital environment to provide a dynamic reference resource for graduate students, researchers, and practitioners. The works on offer are 20,000-30,000

words long (40 to 75 pages), and are available in online, onscreen, and print versions.

159. One of the UK's newest university presses, UCL Press, was conceived of from the start as OA and is engaged in innovative digital developments. In partnership with the Academic Book project, UCL Press have built a new online publication platform, BOOC: Books as Open Online Content. The format consists of a living book that is hosted on a browser-based platform, and material includes traditional content such as reports and presentations alongside non-traditional genres such as videos, presentations, blogs, and Storify's.
160. Liverpool University Press has recently developed *Using Primary Sources*, an OA teaching and study resource that combines rare archival source materials with high quality peer-reviewed chapters by leading academics. Covering major themes within the medieval, early modern, and modern periods, such as religion, ideas, conflict, and class, this provides students with the opportunity to examine rare and original material in detail on their computer, tablet, or phone as well as learn how they can integrate the source material in their own written work.
161. Culture Machine Liquid Books is a series of experimental digital books published by Open Humanities Press under the conditions of both open editing and free content. Users are free, nay encouraged, to annotate, tag, edit, add to, remix, reformat, reversion, reinvent, and reuse any of the books in the series. The most interesting results of such open editing and writing are 'frozen' and published by OHP on the main Culture Machine site as new versions of volumes in the Liquid Books series in their own right. See for example *Photomeditations: An Open Book*. This series has been set up to explore entirely new ways of writing and publishing and to expressly facilitate experimentation.

162. In a report commissioned by the Project, O'Sullivan (2017) examines several highly innovative new developments that push at the edges of what we might call an academic book. For example, I ♥ E-Poetry, a knowledgebase of short-form scholarship on digital poetry and poetics. The initial concept was to read and write 100 words a day about a new piece of born-digital literature. This now contains approximately 650 posts, totalling some 195,000 words—more than enough content to comprise traditional perceptions of what constitutes a monograph. Furthermore, while the entries are short form, they are critical and interpretive, and present new meaning on a consistent theme. This might be categorised as a multi-authored monograph. This has grown over six years from a personal blog by a single scholar and is expanding its coverage of electronic literature through partnerships and collaboration with electronic literature scholars and projects from around the world.
163. O'Sullivan points out that one of the great affordances of digital modes of publication is that they allow us to represent knowledge in new ways, an advancement that facilitates novel interpretation and representation. *Mapping the Catalogue of Ships*, for example, developed at the University of Virginia, illustrates how such an affordance can make complex textual hierarchies more intuitive to readers, demonstrating how the arrangement of the 250-line catalogue of the leaders of the Greek forces and the number of their ships listed within 'Book Two' of the *Illiad* corresponds to the natural geography of Greece. *Mapping the Catalogue of Ships* presents an original contribution to its field and the fact that it necessitated digital publication does not detract in any way from its scholarly value.
164. *Infinite Ulysses*, a crowdsourced annotated edition of James Joyce's multilayered novel, shows how edge cases might include 'community books', projects wherein new knowledge and meaning is created, but through the annotations of the crowd. What is interesting about

*Infinite Ulysses* is that the entirety of the project's value is crowd-sourced. This is unlike various scholarly collections which have included commenting and annotation features alongside the new scholarship they present—*Infinite Ulysses* is taking old material, and giving it renewed significance through open collation.

165. Produced by Dene Grigar and Stuart Moulthrop, *Pathfinders* documents a selection of early born-digital literature. The project emphasises pre-Web hypertextual works from 1986-1995. *Pathfinders* looks to document the experience of this first-generation of electronic literature by recording interactions with the authors of the works, as well as traversals by readers interacting with the pieces. In addition to the audio-visual materials, Grigar and Moulthrop have a forthcoming print monograph, *Traversals* (MIT Press), with close readings of these works. Grigar describes *Pathfinders* as the methodology, and *Traversals* as a process of that methodology. This project is an interesting example of how edge cases interact with more traditional forms, being both resource and insight at once.
166. The Virtual Paul's Cross Project is defined as an 'evidence-based restoration' of the north east end of Paul's Churchyard in November of 1622. The Project was designed to investigate public preaching in early modern London, enabling the experience of a Paul's Cross sermon as a performance, as an event unfolding in real time in the context of an interactive and collaborative occasion. It uses architectural modeling software and acoustic simulation software to give access experientially to a particular event from the past—the Paul's Cross sermon John Donne delivered on Tuesday, November 5th, 1622. This is long-form original research that could have been delivered in no other way.

### 8.7 Non-textual PhD theses

167. There have been some recent experiments in non-textual PhD theses; while most theses are still produced and submitted in print form, this is not necessarily the most suitable format for practice-based disciplines, or those dealing with material culture. A research project carried out on the British Library's EthOS service by Manton (discussed above, Section 4) found a growing trend for researchers to include multimedia and non-text research outputs in their theses. A workshop organised by the British Library's EthOS team explored how PhD theses might be able to manifest as knowledge that is not necessarily written, and to discuss how multimodal (mixed media) methods could develop an argument within PhD research, and the subsequent difficulties in submitting non-textual work. The participants came mostly from non-textual subject areas, with a preponderance of archaeologists, and they discussed a whole range of multimodal projects, including 3-D reconstructions, archaeological games, visualisations. Problems of access, storage and long-term survival were also touched on, as were the issues around examination and accreditation (Foxton, 2016).

### 8.8 Preservation

168. With the wide variety of forms and formats of the academic book that we have outlined here, a key consideration must be long-term preservation of the digital versions. As the Digital Preservation Coalition points out:

The provision of long-term, permanent access to eBooks that have been licensed is ill-defined, and ownership of the responsibility for the preservation of different large categories of digital artefacts that fall under the rubric of eBooks is not clearly established. Nor are the costs for carrying out the preservation and establishing sufficient permanent funding to meet those costs. (Kirchhoff and Morrissey, 2014, 2)



169. In the print world, libraries and archives are the loci of preservation of content, and they retain that role in relation to digital media. But other players also come to the fore: publishers offering Gold OA, for example, need to maintain a long and ever-growing backlist of publications and will have enduring responsibility towards them, especially since these represent a continuing income stream, and there are a number of commercial and not-for-profit organisations providing a wide range of services in preserving publications and complex research data. For national libraries, the long-term preservation issues of the national written record, extended to the legal deposit of non-print materials in the UK in 2013, pose particular problems. The sheer volume and diversity of possible acquisitions, and the responsibility to harvest UK web sites, is a major undertaking, and the UK Legal Deposit Libraries have implemented a shared technical infrastructure for non-print legal deposit, based on the Digital Library System first developed by the British Library that ensures long-term survivability and access, and the libraries have been working with Portico (see below) on a range of preservation issues and possibilities.
170. Print is probably a better medium in terms of long-term preservation, though we must not forget that print needs preservation too, but the outreach of online publications hugely outweighs the dissemination levels a paper book can achieve. These issues, which are being debated throughout the library and publishing communities, highlight the complex relationship between preservation and dissemination, engendering the question of how we can successfully deal with both in the long term, as it is increasingly clear that we must.
171. Digital media are at risk through media, hardware, software and format obsolescence, through loss of context if the metadata is inadequate, and from the sheer volume of digital material. Preservation therefore involves a rich set of technical and

administrative processes that need to be managed within a framework of clear guidelines and policies. Because digital data is so complex and varied, and there are so many formats and standards, any one institution will need to adopt a number of different methods which are well-explained and well understood in the digital preservation community; see the various documents and guidelines published by the organisations discussed below. A key and critical issue in digital preservation is authenticity: the maintaining of a resource's integrity and meaning, even though it may have been transferred between media and hardware several (or indeed many) times. The technical metadata attached to the object to be preserved will, if properly used, guarantee that a chain of custodianship has been maintained, and there are also technical methods for ensuring authenticity, such as the use of checksums.

172. To assist with the technical and policy needs of repositories, an international collaboration has established a set of criteria bundled together in the Trusted Repositories Audit & Certification (TRAC) through which repositories can gain levels of accreditation as Trusted Digital Repositories. There are also many projects and services for both giving advice on preservation and offering preservation facilities: the Digital Preservation Coalition; the Digital Curation Centre; OCLC; Portico; LOCKSS; national libraries; national archives; commercial organisations concerned with preservation. The European Commission has funded many projects in digital preservation through its ICT programme (see Strodl et al, 2011).
173. Portico, a US not-for-profit preservation archive, is a market leader in academic preservation and is experiencing rising demand for its services; demand for preserving ebooks is on the increase, and they also have requests to preserve complex historical data. Portico introduced its E-Book Preservation Service to the publishing community in 2008 and in 2011 library participation began. CLOCKSS, another US not-for-profit, has also seen a steady stream of

both e-journals and ebooks deposited into its internationally distributed network of archives. CLOCKSS uses LOCKSS, an open source digital preservation system developed at Stanford University and in 2016 signed key contracts with Cambridge University Press, Emerald Group Publishing, and IOPP Publishing, UK. Both Portico and CLOCKSS are now working on dynamic data models for ingest as well. Kate Wittenberg points out that ‘publishers are handling more distributed, dynamic objects as part of their publications, with content increasingly based on data rather than text, so establishing the best preservation approach will be crucial’. In the UK, Arkivum, ‘stores a dizzying array of content for organisations in higher education as well as healthcare, life sciences and heritage’. They have contracts from Jisc, and many UK universities, the New York Museum of Modern Art, The Tate Gallery, among others, and they handle a very wide range of data types. See Pool (2016) for more details of Portico, CLOCKSS, and Arkivum.

174. There are also important initiatives where publishers and libraries are working together to ensure that published materials that are at particular risk are safe. These began with journals, but are now being employed for books. The Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB) in the Netherlands has been an international leader in this, with the establishment of their e-Depot, built using robust standards and metadata that facilitate communication between systems; it is offered as an international service, and major academic publishers have signed up as partners. The KB and Portico are partners in the Safe Places Network (Ras, 2009). They have defined a set of conditions which trigger action to preserve content which a publisher is no longer able to maintain for a variety of reasons.
175. It is axiomatic that it is only possible to preserve reliably that which you can control. One problem with enhanced monographs and other complexly interlinked digital publications and resources is that they often connect to many outside sites and organisations, and links are

sometimes broken. The use of the Digital Object Identifier is addressing this problem, but not all resources are identified in this way, especially in the humanities, and we have also found instances of broken links even where this is employed. The other problem that is encountered is that of stability and fixity. We discuss above the issues of fixity in relation to electronic editions, but this is also a concern with other kinds of complex networked data. The possibility for constant additions, updates and modifications means that it can be difficult to establish firmly a version of record, hence the importance of reliable metadata systems to keep track of all the processes a resource goes through during its lifecycle. The other issue is the stability of the data that is linked to: even if the links continue to work, there is no guarantee that the resources themselves will maintain their integrity.

176. As the books of the future become ever more networked and multimodal, the preservation problems will increase. Innovation is to be welcomed in this area, but this brings with it the problems of preserving access mechanisms which may offer very different sets of functionalities alongside the underlying content, as is the case with the examples above. Maintaining functionality in this way, especially when the original developers are no longer managing the resources, is likely to be technically challenging and costly, and it may be that only the content can be preserved, together with metadata that describes the functions of the original object, which could be re-engineered in the future if the need arises. While we welcome the infrastructure developments that unify and standardise platforms for the delivery of enhanced monographs, we must never lose sight of the possibilities offered by the new and experimental, despite the potential problems these may bring with them. The other issue is the contentious one of whether all digital data *should* be preserved. Libraries and archives have always had to make difficult decisions

about retention and deaccessioning of content; some pragmatic decisions may need to be taken.

177. The Digital Preservation Coalition's strapline is 'Our digital memory accessible tomorrow'. Digital preservation is one of the most important challenges facing the academy (and indeed the wider world) as we move further and further towards digital and open content. In 2015, the winner of the Academic Books That Changed the World competition was Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. It is vital that we think about how many of the books we are publishing this year in OA will be accessible and influential 150 years hence: preservation is a key and pressing issue for digital academic books.

## 9. Project outputs

### 9.1 Website, articles, and collections

179. The Project and its community partners have produced a very substantial range of outputs, and more are in progress and in press. Many of these are available on the Project website, which will live on for some considerable time, hosting a plethora of content: major reports such as Tanner's analysis of the 2014 REF (Tanner, 2016) and Watkinson's survey of the academic book in the US (Watkinson, 2016); over 50 blog posts covering many of the themes of the project; reports of meetings, conferences, workshops, book sprints sponsored by the project; think pieces about the academic book and its continuing relevance (or not).
180. The Project team has also produced a number of formal articles and collections: the Palgrave Pivot volume, edited by Rebecca Lyons and Samantha Rayner, containing short articles on perspectives on the academic book from across our communities. Rayner and Anthony Cond from Liverpool University Press edited a special (OA) issue of *Learned Publishing* with a selection of articles from March 2016 University Press Redux conference. Marilyn Deegan and Samantha Rayner wrote an article for *UKSG Insights* (Deegan and Rayner, 2015) and Deegan has an article in the *British Academy Review* issue produced for Academic Book Week 2017 (Deegan, 2017).

### 9.2 Policy report

181. The present report outlines the activities and achievements of the Project, and some of the outcomes and responses that we have had in the wider communities that we have engaged with. A major policy report has been produced in tandem with this by Michael Jubb. This looks in detail at the diverse and changing roles of all those in the intricate supply chains concerned with the production and use of academic books: academics, publishers, librarians, and the myriad

intermediaries (distributors, library suppliers, booksellers, etc) along the way. It considers the key issues of open access, the relationship between print and electronic, preservation, publishing processes, peer review, legal issues, and demand, discoverability and access. It offers recommendations to the funders and policy makers to ensure that the academic book and its central role in the humanities is acknowledged and nurtured.

### **9.3 BOOC (Book as Open Online Content)**

182. BOOC is an innovative OA publication from UCL Press. It presents peer-reviewed content generated by the project in a range of formats (articles, reports, blogs, videos) on a dynamic, evolving open platform. It is intended that BOOC will continue the conversations around the academic book and its futures, and UCL Press will provide a stable home for this to grow and thrive. BOOC content complements the other outputs listed here.

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