Learned Publishing (2003)**16**, 111–122

Phoenix rising: new models for the research monograph?

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ABSTRACT: There is significant evidence that traditional university presses are continuing to face financial crises. Outlets for research monographs are drying up, print runs are being reduced and monograph costs are increasing. The combination of the digital networked environment and open-archive initiatives may, however, provide the opportunity, through institutional repositories, to rethink the role and nature of the distribution of research monographs in a university setting. The adoption of new models, untrammelled by the structures of the past, while still retaining editorial and refereeing standards, could revolutionize the access and distribution patterns of research knowledge within university frameworks. Ultimate success will depend, however, on programmes of scholarly advocacy in scholarly communication with the academic author as both creator and as consumer.

Colin Steele

Background

> A University Press exists to publish as many good scholarly books as possible short of bankruptcy. (Wilson, 1947)

When Thomas J. Wilson, Director of Harvard University Press, wrote this in 1947 it may well have been intended as a tongue-in-cheek comment as the threat of bankruptcy was less apparent then than is currently the case for many presses. The post-Second World War boom in higher education saw a significant rise in the number of university presses and the books they published, building upon the rapid expansion of higher education and libraries. The last decades of the twentieth century, however, have seen a downturn in the fortunes of many university presses, while at the same time we have witnessed the rise and rise of the profits and size of international commercial publishing conglomerates such as Reed Elsevier, Thomson International and Taylor & Francis. The question to be asked, therefore, is has the academy lost control of its intellectual output, which it largely gives away, and does this matter?

University press finances

The problems in higher-education funding, including university library financing, in recent decades have impacted significantly on the fortunes of university presses. In addition, the increasing allocation within library budgets to serials has impacted upon on monograph purchasing and therefore on the finances of those presses. A report in the US *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 'The crumbling intellectual foundation', links the decline in institutional library budgets to the cut-backs in university press titles and in print runs (Smallwood, 2002). Smallwood quotes Beatrice Rehl, an editor at Cambridge University Press, that a decade ago 'you could sell 800–900 copies of anything,

and I mean anything' but now there is 'no way I can make the numbers work . . . I can't charge $100 for a 260 page book'.

A US$100 price ends up in Australia as being A$170–200. It has been estimated that the purchase of monographs by Australian university libraries declined by 50% in the period 1988–98. Similar studies with lesser percentage declines exist for the USA (Case, 1997). The landed price of overseas monographs in Australia is often significantly marked up by the publisher, which is not a problem initially for the libraries, which largely purchase from overseas suppliers, but it is for the individual academic who can find research monographs costing between $80 and $250 per book, with texts of around 200 pages or less. Student purchasing of research monographs has become almost totally out of the question except for essential textbooks.

university presses are now between a rock and a hard place

It has been quoted that the average sale of a social science/humanities monograph worldwide is between 250 and 350 copies with '*x*' copies being remaindered. This is far from an efficient distribution mechanism in the new global networked environments. The Academic Remainders and Daedalus warehouses in Canberra, Australia and Columbia, MD, respectively are physical testimony to the remaindering of the academic output of the Western world. Why not charge lower prices in the first instance, if a significant component of the print run is going to be remaindered?

Another phenomenon that has recently occurred, at least in Australia, is that of pre-remainder remaindering of books. Bookshops are now returning books to publishers on a sale-or-return basis quicker than ever. Publishers accept the returned books but then decide not to actually move these books to warehouses because of the costs involved. They simply delete them from their automated stocklists and sell the books cheaply to remainder middlemen, who then sell by the pallet-load to selected retail remainder outlets. As a consequence, books are being remaindered from major publishers in lots of 1–50 copies per title, sometimes within 6–8 weeks of their original publication, and on average within three months. Examples have been as varied as Cambridge University Press on the one hand and the Library of Congress on the other at one local Australian outlet. With the more academic titles, this particularly affects independent bookshops who are more likely to retain titles on their shelves after three months at the original price.

Many commentators affirm that traditional university press publishing is currently in a state of crisis (e.g. Cooper, 2000; Ruark, 2001; Litchfield, 2002; McLemee, 2002). A rebuttal came from Niko Pfund (2002), Academic Publisher of Oxford University Press, New York, but even he admits that presses 'struggle to keep up with galloping technology and to devise long term strategies in response to an ever changing market place'. University presses are now between a rock and a hard place: the rock of declining sales and the hard place of university financial accountability.

The recent debate on the restructuring of Melbourne University Press (MUP) has attracted wide publicity in the Australian national media in 2003. In 2002 a vice-chancellorial review of MUP was carried out which highlighted the economic problems facing scholarly publishing, citing the decline of publication in 'conventional book form'. As a result, the publishing and retail arms have been separated in 2003 and the intent is to operate, at least in the short term, separate print and electronically delivered scholarly lists, the latter able to be downloaded and printed on demand.

The Australian newspaper at the time stated, 'despite being heavily subsidised by the University and its authors, MUP seems to many to be dying a slow death'. Academic publishing was quoted by one writer as becoming 'vanity publishing' as only those with financial subsidies could get to first base. This issue is, of course, not restricted to MUP. The greatest call on the funds of the Australian Academy of Humanities is to subsidize publications by its Fellows. It should be noted the Academy Fellows are widely recognized scholars and submit manuscripts to respected presses around the world. The issue here is that leading Australian scholars, in a number of fields in the humanities, require financial subsidies to be put on the table in order for their research to be pub-

lished. Such a situation did not exist to such an extent, say, 20–30 years ago. The whole process here is a cyclical one in which authors, publishers, distributors and readers cannot be viewed except as in one single process, yet the mechanisms rarely come together.

The role of a university press

Some of the tensions seen individually in the MUP restructure can be seen in the analyses produced by the Committee on Institutional Co-operation (CIC) – the consortial group of 12 major research universities in the Mid-West of the USA. Here existing presses and libraries have examined issues and tried to identify new models. The CIC report on university presses issued in Nov 2002 is a clear strategy for forward planning. It concludes that scholarly publishing is in a 'transitional phase characterised by fluctuations, new economic pressures, technological shifts and new perspectives' (CIC, 2002).

The guidelines issued by the American Association of University Presses stand as a benchmark for university press publishing (AAUP, 2002). AAUP cites the role of presses in expressing the variety and diversity of cultural expression but many presses have moved into general publishing because of perceived larger revenue returns. The AAUP guidelines reflect the cultural mission of the university presses, although as Litchfield has pointed out, their penetration of their target cultural markets is often very limited.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported in July 2002 that the University of North Carolina Press budget was saved in the previous year by the publication of *Mama Dip's Kitchen* by a Chapel Hill Restaurant owner. Is this what scholars want from their university presses? Is this moving away from their original purpose of disseminating the academic output of their institution or related academia? In the process some presses have become indistinguishable from some of the general trade publishers who regularly commission books from academic authors.

International aggregators

Much of the debate to date in scholarly communication arenas has focused on serials. This is understandable given the rapidly rising cost of serials to institutions, particularly university libraries, in the last two decades, and the increasing globalization/monopolization power of several major firms. The purchase in 2002 of Kluwer Scientific Publishing by an investment bank provides a microcosm of the current state of thinking in terms of returns on the distribution of academic, scientific, medical and legal knowledge. At the time of writing, Bertelsmann Springer is on the market with the 'usual suspects' circling the publishing carcass. In this context serial publishing at this multinational level is essentially a commercial investment, with an expansive role in the dissemination of academic information being very much a secondary consideration.

International academic publishing conglomerates are increasingly offering large bonuses to executive staff if profit margins are increased. Recent comments on publishing lists highlight the fact that acquisitions of smaller academic publishers by larger conglomerates will see an immediate return on investment. Anecdotally the comment has been made that the major commercial publishers have no problems with monograph publishing and if allowed to take over ailing university presses could turn them into profit-making operations through absorption into larger structures. Such assertions need to be debated, but certainly if one tracks the serial subscription price of journals through particular publishing mergers, e.g. the current Taylor & Francis organization, the rises have been significant, although nowhere near the Elsevier price level rises of the 1990s. The need for investment in electronic infrastructures is recognized but the size of the price rises often cannot be directly linked. Academic advisory boards/editors often receive the poorest remuneration in this process, while referees are expected, by and large, to give their services for free due to a misguided allegiance to academic collegiality. There are indications that this philanthropy is breaking down.

acquisitions of smaller academic publishers by larger conglomerates will see an immediate return on investment

As mentioned earlier, another factor that has significantly impinged on the production and purchase of research monographs globally is the move by major international

publishers to offer aggregated packages ('the Big Deal') to university libraries. Packages from firms such as Elsevier have taken up an increasing proportion of library acquisition budgets. In 2002 the Elsevier Science Direct's aggregated subscription charge to the Australian National University (ANU) Library took about one-sixth of the entire acquisition budget. This has the effect, not only of reducing available monograph funds, but squeezing out the offerings of the smaller publishers which are not aggregators. The question of whether aggregated packages are a good or bad option for libraries is a matter of major debate elsewhere (Kohl, 2003).

New models?

Now is the time to step back and reconceptualize the creation and distribution of scholarly material. Malcolm Litchfield (2002), the Director of Ohio State University Press, in his article, 'But presses must stress ideas, not markets', identified the two strands that are now beginning to intersect, namely the 'decline' in university presses and the 'rise' of university libraries/information centres as electronic knowledge banks. He quotes statistics from AAUP that scholarly communication remains 'unattractive from a commercial standpoint' and tries to envisage what scholarly discourse would look like if it did not have to operate in the commercial environment. Average marketing costs for university presses, expressed as a percentage of sales revenue, increased from 17.4% in 1998 to 19.2% in 2001, while the average net operating loss grew from 10.8% to 19.7% during the same period. Litchfield argues, in this context, that the move to seek the 'general educated reader' has not been a success.

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Litchfield's own university, Ohio State, has developed a model of a comprehensive 'Knowledge Bank' which allows in-house and external access to a variety of scholarly material through identified repositories (Branin, 2002). Sally Rogers (2003) from Ohio State has defined the Knowledge Bank as an 'inter-disciplinary multi-media store house of knowledge capital . . . intended to collect, index and preserve digital content produced by Faculty'. Such initiatives can build upon existing resources, such as the library and the IT divisions of a university, so that 'top-up' funding to establish repositories/e-presses for educational and research output is relatively small. This funding is not a simple exchange of funds from one bucket to another – there are different aims and objectives here, although issues such as peer review and thus promotion and tenure processes are able to be integrated into the above concepts.

This trend has been summarized by Ann Wolpert (2002), in a recent article in *Nature*. Librarians, she says, are increasingly being involved in the management and storage of digital academic work:

> new information technologies (digital formats, the Internet, laptop and desktop computing, data and image capture and manipulation) have created opportunities for communication that were unimaginable in an earlier, print-constrained era. These information technologies hold great promise for positive change in the ways that scholars, researchers and educators conduct their work. But they have also destabilised the economics of a highly complex communication system. And they challenge some basic assumptions concerning long-held roles in the value chain of traditional scholarly output . . . it is not at all clear how the system will look when the dust settles.

Professor John Willinsky argues, via his Public Knowledge Project of the University of British Columbia, that an open-access publishing model is preferable. He believes that this model will enable scholarly publications to reach a wider readership on a global basis and will allow more dynamic access rather than the restricted pay for view which seems to be increasingly the norm for e-books. This returns to the question of for whom is the book being published – while it is driven by the individuality of the author in the creation stage, the ultimate benefactor is perhaps not the author but rather the publisher?

Motivations for publishing

Recent studies in the USA and the UK have

analysed academic research patterns in a qualitative fashion – rather than simply reporting quantitative downloads or hits of electronic material (Education for Change, 2002; Friedlander, 2002). The trends are indicating, particularly in the USA, an overwhelming preference for electronic access but with a desire to print the content. No one likes reading large amounts of text on the screen. Therefore the book will not die in print form but its origins, distribution and storage in the future will be different. In this process there will undoubtedly be concerns by some of the academic community who are largely unaware of the complexities relating to electronic copyright, digital rights management (DRM) and electronic distribution issues.

John Cox (2002), in an article 'Digital rights management: old hat or new wrinkle?', has outlined the tensions and uncertainties that currently impact upon the information environment. He argues for new business models for e-content and a more flexible approach for the use of DRM. In some instances, DRM is being used as an increasingly restrictive mechanism for intellectual property protection – in many cases for the publisher and not the author.

Some of the major issues that need to be addressed are those relating to authorial habits. The academic author, often as creator of knowledge, takes no responsibility for the acquisition in a financial sense of that information in its return to his or her institution – the 'Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome' of authorship and access. This division was amply demonstrated in the major 2002 ALPSP study, *Authors and Electronic Publishing*. It is salutary that this report found that fewer than 1% of academics considered direct financial reward to be their primary publishing objective (Swan and Brown, 2002).

It is fascinating to recall here the anecdote, attributed to Alan Brooke (1986):

> an eminent publisher received a manuscript from a famous but charmingly unworldly Don living at Oxford. He wrote to say that he liked it, would like to publish it and concluded 'the advance will be 2,000 pounds'. The next day the Don sent him a cheque for 2,000 pounds.

This historical scenario would now be true with author subsidy payments by university presses, at least in Australia, being quoted far in excess of £2000.

Publish or perish

Financial reward is certainly not the main motivation of the creator of a research monograph in the social sciences and humanities. What attracts authors, according to the ALPSP study, is the ability to communicate with their peer group (33%) and career advancement (22%). The latter often comes primarily from publication in highly regarded and, even more importantly, highly cited journals, which is somewhat worrying as the US Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) citation rankings are not infallible and other factors also need to be taken into account.

There is increasing evidence that authors are switching to the aggregated publisher offerings because of their impact factor in such areas as citation listings. A Feb 2003 listing of the top 50 political science departments in the world was apparently entirely based on the ratings of publications from 1997 to 2001 largely 61 ISI-cited journals (Hix, 2003). This plays into the hands of the branded mainstream journals by 'encouraging' authors to publish in those journals which can then charge what they think the market will bear. Such processes also affect new researchers, multi-disciplinary researchers and those who publish in smaller journals, as the UK found in its Research Assessment Evaluation (RAE) procedures.

DRM is being used as an increasingly restrictive mechanism for intellectual property protection

Bahram Bekhradnia, Chair of the Oxford University Higher Education Policy Unit, in a lecture at the Australian National University in January 2003, highlighted that UK RAE procedures have impacted, either explicitly or implicitly, on academic work practices, including publishing. New electronic publishing models are currently being cited, e.g. 'the chapter approach', in which electronic texts are broken up by chapter, with their own abstracting and indexing and purchase by chapter. This could have unexpected outcomes – e.g. authors might not be aware of this in their writing patterns. As a result there could be a move by authors to

more fragmentary narrative approaches resulting in the lack of a total coherent narrative strategy. This is separate to the arguments in which hypertext narratives are seen to be non-linear.

Fytton Rowland (2002) has indicated in a recent article that a brand name is crucially important in the assessment of authors. This is even more important in the monograph area than for serials. Linda Butler (2002) argued that 'a list of published papers is no measure of value'. Butler highlights the fact that the research formula for publications applied by the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), initially at the request of the Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee, is quantitative rather than qualitative. Australian authors in theory still seek the top branded outlets but increasingly in the last five years have tended to migrate to the second-tier journals since the measures of publication, and thus return to the universities, make no judgement as to the quality of the publication outlet.

2002 may be seen as a watershed year when the OAI finally took off

Postgraduate needs

In a letter to the editor in the Sep 2002 issue of the *Australian Book Review*, Phillipa McGuiness from the University of New South Wales Press, outlined the editorial issues and time involved in converting a doctoral thesis into readable text. Her conclusion seemed to be: is it really worth the effort? One would probably agree with her arguments, particularly as the end product may not sell many copies and would have limited distribution outside Australia, irrespective of the time spent in editorial recasting.

Rather than waste time trying to transform doctoral theses into 'readable books', why not allow them to stay as digital theses available to the world at the point of creation as 'raw' research? After all, theses are scrutinized and worked upon quite extensively and are refereed by examiners at the end of the day – a far more rigorous process than many print monographs receive. In the UK the concept of 'UK theses' has officially now been accepted as a generic database to be developed. In Australia, DEST and the Australian Research Council have recognized the importance of the Australian Digital Theses Project (ADT). The new ANU E-Press will have a specific branded section devoted to digital theses.

Open archives movement and institutional repositories

The creation of digital theses globally has benefited from the initiatives of Virginia Tech and ProQuest in the USA but increasingly theses will be bundled into e-press initiatives inspired by the Open Archive Initiative (OAI). 2002 may be seen as a watershed year when the OAI (www.openarchives.org) finally took off and began to have an impact on global scholarly communication.

OAI initiatives develop and promote interoperability standards that aim to facilitate the efficient dissemination of content, while the OAI Metadata Harvesting Protocol allows the development of a global network of cross-searchable research information. The Eprints.org free software (www.eprints.org) is OAI compliant and enables institutional archiving with appropriate harvesting. There are a number of initiatives supporting these activities such as the Budapest Open Access Initiative (www.soros.org/ openaccess), the American Research Libraries Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) initiatives (www.arl.org/sparc/home/index.asp?page=0) and the Free Online Scholarship movement, headed by Professor Peter Suber (Morrison, 2002).

Digital publishing technologies, linked to global networking and international interoperability protocols and metadata standards, allow for an appropriately branded institutional output to serve as an indication of a university's quality and also as an effective scholarly communication tool through visibility, status and public value.

The background to developing institutional repositories is best summarized in two SPARC papers (Crow, 2002a,b). Crow states in his first SPARC paper:

> Institutional repositories, by capturing, preserving, and disseminating a university's collective intellectual capital, serve as meaningful indicators of an institution's

> academic quality. Under the traditional system of scholarly communication, much of the intellectual output and value of an institution's intellectual property is diffused through thousands of scholarly journals. An institutional repository concentrates the intellectual product created by a university's researcher, making it easier to demonstrate its social and financial value. . . . While institutional repositories centralize, preserve, and make accessible an institution's intellectual capital, at the same time they form part of a global system of decentralized, distributed repositories. This attribute is central to the role repositories can play in a disaggregated model of scholarly publishing. (Crow, 2002a, para 2.4)

SPARC has noted that essential local repository tasks include:

- Deciding on what metadata to store and present; deciding on digital document identifiers.
- Creating author permission and licensing agreements to publish work indefinitely.
- Developing document creation guidelines suitable to long-term archiving and proper presentation.
- Training staff and authors in using the software to submit content.
- Creating document submission instructions.
- Marketing the repository concept to prospective authors.

Cost implementation of repositories can vary tremendously, depending on the nature of the technical infrastructure implemented, the extent of in-house development assumed, and other variables. E-print repository implementation, based on local existing servers, employing open source content, existing management operating systems and database software, can be implemented quite inexpensively.

Institutional repositories, as mentioned earlier, can also be relatively easily incorporated into existing structures within universities such as libraries and electronic support programmes. Experience has shown that the effort and organizational costs required to address academic concerns regarding publishing and copyright and scholarly communication issues in general, and repository policy content management, have tended to outstrip by far the technical demands. Scholarly advocacy, preferably on a one-to-one basis, is the key to scholarly communication change.

The revolution awaits the academic community if they are willing to embrace it

David J. Solomon (2002) has argued that the three core functions for the academic community are the ranking of scholarship, facilitating interactive communication among scholars, and creating a comprehensive archive of scholarly and scientific knowledge. He believes that 'the scholarly community . . . holds the key to . . . allowing the Internet to be a vehicle for facilitating the dissemination of publicly funded research and scholarship'.

Scholarly advocacy is the key to scholarly communication change

Academics are often unaware that material deposited in repositories with appropriate metadata indexing can provide access on a far wider scale and is searchable by Google. Automatic alert systems, tracking and citation analyses are also available in institutional repositories, while many publishers have allowed material to be deposited in repositories. There is an almost schizophrenic nature, as mentioned earlier, to an academic as author of an article or book, who is not overly concerned about his or her intellectual property as long as it is branded and accredited, and the academic as reader, who complains about the high cost of journals for the library and increasingly prefers electronic free access to the purchased material.

Copyright and open source

Copyright law tries to strike a balance between rewarding and protecting authors and publishers and ensuring adequate public access to the flow of ideas and information. In monograph publishing, the current trends in commercial e-book offerings are leaning towards 'imprisoning text'. This tendency needs to be balanced against the global distribution of ideas by the academy in the most effective manner, given that financial reward is not a prime motivation for the author.

there will be a number of institutional repositories which will be seamlessly linked

Of obvious relevance here also are the variety of open-source initiatives, which make software and information available globally free of charge as far as possible. One of the current leading open-source initiatives is at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) with its DSpace Project, a digital repository to enshrine, distribute and preserve MIT's intellectual output (Smith, 2003). DSpace offers the opportunity to provide access to all of MIT's research through one interface. Author's can store their digital works with appropriate copyright in collections that are maintained by MIT. The president of MIT has recently stated that by openly sharing course materials, MIT hopes to create a global web of knowledge (Vest, 2002). While acknowledging these new initiatives might raise concerns among commercial publishers, he is quoted as saying, 'we respect the rights of others and the copyright law, but we hope to accelerate the movement toward open sharing of knowledge'.

Australian e-print developments

Mary Waltham, in a 2003 paper in *Learned Publishing*, asks 'Why does online publishing change everything?' She states:

> if pre-prints and research reports are free to the reader on major websites, or on the author's website, then the value of that information for a publisher of research who is interested in selling the information falls, no question. The issue is particularly pressing as technologies enable smart searching for all free sources of an article. The trend also is speeding up under pressure and action from the author market and it forces publishers to review their fundamental strategy, and purpose.

In the Australian e-print movement it is intended that when repositories are more fully populated, researchers will be able to search easily and seamlessly across the repositories to find relevant material on the research material of their choice (Steele, 2002). The National Library of Australia, through its Resource Discovery Network, will provide advice and settings in interoperability standards, metadata advice and linked digital archiving of a permanent nature.

Australian university e-press developments

The models for the ever-increasing e-print movement have many links to the evolving e-press. At ANU the e-print repository was offered monographs in 2002 by authors who had retained their copyright and for whom print sales had peaked – this was particularly relevant in areas of Asian studies and humanities. At the same time, academics were being influenced by developments such as the California E-Scholarship Program, which makes relevant monographs available, often on a free-of-charge basis. More than 500 University of California Press (UCP) books are available online free of charge through an ongoing partnership between UCP and the California Digital Library. By autumn 2003, 1500 UCP eScholarship Editions will be available. The recent announcement of the expansion of the University College, London imprint will reflect paper as well as electronic options.

In the models currently under discussion and implementation in Australia, it is likely there will be a number of institutional repositories which will be seamlessly linked from the viewpoint of the searcher. Material will be either free of charge on a website (the cost of printing being the responsibility, if required, of the reader at their home site) or is attractively priced to gain maximum purchase potential. Marketing will be undertaken through appropriate institutional and commercial web portals as well as selective emailings. The abstracting and indexing of chapters of the monographs will allow indexing to be picked up by appropriate indexing agencies.

Australian universities were among the first in the world to move to electronic versions of serials and to relinquish print copies. Similarly, Australian universities are pioneering access to electronic monographs through new e-presses. The e-press developments have been accelerated, firstly, because of the lack of a suitable global market for most Australian material and, secondly, due to a decline in the number of outlets for scholarly monographs. The few relevant

academic presses remaining could be said to be in crisis or reliant on subsidies as identified above. Dr Janet McCalman of Melbourne University has recently stated:

> the future of academic publishing for Australian studies is looking very bleak. For the last three to four years, a growing number of experienced and talented scholars have found it almost impossible to interest publishers in their latest work. (McCalman, 2002)

One of the benefits, if it may be so termed, of the downsizing or closure of university presses in Australia is that the new developments can start without being affected by existing structures, personnel and traditions. The current public debate at MUP may be influenced by the difficulties of moving from one organizational structure to another while still operating within traditional frameworks.

Monash University is currently reviving its press under an e-press format, as is Sydney University. Monash's strategic vision incorporates the need to promote its research activities and intellectual capital in ways that enhance the university's brand. Moreover, Monash wishes to foster research and instruction by more directly linking creators and consumers of scholarly material.

Some presses, like ANU, will restrict themselves to the output of their own institution, at least in the first instance, since this is a 'public good' like the library of that particular institution. This does not prevent scholars from ANU from publishing anywhere they can in the world, as many do. Nonetheless it will allow a new outlet for global access and distribution under a branded press for those unable to disseminate their research in traditional outlets or wishing to utilize the distribution potential of the new mechanisms. Production will use XML standards with PDF as one of the print output formats.

The ANU e-press was established by the university in Jan 2003. It will utilize e-press tracking systems to provide online templates for academics and press staff to interact. Online refereeing, which will be paid for, will be utilized as much as possible. Several recent studies have indicated a decline in refereeing standards, which is partly attributable to workloads on academics and to the fact that this often onerous task is not rewarded financially or in terms of promotion/tenure. It is yet another example of the academy giving away its services to third parties – a free copy of the article or a journal issue is poor recompense.

Remuneration for refereeing a monograph is an essential factor in the speed of e-press productions. It may be that the amount of remuneration has to be increased to facilitate the electronic production of the monograph as rapidly as possible. The Australian Common Ground Publishing initiative, which has been supported by the Australian Department of Industry, reports that three months could be an average turnaround in an electronic framework of a monograph from receipt to distribution through its C-2-C (creator to consumer) system. This system incorporates metadata inclusion, version control, workflow management, file archiving and contract management in an online environment. There are a number of global software variants of this framework.

Print on demand and e-books

Recent studies of academic users in the UK and USA have shown the primacy of the printed form (not necessarily the book) as the main access mechanism for research scholars in the social sciences and humanities and area studies. The issues surrounding print-on-demand facilities (POD) are not new, but the opportunities for printing through institutional network frameworks are now more easily available. Electronic templates can now be filled in at the desktop with either department budget codes or personal credit card, sent down the line to the University Printery to be printed in off-peak times, often within 24 hours. Output can be picked up or delivered from a central university point of sale, e.g. the bookshop or a Kinko's fast copy type operation.

a new outlet for global access and distribution under a branded press

In the research document area, in contrast to the possible supermarket-type POD machines envisaged by Jason Epstein (2001), there will not be a lot of money to be made in one-off jobs. Printing will have to be

associated with other activities, as illustrated above, or until they are integrated with fast copy digital textbook/readings operations on campuses. If a number of print copies are required, these can be outsourced to local offset printers. The University of Queensland Press's (UQP) POD facility, which is attractively located in the centre of campus, has printed and bound a 'limited edition' of early Queensland colonial narratives for the Queensland State Library system. The UQP books had long been out of print, but the digitization of back volumes offers new opportunities in the electronic environment.

complicated access structures and financial pay-for-view models

Sam Vaknin (2002) in his *Analysis: The Future of the Book* argues that the role of the e-book in the twenty-first century could allow authors to become publishers and marketers of their works as they were in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He further states,

> printed books in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were derided as inferior to their laboriously hand-made antecedents and to the incunabula. These complaints are reminiscent of current criticisms of the new media (Internet, E-Books) . . . as every new format matures it is subject to regulation from within and from without. E-Books and other digital content are no exception. Hence the recurrent and current attempts at restrictive regulation.

Distinctions will have to be made in terms of the author-as-publisher concept in the various gradations from vanity publishing to in-house 'guild publishing' to deposited, refereed e-print material to free and commercial e-press, refereed material. Examples of these already exist around the world in terms of websites and distinctions.

Clifford Lynch (2002), in a most stimulating essay, 'The battle to define the future of the book in a digital world', has stated:

> issues of preservation, continuity of access and the integrity of our cultural and intellectual record are particularly critical in the context of E-Book readers and the works designed for them. These have enormous importance both for individual consumers and for society as a whole.

We are already seeing, in relation to the generic comments of Lynch, a variety of e-book offerings. It is clear that many of the models that were adopted for electronic serial sales are now being replicated, rightly or wrongly (mostly wrongly in this author's opinion), in the e-book arena. It would be wrong if the models for the research monograph, via electronic access, were taken from those publishers who are seeking to make significant profits from the textbook, undergraduate or course book market.

The current e-book offerings are far from uniform or seamless: libraries and users face a bewildering and complex set of models from publishers in terms of access and distribution, printing and pricing. Some are restrictive in the sense that if a library only bought one book, users can only expect to access one copy on-line at any one time: multiple copies require multiple licences. Others only allow text to be downloaded to a particular machine and/or printing only on dedicated printers. The use of encrypted software or complicated printing and access models need to be fully debated with user groups. Several of the models have come from now partially discredited dot-com entrepreneurs. Who now remembers Questia, who boldly advertised that no student needed a library? Or how netLibrary was 'rescued' by the large American information utility OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) in 2002?

Just looking at two models currently offered in Australia – i.e. Taylor & Francis's e-book programme and James Bennett's partnership with Allen & Unwin – reveals complicated access structures and financial pay-for-view models which make them extremely cumbersome for libraries and users. Some of the models make no provision for copying under the fair dealing provisions of copyright, and others expect the library to be a surrogate bookshop in commercial terms with complicated registration and payment options.

Users have become familiar with the 24×7 access models of serials, either in their commercial or free manifestations. The current Oxford Scholarship Online model by Oxford University Press (OUP), which proposes an annual subscription to several

subject packages of 250 monographs, is much more flexible for the user communities through 24×7 access to all authenticated users of a campus. Kate Jury, Marketing Director of OUP's Academic Publishing Group, is quoted in the UK *Bookseller* (3 Feb 2003) that this initiative means 'better dissemination of the scholarly works we publish'. Whatever viewpoint is taken, there is still a long way to go in the integrated output mechanisms for electronic research material.

Conclusion

Anthony Watkinson in his 2001 report, 'Electronic solutions to the problems of monograph publishing', cogently summarized issues in relation to the then background of electronic scholarly publishing. Since his analysis was published in 2001, and presumably his questionnaire to publishers was conducted earlier, the recent developments in institutional repositories and open-archive movements would not have impacted on his interviewees. Similarly the 'public good/institutional branding' concept which has attracted institutional support was not as significant in his brief, although he did hint at co-operative ventures in his conclusions.

One needs to juxtapose Watkinson's comment 'there is no electronic solution to the crisis, if monographs continue to be much as they are at the moment' (the crucial wording being in the last words) with that of the Director of the University of Illinois Press who has stated 'Universities may find that a more honest way to track the cost of publications would be to fund them up front, publish them electronically and publish them free' (Regier, 2002). This has an undoubted logic to it but the immediate future will undoubtedly see a number of electronic press offerings. Several publishers have found, for example, that posting a free copy of a book on the Internet encourages sales of the print copies through their normal press outlet. The end result could well be a hybrid, as we find with UCP.

Recent global initiatives with institutional repositories and their inclusion of scholarly material, ranging from conference papers to digital theses to books, reflect a fundamental shift. The revolution is not simply in the medium of technological communication but in the attitudes and philosophies on campus towards building and propagating a repository of digital intellectual content through appropriate alliances. These could change the patterns of twentieth-century scholarly publishing.

In this context, the future for the research monograph is perhaps more optimistic than previously envisaged if the creators of scholarly knowledge are willing to embrace the concept of open scholarship in the digital era through these new mediums (Guedon, 2001). The crucial options will be with the academic creators of knowledge and whether they are informed or not as to the scholarly communication opportunities and challenges

a more honest way to track the cost of publications would be to fund them up front

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