The Academic Book in North America:

Report on attitudes and initiatives among publishers, libraries, and scholars

A contribution to the AHRC/BL Academic Book of the Future

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This report was commissioned by Dr Samantha Rayner of the Academic Book of the Future project (see 2a and usually referred to as the "AHRC project") and was delivered in September 2015. The author conceived it as a contribution to the knowledge base of the project and not for publication. It was intended as a quarry for information. He included material in it which was not in the public domain and intruded personal opinions not always properly justified. The form of the report now has been altered in order that it is suitable for "publication" but only just. It is still a quarry but perhaps the sides are smoothed a bit.

In the course of a year quite a lot of work on this topic has been done and the form of what has been reported has not just been opinions, though there are a lot of them, but also some serious research. Only some of this has been taken into account. This is made clear in context. Not all is covered.

There are some obvious omissions that become apparent when one is forced to reread what one has written a year ago. For example the perennial problems relating to archiving and preservation of digital content have a different context and history in the US. This is only touched on.

As mentioned several times in the text much of the conclusions of the report are based on the results of projects financed by the Mellon Foundation. This does not fit well with the attempt that has been made to organise the material under topic headings and leads to quotations in one section which could just as well be in another or sometimes repetition

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1.   Executive summary

This report has the following sections: Purpose (2), Change (3) Books, "books" and enhanced books (4) Open Access (5) Libraries (6) Institutions (7) Production issues (8) Dissemination, Collaboration and Aggregation (9) Business Models (10). Acknowledgements, References and Endnotes are at the end of the complete report. In this section we shall list some of the key points that can be extracted.

This report to the Academic Book of the Future project is concerned with what is different or special about the US academic scene in so far as it represents a context for the publishing of academic books. It is not a comparative study as such:

•   The most obvious feature is the special nature of the 100 plus university presses. Their 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 bought into 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 an academic committee.

•   For many years university presses have mostly been wary of the digital future and new models of financing their programmes especially those relating to open access. This is now changing. Part of the reason for this new openness to change may be due to recognition in many cases that revenue and unit sales are still declining and part of it may be due to a pressure from above – a greater scrutiny from administration crystallised in the mythical figure of the "provost".

•   For many years one way to deal with immediate financial problems has been to place university presses under the management of the university libraries. There has not usually been a meeting of minds alongside the administrative changes. This is now changing. The change is embodied in the increasing activity and confidence shown by the Library-Publishing Coalition.

•   Another facilitator for new thinking has been the role of the Mellon Foundation. Mellon has funded and is continuing to fund a whole slew of projects relating both to the infrastructure of the publishing industry as a applied to the

problems of small not-for-profit organisation but also to policies looking to a new way of publishing both traditional monographs and other scholarly outputs. Mellon has made no secret of their belief that open access publishing is the way forward.

• Open Access in this context is not green open access. The concentration is on gold open access in a national environment that, in other disciplinary areas, inclines to green. There is little discussion of author publishing charges (APCs) as such, though there are some innovative ideas. It is usually recognised that scholars in the humanities cannot afford to pay for publication. There are instead a number of high profile projects that look to ways in which subventions can be organised and that the source of the money needed will be at a library or a university level. US presses are used to subsidy. There are also discussions at the level of representative bodies who speak for senior librarians and those running universities. There is also some recognition that open access publication has to be sold to the academic community though many of the proposals being discussed seem to be discussed in a bubble

• Within the humanities there has long been a lack of satisfaction with monographs as currently published as the best way of expressing scholarship in a digital environment. This is not just that the digital humanities movement with its range of specific ideas is gaining strength – it is wider than that. Many of the projects mentioned are looking to making public scholarly outputs which are not monographs even in the form of enhanced books but are different because scholarship is often different and takes advantages of the affordances enabled by the web. Will such new publications be seen in the same light for tenure or promotion as the traditional book? That is a big question.

• There is one major project which was run by researchers and expresses what one group has seen as its priorities but this study rather stands out because there is not yet enough detailed independent investigation into what academics who publish books actually want: there are lots of assumptions.

• There is remarkably little discussion about print in the sense that the idea that an online open access book can be made possible by the sales of the print version is not rated as a sustainable solution. In public to the devotion to certain "standards" of production which have long characterised the output of US

university presses is not argued for – thought these commitments still lurk in the background. Print on demand (POD) is no longer argued for as a solution though in one sense it undoubtedly is. It is just used.

• Print books still need to be sold as do e-books and it looks as if there is a lot of dissatisfaction with current ways of selling them though collaboration is seen the way. The problem is that the income per unit is lower if you are going through an intermediary. The word "platform" once a matter for journal publishing is now much used and there is a belief that special platforms reserved for the not-for-profit sector are to be aimed for. One prominent thinker in the information world has argued for one platform for all the approved output.

• Many of the presses are also journal publishers, usually small journals in the humanities, are some of their staff at least will have some knowledge of how the big journals work. Are there lessons to be learnt? This is a question that is discussed and the answers are not straightforward. In spite of the existence of big bundles from the big players which include both books and journals in many ways books are different.

## 2.	Purpose

This section explains:

- The relationship between the project and this report
- Why this report concentrates on the activities of US university presses
- The special position of the Mellon Foundation in its funding of research on how scholarly publishing in the humanities may develop
- Some definitions of what is meant throughout by a "monograph"

a) The AHRC Project

It seems appropriate to begin by explaining how this particular report relates to the project as a whole – at least in the understanding of this author.

This quotation comes from the site of the project

To gain the most comprehensive understanding of the publication needs of scholars at all stages of their careers, and the practical, economic and legal issues relating to the publication, dissemination, use and curation of the long-form publication in traditional and new formats. (**1)** The project involves extensive collaboration among stakeholders – publishers, librarians and scholars – and there is no attempt to begin with a tight definition of a book. Rather the assumption is that the nature of the book is fluid but the boundaries are set by the need of scholars in the humanities to have a vehicle for presenting research in a long-form in contrast to journal articles which are short-form. What sort of structure this is understood to be and how it is put together is up for grabs as is how the entity relates to the wider networked world. There is a built in assumption that the future is digital. However there is as yet no real pressure from researchers and other academic users for the giving up of the print book in favour of the eBook. A majority of the revenue for publishers still comes from print and in fact in spite of the early start academic eBook take-up lags behind continued print sale. But of course there is no need to insist upon one format

At this stage the project has accrued quite a lot of research, and comment reachable through the site but usually this report makes no direct reference to this. On the whole there has been little interest (as far as we can tell) in what is going on in the USA. For example see the list of resources. (**2)** One output

from the project in book form, *The Academic Book of the Future* edited by Lyons and Rayner, has only one chapter covering US developments at all. Admittedly though that chapter by Anthony Cond (no 6) does so with admirable concision and understanding (**3**)

This apparent lack of interest is reciprocated, though in the US the Crossick report (**4)** does get some mentions. The references to his conclusions tend to dwell on his minimisation of the so-called crisis (which we shall not be analysing in this report) and the emphasis on the continued demand for print – not always recognised in US projects. There is a respectful interview in US blog Scholarly Kitchen by Alison Mudditt (University of California Press) and the lack of comments are perhaps significant **(5)** There appears to be little interaction. In this report we have not attempted to make comparisons between what Crossick reveals and the US situation that we wish to explain.

Since the first version of this report, an excellent article has been accepted by the journal Learned Publishing. This is written by two of the directors of the five new university presses launched in the UK last year and makes a serious attempt to show how these new presses fit in to the great tradition of US university press publishing (**6)**

As the title of the report indicates it is concerned with what stakeholders do and think rather than recommending action that should be taken. In a sense there is only really one stakeholder and that is the researchers. This needs to be recognised even if this report is overwhelmingly about university presses, monographs and the future of publication. These other stakeholders mentioned are facilitators. The monographs are not for them but for an audience which is mainly other researchers but which might and can be wider.

 Where there is evidence about the concerns and hopes of researchers it is provided but there is very little research which is properly constructed and which offers a reasonably sized sample. There are other recent projects on the attitudes of researchers. For example there is the study on trust in information sources for the Sloan Foundation (**7**) which unfortunately only dealt with the attitudes of scientists and social scientists. A few humanities scholars crept in but not enough to provide a basis for conclusions.

Nevertheless it seems likely that humanities researchers are likely to be more conservative in matters of tenure, digital publishing and open access than most of the proposals and projections in that report assume. This assumption is backed up by interviews with senior UK publishers in the humanities with a close knowledge of the US scene.

Note that we have neglected the arts (as contrasted with the humanities) disciplines. This is admitted. Some US publishers cater for them particularly. They have their own challenges and there are Mellon projects which relate to them. The aims and scope of the AHRC project did ask for some consideration of the arts.

Nevertheless in spite of the central position of the researcher, the central player in this report is the publisher – the university press. There is more on presses below (section 2d) including an argument for the concentration on their publishing. One justification for this approach that the mission of university presses assume a special relationship with the research communities whom they serve and this assumption is devoutly believed in by the staff of the presses.

 Some monographs on the list of the presses are what is sometimes called crossover – they have a wider audience potentially among professionals and the general public. Some have use as upper level texts. Many publishers seek these sort of monographs because they think they can make money out of them and some also spend a great deal of time publishing local/regional books at a number of different levels including specialist scholarly works. This report is not concerned with this part of the output of presses. It deals with those monographs concerned primarily with scholarly communication and the special problems and opportunities relating to them.

A lot of the publishers under scrutiny publish journals in the humanities and there has been something of a resurgence in these programmes. It is tempting to look into models for them as the way humanities journals are published is different from the way science journals are published. In some cases books and journals are brought together in editorial and policy making. There are now also platforms in scholarly publishing which bring together journals and books: these will be mentioned in passing. In the section on

production the dangers of precipitate taking over lessons from journals practice are raised - in spite of the length of time that journals have been digital compared with books: however in his keynote presentation at SSP 2015 (also mentioned elsewhere) Charles Watkinson of Michigan Publishing used an analogy from environmental ecology which may be apposite – "we seem to know the edge is where the action is or the place where you push things to for the best results." (**8)** His examples of approaching monographs from the "edge" of journal publishing are formats, platforms, and measures of impact, sales channels and business models. Some of these edges will be covered in more detail than others.

There is also the role of librarians. Librarians are the main purchasers: buying and selling models are in a state of flux which will be touched on here but not in detail. However over the last two decades librarians have also come to see themselves as more actively involved in scholarly publishing as they search for new roles. There will be more on this.

Researchers in different disciplines work in different ways. It has not been possible to dwell on this and seek out what research there is. There are one or two grants concerned with special disciplines which will be mentioned. It would be good to have time to do more drilling down into generalisations about the humanities.

Libraries are more and more integrated into the wider thinking of the institutions of which they are part and, as we shall see, proposals applied to or connected with the future of the academic book are often articulated at an institutional level – something the institution should decide on. This is particularly the case with open access policies. We shall not deal with the bigger picture in this report (for example the involvement of institutions through their libraries in advocacy, repository development and the handling of author publishing charges) though we shall of course have a section specifically on open access monographs.

The project itself is based on collaboration. One of the main aspects the changing picture of the way academic books might develop is that collaboration between different publishers and across different stakeholders is a growing part of the picture. This will be covered.

Finally as any historian will tell you the seeds of the future academic book will lie in the past. I have no apologies for including quite a bit of history. As a guide to the future of the monograph it is worth knowing about.

b) Why North America?

I have proposed that it is worth examining what is going on in North America in some depth in any discussion of the Academic Book of the Future not just because there are so many more scholars in the humanities in the USA and Canada than there are in the UK. It is more because discourse on the topic is so much more visible – compare the content of the Journal of Scholarly Publishing (Canada) with Learned Publishing (UK). Note that I have referred to North America and mentioned Canada but for practical purposes one could just use the term US and that would suffice. Citizens of the USA usually forget Canada is also part of North America.

It could be argued there is more clarity in the discourse in the world of US scholarly humanities. It is also different. There is the special culture of the Liberal Arts colleges. There is also the special culture of the university presses – see next section. A lot of the interaction in the USA is essentially self-referring. It could be argued that the AHRC project will gain a lot in a networked international world if the references to sources outside the UK, especially but not exclusively North America were visible and as comprehensive as possible This report cannot claim to have covered all bases but some literature searching has been done and as much relevant literature, including reports etc, as seemed relevant are referenced

c) Why university presses?

This section is concerned with explaining why they are of special importance and how their publishing fits in with publishing in the humanities in general

University presses are primarily concerned with humanities monographs. As mentioned before they do publish journals, usually also in the humanities. but the usual attitude to these journals is much as it was in most US and UK publishers before the 1950s – something one does for the scholars but of little interest, not creative and not susceptible to much added value. There are some presses such as MIT, Penn State and Duke who have a serious

investment in journals. There is one press (Rockefeller) which publishes three significant science journals and nothing else.

How many monographs are published in the US on an annual basis?

Here is a recent numerical assessment by the consultant Joe Esposito, who has produced a survey for the Mellon Foundation: the numbers are generally accepted.

The American U. presses (not OUP, Cambridge, or the Canadians) collectively publish 14,600 books a year. 5,000 of these are monographs, defined as books by scholars for other scholars. Collections of essays don't count. Books designed for classroom use don't count, though some monographs eventually find their way into upper-level courses. A book is not literally a "mono"-graph: it can have more than one author. But it has to be a sustained argument. Of those 5,000 monographs, 4,000 are in the humanities, which were defined by BISAC codes. **(9)**

These are lower numbers that many might have assumed and the presses producing them are not a homogenous group. There are 131 members of the trade body AAUP. Some of these are not university presses and some are from outside North America. There about 90 presses perhaps a few more if we take into account Canada. AAUP divides members into 4 classes by revenue. Around 50% of AAUP members are in Group 1 with revenues under 1.5 m. Each publisher probably produces fewer than 15 monographs a year. The better known publishers such as Michigan are in Group 3 with revenues over $3 million. There are a small number of publishers in Group 4 with revenues over $8 million. These are presses like Yale, Harvard Princeton and Chicago.

For an informative taxonomy see a very recent blog post by Roger Schonfeld of Ithaka. He hopes to refine it **(10).** There is another taxonomy in section 6 produced by Charles Watkinson concerned with those university presses reporting to libraries

These are low revenues bearing in mind that these are total revenues not just monograph revenues. The big presses have endowments and Chicago (to take one example) probably achieves profitability because of its extensive

representation of other presses. It is suggested that the presses in group 4 do not really mingle much with the smaller players who have very different concerns, do not have international offices and have much less of an international reputation except to scholars in specific fields. It is interesting that the really big are not noted for the amount of innovation they are showing and they are not involved as leaders or in the various experiments we shall discuss later. One informant suggested to me that an additional category of big but innovative presses should be added to the categories offered by the AAUP. She instanced University of California Press and MIT **(11).** The activities of the former will be mentioned later

The smaller players make great capital on their integration into their own local scholarly universe. There are undoubtedly loyalties – a good example is at Akron when it seemed that the administration were about to close the press. **(12)**

Here additionally is the perception of the role of the press as seen from the president's office of a medium to large sized university:

Our university is one of approximately 100 universities that provide support for a university press. In doing so, we are also providing support for the humanities and social sciences faculty of the hundreds of institutions that do not have presses, but publish with a university press because their standard to receive promotion and tenure remains the peer-reviewed long-form monograph **(13)**

Over the last few decades there has been a lot of soul searching in the world of US associations representing humanities disciplines, particularly the Modern Languages Association (MLA), about the tie between first book and tenure. The MLA president in 2002 started a new debate on the "crisis" and represents a seminal document **(14)** The influential MLA report of 2008 **(15)** seems to reflect the world as it was in 2000-2001 but perhaps it had not changed. There may be more recent reports.

Here are some sources on the credentials of digital scholarship which may represent what really goes on in promotion and tenure panels – but do we

know **(16)** very little. This really is an area where independent research might shine light

One might think that the presses are still as once was the case, even with Oxford and Cambridge, the place where the local scholar places their monograph. However examination by one group 3 press (University of Michigan) to see where the humanities researchers submit their monographs reveal how many local authors submit and are accepted.. There are a total of 245 and their destinations break down as 122 go to other university presses, 94 to commercial companies and 29 elsewhere. The local press only received 8 of these monographs. The recipient presses that got more are NYU (10), Duke and North Carolina (both (9). Is there something odd here; yes there is? OUP and CUP are both counted as commercial publishers. OUP publishes 22 and CUP 21 followed by Routledge at 8 and Palgrave at 7. These are the four publishers picked out by Crossick as the main monograph publishers in the UK. **(17)**

University of Indiana has also put up the same information for their faculty **(18)** Now what about the number of humanities monographs published by these commercial organisations? In preparation for writing this report there has been informal consultation with representatives of those companies that Crossick consulted with. Those who are running the project will be familiar with his conclusions but for my own purposes of comparison here is what he says concerning monograph numbers:

Data on new titles were provided for this review by the four largest publishers of monographs in the UK and, although no more than a significant indicator of larger publishing trends, the results for these four major publishers are revealing. They show very significant growth in the numbers of new monograph titles being published by them year-on-year: 2,523 new titles were published by these four publishing houses in 2004, rising to 5,023 new titles in 2013.

There is a footnote:

The four publishers were Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press,

Routledge (Taylor & Francis) and Palgrave Macmillan. New monograph titles were defined as including edited collections and scholarly editions, but not textbooks or 'trade' books intended for the general market. Reissues, new editions and new format versions of existing titles were excluded. This growth was wholly organic and not the result of takeovers. Indeed, recent years appear to have seen an expansion in small, monographic publishing houses **(19)** It is important to understand that these numbers (we are assured) are numbers of monographs (more widely defined that has been done in this report) published by all the offices of the companies involved. One of the publishers listed here has told us that 50% of the monographs published from the home office were by US scholars **(20)**

So why concentrate on US university presses in writing about the future of academic books in the UK? There is no doubt that the majority of these presses have similar problems – continued institutional funding and continued provision rigorous peer review yet achieving sales than enable break evens for most books, and how to deal with the digital world and with open access looming up. They are in this sense a coherent group as monograph publishing is their job. They may only represent a component of monograph publishing in the humanities but this is what they do. The Mellon Foundation in both its philosophy and "for practical reasons" is not concerned with and overlook what the four big players are doing.

The AAUP describes their mission thus:

Daniel Coit Gilman's (at Johns Hopkins the first university press director in the USA) linking of the mission of university presses to the purpose of universities themselves helped lay an important legal cornerstone for a large part of today's system of formal scholarly communications. As non-profit enterprises, university presses seek to fulfil the university's mission of serving the public good through education, rather than of maximizing profits, increasing owners' equity, and paying out shareholders' dividends. **(21)**

The university presses think they are important, many humanities researchers and the universities that fund them think so too. Thompson is good on this): **(22)** he explains how universities expect their presses to continue to publish

monographs even when they are uneconomic and he gives examples of pressure. The Brown report (see section 3d) takes the relationship as a given and its preservation under (new circumstances admittedly) as crucial to scholarship. To an outsider their own belief in their importance to the humanities and indeed to scholarship a whole is difficult to justify. See also the comments of Joe Esposito in section 3f. There is a similar belief that there is something special about the nature and quality of peer review of humanities monograph as conducted by US university presses which is quite different in quality from the peer review conducted by other publishers of similar books. Even Crow (see section 3f below) falls for this assertion. Is there any truth in this example of American exceptionalism?

One answer is yes and no. It could be argued that some presses do spend more time on nurturing an author and his or her book in a way that outside the university press scene would just not be possible. It is not that the peer review is more rigorous though it is possible that more time is spent analysing the results. It is the time spent on development of the text which can be a real work of love. Unfortunately time spent on development depends on how many books the editor is responsible for and there is constant pressure to take on more books than the number one can manage to this degree of detail. And "university presses" are taken as a group and claims for them are made for them as a group and as in all groups some of the members are a lot better than others at adding scholarly value.

Sanford (Sandy) Thatcher has written extensively on the editorial role of the American University Press and its procedures based on many decades of experience. He sets out his views:

I would not want to make any universal claim that review procedures at university presses are more rigorous than those used by commercial publishers. What is true is that university presses are trusted more principally because they are mandated to have faculty editorial boards that are authorized to make the final decisions about what gets published. There is no counterpart to these editorial boards in commercial publishing. Commercial publishers may have faculty as series editors, but they do not function in the same way editorial boards do. These boards make the decision-making

process at university presses more complex and dynamic than the process at commercial publishers. I have written about editorial boards as integral to decision making at university presses principally in two places: a long essay titled "List building at a university Press," which was the final chapter in the volume titled "Editors as Gatekeepers edited by James J. Fyfe and Rita J. Simona (Rowman and Littlefield, 1994) and an abridged version of this essay that appeared in the Journal of Scholarly Publishing under the title "The 'Value Added" in Editorial Acquisitions" (January 1999). **(23)** Both of these essays are accessible freely here: **(24)** It should also be noted that membership of the representational body, the Association of American University Press (AAUP) lays great stress on "proper" peer review and expects members to follow guidelines **(25).**

Admission to membership depends on proper procedures which however are fairly flexible – at least one important member does not strictly follow the guidelines

A committee or board of the scholars (or other officials of directly comparable rank and authority) of the parent institution or institutions shall be charged with certifying the scholarly quality of the publications that bear the institutional imprint **(26)**

Perhaps the best analysis of the relationship between US university press and other publishers that routinely publish the output of humanities faculty in their universities is in the Indiana/Michigan report on subventions in the paragraphs explaining how they see a system working practically **(27)** There are of course other university presses throughout the world and AAUP includes in its membership a small number of them as well as other organisations with a similar role but the particular philosophy of the US and to some extent Canadian university presses and their context in the Academy is unique.

The big or (if you like) "commercial" publishers of humanities monographs mentioned above and with some additions are based in the UK. Other reports to the project will cover their attitudes and practice in relation to monographs. The big four picked out by Crossick all have their own bundles

which include all their monographs whatever the place of publication and their own policies centrally decided. Two of the big players (OUP and CUP) have begun to bring American university presses into these bundles and they will be considered later with other aggregations and collaborations (section 8)

d) Funding and Funders

Funding could refer to funding for specific monographs which is common and sometimes required when university presses are the publisher. However this section is concerned with the funding of projects which are intend to enable research that will lead to change in the way in which university presses operate and what sort of outputs they publish, which is what most of this report is concerned with

It is a standard assertion that the funding provided to university presses is not sufficient to enable them to experiment or to embrace costly investments. Outside funding is always looked for. By far the biggest funder is the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (note that there are other Mellon foundations) which is beginning to be referred to as AWMF. Its history goes back 46 years. Not only is AWMF a funder but it has policies and elicits proposals. For many years the AWMF site has been a model of reticence but now all has changed. There is now available a 2014 strategic plan for the relevant part of their programme that "guides our support of humanistic scholarship, liberal arts and doctoral education, and the performing and visual arts". **(28)** There is also a database of grants which helpfully starts in 2015 and goes backwards **(29)** The strategic plan for the scholarly communications programme defines its role as follows:

Digital technologies have transformed how knowledge is embodied, organized, disseminated, and preserved. Use of these technologies has the potential to expand and equalize access to cultural and scholarly resources across sectors of society. **(30).** Within this programme are four areas of recent or renewed emphasis. This is the one of most importance for our purposes: "A multi-pronged plan to assist the evolution of academic publishing in the Internet age". It is most important because we are looking to change because change brings about the future.

If we look at the last 25 results (2014-2015) that come up under this heading of scholarly communications we find that 7 are given to university presses. These will be discussed under appropriate headings. If one searches over the same period under the sub-heading of electronic publishing one finds some more in additional to the ones also found under this heading and one or two not to university presses that are also relevant.

The rationale for this latter grouping of grants is important and significant:

The Scholarly Communications program makes grants that build the capacities of not-for-profit academic presses and other organizations that act as publishers to produce high quality, broadly accessible, digital products (**31)**

The wording is subtle – yes "broadly accessible" does mean open access and the "other organizations" does mean library publishing enterprises. The words "not-for-for profit" is a governing concept. AWMF has rigorously eschewed any contact with the commercial sector. The argument is based as much on the perceived (by Mellon) quality of what commercial publishers publish as any argument that they make profits and do not need help. There is no collaboration unlike those that JISC undertakes. However for a very long time AWMF have sought to fund sustainable projects whereas for many years many Jisc projects had no outcome and no sustainable future. The senior program officer Don Waters sees this as an article of faith and he has been immensely important to the whole university press scene and of course humanities scholarship since 1999. Waters and AWMF are central to the Academic Book of the Future in the USA. There are other sources for his influence **(32)** and his dedication to sustainability in an article by Seaman and Graham **(33)**. Waters does not usually make his presentations available.

However there is however a recent presentation from an AWMF staffer available in the form of a recording **(34)**. One slide entitled – What does the Monograph of the Future Look Like is peculiarly relevant to this project. It is a big ask. The monograph of the future will exhibit/enable:

- *High quality*

- *Participate in the web and interact with related materials*

- *Include metrics of use and annotation*

- *Eligible for disciplinary prizes and awards (sic)*

- *Digital content maintenance and preservation*

- *Economically sustainable*

- *Broadly disseminated and widely accessible*

She sees the big questions as follows:

- *What are the unique challenges for electronic publishing of long form scholarship in the humanities?*

- *Are there or might there be long form genres other than the monograph?*

- *What infrastructure is necessary?*

- *How can potential library/publisher/other collaborations meet those needs?*

Finally since the first version of this report was produced there has been an important interview in the Charleston journal Against the Grain **(35)**. There is a shorter but open access version **(36)** This impressive mission statement sets the granting mentioned above in a context under the heading *New Infrastructure for Long-Form Publication.* It is as usual characterised by clarity and mastery of the evidence

One of our objectives in the Scholarly Communications program is to help incorporate modern digital practices into the publication of scholarship in the humanities and ensure its dissemination to the widest possible audience.

In 2013 we began focusing on long-form research publications in the humanities, and particularly the monograph. As a result of this process, we

created a working set of the features of the monograph of the future as we heard it described in our meetings across the country **(37)**

There are other funders. The National Endowment for the Humanities **(38)** is a big player but concentrates on funding research which may end up in monographs. One might see NEH as the US equivalent to the AHRC in the UK but as well as being much wealthier it seems to have a more restricted remit. Mellon makes up the difference

Some presses have their own foundations. In the case of the University of California Press their foundation **(39)** has funded their recent open access initiatives. See section 5 on Open Access below)

e) Definitions

Here is a definition of "monographs which has been used before and which Thompson adopted: **(40)**

The monograph is a large, specialized work of scholarship that treats a narrow topic in great detail. Size is a critical characteristic, because it distinguishes the monograph from the article, which has the same purpose, but is small. The monograph is the product of a large project usually carried out by an individual scholar. It presents what the scholar has concluded is the truth about some set of historical events, the characteristics of some work of art or literature or the biography of a historical figure, an artist or a writer. This list does not exhaust the categories of possible topics of monographs, but makes the general point that monographs are principally about establishing facts or narratives in a set of fields in which facts and narratives are often hard to establish. Together with critical reviews and articles, monographs provide the foundations for general explanations in these fields.

(They are) books, which are records of primary research intended for other researchers and bought mainly by libraries... In (certain) disciplines such work represents the main channel for communication of research and is recognised as such for purposes of tenure and promotion.

This report does not cover critical editions for example in any generalisations

made. Monographs in the humanities are always understood. Otherwise the definition does not seem to be needed. Crossick is catholic in what he covers

A lot of this report may read as if it is implicit that publications in the form of print or print equivalent are the normal form of the monograph. It is arguable that this is still the view of most humanities academics. However as we will see from the next section there have been serious recognition of the opportunities presented by the functionality of the web soon after the web became visible and there is also now an increase in significant and increasingly important thinking about what a book represents as a scholarly output. There is also serious investigation into the publishing of non-traditional scholarly outputs. This is discussed further in section 4

3.   Change

This section places the recent developments leading up to the slew of initiatives often due to Mellon grants in a historical context. All these studies and reports have had an impact in forming the thinking of university press folk in the US except for the first one (b) which is included partly because this author wrote it but justifiably because it contains accounts of the thinking of presses as the time and also gives an account of initiatives at the beginning of the last decade which have had an enduring influence.

a) The web as the context.

There are two points that need to be made. In the first place the realisations of the opportunities for digital publishing of books date back to about 1992/3 when the web became visible to publishers. The Internet spawned some interesting projects well before that date but they are usually not relevant here. **(41)** Thompson mentioned the City of Bits put on their website by MIT in 1994 – see **(42)** It is said to be still selling. It seems to have had no impact at all. An interesting article by Sanford (Sandy) Thatcher demonstrates how early plans for digital monographs and even open access monograph were worked on by percipient university presses but they did not get anywhere (alas). **(43)** Secondly it is always important to remember that scholars in the humanities do not live in a bubble but that they, as individual human beings, use the functionality of the web for all the everyday purposes of life. As we shall see below digital humanities movement, which goes back certainly into the 1980s, is an undoubted influence which needs to be taken account when discussing the thinking among humanities researchers as a whole but in a wider context there is every evidence that whatever the stereotypes of scholars with quill pens most researchers in the humanities are fully paid up users of digital affordances.

All these documents in date order indicate (sometimes only slightly) which have happened over the period since 2000, which because of the beginnings of large scale digitisation of books and other developments in the dot.com boom, marks a good place to start. They represent a linear history of proposals for digital books and how to publish and sell them and (later) the emergence of open access books. With the exception of the first document

they all made an impact in the US and still are quoted. Note that there also projections about solutions which might be taken up or even planned but almost invariably not undertaken in anything more than an experimental ways. The word "experiment" is used on contrast to "pilot". In 2000 it was observed in interaction with press directors in 2000 that "experiment" actually meant doing nothing. A "pilot" went one better: it was at least a "toe in the water".

There are obviously important books and reports which could have been included in this report and which are quoted from time to time. These are from the Centre for Studies in Higher Education (CSHE). The site lists some apparently relevant publications over the ten years from 2002 to 2012 often financed by Mellon: **(44)**. Almost all these documents relate to intensive research on faculty at UC Berkeley and many of the discussions are dominated by California based academics. The samples are small too.

b) Electronic Solutions to the Problems of Monograph Publishing
   Anthony Watkinson (2001) (45)
   These are the aims of this research which was commissioned by the Publishers Association. Notice that the word "crisis" was not used.

a) The ways in which publishers and others have begun to and are planning to provide electronic vehicles for monograph content.
b) Those projects in particular which appear to be capable of implementation in the near future with a view to establishing a number of possible scenarios.
c) The standards, formats and other conditions which are most likely to lead to implementation.
d) In general the likely acceptability of those approaches deemed to be viable both for the library and for the end-user (reader) as well as for the author and the publisher. Pricing models will be considered.

This project is of importance in this context mostly because most of research was in the US – publishers and librarians. It certainly was not because of any influence it has had. It was also research into the attitudes and practices of the main body of university presses in the US. The bottom line was that in spite of the fact that all major publishers of journals published in print and digital by this stage there was almost total distrust of e-only monographs and

not much *real* interest in digital versions.

The pioneering digitisation of the Taylor & Francis book backlist 2000-2001 was an action not followed by other companies. It was a casualty of the failure of librarians to respond and the general loss of confidence in digital solutions after the dot.com bust in 2000. (**46)**

There is a short list of conclusions which are summarised and commented on in italics:

- There is a crisis. It will worsen. Fewer monographs will be published. There is no obvious digital answer. *In the first version of this report I stated that there is no evidence that fewer monographs are being published and there is also no evidence that the crisis has worsened. I am beginning to conclude that the search for new open access models over the intervening year has got such traction because things are getting worse for the university presses – see section 5*

- There will be more electronic only monographs as delivery systems improve but they will not save enough money to help the general dire economics. *Yes.*

- Libraries will adopt more "just-in-time" policies which will mean fewer books being purchased. *This is essentially the description of the embrace of PDA/DDA. It is not clear whether this means less books are bought.*

- Schemes for big multimedia projects are "red herrings". *Yes – but see below not entirely now.*

- There is scope for co-operative enterprises across stakeholder (sector) boundaries. *There may still be scope and they are beginning to emerge in the open access environment*

- Aggregation online looks a good bet. *It did and it does*

- The subscription model might work. *It did for JSTOR and Muse and some bigger publishers such as OUP with Oxford Monographs Online and (see below) it is being expanded*

Of course open access for books is not mentioned. The first open access

journal was just starting.

There was a lot of interest in print on demand and it was in a sense an alternative to investing in e-books though it was an inspiration for the changing of the production process to encompass electronic files (PDF). Here is the attitude to print on demand which was much discussed (p.59) which begins with a publisher quote:

"Perhaps the most important point to make about print-on-demand books is that they are not e-books. In fact they have nothing to do with e-books."

The section continues*: "Of those publishers who responded to my questions, most also saw print on demand (POD) as "additional" to e-book publishing. For a substantial group of others however it was undoubtedly an alternative strategy, one easier to start with. A number of publishers are already planning to print very short to cover only those copies that go out on publication and then reprint on demand. Others are going the whole hog and see POD from PDF files as "part of the overall options", which the possession of electronic files can allow."*

Because the projects analysed in this report were largely false dawns in the emergence of digital monographs some more comments on the past projects are warranted. Some links have rotted away

- **The Columbia Online Books Evaluation Project.**

This project financed by Mellon is referred to by Thompson positively as the most systematic attempt so far to look at usage of digital books **(47)** but his link to the papers on the Columbia site and also a different link provided in Watkinson are both no longer operative. The only source known to this author is a journal article by Mary Summerfield and others **(48)** and, if the authors do not exaggerate, it is, though much smaller, the book equivalent of the SuperJournal project in the UK **(49)** which looked at journals over more or less

the same period. Alas it had little impact. Here is the summary which gives the scope of the work:

The Online Books Evaluation Project at Columbia University studied the potential for scholarly online books from 1995 to 1999. Issues included scholars' interest in using online books, the role they might play in scholarly life, features that scholars and librarians sought in online books, the costs of producing and owning print and online books, and potential marketplace arrangements. Scholars see potential for online books to make their research, learning, and teaching more efficient and effective. Librarians see potential to serve their scholars better. Librarians may face lower costs if they can serve their scholars with online books instead of print books. Publishers may be able to offer scholars greater opportunities to use their books while enhancing their own profitability.

As we shall see these are familiar themes but they are cautiously presented and in the text of the article the assumption is that it will be a decade before these hopes/possibilities can be realised. It is assumed that the success of the digital book will depend on the move by humanities scholars to reading a digital version and that they will no longer need to visit the libraries. By that date it was already clear that this represented the way in which scientists accessed journals. The fact that this has not happened and that print books are still so important may undermine some of the arguments. Hyperlinking which is so important in the development of online journals is tentatively mentioned

- **Gutenberg <e>**

This so-called Darnton project is also known as the Darnton pyramid. It did indeed die but not until 2008 after a number of injections from the Mellon Foundation. The monograph rested on a substrate of digitised resources. It was an early attempt at publishing enhanced e-books **(50)** For the optimistic start and for the long-drawn out end see the Seaman and Graham analysis(**51).** Another source giving Darnton's own optimistic view is at **(52)**.

Thompson gives several pages to the project and its significance **(53).** Note that even at this date Mellon did understand the importance of sustainability. Seaman and Graham quote Darnton as being shocked when asked for a business plan – something he had never been asked for in his academic life. It was also pointed out by Seaman and Graham that Darnton pioneered what has been a feature of many early experiments in e-publishing in that he took absolutely no interest in what authors actually wanted. The argument is much more complex than this summary indicates. The negative is that it was very difficult to get together the sort of "book" envisaged and expensive to produce.

- **ACLS History e-Book project (1999)**

This project was also financed by Mellon. It was a co-operative venture and the aims re described as follows:

> *"1) To foster broader acceptance by the scholarly community of electronic monograph length texts as valid scholarly publication by creating electronic texts of high quality in the discipline of history;*
> *2) To promote collaboration among ACLS, its constituent societies, university presses, scholars and libraries in electronic publishing;*
> *3) To develop publishing processes that will help streamline production and make the creation and dissemination of scholarly electronic texts more cost-effective;*
> *4) To help create a centralized, non-commercial (sic), electronic publication space;*
> *5) To establish the viability of publishing specialized scholarly texts in electronic format"* **(54)**

These are reasonable aims with the possible exception (for some) of the fourth aim which has always and still is central to the Mellon enterprise. It is rather more directly put here than it usually is. The enterprise was slow getting off the ground and has changed in its form but it has survived. **(55)** It became self-supporting in 2005 and reached its present wider form in 2007 as as Humanities E Books (HEB) . It is now a corpus of 4,300 books. There is

further information about subscriptions at **(56).** An obvious question is how does HEB relate to JSTOR and Muse and also to the other commercial aggregations? HEB commissioned a survey of librarians and what they used in 2013 **(57)** but it is not at all clear that they chose the right aggregations to consider. It could be argued that HEB does not have a great deal of impact on humanities researchers in general but maybe it does in the history community - especially because of its own history.

c) **Books in the Digital Age (2005) John B. Thompson. Polity Press (58)**

This is probably the most important book written on publishing for many decades and is seen as still having considerable importance in spite of its age. The subtitle is "*The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States".* Monograph publishing is picked out as a special type of academic publishing and, though many generalisations relate to book publishing as a whole, many specifically refer to Academic Monographs in the sense used in the project and most of the evidence adduced comes from the USA. Many of the projects mentioned above are mentioned here but the conclusions about the digital future of the book (monograph) are much more carefully worked out. Some are relevant to the humanities. They are as follows:

- *The key problems that have to be solved in any attempt to make scholarly books available online are more economic than technical. What experimentation so far has shown is that the principal market for scholarly book content is institutional rather than individual.*
- *The best way to maximise the added value of delivering scholarly book content online is to treat individual books as part of a scholarly corpus or database which has scale, selectivity and focus.*
- *Whether the development of scholarly corpora is best handled by publishers themselves acting either on their own or in collaboration with one another or by third party aggregators of content remains an open question*
- [there is a section on fears about fears of cannibalisation which was a major concern in 2005 but seems not to be so much of a concern now]

- [There is a section on the PDF versus XML question which again has moved into a different context]
- [There is a section on continuing problems over rights which is not seen as a barrier to overall progress any more on the longer though a solution in the arts is certainly much needed]
- *Costs of going online are much greater than many had thought and the willingness of publishers to experiment has been much greater than would be warranted on financial grounds only*
- [Print equivalent or not is a continuing issue that has moved on]. *While the ideas of Darnton and others may have considerable appeal in abstract terms, they are rather distant from the practical realities and pressures faced by publishers and from the concerns and preferences of academics.*
- *Synergies between scholarly journal publishing and scholarly book publishing to be explored with Oxford Scholarship Online as a model*
- *We know little about how monographs are actually used by the scholarly community. [We know more now but not enough and the research has concentrated more on textbook use]*
- *Whether there are online solutions is now yet known but a lot will depend on the electronic resources within libraries.*
- *Publishers should at least think hard about what they are publishing and why*

d) University Publishing In a Digital Age (2007) Laura Brown (59)

This study was much quoted when it came out particularly because Laura Brown was a well-known publisher who had recently parted company with OUP. The remit is wider that the subject of this report:

This report began as a review of U.S. university presses and their role in scholarly publishing. It has evolved into a broader assessment of the importance of publishing to universities. **(60)**

This section shows how the context has changed:

The responsibility for disseminating digital scholarship is migrating instead in two directions – towards large (primarily commercial) publishing platforms and towards informal channels operated by other entities on campus, mostly libraries, academic computing centers, academic departments, and cross-institutional research centers. While these entities all play a critical role in scholarly communications, university presses have developed publishing skills and experience over many years that are also very valuable in this new context and that would be costly, if not impossible, to replicate. We hope to highlight those skills in this report and suggest how they can be adapted to the digital age.

The objectives are listed here:

- *Universities should be more involved in publishing*
- *University publishing has to be revitalised and that needs investment and action*
- *Presses must adapt quickly to remain a vibrant part of scholarly communication*
- *Technological platform needed and collaboration needed to achieve it*

There is a highly optimistic prognosis:

We believe the next stage will be the creation of new formats made possible by digital technologies, ultimately allowing scholars to work in deeply integrated electronic research and publishing environments that will enable real-time dissemination, collaboration, dynamically-updated content, and usage of new media.

There is a lot of concern about the future coupled with the optimism of the previous quotation:

Recently, influential university decision-makers have recommended a

consolidation of university presses as a response to the need for scale. Administrators are looking to other parts of campus (most commonly libraries) to assume publishing related responsibilities for digital content. Some are re-evaluating the governance of their presses, and moving or considering moving their presses into different reporting lines or parts of the university administration.

The bottom line in the recommendations is leadership by provosts, collaboration within the university and across presses and an imperative that presses go online with all their content.

This essay is not so much quoted now but the section devoted to collaboration with libraries may well have been influential and was certainly early. There are uneasy references to open access journals but essentially though, there is a lot of nuancing, open access is not seen as a way forward for humanities books.

e) **Imagining a University Press System to support Scholarship in the Digital Age – Clifford Lynch** (2010) **(61)**
Cliff Lynch is probably the pre-eminent thinker in scholarly communication but does not usually turn his attention to university presses. The abstract gives his picture of his vision. It is conceptual rather than based on what is possible – though of course it is intended to be an actual solution. Although he sees the university press as source for what he calls research and resource databases he does admit that they are not the major source and that they are not equipped to be involved directly in the publishing of the databases as he describes. The databases are in fact that main subject of his essay – but he has some useful ideas about the future of the presses and the future of the academic book. Here is one insight:

I outline a possible future system of many distributed university presses mainly focused on the editorial production of scholarly monographs, supported by a very small number of digital platforms for managing and delivering these monographs as a database rather than transactionally to academic and research libraries. I also touch on the ongoing evolution of

various types of scholarly books into (often much more costly) networked information resources and the implications this has for the overall dissemination of scholarship and the roles of university presses.

f) Sustaining Scholarly Publishing: New Business Models for University Presses. A Report of the AAUP Task Force on Economic Models for Scholarly Publishing Lynne Withey et al (2011). (62)

Withey headed a group of university press publishers and it comes out of the official representative organisation

Among the report's recommendations are:

• *Active, structured, open sharing of lessons learned by participants in existing digital publishing projects should be an ongoing process.*

• *Existing partnerships between presses, libraries, and other scholarly enterprises are vital models for collaboration to learn from and build upon.*

• *The support of foundations, libraries, and university administrations in providing funds to work toward the digital future has been, and will remain, crucial.*

• *Open access is a principle to be embraced if publishing costs can be supported by the larger scholarly enterprise. University presses, and non-profit publishers generally, should become fully engaged in these discussions.*

• *As a keystone species within the larger academic ecosystem, university presses can imagine themselves to be independent. This Task Force report makes clear, however, that during a time of dramatic transition, all members of the relevant scholarly communities—presses, authors, libraries, administrators, scholarly societies, and funding agencies—will need to be enlisted in open-ended and open-minded discussions, to ensure a robust scholarly communication ecosystem in the future.*

As we shall see from the fourth bullet point open access does make an entrance. Quite a bit of commentary is available from a number of different angles

There is a perceptive blog comment on this report from within the Academy which is worth recording:

Change in scholarly publishing is already being driven by faculty—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly—especially in the context of our everyday campus-based requests and needs. The scholarly ecosystem is deeply interconnected. For example, changes in how we access other people's research (the demand side of the equation) are being felt by university presses (the supply side). If the demand rises for PDF files, then presses need to consider not only how to meet that need now but be able to have in place economic models that will allow them to meet that need in the long run.[2] In this regard, I would cite what Barbara Fister, a librarian at Gustavus Adolphus College, wrote earlier this year in Library Journal: "Times have changed. The migration to electronic formats untethered to physical libraries has already happened—so far as readers are concerned. How often these days do one encounter even the hoariest of scholars insisting that print journals in the library are preferable to electronic access at their desk? But the publishing system (and much of the prestige bound up in it) remains tied to archaic production processes, largely because librarians and their budgets have managed to throw together make-shift bridges to close the gaps between scholars and the resources they need. We're good at making things work for our faculty, for now, and we do it quietly, making compromises behind the scenes. We're not so good at meeting the needs of future scholars. They aren't able to raise a stink, so we ignore them. Faculty members are not neutral or disinterested parties in this conversation—we already impact the system"
(63)

Barbara Fister (quoted here) is a librarian at a small college who is also a columnist in the important Library Journal. Elsewhere in the blog Edwards argues for the presses to respond to a mixed model of academic dissemination not tied to print and also that tenure committees also take note of the changes.

Fister herself in another column in Inside Higher Ed - *Hacking the*

Academic Press: or Herding Pushmi-Pullyus **(64)** The unusual title is explained in this quote:

It imagines a future that is open access. But at the same time, it is very much anchored in current-traditional publishing, and this gives the document a weird pushmi-pullyu anatomy."

There are other instances of what Fister sees (with some justification) as a lack of drive. See the last bullet point above in the report which is almost a caricature of an excuse for inaction.

Finally there is a comment from the consultant Joe Esposito

He writes:

This is the subtext? of the AAUP report: How important is university press publishing? And if it is important (as its practitioners passionately believe), how can its practitioners get the attention of the academic community for the support necessary to keep the presses going.
 (65)

Compare the date of this report (2011) and the date of the launch of the Mellon infrastructure programme (2013) and the situation now and it is obvious that the press community and those who comment on its problems have found a way forward

g) Planned Obsolescence – Publishing Technology and the Future of the Academy. Kathleen Fitzpatrick (2011)

This is the date when the book was printed by New York University Press but it was about in various forms before then. The open review process is explained and demonstrated **(66)** More important is the attempt to bring together the digital humanities and the university press communities. This is a very important book and will be examined separately – see section 4 but it is not clear how influential it was. What one can say is that ideas set out in the book

seem to be having some traction

h) A Rational System for Funding Scholarly Monographs – Raym Crow (2012)

(67) This white paper commissioned by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Association of American Universities (AAU) is written by a consultant with ten years' experience of scholarly communication who wrote a seminal work on repositories: The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper (**(68)** This former position paper is a classic of deconstruction which left publishers with no role under his model of scholarship at least as far as journals are concerned but nevertheless now Crow is a valued consultant to university presses. These ideas may be applicable

His approach here is rigorous – here is what might have been made a strapline:

(*The) inherent cause of the market failure: that a primary external benefit of monographs—their use for professional credentialing—is not captured by a monograph's price.*

One interesting section proposes that the annual output of 4000 monographs mentioned above in 2c represents an undersupply. He does admit commercial publications exist. Some might find this statement somewhat surprising to say the least:

The monograph supply analysis above does not take into account commercial publication of scholarly monographs, as the real and perceived differences between university press and commercial publication require that, for practical purposes, we treat press and commercial publication as distinct markets. The "market" of North American tenure committees recognizes a significant qualitative difference between commercial and press-published monographs, and, for the most part, devalues commercially published monographs as acceptable substitutes for credentialing purposes. As a result, there is no positive external benefit from the publication of monographs by commercial publishers as there is for university presses. The market failure,

therefore, refers specifically to university press monographs.

He does not seem to recognise that US authors appear to go by choice to the foreign interlopers (again see 2c) and what about all those foreigners, who do not have to go through the first book published in the US to be accepted into posts in the US.

Here are his "solution design criteria":

- *Decouple monograph publishing decisions from commercial viability*
- *Align funding with the value delivered to individual institutions*
- *Retain quality signalling – this includes a suggestion derived from chapter one of an earlier version of Fitzpatrick (see below) that peer review might be separated entirely from publishing. Higher Education Institutions in US demand the special quality of peer review exhibited by US university presses but they may just not be able to produce enough and this may be an alternative*
- *Broaden publishing channels – for example "scholar-led editorial groups in partnership with academic libraries"*
- *Increase discoverability, functionality, and accessibility – a little bit more than open access*
- *Co-exist with other models. Many of these are described (14-16) and it is interesting that (for example) Knowledge Unlatched is current. We are in the modern world.*

Here is the preferred solution:

An institutionally funded faculty book subsidy would effectively decouple the evaluation of scholarly merit from market considerations, retain existing quality signaling, and increase discoverability and accessibility via open access dissemination. The model could facilitate key features and benefits of the other approaches described above, including the introduction of new publishing channels (for both traditional and new-form digital scholarship) and innovations in the research publication value chain, including new peer review regimes and a shift to digital-first editorial workflows, production, and dissemination—whether implemented by individual presses or collectively. The faculty book subsidy system could also coexist with, and even complement, other business models in a pluralistic publishing environment. That said, the faculty book subsidy would represent a significant innovation

and would likely be a catalyst for positive change and for stimulating innovations such as those outlined above. Thus, it would represent a first step that would allow AAU-ARL to intervene immediately and significantly in the current scholarly publishing environment without overcoming the formidable hurdles to transformative change. In the long term, a faculty book subsidy would stimulate that transformative change.

There was some follow-up under ARL auspices – see **(69)** but much less comment than one might have expected. As we shall see it has been an approach with traction and one under further scrutiny but not perhaps by publishers. An early example (with the help of some Mellon funding) is on what is called in the white paper Vertically Integrated Research Alliances or VIRA – not an acronym which seems to have taken off (**70**)

i) Open Access and the Humanities: Context, Controversies and the Future – Martin Paul Eve (2014)

This book is the best introduction to models of open access for humanities monographs though Eve's approach is a much wider one including journals as well and indeed his attention is now mainly directed to the possibilities for journals. Cambridge University Press did make available an open access version **(71)** on a chapter by chapter basis. It will be discussed later

4.   Books, "Books", and enhanced books

This section will cover some thinking within the US humanities about scholarly outputs, about monographs in digital form with additional media as part of the content (here characterised as enhanced books) and scholarly outputs which are long form but which are not monographs (here characterised as "books" . It will also cover some thinking among and also some action among university presses. It is to some extent a jumble of references to what might cause and maybe is causing change: no clear picture is emerging but there are certainly "trials" going on. For some background thinking from a library viewpoint not included in the first version of this report see the OCLC study on the Evolving Scholarly Record **(72)** This covers all types of scholarly outputs not all of which are relevant.

Unfortunately there is very little realistic literature on what researchers actually want as authors. The one major exception is the "Emory" project (**73)** which is discussed in most sections of this report. Most of the surveys, such as the excellent studies from Ithaka, are more concerned with the research process previous to dissemination. **(74)** That being said there has during the period since 2000 been an increasing amount of thinking about (other) research outputs particularly from within the digital humanities "movement" and this will be covered insofar as it is relevant to the Academic Book of the Future. By definition much of this thinking is conducted using social media and it is more difficult to retrieve than formal publication. Only some serious research including a properly constructed and widely disseminated questionnaire can establish how important within the individual disciplinary communities the very interesting ideas evolving within digital humanities actually is among scholars. However here is one example from the from the literature by Munoz (**75)**; this is in a journal which does seem to be responding to a need (**76)** but it is not a series of "books". There is more on these ideas below – and an analysis of one well-known example of action.

A separate development involving a change in the standard format of the monograph is the now established format of "Digital Shorts" **(77)**. They may not

be a replacement for monographs and may not represent scholarly outputs as defined by the terms of the project but see the quotes below. Whether these have a separate and American inspiration, which is separate from Palgrave Pivots and suchlike, are not something this report needs to be concerned with

One example is Princeton Shorts **(78)**. The **bold** in these quotes are ours

*Princeton Shorts are brief, but influential selections drawn from ground-breaking Princeton University Press titles. Produced exclusively in ebook format, they are selected with the firm belief that while the original publication remains an important and enduring work, sometimes we can all benefit from **a quick take** on a topic worthy of a longer book.*

Another example is from Georgetown:

*Georgetown Digital Shorts are peer-reviewed, original texts that are easily and widely available to students, scholars, libraries, and other readers on a variety of platforms domestically and abroad, such as Amazon's Kindle, Apple's iBookstore, Barnes & Noble's Nook, Books at JSTOR, Google Play, and many others. These **texts expand the spectrum of scholarly output** while being ideally suited for today's reading devices* **(79)**

Another more explicit taxonomy is presented by Minnesota Forerunners: here is the description:

*Forerunners is a thought-in-process series of breakthrough digital works. Written between fresh ideas and finished books, Forerunners draws on scholarly work initiated in notable blogs, social media, conference plenaries, journal articles, and the synergy of academic exchange. [Sic] **This is gray literature publishing: where intense thinking, change, and speculation take place in scholarship***

What does this mean? Does it mean that it is grey literature because it is not peer reviewed? This is not the case. Here is part of the information to authors **(80)**

Submission: We invite timely, innovative works of between 15,000 and 25,000 words, written for a broader audience of serious readers. Forerunners may be original writing or adapted from forms such as series of blog posts, articles, or conference plenaries. Initial areas of focus are digital media and game studies, higher education and scholarly communication, environment and nature, disability studies, and social thought and theory. Send editorial inquiries to fore@umn.edu.

Review and Production: Peer review and board approval will be conducted in an expedited, online process. Editorial staff joins forces with authors to develop the work and all Forerunners will receive professional copyediting and proofreading. Following submission of final text, Forerunner eBooks will be published within twelve weeks.

This is nuanced. It is peer reviewed and "properly" produced but it is quicker. From the point of view of the Press does this mean that it is grey because it comes out quickly? These are cheap too. Do real monographs have to be reviewed slowly and be produced in a ponderous fashion?

We know from Digital Publishing survey from the AAUP (see section 7 on production issues) that Digital Shorts was recognised as a genre in 2012 but in 2015 5 new presses have reported publishing them but at the same time 6 have withdrawn. They are unlikely to produce much in the way of revenue and might well be a marketing strategy to attract or retain authors.

We do know from the Digital Publishing survey that 21% of respondents had a strategy concerning enhanced eBooks – see section 3b above for the suggestion that such statements can be an excuse for inaction

Two conclusions which come through clearly from the Mellon projects on institutional funding is that the funding is not just for print-equivalent (PDF) but is for something more and also for an open access model.

But here is another definition of "books" from the Mellon project with Indiana and

Michigan *A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books* **(81)**

Rather than relying on a narrow definition of what constitutes such a scholarly object [the monograph] , the mechanism we seek to describe allows for new kinds of vehicles. The scholarly objects we seek to support can include the traditional monograph, but are not limited to book-like forms. These scholarly objects can include new forms of digital publication with a variety of enhancements that are designed specifically for the digital environment, such as annotation, linking, non-linear reading, audio-visual components, or dynamic visualizations. Regardless of the form the containers take, the content therein seeks to make a contribution to knowledge and to further the relevant scholarly literatures, and thus retains the authority of "publication" as it is traditionally understood for the scholar and scholarship **(82)**

Here is another very relevant comment from the same report:

The team was mindful throughout this process of the unintended consequence of continuing to fetishize the long-form book (or book-like forms) as the gold standard of scholarly work in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Indeed the challenge of having these conversations was to try to keep the heterogeneity of the "object" to be communicated in play. The fall-back position was to use the term "book." Some participants noted the definitional problem of the project. One of them observed: "The notion of the scholarly object you've given us is fixed rather than dynamic. The challenge of developing a model that would encompass dynamic projects involves the challenge of establishing a funding model that accounts for the significant costs of emergent modes of scholarly communication, among them hosting and preservation, collaborative ideation and tool-building. Emergent scholarly objects and environments also pose challenges in terms of the potential openness of the end product, and multiple versioning, as well as challenges with multimedia elements **(83)** It is now time to look at the ideas that are much discussed within the humanities communities, particularly those who describe themselves as "digital", about the sort of scholarly output which will enable the full expression of the way that scholarship is being developed within this community. Digital Humanities is an international community. There is no need to go into any detail about the

thinking of its exponents which the project owners will be very familiar with. We have mentioned earlier the seminal book by Kathleen Fitzpatrick oddly entitled *Planned Obsolescence*. It may or may not be significant that the collaborative refereeing has not been followed up by other scholars and actually does not seem to have much impact on the way her ideas are presented. It could be argued that the book could we have done with a good editor.

How representative and influential are the ideas of Kathleen Fitzpatrick? In her strategic position at the MLA she has certainly been in a position to exert influence: a tweet – characteristically – demonstrates that she has just been promoted. What has she done there? Media Commons exists but the outsider cannot tell how much discourse actually happens among the members. The description of the MLA publication programme **(84)** says little except that there is rigorous peer review and that it does not publish monographs but some collections of essays – no sign of other scholarly outputs

The quotation below begins a very useful article by Agata Mrva-Montoya (2015) **(85)**

In her book Planned Obsolescence, Kathleen Fitzpatrick postulates that the 'monograph' could be integrated into the digital environment in more creative ways than a stand-alone print or ebook. New technologies provide opportunities to 'facilitate interaction, communication, and interconnection,' and the publication of research outputs could be part of a network and ongoing conversation. Moreover, it could include data sets, websites, and software. In short, what she is postulating is the creation of a digital scholarly publishing system such as MediaCommons.

This is a little different from "books" and does not cover the electronic resources which come from many Digital Humanities projects. She continues

In contrast, the majority of scholarly book publishers remain focused on monographs and edited collections, released in multiple formats (print, ePub, and so on), but with linear content refined using traditional editing practices and the design driven by the paradigm of the printed page. We are still effectively dealing with 'print' books hosted in an online environment.[3] While the open access publishing model is certainly transformational, it is driven by

experimenting with the new business, distribution, and permission models rather than with a new format of scholarly communication practice. Whether the books are released as ePub, PDF, or even HTML files, without the integration with social networking platforms these books 'miss the real potential of what scholarly communication could be in a digital environment.'[4] The technological context is changing, and if we want to ensure that research is accessible to multiple audiences, we need to go beyond the 'tradigital' books and open access model to reach readers via multimedia, eBook applications, and social networking platforms. (Pages 321 and 322)

She points to the survey by the Oberlin group in the previous year:

Faculty in 2014 show that academic authors remain interested in publications with a prestigious publisher that would provide high-quality peer review and editorial support within a reasonable publishing schedule. They 'continue to see greatest value in traditional processes,' while 'newer innovations are not seen as key,' although 'around 50% were either positive or strongly positive about newer publishing initiatives.' Publishing features that ranked as least important included 'update functionality, innovative tools to encourage conversations about research, and the option to receive community feedback on a work in progress,' which is exactly opposite to what Katherine Fitzpatrick postulates in her book. (It seems that the faculty of the Oberlin Group prefer to rely on receiving feedback through traditional channels of communication such as conferences and seminars (page 323)

As we shall see later in section 4 and elsewhere the Oberlin group's plans in the form of Lever Press are a little more upbeat but what she writes next is very sensible and indeed all the rest of the article has very good points in it

From an academic reader's perspective, the drive to digital is also not as urgent as one would expect. While the availability of books in electronic format, especially those published in open access is seen as a bonus, the printed book remains a preferred format for close reading. According to Paul Fyfe, 'numerous commentators suggest [that] the dynamic affordances of print technology have yet to be electronically re-imagined or effectively remediated.' This does not mean that we should all go back to printed books and forget about digital. As the

technology and readers' requirements change and evolve, we should remain flexible. (page 323)

It is nice to see a defence of the preference for print which is missing in most of the proposals discussed. It is nice to see because advocacy of the digital should not be at the expense of a failure to recognise the affordances of print. Most of the rest of the article is concerned with digital critical editions, the opportunities of mobile and apps for mobile which (as she says) by-pass university presses on the whole

How do the various plans of university presses and other stakeholders relate to the hopes of digital scholarship including those interpreted by the digital humanities community?

In one of the other reports (discussed in detail in section 6) the Emory working group **(86)** produced a highly nuanced discussion on the relationship between digital scholarship and digital publishing. The working group pointed out that, although monographs did emerge from work in digital humanities many works [perhaps most] of digital scholarship take very different forms — including databases, visualization projects, interactive archives, etc.

As we shall see in section 6 not all these scholarly outputs are as yet available for the subventions which the Emory group is concerned with. The Oberlin group of 80 institutions (liberal arts colleges) led by Bryn Geffert of Amherst are now working with Michigan Publishing to form Lever Press. It was launched since the first version of this report (**87)).** This is badged as an open access press – see next section also.

It is worth looking at the projects discussed in these sections from the early days because you can sometimes see signs of morphing under the impact of realities. The proposals not usually available publicly are an even a better start. There is an early call for proposals which specifically asks for projects which are not traditional monographs (**88)** Here is the wording:

The Lever Press now seeks proposals for series to become part of the editorial

program of the press. Our objectives are to publish both traditional, monograph length works while at the same time entertaining proposals that would encompass other emergent forms of scholarship, particularly nonlinear, iterative projects drawing on digital research modalities

This is from the preamble to the proposal document:

Lever Press represents a departure from traditional academic publishing's business models, and we strive to innovate with our content as well. We seek forward-facing scholarship to guide our path and we ask you to think creatively about new ways of presenting scholarly work. We are especially interested in publishing work aligned with the mission and ethos of the liberal arts college tradition; blurring the lines between research and teaching, embracing the deep interdisciplinary that can be found in smaller academic communities, and driven by a deep commitment to social engagement.

Further into the form there is this request for information:

We endeavour to incorporate many of the features existing publishers avoid due to the existing market's inability to monetize these publications. Help us get an idea of how elements typically considered off-limits components in publications would be incorporated within your work (rather than relegated to ancillary status in a different location).
The above quotation reads like the offering of an opportunity for enhancement rather than a new model of scholarly output but subsequently here is another quotation?

How might this publication push the boundaries of scholarship via exploring formats beyond the traditional monograph-length book and/or the integration of digital research tools?

See an interview which has appeared since the last version of this report. **(89)** The interviewer shows most interest in the business model but there is also a renewed commitment to scholarly outputs in "different forms"

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Finally there is another Mellon project – this time led by Douglas Armato from the University of Minnesota Press. The collaborator here is not a library or another press but a digital humanities centre. The project was presented to Mellon as Developing the Iterative Scholarly Monograph at **(90)** but has been announced as Manifold Scholarship at **(91).**

Mellon on its grants site points to an article in the Library Journal on the project. **(92)** Here is a quote from the article:

User-friendly features will enable authors and readers to engage with the electronic versions by adding comments and annotations, but Manifold Scholarship is intended to be a tool for presses, rather than a platform to facilitate self-publishing, Armato explained.

> *"The idea of Manifold is to do the same thing we do with [print] books— put the publisher in the middle, working with scholars to get these complex, networked works online," Armato said. "It's a chance for us to work with authors that have these complex projects…. There's really no place for them to go, unless the scholar has the coding talent, or access to people that do."*

It looks as if the result of the project will be an exemplar rather than a series of books. Here is a quote from Minnesota and their collaborators at the City University of New York.

Minnesota and The Graduate Center will work again with the web development team at Cast Iron Coding, who partnered with them to build the open-access book platform Debates in the Digital Humanities (http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu). The three collaborators will establish Manifold's development platform as a public project from day one, sharing preliminary work and concepts, updating progress, and including discussions about the problems being tackled. The project tracker, and the source code repository, will be public for the entire process, and the final product will be an open, customizable platform available to other presses and the public. Comments Zach Davis of Cast Iron Coding: "We

hope to engage stakeholders in scholarly communications and perhaps even a larger community with this open and transparent approach.

Since the first version of this report was produced there has been some continued refinement of what is intended. In a blog *Building Manifold* **(93)** a posting gives the following optimistic message:

Manifold is not simply an endeavor to create a better publishing platform; it is an answer to the challenge of rethinking and reframing the concept of scholarly publishing. In broad strokes, scholarly publishing is very much still a print-centric enterprise. Despite the vast libraries of electronic publications available, the systems, mindsets, and expectations of the greater university press culture—including those of authors and the academy—are engineered specifically for print.

In terms of production, while many presses have augmented their procedures over the past two decades, those alterations tend to simply mirror print methods instead of refashioning them to account for digital materials and platforms. For other presses, third-party service providers, or packagers, handle the creation of electronic editions in parallel with print or as an afterthought to it. That is to say, even when print isn't to be the only medium of publication, it still receives primacy over all other editions. When a question of formatting comes up, it's a question to be resolved for print first. When internal elements are being scrutinized, they are done through a lens that foremost anticipates a static physical object.

We've reached a moment, however, when we need to step back from print and see it in the proper context among the myriad means of expression scholars now have at their disposal (*June 1st 2016)*

The rest of this posting is well worth reading

Finally the Michigan white paper of September 2015 funded by Mellon (see section 7 for more detail) raises the definition of the monographs as follows:

The monograph has long been the preferred vehicle for both distributing scholarship and evaluating the performance of a scholar in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Rather than relying on a narrow definition of what constitutes such a scholarly object, the mechanism we seek to describe allows for new kinds of vehicles. The scholarly objects we seek to support can include the traditional monograph, but are not limited to book-like forms. These scholarly objects can include new forms of digital publication with a variety of enhancements that are designed specifically for the digital environment, such as annotation, linking, non-linear reading, audio-visual components, or dynamic visualizations. Regardless of the form the containers take, the content therein seeks to make a contribution to knowledge and to further the relevant scholarly literatures, and thus retains the authority of "publication" as it is traditionally understood for the scholar and scholarship. **(94)**

Reading the blurb of the book and the comments by Fitzpatrick herself one might imagine that most of what she is writing about is concerned with collaborative (open) peer review. This has not been taken up in the proposals from presses. Overall however one cannot fail to be struck by how many of the initiatives proposed by Fitzpatrick are parts of the discourse of the presses. Bringing in the university hierarchy and concerns about sustainability are part of the message from Fitzpatrick and equally part of this discourse. "Books" as defined in this section have been published as Library Publications but not with what researchers refer to as "proper" peer review in the journals world when for example is can encompass innovations like PLOS One. In the humanities world it is likely that "proper" peer review will have to the sort of review provided by university presses for monographs if it is to be "trusted". The sort of review proposed by Fitzpatrick may have to wait. The difficulty will be how to handle reviewing of multimedia. It is probably that some of the projects mentioned above are wrestling with this. Looking back to experiments pre 2001 it is surprising slow developments are.

5.   Open Access

Throughout this report there is a teleological element. Open Access tends to be seen as the direction the monograph is going. This is not yet the standard view of university presses and even one new one in the UK which combines innovation with a commitment to green because gold is not appropriate for humanities publishing **(95)**

We have only a partial apology. It does seem that over the last two years all the research and reports do seem to be plumping for gold OA even if it is usually a different model than that which obtains over the journal spectrum except it must be admitted in the humanities.

There are not as many examples of US equivalents to OAPEN or Knowledge Unlatched for example in Europe but what is remarkable is the recent move in the direction of an Open Access model and the amount of serious planning. It is of course supported by Mellon: here is a gnomic utterance from that source:

Rich, challenging, and substantive as this list of features may be, note that it does not include open access as a defining feature. The Mellon Foundation strongly supports open access, and believes that it will play an important role in how its vision of the monograph of the future is achieved, but open access is one of the means to the ends we envisioned, not an end in itself. **(96)**

In the list of important publications indicating and contributing to change or at least changing fashions over the last fifteen years we have drawn attention to *Open Access and the Humanities* by Martin Paul Eve **(**see 3i above). Eve is still located here in the UK but he seems to spend a lot of time in the US and has advised on several projects that we have mentioned in various sections of this report. There is an excellent chapter on monographs (4) but there seems to be a lot more on journals. It is clear that there have been more projects or pilots specifically testing open access models in Europe than there have been in the US. The Lever Press model has already been largely covered in the previous section

Nevertheless some other enterprises live in the same space as the university

presses we are primarily concerned with and have dealings with these presses.

Moreover Knowledge Unlatched in its first pilot collection from 13 publishers including books from 4 US university presses. This was how Knowledge Unlatched was briefly mentioned in the first version of this report. There is a lot more that could be said now.

KU makes absolutely clear its OA mission (**97)** Here is the story:

Over the past few decades the market for monographs has shrunk by around 90%. Many libraries are unable to afford even a small collection of specialist research books. Individual readers who do not have access to a well-funded library are generally unable to afford to buy titles that they want or need. A broken academic publishing model is preventing, rather than facilitating, the spread of human knowledge. The situation is especially grave for researchers and communities in the developing world, but the monograph crisis is affecting authors and readers in all markets.

Personal communications have suggested that over the last year this story has become more realistic to university press directors. They have been loath nevertheless to admit that open access digital books may well be the answer to long form scholarly communication whatever the model and that print monographs can only be a subsidiary form.

This is the situation in August 2016 as KU is working on its third launch: **(98)** reasonably enough the claim here is that KU is moving out of the pilot phase.

A further development in June is signalled in a press release:
Knowledge Unlatched (KU), a not-for-profit company based in England, and University of Michigan Library (U-M Library), a major research library based in Michigan, are pleased to announce that they will collaborate to study and overcome remaining obstacles to the spread of Open Access scholarly publishing in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Under the arrangement, U-M Library will provide a North American base for KU which has recently also established presences in Germany and Australia. **(99)**

The Open Humanities Press initiative **(100)** is considered again under the heading of institutional subsidy. It is an international project but according to Eve has had strategic relations with a number of US institutions and subsidies from Michigan publishing **(101)** Here is the current list of books**: (102)** OHP books still appear on the Michigan site: **(103)** This is the description:

The Open Humanities Press (OHP) is a grassroots response to the crisis in scholarly publishing in the humanities. OHP is an international open access publishing collective whose mission is to make leading works of contemporary critical thought freely available worldwide

Grassroots is presumably a synonym for what the OHP site calls scholar-led, a term which has a lot of resonance in the library community **(104)**
Again this is a UK based organisation with some US partners **(105)**
As explained in section 7 the Michigan/Indiana Mellon funded white paper on institutional subventions has a central concern with open access: inter alia it mentions this initiative. Here is another initiative which may be of interest but which we have not looked into:

*The National Endowment for the Humanities has recently explored the idea of the Humanities in the Public Square as part of their Common Good initiative (**106**) notably for publishers in their partnership with the Mellon Foundation to fund the Humanities Open Book Program. Open Access allows humanities scholars to reach public policy makers, scholars in the developing world, amateur enthusiasts, high school teachers, and a range of other, sometimes unexpected, audiences.*

As already mentioned above (section 3) Mellon funding involves a commitment to open access. Funding for PDF (print-equivalent) is also not enough.

The main directory for open access publishers of books does not cover many US presses. This will change.**(107)** Here is an example of a list which is actually developing and with books easily to download and pleasant to read

This most discussed project is that undertaken by the University of California Press. The hype is based around the fact that these are open access projects. The director Alison Mudditt comes from the commercial publishing world and she knows about marketing. **(108)** The second reference leads to a presentation impressively entitled: *Beyond the Hype: Community Approaches to Sustainable Open Access.* The first reference puts forward a strong case for the new book project here called Luminos:

One of the truly double-edged swords of traditional monograph publishing is the influence of market forces: having to choose books based (at least in part) on what they think will sell has forced university presses to pass on books with very narrow audiences, even if the quality of the scholarship itself was high. By "sharing costs between all parties who benefit from publication" Luminos will change that dynamic: authors will have some financial skin in the game upfront, while publishers will be able to focus more tightly on quality while being exposed to less financial risk.

How is this to be done?

As we sought to address these issues, we started from the premise that libraries and presses cannot resolve this problem alone, and that the dysfunction is a systemic one requiring a collaborative approach. Many of the university administrators I've spoken with – deans, vice chancellors for research etc – also accept that they have a role to play in funding going forward. At this point, we anticipate that there will be a variety of potential sources on campus to support the Title Publication Fee (deans' funds, OA funds, research funds etc.). Over time, we anticipate a more structured approach to funding this transition as initiatives such as those from [AAU/ARL](#) and the [Mellon Foundation](#) become active.

Luminos provides a model in which costs and risks are shared, making it sustainable for all. And we have worked hard to keep costs as low as possible. At the same time, our number one priority has been to ensure that these titles are subject to the same level of review and scrutiny as every other book we publish. We have built a reputation on quality publishing and titles in the Luminos program will meet the same standards of quality as any other book bearing the

University of California Press imprimatur.

The site is called http://www.luminosoa.org/. It is Luminos plus OA. Since the first version of this report was published books have begun to come out. The presentation is excellent and they are easy to download.

 Luminos is mainly underpinned by the technology of the ferociously open access commercial publisher and partner Ubiquity Press (see section 7 for more information) This is technology often devised for journals but now applied to humanities monograph.

To some up it looks as if Eve's book may already be outdated if Mellon's funding does enable a whole tranche of open access initiatives by different presses mostly if not all based on the institutional subsidy model. If these projects attract the money and the authors and the arrangements do seem to be sustainable the picture of what might work to promote open access monographs will change. There is likely to be a domino effect.

Since the first version of this report was delivered Mellon has made at least one major new open access related grant- to Johns Hopkins University Press Project MUSE which is a central player in the wider university press scene **(109).** The significance of the grant is made more explicit in another press release (**(110)** and no doubt more details will soon be available**.** For more on Project Muse see section 10,

One way of looking at the future of the monograph in the context of open access publishing is to consider how to convince hat others have found to be suspicious academic community whatever the Emery project may say.

This 2015 presentation (**111)** by Charles Watkinson attempts to tackle the question. The presentation relates to the report on A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books at Two Universities subsequently delivered and which covers much more than the title suggests as indeed do many of these Mellon funded reports.

As we have seen Open Access models in the USA rarely even mention APCs as an enabler of gold. The only example where some contribution from the author is part of the model is the University of California *Luminos* offering. How different is the discussion from that which obtains in the UK

Just to end on a negative note. In the first place a subsidy based system where libraries pay all or most of the costs may work when there are few claimants but will it work when they are many? If this is redirection of costs from the purchase of monographs after publication to a role in choosing what is published how will it work for those scholars outside the system. Finally Esposito as usual raises a difficult question which relates not to libraries but to the administrations where their income comes from **(112)**

This is the core problem: if provosts are unwilling to support the current university press world, which earns back about 90% of its costs from the marketplace, why would they, in the long run, be willing to step up to support the very same books but at greater expense?

6.   Libraries

Libraries are mostly concerned with buying books in the mind of the researcher. Some of this section touches on their role in buying but not as much as perhaps it should.

However it is a truism that academic libraries are looking for new roles. One role is publishing. It could be argued that as publishers library associations have not been good publishers and in no way innovative. There is nothing new in university presses reporting to publishers. Again it could be argued that they have almost always run the presses badly. Examples can be given in both cases.

The rise of the Library Publishing Coalition in the US has been a really big change – see below. In some ways this is part of the change seen across library/publisher relationship as a whole. Publishers are now recognised as stakeholders and publishing as a role.

Lockett and Speicher have placed the start of new university presses in the UK in this context **(113)**

There are a number of funded projects which usually involve library/publisher collaboration but which look to the institution (the university) for action and funding. These are discussed in the next section 7.

There is a huge literature on patron driven acquisition (PDA) and, as it is generally known now, demand driven acquisition (DDA) – too much to master in a short report. A great deal of it comes in the form of presentations by librarians at library conferences (so they can get funding) and it is often not easy to retrieve.

An important summary from Joe Esposito and others has been published under the title *PDA and the University Press* in 2013. It is based on a report commissioned by Mellon **(114)**

There is a highly positive view of DDA from the library viewpoint in the following

report from a standards organisation- **(115)**: here are some key points

- *DDA allows libraries to present many more titles to their users for potential use and purchase than would ever be feasible under the traditional purchase model.*
- *If implemented correctly, DDA makes it possible to purchase only what is needed, allowing libraries to spend the same amount of money as they spend on books now, but with a higher rate of use.*
- *Libraries may also be able to use the evidence of demand to demonstrate the value of monograph collections and in turn to protect monograph budgets from potential cuts.*
- *Under a traditional up-front purchase model for monographs, the acquisition process ends soon after the book arrives in the library. DDA, on the other hand, requires long-term management of a preselected "consideration pool" of titles available for purchase. Libraries must implement rules and procedures for adding titles to this pool and for keeping un-owned titles available for purchase long after publication.*
- *The process of acquisition evolves from one of getting books into the collection to one of long-term management of the discovery tools that allow for demand-driven access to monographs.*

This is a good example of the author/user confrontation. The library may be able to buy more for the same amount which is good for the humanist as user but at the same time the publisher will receive less per book which is bad for the author because the publisher may no longer afford to publish the book based on predictions. There is a final point – almost an afterthought.

- *DDA may disrupt the entire scholarly communication supply chain, therefore libraries, publishers, and aggregators must be committed to working together to establish long-term sustainable models that highlight mutual benefits.*

One such consultation exercise is being conducted currently – the so-called Charlotte Initiative. It starts from a different standpoint. The thinking of the Initiative refers back to the print situation where books are bought and then owned. The originator of the prospectus is Charles Hamaker from the Atkins library at UNC Charlotte and the purpose as proposed by him is a library purpose:

What is interesting is that part of the plan is for University Presses as well as representatives of Library Consortia to be engaged. This is collaboration in the special world of US humanities monographs. It is difficult to see it working in other academic or publishing sectors at least where the model is a subscription or purchase one. Since the last version of this report the project has acquired a site and there is a lot more information available. **(116)**

AWMF (Mellon) are not just interested in the role of libraries as the purchaser of academic monographs. They are also interested in libraries as publishers. It is very noticeable how many of the projects discussed here and funded by Mellon are jointly proposed by a library and a publisher.

It is also important to remember that it is the librarians of the Oberlin group who are sponsoring the Lever Initiative – see section 4 above.

Now we come to the Library-Publishing coalition which has brought together this community. This is who they are:

The LPC fosters collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and the development of common practices for library publishers. Our goal is to explore how to better serve the scholarly communication needs of the academic community, through sustainable, innovative library publishing solutions aligned with institutional missions.(**117)** It is important to note that libraries have always published as Ann Okerson points out in her important publication, which came out as the first version was nearly finished and which should have been absorbed for this publishable version but was not. Apologies **(118)** There are other relevant comments in a post a little later in 2015 by Joe Esposito which contains some useful references and also some pertinent comments **(119)** LPC was initially promoted by the Educopia Association **(120)** an organisation concerned with collaboration and networking. It is a very American structure.

Here is a definition of "Library Publishing": (**121)**

The LPC defines library publishing as the set of activities led by college and university libraries to support the creation, dissemination, and curation of scholarly, creative, and/or educational works. Generally, library publishing requires a production process, presents original work not previously made available, and applies a level of certification to the content published, whether

through peer review or extension of the institutional brand. Based on core library values, and building on the traditional skills of librarians, it is distinguished from other publishing fields by a preference for Open Access dissemination as well as a willingness to embrace informal and experimental forms of scholarly communication and to challenge the status quo.

They run what appear to be successful meetings. Here is a session that it deals with the future of the monograph: it can be accessed as a recording **(122)**.

LPC publish a Directory as well as running meetings. The 2015 lists 124 libraries with publishing activities (**123)**). It is somewhat confusing to understand the meaning of categories used. Most of the publications are journals but these are journals owned by departments or institutes or other learned groups. The journals are listed as peer reviewed but the peer review does not carry the imprimatur of the library. The imprimatur comes from the publishing organisation and not from the library that facilitates and provides infrastructure. This at any rate is the situation at Michigan where Michigan Publishing with quite a few years behind it is separate from University of Michigan Press. They share the same director. How long will this last in its current form? The small minority who announced that they publish monographs and, in spite of claims, there are very few digital initiatives or any claims to conduct peer review. What is very unclear to outsiders is made clear in the Scholarly Kitchen Blog by Phill Jones: **(124)** About 25% the AAUP university press members are organisationally part of the library administration. For most the connection is in practice very tenuous. Michigan and Purdue are examples to the contrary. It may be that the connections being built up through the Mellon funded projects may change the picture.

Charles Watkinson analysed the relationship between library and publisher in 2015 under the title From Collaboration to Integration: University Presses and Libraries **(125).** The preface suggests that libraries as publishers may be able to publish scholarly books which are too specialised for university presses to undertake. In his chapter he provides some history and a tentative taxonomy of relationship types:

- *Type 1, little evidence of currently active relationships between press and library (e.g., Columbia, Ohio State, California)*

- *Type 2, good relationships between the press and one or more libraries, but no reporting (e.g., Cornell, Duke, Florida, UNC, Wayne State, Fordham, Tennessee)*
- *Type 3, reporting and joint projects, but relative autonomy and no physical collocation (e.g., Penn State, Syracuse, MIT, Temple, NYU)*
- *Type 4, physical collocation, reporting, but relative autonomy (e.g., Georgia, Arizona, Utah, North Texas, Kentucky, Indiana)[3]*
- *Type 5, more integrated, shared vision approaches (e.g., Michigan, Oregon State, Utah State, Purdue)*

The key development in the context of this report is if or when new presses (like Lever) start publishing
scholarly outputs they are judged as of equal worth with traditional monographs in terms of quality by the humanities communities and of equal value for academic progression by tenure and promotion committees

7. Institutions

Throughout this report concentration is on the humanities monograph as an expression of humanities research and discourse leading to an increase in knowledge and understanding. We do not intend to investigate that special difficulties relating to the "first book" which loom so large in discussions about monographs and are not concerned with problems of tenure and "credentialing" in general. Decisions taken within institutions by senior academics acting as gateways to jobs in a university are not only an aspect of institutional as well as academic control but obviously will also impinge on the future of the academic book. We have mentioned the role of the library but libraries are a component of the institution, one of the aims of and sharing the mission of the university. Hence this separate section on activities of the university administration as distinct from the library because provosts and administrators are separate in their thinking and this different thinking increasingly impinges on the work of researchers

One of the important documents picked out in section 3 is by Raym Crow and this is concerned primarily with issues which relate to institutions as much as the researchers themselves. It is interesting that Crow's Rational approach – an exercise in selection and clarity – is sponsored by the Association of American Universities and the Association of Research Libraries not by the AAUP. The Crow document of 2012 **(126)** was however fairly quickly followed by responses not just from the AAU/ARL **(127),** but also by the AAUP Press and Library Collaboration Survey, already mentioned. Libraries are part of Institutions but have their own ways of thinking and their own hopes. All of the documents mentioned immediately above are conveniently brought together**(128).** The AAU/ARL process continues but mostly outside the public eye.

Here a blog entry by Christopher Long (rather an outsider as he explains), which gives an idea of what is going on in August 2016 and this is where:

(the) Task Force's proposal (is) to establish a sustainable model by which long-form humanities scholarship could be published in a digital open access format.

The proposal called for up-front institutional funding for the open access publication of manuscripts accepted through standing AAUP best practices for peer review.

What follows is particular illuminating:

Questions of cost, addressed by the Ithaka Report on the Costs of Publishing Monographs and qualified in interesting ways by John Sherer of the UNC Press, did not derail the conversation, which took a decisive and, in my view, positive turn when we agreed not to frame the initiative as a response to a crisis in either the humanities or in publishing.

Far the better strategy is to seed an initiative that will establish a sustainable publishing workflow designed to expand access to and engagement with humanities scholarship.

Publishing is one important way the humanities are put into practice. Ideas only enter the public realm when they are made public — that is, when they are published. But publishing is not simply a matter of making ideas public; it is also an opportunity to create publics, to establish relationships around shared values and ideas, and by extension, to transform existing realities in light of new possibilities opened by novel ways of thinking.

Attempts to establish a sustainable financial model for open access publishing in the humanities should ultimately be motivated by a commitment to advancing the capacity of humanities scholarship to transform, enrich, and shape public life.
(129)

There is more on costs below in section 8

Jennifer Howard , the library columnist, has blogged in a very relevant fashion **(130)** She relates the reports/proposals mentioned above to the Mellon project mentioned further down in this section and conversations/ presentations at an AAUP meeting in 2014.

Don Waters was recorded as saying that "Mellon could provide seed money to universities to pay for the digital publication of some faculty members' work and to make it openly accessible online." This is rather surprising as individual subsidies are not Mellon style

Another part of the posting is of relevance:

Gregory M. Britton, editorial director of the Johns Hopkins University Press, moderated the AAUP session. Afterward, he shared some thoughts via email.

"It's interesting that these ideas come from outside the university-press community, but that proponents of each have been quick to recognize that university-press participation is essential for its success," Mr. Britton said. "I am pleased publishers have been invited into the conversation."

But it's not just publishers who need to be persuaded. "These plans will not work if scholars see these works as lesser than books published under a market-focused model," Mr. Britton said.

Scholarly publishers will also want "good data on the usage of these books," he said. "Having them openly available in a central location will ensure that we can measure their ongoing usage."

Another university press comment is recorded as expressing some welcome and some concern;

Alan G. Thomas, editorial director for the humanities and social sciences at the University of Chicago Press, attended the AAUP session. "Mellon has made clear that this is not an attempt to overturn our model but to supplement it," he said in an interview afterward. "I see the initiative as a worthwhile experiment."

Mr. Thomas suggested that university-press editors were intrigued by the ideas being circulated but also have concerns: For instance, how many institutions would really benefit from Mellon seed money, and would it be a diverse enough group? With either the Mellon or the AAU/ARL approach, would university administrators instead of press editors decide which books got singled out for support?

"Many of the university-press editors believe it would be better for the presses to make the selection," Mr. Thomas said, because the presses have a better sense of which fields would benefit most from open-access publication.

Note here the pressure for open access and the nuanced concerns on how the initiative is being taken away from the publishers.

Earlier in the text we apologised for omitting any treatment of archiving and preservation. The problems of digital preservation were once seen as a serious barrier to digital-only. We did however find one recent proposal for action on a large scale by institutions and one which is now being advocated strongly by its authors is *A scalable and sustainable approach to open access and archiving in the humanities and social sciences* **(131)**. In most all the report references are concerned with journal publishing. Books are peripheral even, in this case, in the humanities!

AWMF Mellon however remains committed to books.

A grant was given in December 2014 to Indiana University Libraries working with Michigan Publishing for a Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books. (**132)** The white paper setting out the results became publicly available last year after the first version of this report was delivered **(133)**

The two shared ambitions of the investigators are to ensure the survival of a viable, even robust, scholarly publication system in the humanities and humanistic social sciences in service to faculty, and to further the goal of open access publishing to make the work of academics broadly available to other academics, students, and people across the world. In other words, this project is directed toward financing longer-form publishing as it intersects with technological challenges of sharing the work of the humanities.

The "various iterations" really do stretch the definition of the monograph but aims to secure the same level of authority as the traditional monograph. There has been a detailed quote in the section 3 which explores "books".

A lot of care is taken to face up to questions that university administrators have raised or may raise.
The report addresses the "free rider" problem, at least in part:

Apparently more and more, regents, financial officers, and provosts are asking why the university budget subsidizes a press that publishes the work of scholars from other universities and colleges.

Their answer is as follows:

In a direct subvention system, university presses would support their publication program through the subventions brought to them by authors at their own and other institutions. In other words, universities and colleges would act as financial contributors to the publishing system by supporting the scholarly work of their own faculty. In a robust-enough system, the funds available for subventions would cover full first-copy costs.

A subvention system is meant to support faculty as authors as well as non-profit presses as publishers. It models a program that supports humanities scholars as they advance through ever-changing careers.

The text moves on to the open access argument primarily one of visibility and increased readership: "facilitation of access to the world of humanistic work."

How is it all going to work?

At Michigan the favoured solution would seem to revolve around "vouchers". There is discussion of contracts relating to Michigan faculty bringing their subsidy to another publisher. The main demand will be an open access digital edition.

There is a lot of angst about what publishers would be eligible for the subvention. This question comes up whenever institutional subventions are mentioned. It is not just a matter of banning commercial publishers but what about OUP and CUP? Michigan reports:

We examined dossiers in humanities and humanistic social science areas for faculty promoted to associate or full professor from 2010-2015, finding that roughly 18% of the works identified as "significant" in the promotion cases were published by Oxford University Press or Cambridge University Press. What would it mean to create a system in which a not-insignificant portion of books authored by our faculty would be ineligible to receive funds? **(134)**

There is no final decision but a lot of questions: what is clear is that the faculty will want to own the process of deciding on eligibility.

Faculty had a lot of concerns which included a fear of lowering of quality but particularly (it would seem) of losing print. There is also little doubt that high quality digital versions must become possible.

The writers of the report do not accept worries about print versions not selling because there is an online open access version – it was raised by faculty as was fears about the status of open access. Would open access books be taken seriously by tenure committees?

There is another project looking to a university-funded model, already referred to as Emory, which is also funded by AWFM. It is available in the Journal of Electronic Publishing as *The Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era* **(135)** The author Michael Elliott is an academic in an English faculty. Note that the majority of the working group were faculty not facilitators. This makes it unusual. This is the aim

Over the course of six months, our working group endeavoured to consider whether a model of university-funded monograph publication could improve the publishing landscape for scholars in the humanities and facilitate "digital transition". Under such a model, a university would bear a high percentage of the publication costs through an initial contract. The university press would produce a high quality, open-access digital publication, as well as make the book available in print form - possibly through print-on-demand.

Here are the specific questions that the working group addressed:

- *How would authors be selected to participate in such a program? How would university support be allocated?*

- *What core features of the digital publication would be necessary to make this model a viable one? What can we learn from Emory's record of digital publication through its Center for Digital Scholarship?*

- *What would we expect in the contract concerning preservation,*

distribution, and open access licensing?

- *What are the costs of such a program, and where in the University budget would these costs be supported?*

Their conclusions are:

- *We place a high premium on long-form scholarship[*
- *We endorse a model of university funding for digital monograph publication*
- *We are entering a period of increased variegation in humanities publication*
- *We endorse open access publication of long-form scholarship*
- *We believe that a program of university funding should be open to faculty of all ranks*
- *We seek to ensure the high quality of scholarship*
- *We have concerns about preservation and discoverability*
- *We remain uncertain about costs*
- *We believe that any program of this kind will require education and socialization*

Although like other similar reports they do see enhanced monographs as important and to be encouraged but "we do not believe that all books will require significant digital enhancement" **(136)**

Not surprisingly in view of the composition of the working group but unique among such reports, the group decided that long-form scholarship published through digital scholarship centres should be eligible for funding "provided the center could demonstrate a rigorous peer review process and that scholars could articulate the value of their works as similar in scope and impact as monographs."

There is an interesting section on what qualities a digital monograph requires. Those that have production implications are set out in greater length in section 7 on production issues but in short form the pre-requisites are robust peer-review, printable, annotation, "fully" searchable, and "the potential for networking".

The Emory group also "became convinced" of the "deep significance of open access for digital publishing". We have discussed this conviction at greater

length in the section on open access

The Emory group discussed the practicalities of a University Funding model at length. What should be funded under any such scheme? The group picks out:

- *Monographs that are close analogues of print monographs in which the author believes that the project would benefit significantly from publication through an open access, digital form*
- *Digitally enhanced monographs that take advantage of the networked digital environment to provide reading experiences that cannot be replicated in print*
- *Long-form scholarly works that could not exist in a print environment*

There are other faculty led projects emerging from Mellon funding.

One funded in 2015 and from some distinguished information scientists and librarians headed by Allen Renear on "*Understanding the Needs of Scholars in a Contemporary Publishing Environment*" is a Mellon-funded initiative led by the University of Illinois Library, in partnership with the School of Information Sciences, the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, and the African American Studies Department at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign **(137).** Note that the name has been changed. One explanation of what is intended can be found at **(138)** but a lot of the questions which this report is concerned with do not seem to be raised – though there is very little evidence exactly what is happening.

8. Production issues

This section takes a rather wide interpretation of production issues including as it does some history of what used to be called electronic publishing and also some information about projects connected with attempts to build cost models for publishing monographs

Before 2000 the use of electronic methods had saved university presses money and time. Here are the memories of someone who had a senior position at a major university press in the US: he writes

As an editor at a press you must obtain two reports on a manuscript before you can make a case for its publication. Pre-email you had to send a letter or call people sequentially until you located two qualified academics willing to review a manuscript. Post-email you could send messages to ten people simultaneously asking them to review a manuscript and usually have replies by the next day, AND you could contact people easily around the globe. Although I already had an international author base pre-email the size and reach of that base expanded quickly post-email. I loved asking academics in Australia to read manuscripts because they usually said yes and they replied quickly. Equally important, the production workflows changed dramatically. Pre-1990 the majority of manuscripts arrived at the publisher in paper form and were rekeyed for typesetting. Post-1990 the majority of new books arrived on disk and there was no rekeying. This change made for huge efficiencies in time and in cost. In 1980 we paid US $10 per page to typeset a book, while today the average cost is $2.50 per page and some publishers pay less. Such changes have contributed to the ability of publishers to keep publishing monographs even if average sales have dropped. **(139))**

As described above the changing environment is not specific to the US of course. It also already explains partly the attitude that e-books could represent considerable cost savings. Seaman and Graham (see section 2) in their analysis of what went wrong with Gutenberg-e – perhaps a first high-profile attempt to produce an enhanced e-book: the journals experience of some working on the

project were led:

to assume that digital monographs would be cheaper to produce. What had worked for electronic journal programs like JSTOR and CIAO, they believed, was sure to work for monographs too.53 In fact, the family resemblance between journals and monographs concealed important differences. It was one thing to work with learned societies and other institutions to digitize, aggregate, and repackage serial literature and other materials that had already appeared in print form for the Web. It was quite another to collaborate with first-time authors to convert raw dissertations into monographs and to re-conceive them for the digital realm using the complex and largely untested design and production processes that that involved **(140)**

This was a special use-case of course but there is a whole range of problems (as well as the obvious opportunities) from approaching book production or most aspects of book infrastructure from a journal standpoint. Publishers have always until recently in practice always separated book and journal production and selling. There are different suppliers. Large publishers have in the last few years not only sold their books in bundles alongside their journals and JSTOR are doing so too but JSTOR do not also produce the books and that is a very different matter. At least one large publisher has established almost identical workflows for books (using the chapter and the article as equivalent units). The scale involved may make this possible. Is it possible for university presses and for books in general? There is a lot more to consider here than falls within the scope of this report but for the project work flows do need looking at. Automation and standardisation do save money, minimise mistakes and lead to a faster route to publication. Past practices of university presses in the US militated against taking this sort of approach and no doubt some of them live in the past still but it has been pointed out to me that they are a minority.

That being said there is little doubt that some of the more important developments are where journal practices are being taken up in monograph publishing and also the dominant strand in journal publishing (STM journal developments) is influencing practices in both humanities books as well as humanities journals. Early in this report (2b) there is a reference to the recent

SSP keynote by Charles Watkinson where he speaks of "edge" approaches. Examples are given elsewhere.

A particularly good example is the offering of the British publisher and publishing partner Ubiquity Press which is discussed in the section on open access books. Their evangelism has undoubtedly caused a stir in humanities publishing in the US: this is their message **(141)**

Ubiquity Press is more than a publisher – we're also engineering new technology that will change and improve the future of research communications worldwide. Our focus is on producing systems that enable universities and researchers to take control of publishing, and that make research information available to the widest possible audience.

In 2000-2001 there was a lot of discussion about e-books essentially in the realm of policies. University presses considered that they were on top of the digital revolution if they discussed it but this did not involve an action plan in the great majority of cases. Where are we now? Here is an informed analysis:

- *Essentially all UPs now have e-versions of their print books except in special circumstances (exceptions due to lack of rights, not so much technology)*
- *Fewer than 50% of AAUP presses have XML first workflows*
- *The majority send the PDFs for print to a vendor to convert. Bibliovault (Chicago Distribution Center) and Coresource (Ingram) provide this service along with digital asset management and distribution to vendors.*
- *XML first is expensive and the use cases are still often lacking. The major case so far has been that XML first produces cleaner files for preservation purposes and offers opportunities for creating more enhancements. However, there hasn't been a huge market demand for enhanced ebooks and the major device vendors (especially Kindle) are not able to support enhancements very well.*
- *Two UP vendors are particularly prominent in making XML workflows easier. One is Scribe, the other is P-Shift devised by Bill Kasdorf for University of Toronto Press. There is a move in this direction. XML is important for the future developments of digital monographs and these*

systems enable working with Indesign and Word as is currently the case. (**142**)

There is more information on/in Digital Book Publishing in the AAUP Community report **(143).**

The bottom line here is that e-book equivalent to the print book remain e-book equivalents. You cannot do anything much which takes advantage of the functionalities of the web. To keep monographs at least breaking even, within the environment of a subsidised publisher, it is very difficult to argue for extra costs when there is little evidence of increased revenue being available.

We go back to the Darnton pyramid discussed in 3 b) where the pressure was "political" and the money for a while came from Mellon. It could never work and few in the business thought it could. Journal publishing is still playing with the enhanced article – the article of the future – when even the largest publisher is only rolling it out for their most profitable journals.

The big UK presses, especially OUP, have gradually found ways of justifying XML and quite a bit of tagging enabling separate handling and sale of individual chapters to give one example and indexing the whole monograph collection in quite a detailed way to give another. There may be US equivalents now (2016) but there was not in 2015. Indeed there has been little discussion about chapters as units for commerce – one of the justifications. The assumption made here is that XML (ideally upfront) is the best way of enabling more use of the functionalities available which are not available in a PDF.

The Emory report (see section 6 above) has a list of what is required of the digital monograph which indicates why XML is a must. Here are some points made by the Emory Working Group:

> *Annotation. The value of annotation in research and teaching is paramount. Any digital format must allow for annotations, and for the export of those annotations by readers.*
> *This seems to be a key feature of many of the new digital publication*

platforms that are being developed.

Searchable. In the absence of a printed index, it is important that a digitally published monograph be fully searchable.

The Potential for Networking. One advantage of digital publication is the ability to provide links, embedded within the text or in appendices, to primary sources that are publicly available on the Internet. This possibility will not be equally available to all scholars in the humanities, nor will it be of interest to all. However, for some, this possibility affords exciting opportunities to enhance their scholarly products. An important feature of humanistic scholarship is the ongoing interpretation of cultural evidence—and the ability of a monograph to directly link to the evidence under consideration could substantially enhance the experience of reading it. Done properly, such networking would encourage scholarly dialogue and debate, and advance future scholarship on the evidence in question.

We note, though, that networking a work of scholarship in this way will present new preservation challenges. These links will have to be revised, updated, or eliminated over time, meaning that the digital publication itself will need to be revised. University presses will need to develop protocols for such revision, clearly outlining their own level of responsibility as well as the responsibility of the author.

This last point is a particularly interesting one and it is surprising that the demand does not seem to be greater **(144)**. During the 1990s Jisc organised in the UK the big SuperJournal project **(145)** Over 20 publishers of journals were involved including some based in the US. Many went into the project, which sought to find out what users wanted in a digital environment, with the assumption that embedded video would be a front runner. It was not. The big need and wish was for linking. Hence CrossRef founded in 2000 (**146)** UK book publishers are now taking up DOIs for chapters and linking is becoming realised. For journal authors linking is the one big thing that publishers have enabled.

Other technical developments may impinge on the thinking of humanities scholars such as those at Emory and present them with more dilemmas, the need to choose provoked by the possibilities of subvention.

It could be argued that there is a special problem for US university presses - a confusion of quality of content with the badge of a certain type of expensive production style immediately recognisable and different from the way in which humanities content is presented even again from the big UK presses. Production is still often design led. Do books which are text-based and straightforward text at that really need design? Design gets in the way of XML first. This is a complicated issue I skate over here and (as mentioned above) there does seem to be ways round the obstacle

Here is an extract from a cut down version of the history of a medium sized Penn State Press:

The Press has always taken special pride in the design and production of its books and journals—no doubt a reflection of its having been a leading publisher in art history almost from the start—and its record of success has been exceptional. First under the guidance of Janet Dietz as Production Manager from 1963 to 1999 and, since then, under her successor, Jennifer Norton, the Press's Production Department (with such longtime staff as Cherene Holland as Managing Editor and Steve Kress as Chief Designer) has created an international reputation for excellence in editing and design.**(147)**

There is a culture here which does not exist in university presses in other parts of the world. One wonders how important it is to the author community: it is mentioned by them but would a questionnaire show it to be of primary importance?

Not surprisingly there is little knowledge available about real costs of production was the conclusion in 2015. See some of the projects explained in section 6. They certainly have done serious work on real costs because they have to know what funding is required. Of course some commercial publishers like Palgrave

have set author publishing charges but (as is pointed out) their mission is different.

The big change came in February 2016 when the release of the Mellon funded report on the Costs of Publishing Monographs by the not for profit service Ithaka S+R under the direction of Nancy Maron
(148).

The sub-title Towards a Transparent Methodology promises a lot but, as is the case with any reports on costs, the jury is out on how useful this rather impressive investigation will be. At least it represents something to argue about.

In the course of one argument Maron produced the following informal summary of how they went about their task:

The study took a top-down approach, and those who reported were asked to include all costs MINUS costs relating to certain categories of work, specifically print production and sales. This was for a very specific reason: the underlying impetus for the work was to imagine publishing costs for a (future, potential) open access subsidy model. Put another way, in a world where the costs of publishing were to be covered up front, with the understanding that the resulting work would be made openly available (perhaps in addition to paid alternatives), what costs ought to be included, or need to be included? From that starting point, several exclusions followed: no royalties and no advances, since these are costs explicitly tied to an expectation (or delivery) of sales. No sales, no royalty; no costs of print production, or related costs like shipping, warehousing; no costs related to sales activity, like commissions or staff time of sales staff or reps. On the other hand, anything that could be reasonably left in as a cost that would continue to exist and be needed in a digital-first scenario, was, including acquisitions and marketing efforts – both the staff time and the direct expenses. Also included were press-level overheads such as investments in databases and the director's time. And just to be sure we were not missing anything; we encouraged staffers to try to quantify the effort spent on their books before and after the year of publication (as we gathered cost data on one specific year). No surprise, acquisitions editors shared stories about the long lead time in

developing new works, and marketing folks similarly talked about lasting engagement with books in the backlist. This is all included. **(149)**

Also relevant is an accessible blog post by the consultant Joe Esposito **(150).** An analysis of Esposito's position is as follows: He accepts this.

Your point was not that people are confusing production costs with publishing costs but that the very idea of putting a price on publishing costs--such as recent attempts to do so in planning for large-scale open access monograph publishing--is a mistaken enterprise that can't hope to capture today's costs in any meaningful way because the "true" costs of publishing are so variable and so hard to capture in a fixed standardized dollar figure. They are also mistaken because they certainly can't predict what costs will be in a "flipped" future. Furthermore, that "flipped" future would entail so many other yet-to-be seen changes in a complex ecology that we shouldn't assume that the object in question -- the monograph -- would continue to persist as such, despite OA claims to want to preserve and support it **(151)**

As we have seen, his last sentence makes a very reasonable claim. "Books" will cost more to produce. However it is reasonable to do a profit and loss calculation for any investment and one has to make the best estimate one can.

One open access project of the University of California Press has been laid out in section 4. Another for a web-based content management system for the publication of open access monographs is only listed here **(152).** There is slightly more information in another press release: **(153)** More information on this project can be gained but not from public sources or in quotable form. It looks to be an important project which could be used by other presses but even a year after the start there is no public information. One puzzle is how it relates to the work Ubiquity Press is doing for the Press – see section 7

Finally there is yet another Mellon project under way. The product is called EditMe an Academic Publishing Platform and is from West Virginia University (**154)** The proposal suggests that it is for books as well as journals. It is not. It is only concerned with journal publishing.

9. Dissemination, Collaborations and Aggregations

As we have seen there is a lot of rhetoric about the importance of collaboration between university presses to take advantage of consortia deals and the wishes of individual libraries to buy bundles. The whole situation regarding platforms and collaborations is in a state of flux. As with other sections of this report the emphasis is on digital. Digital enables innovation.

The exact relationship between the roles of different types of aggregation is not spelled out in detail but the main players are identified.

There are some well-established aggregations based in the USA. Since 2015 there are now fewer and the smaller number is now better integrated. The story at summer 2015 has been retained but it is undoubtedly out of date. The biggest commercial example is what ProQuest now call EBook Central Publishers **(155)** which is the bringing together of EBL and Ebrary which had developed a good reputation. They claim the largest selection of 740,000 ebooks. Another part of the ProQuest site claims 450,000 academic books – **(156)** This is all a bit confusing because ProQuest have recently purchased MyILibrary, which on its site claims 750 e-books. Anyway ProQuest have a big stake in the e-book business and are important to university presses.   The publishers include a substantial number of US university presses of all sizes – but not all. For example there is no University of California and no Yale. The four big British players are included.

The second largest commercial player is EBSCO which absorbed the original e-book aggregator NetLibrary. There is a clear description of their offering including various subscription models at **(157)**. These commercial organisations offer books as individual publications within subject bundles not as part of the list of a publisher. They are a little discreet about which publishers partner with them over these offerings but there are certainly a fair number of university presses. Books are treated separately from their journal collections.

JSTOR, the leading not-for-profit player, does give a list of publishers who use

their services **(158)**. They also offer an aggregation. It has a bigger claim: "JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources." They seem to offer a lot fewer books: "Books at JSTOR offers more than 35,000 ebooks from renowned scholarly publishers, integrated with journals and primary sources on JSTOR's easy-to-use platform." Their reputation as the purveyor of a bundle of journals is probably even higher as a source of information than it is over here. It is "well known" (see next paragraph) that students in the humanities are sent to JSTOR and sometimes never realize that there is any other way to reach the literature. JSTOR make a big point of the fact that they do not use digital rights management unlike the commercial companies

Now we move on to some new developments. Johns Hopkins University Press runs Project Muse which could be seen as a rival to JSTOR Muse has since 2012 added books and more than that has offered a service for a large number of university presses (65) including some smaller ones **(159)** In many ways their offering looks much like that of JSTOR – see the collection features listed in the URL just quoted. The history of UPCC is available also on the same home page already cited and described the initial mentoring from 2009 by Mellon with an assessment of the needs of the library community by Informed Strategies led by the consultant October Ivins and of business models provided by the Chain Bridge Group (Raym Crow mentioned in section 2). It was then called UpeC and Muse was chosen as its partner to create book collections because of the collaborative reputation of Muse. Muse is governed by a committee composed of both librarians and university press publishers. There is a description of the circumstances of the merger in a press release from AAUP available at **(160)** A more detailed explanation of how two projects came together is at **(161)** There is a great deal of hype concerning the importance of these initiatives for humanities scholarship. For a very recent initiative from Mellon see section 6

There are several other initiatives which need to be mentioned here but which are not so important in the bigger picture. As long ago as 2011 Oxford University Press reached out to other university presses to join in with their established Oxford Monographs Online (later Oxford Scholarship Online) – see the press release at **(162)** The first tranche of partners included two US

presses. Now there are 20 presses involved with half from the US including Yale, Chicago, Columbia and California. The blurb reads:

University Press Scholarship Online offers 18,000+ titles available in 30 subject areas, from Oxford and 18 other leading university presses. University Press Scholarship Online brings together the best scholarly publishing from around the world. Aggregating scholarly content from leading university presses, UPSO offers an unparalleled research tool, making disparately published scholarship easily accessible, highly discoverable, and fully cross-searchable via a single online platform. Research that previously would have required a user to jump between a variety of books and disconnected websites can now be concentrated through the UPSO search engine.

It looks impressive especially as it uses the wider connectivity enabled by the Oxford Index (**163)**

Cambridge University have started rather later and do not include any US universities press in the portfolio of University Publishing Online in which they are the biggest player. In 2016 Cambridge, now with a brand new platform, do not appear to have any e-book US partners **(164)**

Neither of these developments – indeed none of the developments described have collections of academic (humanities) monographs only. It is interesting that these not-for-profit groupings seem to be more or less in their present state during 2012 **(165)**

Finally there is another US based enterprise BiblioVault. As its name suggests it has a different group of functions but there is some overlap with other collaborations mentioned above. Here is a description and note how yet again Mellon was involved in its inception:

BiblioVault helps scholarly publishers preserve and extend the value of their books, providing long-term secure storage of digital book files for member presses, as well as a wide range of scanning, printing, transfer, conversion, and distribution services.

Launched in late 2001 by the University of Chicago Press, BiblioVault operates

under the umbrella of Chicago Distribution Services, which also oversees a digital printing center, the Chicago Digital Distribution Center (CDDC). The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supported the development of BiblioVault and the CDDC with three grants totalling $3.2 million.

This service hosts 90 scholarly presses and files for 40,000 books (**166)**. The list includes some small commercial publishers as well as a fair number of US university presses

There are also of course presses who rely upon their own custom-built platforms from which to sell their books on subscription as a model. A recent player is Duke University Press. They have worked with HighWire Press as the partner in running their extensive journal list and not known as much involved with humanities monograph. Information is provided at **(167)** and at **(168)** The latter reference explains

The publisher decided to switch from the previously used Ebrary platform to its own website in order to allow for greater control as well as better search tools and cohesion between journals and books. Users can now see all journal articles and books created by a specific author and also compare book chapters to journal articles simultaneously.

There is some impressive technology here but will it help sales?

What does it all mean for the humanities monograph? The director of a medium-sized press presents a pessimistic view but one which will resonate for any publisher in any field. It is essentially the problem of discounts

It's the same old picture as with small publishers and journal aggregations. About 5 years ago, the consensus was that UPs should sign up with any eBook aggregation that moved. Some of the largest US UPs were more cautious (e.g., MIT Press) and a few of the mid-size ones more attentive (notably Duke that tried to build its own eBook package). Now all the North American UPs are finding that the financial returns from these eBook aggregations are not sustainable and are trying to work out whether they should adopt a more focused strategy. Particularly under the limelight is UPCC / Project Muse because this represents

106 smaller UPs and was set up with consultancy advice explicitly to try and provide reasonable returns. It is very library-friendly with no DRM, unlike the commercials, and respectful licensing terms. It brings back the best return of any of the aggregations and operates on a purchase rather than royalty model. But we still get back only one fifth of the retail price of a frontlist book for each sale, and the number of libraries purchasing collections is shrinking rather than growing. It doesn't work very well for libraries, either, because the unlimited simultaneous user provision means that publishers hold back the books that might have more sales potential, and the collections are therefore not at all comprehensive. Publishers who are in both JSTOR and Muse relate that their biggest checks still come from Project Muse, then JSTOR follows fairly closely behind. The commercial aggregators are behind.

One of the crucial questions now is about what a fair price for libraries to pay for eBooks is, especially to be able to acquire titles with likely use by multiple simultaneous users, those supplemental course texts, a mainstay of almost every UP's budget. There is a Mellon project called the Charlotte Initiative. Publishers and librarians are involved [see comments in section 5 above]

*Medium sized presses have historically gone for any aggregation that moves but are now having regrets and are wondering how to price and who to partner with going forward.***(169)**

This is the way Cliff Lynch **(170)** for further quotations from Lynch's 2010 essay see above at 3e sees the future –

It may be helpful to recognize that there's a complex of what are essentially organizational, business, and cultural problems to be overcome—for these, technology is mostly well understood, and if not in place already is certainly straightforward to develop and deploy. Very strong and determined leadership may be required to force adoption of common technology platforms, shifts to new business strategies and to overcome the appeals to tradition and the carping about the endless minor problems and demands for customization that are presented as insurmountable barriers to change. But then there is a set of what seem to be deep and not well understood intellectual challenges (with a host of surrounding technical and cultural implications and questions) in defining

the various digital-world successors to the current scholarly monograph (including, to be sure, something that looks very much like the current printed scholarly monograph) and understanding how these developments situate with regard to the evolution of electronic research and reference resources. We've already seen a variety of experiments here, with those focused on digital monographs mostly failures or limited successes, but nonetheless informative; this is going to be a difficult, lengthy process with a very large empirical component. In my discussions about the future of monographic publishing and university presses, I've tried to split these deeper and still-open fundamental questions out from the other types of discussion where possible

Lynch seems here and elsewhere to assume a monolithic or at least interoperable set of platforms. As we have seen such a single platform or interoperability is just not emerging.

At present on the whole for most university presses revenue is declining. There may or may not be evidence for this but it is widely believed.. We have mentioned discounts for eBooks. As things are much more threatening are discounts to Amazon. There is a 2015 posting on the Scholarly Kitchen blog on the relative importance to Library Sales to University Presses **(171)**

Here is another view from someone well placed to know about library sales and the difficulty of pinning them down:

Almost every scholarly publisher produces digital editions of monographs, generally at almost no additional cost. They send digital files to distributors such as Amazon for the consumer market and they send digital files to aggregators such as ebrary, EBSCO, Project Muse, and JSTOR for the institutional market. If I remember correctly, in a recent survey by the Association of American University Presses on this subject it was reported that the maximum digital revenue for some university presses was just over 25% (so less than for general publishing), and other presses reported digital revenue between 10% and 15% overall. Purchasing by academic institutions of eBooks varies widely. The aggregate figure may be around 25%, perhaps higher. Turning the subject somewhat on its head, the academic library is not a major market for most university presses.

Library sales (and this is print and digital combined) may be as little as 20% for some presses and possibly as high as 35%. There will be few presses for which the number is higher. **(172)**

See the tables in the previously mentioned Directory from AAUP (**173)**

Of course all these statements above are about the whole book output of university presses and academic monographs, however central to their own perception of their mission As we have seen in 1d the latest accepted estimate is that only 4000 of the 14,600 books produced by US university presses are humanities monographs. It looks as if one has to assume that a sales operation is likely not to be geared to the interests of the humanities because presumably they are seeking to maximize profit from trade books, particularly regional books, and textbooks – two very different markets

10.   Business Models

Most of the discussion of business models has already happened in previous sections and not much will be added here. It would be interesting to compare all the different projections and analyse the differences but this is not possible though it might be for Mellon staff. It would be interested to know if they monitor projects against actuals.

In his keynote at the 2015 Society for Scholarly Publishing from Charles Watkinson has already been mentioned **(174)** points out almost all the models on which work is being done are open access models and these models usually assume that the financial contribution from the author will be small or non-existent. The assumption is that the academic book of the future will be an open access book. Publishers have often complained that authors assume that going online means going open access. It looks as if in these US humanities communities this equivalence is now going to be fixed – if the proposals we have discussed work and do not fail like those unrolled in 2000.

These models are (as we have seen) mostly originated from Europe and they are all listed and succinctly describe in the book by Eve.

It seems probable that the idea that an open access version can be subsidised by the print version sales has been tacitly dropped although it may be suggested as part of the income needed as it is in the University of California projections. The reason is that it is no good just making as much money from print as one has in the past. The problem publishers are confronted with is that (whatever the actual economics) the bottom line is that monograph publishing by the university press has been breaking even at the best. The extra costs associated with another edition (open access and online) just make the situation worst.

Almost all the new projects which have been described in this report come under the heading of "institutional subsidy". The University of California Press model is a little more complex but (as we have seen earlier) it has an institutional component. The Oberlin group project (the Lever initiative) is slightly different

from the Mellon funded projects. The RFP sent out to prospective partners proposes a form of institutional (possibly the university but probably like KU a library subsidy) under which it is assumed that at least 40 of the 80 liberal arts colleges that make up the Oberlin group will take part.

The proposals made to Mellon by the applicants for funding are not made public but it would be reasonable to say that there is quite a lot of detail with them. Mellon demand sustainability and all candidates have to produce quite bit of evidence. Suffice it to say that the business models are worked out.

In the presentation by Charles Watkinson mentioned at the start of this section there are four challenges which he picks out. They are:

- *How much should a book processing charge (BPC) be?*
- *Where should the money come from?*
- *How should it be allocated to author?*
- *On what terms should it be disbursed to publishers?*

The big change since Open Access and the Humanities was published in 2014 is the emergence of these new institutional models backed up by previous influential reports to key US representative bodies (ARL and AAU as well as AAUP). This is an ongoing process.

Throughout this report the concentration has been on the not-for-profit sector because this is where the visible action is. The commercial publishers of monographs keep a low profile as to the two big university presses. How will they fit in with revived university press sector as described throughout? One guess is that they will remain as important as ever but they will have to be more agile in innovating than they have been – the Palgrave pivots and the like are an exception but wonders whether these innovations work in commercial terms.

Esposito (see section 6) in his posting on library publishing makes a strong argument for the essential inability of the sector as described really doing the big things which humanities scholarship needs to be made public. One thinks of the catalogue of ProQuest and similar companies. There is probably no equivalent in

the US for the sort of collaborations which Jisc has entered into **(175)**

Here is his comment - one of several in the posting referenced below

This is the variety of publishing where it is unlikely that libraries will play a significant role, publishing that is based on capital investment and that addresses a demand-driven marketplace **(176)**

The assertion is powerful but does it need to restrict the possibilities if funders like Mellon continue to have the money to spend. This is a recent announcement about a huge grant to Stanford Library – the title is sufficient **(177)**

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