Beyond the Monograph: Publishing Research for Multimedia and Multiplatform Delivery

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The output of university presses remains centred on a stand-alone, print-driven book paradigm, despite technological developments that can enable 'interaction, communication, and interconnection.' In order to improve the distribution of books, several university presses have invested in the development of online content platforms, but the great majority of digital publishing output is limited to PDF, ePub, and HTML files. Inspired by increasing popularity of mobile technologies and devices, this article investigates opportunities for greater use of digital media in scholarly book publishing. It focuses on the feasibility of producing ebook applications and using social networking platforms as a way to make complex information accessible to wider audiences enabling improved research dissemination and increased engagement with individual works.

Keywords: scholarly publishing; mobile technologies; ebook applications; social networking platforms; scholarly digital editions

INTRODUCTION

In her book *Planned Obsolescence*,[1] 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.[2]

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.

In this article, I will look at the current institutional and technological ecosystem that scholarly publishing operates in, especially the implication of mobile technologies. I will explore digital developments in scholarly publishing, focusing on the output of university presses in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. Finally, I will investigate the opportunities, associated benefits, and limitations of greater use of ebook applications and social networking platforms in scholarly publishing.

SCHOLARLY ECOSYSTEM

The importance of monographs and edited collections in scholarly publishing in the humanities and social sciences is embedded in the academic evaluation process, in which the academic book plays a significant role in the authorization and accreditation practices of academic promotion and research funding. While the requirements of the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) and Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) are slowly changing, and the need to recognize format neutrality has been taken into account, the focus remains on books, book chapters, journal articles, and conference publications as the chief modes of scholarly output. The HERDC requirements stipulate that:

> A publication is more than the release of a work. It implies quality control (such as peer review or in-house quality control) and enhancement through processes such as assessment or review, editing, copy-editing, design, and conversion of the work to an appropriate format.[5]

These institutional pressures are driving the publishing directions of academic authors. The results of a US-based survey to Oberlin Group

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.[6] 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.'[7] 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,'[8] 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.)

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 reimagined or effectively remediated.'[9] 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. As Alison Norrington, a transmedia fiction author, writes:

> [t]o harness 'e' is to offer options—levels of immersion and engagement, multi-platform choices, perhaps even linear or nonlinear narratives with the intention of organically reaching a wider readership far beyond the restriction of print-based novels.[10]

This flexibility is crucial if we as scholarly publishers want to go beyond serving 'the "horizontal" interests of research faculty,' respond to 'the "vertical" interests of undergraduate education' or the general public,[11] and meet the increasing pressure from governments and funding bodies to communicate and demonstrate the societal impact of research beyond academia. Most peer-reviewed research is written for fellow specialists and remains effectively inaccessible due to jargon, impenetrable language, and a long, static format. According to Daniel Allington, the task of producing knowledge and communicating it to

people outside academia are two different goals, requiring different publications, different language, and different business models.[12] Technologies such as applications (apps) offer opportunities to create new points of entry to complex ideas.

'tradigital' books and online content platforms

Digital innovation in publishing has transformed operating and content management systems, production workflows, and sales and marketing divisions. In terms of the final output, the release of books in multiple formats has become the norm. Apart from print books, the titles are typically released in ePub, MOBI, PDF, and less often in HTML. These files can be for sale or available in open access. As their production and design remain driven by print, the term 'tradigital' book seems very apt. Once it is published, a book goes silent. It takes a long time for any reviews to appear, and they remain disconnected from the book. And it remains static, even though, as Gary Hall writes:

> [T]he developments in electronic publishing contain at least the potential for us to perceive the book as something that is not completely fixed, stable and unified, with definite limits and clear material edges, but as liquid and living, open to being continually and collaboratively written, edited, annotated, critiqued, updated, shared, supplemented, revised, re-ordered, reiterated and reimagined.[13]

However, such an approach remains contrary to the very nature of the academic book that, by definition, contains discrete and static results of research output. As Fitzpatrick comments, '[w]e rely on such stability as a sign of a text's authority.' She suggests that the implementation of versioning can be a solution 'to support change while maintaining the history that make the change visible' at the same time.[14]

Apart from the production of individual titles as ePub and MOBI files, digital innovation in scholarly publishing has focused on the creation of online content platforms and publications. These platforms have been built on the experiences acquired in journal publishing, and, in fact, many of them started as journal-only databases with book content added later. Some of the best examples include the Oxford Scholarship Online, the University Presses Scholarship Online, University Publishing Online (Cambridge),[15] University Press Content Consortium at Project Muse,[16] Books at JSTOR,[17] Bibliovault (Chicago),[18] and others. They typically

include access to journal articles, books, and book chapters, less often audio, video, and other forms of multimedia. They usually support chapter-based PDF files as well as XML content and ePub.

The majority of the platforms are based on the subscription model, although there are experiments with the open access model as well such as the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB).[19] The primary aim of DOAB is to increase discoverability of open access books. The various content databases are designed with library needs in mind, rather than targeting individual customers, although they have built-in features for the individual researcher. They provide a user-friendly platform for research and discovery, chapter-level keywords and abstracts, various alerts and social networking options for sharing articles and book chapters with colleagues. The objective of the various platforms is to expand the readership of important scholarly titles and ensure reliable, long-term preservation and access to scholarship.[20]

'networked' books and scholarly digital editions

While university presses focus on the production of 'tradigital' books and the creation of online content databases, which are basically repositories of 'tradigital' books, some truly innovative projects that use the affordances of new technologies have been happening outside the world of scholarly publishing. Fitzpatrick's book *Planned Obsolescence*, which was first released in a draft form on the Media Commons Press platform and open for public comment, is an example of a 'networked book' written, edited, and read in a networked environment that emphasizes author–reader interaction. In the book, Fitzpatrick discusses at length the innovative practices in the structures of authorship, peer review, and publishing made possible by the affordances of digital technologies.[21]

Apart from the Commons Press platform, there are other web authoring platforms that allow for collaborative writing that can be done in public. In fact, Google Drive/Docs, wiki software, or any blogging platform can be used. There have been various initiatives at creating a web interface for authors and editors to create, manage, and disseminate multi-format academic output.[22] The fact that Fitzpatrick's book ended up being conventionally published by New York University Press is symptomatic of the state of the current scholarly communication ecosystem. While researchers are working with new tools and technologies, in increasingly collaborative environments, the research outputs still need

to be published in a format that complies with the various academic evaluation processes around the world, which typically means a book, a book chapter, a journal article, or a conference paper in a printed or digital format.

Scholarly digital editions are an exception to this rule—they are researcher-led, collaborative projects in digital humanities; they appear primarily in a digital format; and they are often produced and released without the involvement of a publisher. Scholarly digital editions are critical representations of historical documents or texts. Going beyond the digitization and reproduction of text in documentary form, such as facsimiles, which is what digital library collections are, scholarly digital editions seamlessly combine 'the facsimile tradition with rigorously edited, TEI-encoded text that is surrounded by scholarly apparatus' or incorporate alternative theoretical approaches. These are highly collaborative projects that involve not 'only assembling and editing the content but also building the tools and software that enable this scholarship.'[23] They take the form of digital thematic repositories, collections, or archives, which combine 'the annotations, introductions, interface and navigation.' They can also include multimedia such as high quality images, audio and video clips, and interactive maps.[24] Kenneth Price emphasizes 'the possibility of incremental development and delivery' of digital scholarly editions as a unique and useful feature of this form of scholarship while at the same time expressing concern about the stability of an electronic edition and the need to ensure interoperability.[25]

There was some interest among university presses in publishing electronic editions in the 1990s, but 'that enthusiasm has since waned,'[26] most likely due to the projects' complexity, cost, and the lack of financial returns. Oxford University Press (OUP), Cambridge University Press (CUP), and the University Press of Michigan have published various scholarly digital editions. The University of California Press was involved with the Mark Twain Project Online, developed together with the Mark Twain Papers and Project of the Bancroft Library and the California Digital Library.[27] The Rotunda imprint of the University of Virginia Press, which publishes 'original digital scholarship along with newly digitized critical and documentary editions in the humanities and social sciences,'[28] was enabled by grant funding.

While the scholarly digital editions need to rely on grants and collaboration between humanities researchers and intellectual property

specialists, there is a potential for a fruitful involvement of university presses and university libraries to ensure ongoing support and discoverability and long-term preservation for the project once the grant money finishes and researchers move onto other projects. In fact, this is the plan for the Charles Harpur Critical Archive, which is going to be hosted by the University of Sydney Library, and the Sydney University Press will be the project's publishing partner. The Charles Harpur Critical Archive[29] (and the Joseph Furphy Archive[30]) have been based on the work of the Australian Electronic Scholarly Editing project,[31] which aims to enable electronic collaboration in humanities research.

While some of the scholarly digital editions are freely available online, the issue of access remains problematic as 'the audience may range widely in age and sophistication and training.' Price suggests that '[a] savvy interface designer on a particular project might figure out a way to provide levels of accessioned gradations of difficulty, but unless carefully handled, such an approach might seem condescending.'[32] Moreover, as the primary audience for digital scholarly editions remains academic, there are no incentives to make the content user friendly and accessible to the general public.

THE GROWTH AND IMPACT OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES

While scholarly digital editions and thematic research collections are primarily designed to be accessed via web browsers, and scholarly publishers still tend to operate in the world of personal computers (books are written, edited, and published on a PC and meant to be read on a PC as PDF or HTML files), readers are spending less time with PCs and more time with mobile devices. According to a ComScore report released on 21 August 2014, mobile usage as a whole accounts for 60 per cent of time spent on digital media consumption versus desktop-based use at 40 per cent in the United States. App usage alone makes up a majority of total digital media engagement at 52 per cent. Smartphone users spent 88 per cent, and tablet users spent 82 per cent of the time using apps.[33] This is not surprising. Mobile devices are constantly on and taken everywhere; they provide smooth access to sensors, cameras, and location, payment, and social platforms; they are increasingly sophisticated and easy to use.

The good news is that according to a Pew Research Center report from 2012, owners of ebook reading devices are reading more books

than those who do not own a device. Almost a third of ebook readers read on mobile phones (29 per cent), and 23 per cent read on a tablet computer.[34] The fact that mobile device users read more is not a surprise. As Andrew Rashbass comments, 'with *The Economist* on your iPad and your smartphone, both including a full audio edition, it's always with you. You can read it anywhere and everywhere and listen to it too while you drive, jog or garden.'[35]

The move to mobile does not only affect how much time we spend on reading and what we use for reading and accessing information, but it also affects how we read. Using *The Economist* in the United Kingdom as an example, Rashbass came up with three ages of reading: the 'lean-back' of paper magazine, followed by the 'lean-forward' reading when using a computer, which places an emphasis on 'snacking' on information, and, finally, the move back to a 'lean-back' mode with the mobile technology. He asserts that the way consumers read on tablets is 'much closer to print than to online.'[36]

In contrast to the immersive, in-depth, and concentrated reading associated with print books, a 'screen-based reading behaviour' has been linked with 'browsing and scanning, keyword spotting, one-time reading, non-linear reading, and reading more selectively.'[37] While the various ereaders provide a somewhat better reading environment to a computer screen, such as the integration with a dictionary, greater accessibility,[38] and portability, they do not offer random access of a print book and lack the visual location on the page.[39] The interface can be confusing, and the note-taking interface is clunky. For academic readers, the benefit of ebooks over print books is that they are easily quotable and searchable, but they offer no standard way of citing.[40]

The arrival of tablets and the development of ebook applications has changed yet again what reading is about. An ebook's application is 'a small, specialised software program downloaded onto mobile devices.' At a simple level, they display text, illustration, and narration. The more complex book apps can simultaneously handle 'multiple layers of content like speak, illustrations, films, interactive illustrations, sounds, texts etc,' and they look very much like a game. Apart from content-based apps, there are brand-focused 'in-app-stores,' which often provide free entertainment or information and a shop front to sell digital content.[41] According to Jennifer Rowsell:

> [r]eading on an iPad or screen calls on different processing skills (e.g., reading hypertextual links, understanding differences between visuals, aesthetics, and animated text) and embodied practices (e.g., tapping, scrolling, expanding and shrinking text and words) and selecting amongst visual stimuli that lead readers into varied semiotic, discursive text genres that may call on different thinking processes.[42]

She places the various types of reading involving electronic devices on a continuum from narrative and linear (associated with ebooks and web), through multimodal (that is, involving different media as in the case of ebooks and social media), to ludic (that is, showing spontaneous and undirected playfulness in game-based apps).[43]

In the case of game-based texts, 'the playing or reading of a text is more agentive'—they give the reader greater autonomy.[44] There is also a stronger connection between reading and writing, partly influenced by Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking platforms.[45] From a 'reader' of a print book, through a 'user' of an ebook or a website, the reader/user becomes the 'participant' in an ebook application. The experience of the text changes depending on the format:

> Like the 'user' the 'participant' can experience the text as an interactive database, which is dramatically different from the linearity of the printed book, yet the participant goes beyond consuming and searching to sharing and producing content, re-writing the text.[46]

The tablet and ebook applications provide opportunities for a completely different level of engagement with content going beyond what is possible with a print book, an ebook, or even web content. The book becomes:

> the 'occasion' of a series of participatory and productive activities, which included, of course, reading but also annotating, searching, sharing with other participants and including the participant's own content in the form of images from their tablet photo stream and their commentary.[47]

While there are some interesting apps available, which combine in-depth research with compelling stories, illustrations, videos, animation, and games, all seamlessly integrated into visually attractive and intuitive designs, the development of ebook applications remains a largely unexplored area in the world of scholarly publishing.

EXPERIMENTING WITH APPS

I have found several examples of university presses that have experimented with apps. The two presses that have produced an extensive number of ebook applications include CUP and OUP. Both companies have released a number of apps in the area of teaching English as a second language, including grammar apps, dictionaries, and pronunciation guides for different groups of learners. The Oxford Bookworm series is comprised of English classic stories adapted for learners of English of various levels of competency. CUP also released several reference apps accompanying their medical texts and a series of apps on Shakespeare (*Explore Shakespeare* app and apps for individual plays). CUP Australia released a marketing app (*Cambridge Australia*), which is a 'gateway to a range of complete secondary student texts, designed and formatted for tablet devices.'

Apart from CUP and OUP, Princeton University Press has released two apps, both based on bestselling and well-established books. *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, which was released in 2000,[48] contains 102 interactive maps, from archaic Greek to the Late Roman Empire, which can be pinch-zoomed up to 800 per cent, contain modern overlay, bookmarks, and multiple pathways. The second app, *The Warbler Guide*,[49] which was released in 2014, contains 3D graphics, warbler songs, photos, and so on.

In 2011, the University of Chicago Press released *Gems and Jewels* (in collaboration with Touchpress).[50] The app accompanies the book *Gems and Gemstones: Timeless Natural Beauty of the Mineral World*, which was inspired by the collection of the Field Museum and includes images that are high resolution and enabled with zoom capabilities and gyroscopic interaction (3D spins). It allows one to examine the museum artifacts from all angles. The press also released an app in association with the sixth edition of the *Spanish–English Dictionary* (2012). The University of Hawaii Press released a series of flashcard apps for Korean language textbooks (the KLEAR series), which feature digital flashcards, interactive vocabulary lists, and a quick search for the definition of textbook vocabulary.[51] Finally, there is a simple iPhone app available for one of Sydney University Press's books: *Pocket BOSBOK Vocabulary of Assumed Business Knowledge (Glossary)*, which was produced by the author.[52]

APPS IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

It is poetry that first inspired me to look into the affordances offered by ebook applications in the context of scholarly publishing. *The Waste Land* app[53] released in 2011 by Faber and Touchpress is probably one of the most successful examples of how an app can transform the reading experience and open a difficult text to new audiences. This particular app looks uncannily like a digital scholarly edition. Apart from the annotated text, a facsimile of T.S. Eliot's manuscript, and audio recordings of Eliot and others reading the poem, the app contains analytical notes, audio-visual commentaries by academics, a video performance of the poem, and a gallery of images. As John Naughton commented in *The Guardian*, *The Waste Land* app demonstrates 'the potential of technology to add significant value to a work of art — in this case a written text of great importance but formidable difficulty.'[54]

Analyzing what producers of *The Waste Land* app, and other apps such as Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (2012)[55] (with 154 sonnets performed by various actors and synchronized to the text, which highlights line by line as each sonnet is spoken) have achieved shows a whole gamut of interesting possibilities for how apps could be useful in the context of scholarly publishing. It seems that scholarly or literary texts lend themselves, in particular, to interactivity that could include translation, interpretation, and commentary and create new opportunities for broadening audiences, which could help resolve one of the problems that afflicts academic books — they are not broadly read. Apart from including an expert perspective and the ability to aggregate relevant content from across multiple sources, an app allows one to present concepts and themes from new and different perspectives and to form a deeper connection with the subject matter.

An app can make the topic more relevant to the readers through accessing multiple literacies. Apps can contain ancillary audio and visual material, animations, rotations, geo-location, and augmented reality. Hands-on experimentation and interactivity could be used to enhance understanding and clarify concepts and show meaningful connections between ideas and themes. Apps could be a bridge between theory and practice, helping with effective knowledge translation to reach across the gap between research and its implementation. Basically, they could be a tool for translational and educational purposes.

Some of the more interesting examples that I have come across from non-scholarly sector are apps designed by Citia, a startup founded in 2011. Working in collaboration with an author, Citia editors extracted ideas and concepts from a non-fiction book and placed them on digital 'cards' and 'stacks.' The HTML5-based, swipeable, and sharable cards can be read on different devices and sent across every major social network.[56] Linda Holliday, the founder of Citia, was quoted as saying that 'Citia apps won't replace the books they're based on. Instead the aim is to complement the author's book and lead people to buy it, should they want to explore the ideas more deeply.'[57] Another interesting example is the *Think Like Churchill* app, which was published as a companion to a new biography of Winston Churchill by Boris Johnson (*The Churchill Factor*, 2014). It combines aspects of a game and graphic novel as a way to broaden the audience for the book and inspire interest in this historical figure.

There is a place for apps in the scholarly environment beyond individual products. Apps such as *BrowZine*, a tablet-based platform for scholarly journals, work with libraries to make their holdings customizable on the individual level. Users can create a custom bookcase and get reminders of a new publication on release in their area of interest.[58] Apps, such as those produced by Citia, also offer innovative marketing possibilities. Publishers are able to create a sales catalogue with reading samples, author interviews, sample chapters, and links to an online store. One of the more interesting examples is the app created by Atavist, a publisher of book and non-fiction multimedia stories that incorporate video, audio, interactive graphics, and so on.[59]

While apps offer interesting opportunities for the translation of research books into readable, engaging, and practical content, they are likely to remain an exception rather than a standard part of scholarly publishing output in the near future.

Not every project lends itself to the app format. The ones that do 'benefit from multimedia presentation, that blend text, image, and audio files in an engaging and interactive way'[60]—for example, *The Elements: A Visual Exploration* by Theodore Gray (Touchpress 2010),[61] which is listed by Gregory Britton as being one of the best book app designs. According to Britton, the best book apps:

> have a scrapbook-like quality that invites exploration. They allow readers to browse and probe the text, but within a controlled environment, not unlike a museum exhibition. The best apps do not replicate the limitations of the print book that way a PDFs does with static text, fixed images, linear presentation; they incorporate dynamic elements, interactivity, sound and action.[62]

While print books and ebooks are interchangeable to a degree, trying to replicate the same content in an app or on the web misses the point. The objective should be to create a set of products that would complement each other. In a way, print and digital books do this already. At this stage, ebooks are more linear than print books — going back and forward, checking footnotes, index entries remains clunky — but they are easily available, portable, and searchable, while print books remain a better format for what Paul Fyfe describes as 'a complex mixture of nonlinear information uptake, manual annotation, on-the-fly mnemonic indexing, ocular collation, and ambient findability.'[63]

Not every project lends itself to the app format because good native apps are expensive to produce: '[T]he median cost range is between [US]$37,913 and $171,450, but could climb up to $500,000 or higher.'[64] Moreover, native apps are not universally accessible from any device, which means a different version of an app needs to be produced for each platform such as iOS, Android, BlackBerry, Windows, and others. Even within a single operating system, devices vary 'significantly in terms of display (physical size, colour depth, screen resolution, pixel density, aspect ratio); input (trackball, touchscreen, physical keyboard, microphone, camera); and capability (processing power, storage, antennae, and so on).'[65] Moreover, ebook apps need to be updated on a regular basis as new versions of the operating system and new devices are released. In contrast to print books, the electronic texts and projects have an unfixed, dynamic existence.

Finally, discoverability of apps remains a challenge. In July 2014, there were 1.3 million apps on the Android Market Place and 1.2 million apps on the Apple's App Store.[66] In comparison, there are approximately 2.2 million books published a year worldwide.[67] There are over one million books on the iBookstore.[68] The difference is that books are distributed via multiple channels, while app distribution relies on the platform-specific app stores. Moreover, similarly to printed books, app content is invisible online. Both print books and apps can be searched for online,

but their content cannot be indexed by the search engines,[69] hence, they rely on driving traffic through alternate methods such as web and social media platforms.

WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Experiments around the inclusion of pre-print archives, post-publication commentary, and author revisions, which are common in journal publishing, remain the exception rather than the norm in the world of book publishing. In contrast, having a website associated with a book for data sets, multimedia, or additional material that for various reasons could not appear in the print (due to the lack of space, format incompatibility, or the extraneous nature of the material) is not a new idea. *For the Sake of a Song: Wangga Songmen and Their Repertories*, which was published by Sydney University Press in 2013, is a good example of a book with an associated website,[70] where all of the recordings analyzed in the text are available to stream.

Some academic books 'continue' their life as a blog, allowing for ongoing updates and discussions. At least, that is the idea. The reality is somewhat different. Sherman Young, for example, started a companion blog to his book *The Book Is Dead, Long Live the Book*, which was published by UNSW Press in May 2007. He described it as 'a provocation designed to further the conversation about the future of books.' He wrote that '[b]ook culture—great ideas and a deeper conversation—will only survive if we embrace the new media technologies of ebooks and electronic distribution.'[71] It is somewhat ironic that the blog dwindled down to only three posts in 2013 (all three on a single day on 19 April).[72]

In cases where individual projects come to a close or lose momentum, the publisher can provide continuity and long-term strategy. This is also the place where university libraries have a role to play in providing archival and preservation strategies. However, we need to do more than just upload books online. A lot can be learned from the commercial publishing sector. According to Murray Izenwasser, a successful publisher's website should include:

- full search engine and mobile optimization;
- integrated social media content, curation, and sharing;
- email registration and community programs;
- robust ecommerce capabilities;

- an effective mechanism for amplifying authors' online and social media activities;
- a dynamic, ongoing digital marketing program across as many channels as time and budget will allow.[73]

Whether printed books or digital projects, open access or not, the publisher's website remains an important tool in ensuring the dissemination of knowledge and facilitating 'interaction, communication, and interconnection' in the words of Fitzpatrick. Various social media channels can help with spreading the word about the book, and we should encourage our authors to participate. The real purpose of those channels is to drive readers back to the publisher's website so we need to make sure the web is doing the best it can.

The engagement of university presses in social media platforms happens predominantly at the level of the publisher brand and marketing rather than through the creation of ongoing conversations around individual titles. There are exceptions to such an approach. One of the more interesting examples of a publisher's website belongs to a Cambridge-based, independent, open access press named Open Book Publishers. Books can be read online using the Scribd platform or as an HTML file. Several formats are available for sale: hardback, paperback, PDF, ePub, and MOBI files. More interestingly, however, every book has a mini-homepage with links to description, contents, an author/contributors section, copyright information, additional resources, reviews, and comments. Each book can also be tweeted or shared on Facebook. Moreover, there are buttons to download the citation to the three most popular referencing softwares (BiBTeX, EndNote, and RefMan).[74] Very few books have attracted comments, and some of them are technical in nature, but the option is there. The website of Ubiquity Press, another UK-based open access publisher, also allows for comments and is heavily integrated with various social media platforms as well as altmetrics.[75]

As these examples show, there are a lot of opportunities for university presses to broaden the online presence of a 'tradigital' book using third-party platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, SlideShare, YouTube, and so on, which are easy to use, have a wide base of existing users, and include tools that enable discussion and sharing of content.[76]

CONCLUSIONS

The new technologies offer new and exciting ways to integrate and distribute knowledge. Although platforms, stability, interoperability, and longevity are all in flux at this moment, we need to experiment and adapt to the new media environment. Academic books should not be standalone products—it is no longer sufficient to just upload them online, even if they are available in open access. While open access serves well the 'horizontal' interests of other researchers, it is typically not sufficient if the authors are interested in 'vertical' communication beyond academia. Even though at this stage writing blog posts, producing apps, or even publishing books for the mass or educational market is not recognized as a research outcome in the HERDC or ERA assessments, or valued by tenure and promotion committees, there is an increasing need for academics and universities to demonstrate the societal impact and the importance of their work and to communicate with public audiences worldwide. This opens new opportunities for scholarly publishers to support academics in the area of translational publishing, social media engagement, and multimedia production.

Publishing for multiple platforms does not mean replicating the same content across various formats. Apps are not a replacement for books, whether print or ebooks. They are a new medium that offers a range of possibilities for an educational and translational agenda. They could be produced as an add-on, a teaser, or a marketing tool. They are particularly suitable for content that could benefit from the use of multimedia (images, video, audio, rotations, and visualization). However, even in the case of text-driven books, apps can be used to make the difficult more accessible and engaging. They can tease out main and subsidiary themes and concepts from the book's narrative or focus on educational or practical applications.

Even though on the surface the creation of ebook applications seems antithetical to the very core of open scholarly dissemination of research online, there are arguments against dismissing apps as a closed environment. The World Wide Web is good for broad dissemination of ideas and stimulating synchronous and asynchronous conversation and collaborative enquiry, but apps have the potential to use multiple literacies and gamification (that is, the use of game elements in non-game contexts) to increase the engagement of individuals with complex content. While both apps and web provide support for interactivity, animation, video,

and audio, the ability of the user to personalize the app and make notes invites a different level of engagement. A mobile app can provide users with unique functionality and speed that cannot be achieved with a responsive website. It is also much better in terms of user experience, aesthetics, and design at present. While it is theoretically conceivable to achieve similar results using HMTL5 to build a platform-independent product that could be delivered via the web and in a mobile app form, the way that major mobile operating systems are set up make it impossible for now.

Although apps may not be a commercially viable proposition at this stage, the tools are constantly evolving and the costs of production are falling. Ways to overcome cost barriers include working together with companies that provide sophisticated production systems, such as Software as a Service, which can be cost-effective. We can experiment with crowd sourcing, and, most importantly, we can and should collaborate widely with other university departments, the library, information technology, other organizations, and commercial enterprises.

Although the writing and publication of an academic monograph has always involved a degree of collaboration with the input from peer reviewers and the work of copyeditors, proofreaders, and designers, it is predominantly the work of a single author, and the whole process is fairly linear. In comparison, the development of digital scholarly editions or ebook applications involve far more complex, non-linear, and iterative processes and require a close collaboration from an early stage of conceptual work. There is opportunity for university presses to play a greater role in developing digital projects, and we need to be able to support scholars interested in pursuing new possibilities, perhaps in collaboration with the library and information technology department, as part of the digital studios.

While the scholarly book remains at the centre of what humanities and social science researchers want and need to publish at present, there are opportunities to create digital ecosystems that would incorporate web, social networking platforms, apps, and other formats. We should use our websites more effectively to provide context and enable ongoing interaction with a book, build networks, and cultivate communities of readers. One of the unexplored areas in scholarly publishing is the production of audiobooks, which has experienced double-digit annual growth in sales since 2009 (12.7 per cent per year).[77] According to the

report of the American Association of Publishers released in October 2014, downloadable audiobooks were the fastest growing format with a +26.2 per cent growth over the same period in 2013,[78] a trend enabled by the migration of audiobooks from compact discs to downloadable digital audio and mobile devices. Having the audiobooks on portable devices, allows people to listen while they commute, exercise, and do other activities, which allow for multi-tasking. However, that is a topic for another article.

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