

Promoting and Nurturing Interactions with Open Access Books: Strategies for Publishers and Authors

A COPIM WP6 Research and Scoping Report

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.5572413](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5572413)



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Introduction

By Janneke Adema & Tobias Steiner

This report explores how publishers and authors can promote, nurture, and facilitate interaction with openly available books. Open access (obviously) opens up scholarship, but it also offers scope to enhance interactions between books, scholars, publishers, resources, librarians, and of course readers. This might take the form of creating communities and conversations around books, of gathering comments and hyperlinks, or of enabling updating, remixing and reusing, translating, modifying, reviewing, versioning, and forking of existing books. Open access, in short can create additional value and new avenues and formats that go beyond openness, by changing how people interact with books. Research shows that making books available in open access enhances discovery and online consultation (Snijder 2019), but the short outline above makes clear that there is still a lot to be done to stimulate, explore, and practice the full range of book interactions made possible by open access.

This report will explore some of the ways in which both publishers and authors can start to do so. The first part of this report provides a literature overview that identifies the opportunities that digital technologies and enhanced interactions with open access books can provide for scholarship; it outlines some of the main types of interactions around scholarship—and around and as part of open access *books* more in particular—that scholars are involved in; and it showcases some of the experiments within humanities book publishing with reuse and remix; finally it presents some of the main (technological and socio-cultural) inhibitions that have prevented further uptake of these practices. The second part of this report more closely explores the technical dependencies that the introduced interactions and affordances rely upon. Doing so, it outlines and showcases various open source tools,¹ software, technologies, platforms, infrastructures, guidelines and best practices, that lend themselves to being adopted by publishers and authors (or by publishers and authors working in collaboration with each other) to facilitate interaction around their book(s). The third part of this report then summarises the findings of the previous parts and provides recommendations, guidelines, and strategies (again, both socio-cultural and technological) for publishers and authors to further open up their books and collections to community interaction and reuse.

¹ For more on our position towards open source tools see Adema, Mars, and Steiner, 2021: <https://copim.pubpub.org/pub/books-contain-multitudes-part-3-technical-workflows-tools-experimental-publishing/release/3#on-open-source-tools>

Experimental Publishing and COPIM

This report has been written as the second research report coming out of COPIM's work package 6 (WP6), which focuses on [Experimental Publishing and Reuse](#) and looks at ways to more closely align existing software, tools and technologies, workflows, and infrastructures for experimental publishing with the workflows of open access book publishers. To do so, it is co-producing several pilot projects of experimental books (which we are currently developing with communities of scholars and technologists and partner presses Open Humanities Press, Mattering Press, and Open Book Publishers), which are being developed with the aid of these new tools and workflows. As part of these pilot projects, relationships will be established with open source publishing platforms, software providers, and projects focused on experimental long-form publications, and outreach activities will be conducted with open access book publishers and authors to further promote experimental publishing opportunities. This work package also explores how non-experimental open access books are (re)used by the scholarly community, which is what this report focuses on. As such, it examines those technologies and cultural strategies that are most effective in promoting open access book content interaction and reuse. This includes building communities around content and collections via annotations, comments, and post-publication review (e.g., via the social annotation platform [hypothes.is](#)) to enable more collaborative forms of knowledge production. As explained above, to achieve this this work package will map both existing technological solutions as well as cultural barriers and best practices with respect to reuse and other emerging book interactions enabled by open access.

COPIM's WP6 will also produce an online resource to promote and support the publication of experimental books. The first report we wrote for WP6, *Books contain multitudes: Exploring Experimental Publishing*, is a three-part research and scoping report that has been produced to support the development of this online resource. The third part of this first scoping report reviews existing resources on tools, platforms, and software used in the production of experimental books, and sketches a roadmap and methodology towards the creation of the online resource mentioned previously. It also explores two key practices within experimental publishing and the creation of experimental books that will feature within this online resource, *collaborative writing* and *annotation*. The latter will also play an important role in this report, hence connections will be made between both reports as they further develop.

Similar to the variety of other reports and outputs produced in COPIM, this report will make use of PubPub's advanced versioning functionalities. We will be updating this document over the next 1.5 years, thus allowing us to incorporate user feedback and new technological developments. We very much welcome feedback on the report. Please feel free to add comments to the PubPub version directly (account/login required), or contact us at wp6@copim.ac.uk.

About COPIM

COPIM (Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs) is a 3-year project led by Coventry University as part of an international partnership of researchers, universities, librarians, open access book publishers and infrastructure providers and is funded by The Research England Development Fund and Arcadia—a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin. COPIM is building community-owned, open systems and infrastructures to enable open access book publishing to flourish, delivering major improvements in the infrastructures used by open access book publishers and those publishers making a transition to open access. The project addresses the key technological, structural, and organisational hurdles—around funding, production, dissemination, discovery, reuse, and archiving—that are standing in the way of the wider adoption and impact of open access books. COPIM will realign open access book publishing away from competing commercial service providers to a more horizontal and cooperative knowledge-sharing approach.

As part of seven connected Work Packages, COPIM is working on 1) integrated capacity-building amongst presses; 2) access to and development of consortial, institutional, and other funding channels; 3) development and piloting of appropriate business models; 4) cost reductions achieved by economies of scale; 5) mutually supportive governance models; 6) integration into library, repository, and digital learning environments; 7) the re-use of and experimentation with open access books; 8) the effective and robust archiving of open access content; and 9) knowledge transfer to stakeholders through various pilots.

Who is this Report for?

The main communities we want to reach with this report are publishers and authors/scholars (or communities of scholars), to explore how they, by experimenting and often just making simple adjustments, can start to open up and stimulate interactions around their books. Larger (commercial) publishers often have the resources to develop tools and workflows for interaction in-house (which are often proprietary). Scholar-led publishers, although they have often been at the vanguard of more experimental forms of publishing, have indicated that they still lack expertise and familiarity with more experimental forms of publishing and with the tools available to support them ([Adema and Stone 2017](#)). We therefore focus in this report on open source tools and openly and freely available resources and guidelines that can help small-scale and not-for-profit book publishers that cannot afford to build their own custom platforms, to stimulate engagement around books. We also show various examples throughout this report of how publishers, publishing collectives and platforms, authors, and scholarly communities already are stimulating interaction around books in interesting ways and the tools and practices they have adopted to do so.

This report focuses on interactions with books and on books within the humanities and social sciences in particular. Many of the types of interaction and interactive practices we describe within this report (such as for example open peer review and data mining), are being used and adopted more commonly within the STEM fields (where their uptake is also more widely researched). The humanities (and to a lesser extent the social sciences) in general have lower adoption rates where it concerns these types of practices and also have field specific preferences (as well as prejudices) towards many of these practices, which will be taken into account and further discussed in this report.

Note on Terminology

This research focuses on *interaction* with books as we deem this term sufficiently overarching to capture the various practices that we explore and promote within this report. Similarly, a term such as *engagement* with books would work well to capture the general attempt to promote the “Great Conversation” of scholarship that we want to stimulate and build upon within the humanities and social sciences. Within these fields, theories around *intertextuality* (Kristeva, Bakhtin) and *the social text* (McKenzie, McGann) have already explored in depth on a theoretical level how texts respond to each other, are connected and interwoven, and how social and dialogical links are made between them. Within a print context a clear and well-established research and publishing workflow and apparatus has already been set-up to enable and stimulate this conversation and make these connections visible and transparent, from citations and footnotes to bibliographies and indexes, and from book reviews to response articles and review essays—not to mention the elements of feedback we have set up through conferences, seminars, mailing lists etc. In an online environment this is increasingly supplemented by social media and by personal websites and blogs, but digital tools offer us the opportunity to also interact more directly with the books themselves. From annotations in the margins to open peer reviews, our scholarly conversations can increasingly be connected to, feedback into, and perhaps even reorganise our (networked) publications.

Beyond “interaction”, terms that are often used to characterise further engagement practices are “reuse” and “remix”. These terms, drawn from open culture and music production, have become familiar to many authors and publishers due to their use within Creative Commons licenses, especially those that allow the “reuse” of a work (depending on the licence, e.g., commercial reuse or derivatives), or through the focus within the open access movement on the difference between *gratis* and *libre* access (Suber 2008). This ties in with another focus within open communities, namely that on *open and social scholarship*, which focuses on stimulating the conversations around open scholarship. The issue is that for a long time within the open access movement, strategically the focus has been on providing access to books where reuse and interactive elements as well as a “rigorous critical exploration of the form of

the book itself” have seen less uptake (Adema and Hall, 2014). We will explore this in more depth in [part 1 of this report](#).

Community Knowledge Production and (Alt)metrics

This lack of a more rigorous engagement with what our system of knowledge production could be in a digital environment, i.e., one that doesn’t simply duplicate the forms and practices (quality control procedures, preservation structures, textual format) we are accustomed to from a print environment, might have to do with the lack of benefit scholars derive from more communal and interactive forms of knowledge production within our standard research quality and assessment systems. Although the main form established within a print environment to showcase scholarly interaction (i.e., references/citations) has been heavily quantified and metricised, new forms of digital interactions around texts have not necessarily been quantified in the same way (yet). Although many scholars have welcomed the development of [altmetrics](#), or even [humetrics](#), to capture these forms of digital social engagements around texts, many others have seen this transition period as an opportunity to further question the quantification (and monetisation) of the conversations we have around our research (Joy 2018).² This report focuses on and promotes communal and commons-based forms of scholarship and knowledge production, away from (a focus on) metrics and impact-based assessments and a view of scholarship or books as a commodity. However we are not naive to the importance metrics continue to play within reputation and reward systems, also within the humanities, and especially in the perception of (humanities) scholars to what constitutes quality scholarship, which will be reflected in what follows.

Interaction and the Publishing Function

How is it in the interest of or the responsibility of publishers or authors to enable, support, and stimulate interactivity around books—does this need to be a shared interest and responsibility? As we will outline more in depth at various points in this report, the roles and responsibilities of authors and publishers are changing in an online environment, and especially smaller and scholar-led publishers might have an important and advantageous role to play in rethinking publishing workflows when there is (depending on their open access business model) less commercial pressure to sell print books or derive revenue from digital ones, which is what most marketing endeavours within a print or commercial environment have traditionally focused on. The “marketing” function in this respect could be rethought to focus our endeavours much more on interactions with the publication, which we perceive in

² Note in this respect how commercial publishers are increasingly expanding into data aggregation and “research intelligence” to capture our scholarly interactions, while offering proprietary solutions for the whole pipeline of research production (Posada and Chen 2018, Larivière, Haustein, and Mongeon 2015).

this context as a shared function that publishers and authors might want to take on, where scholars and their social networks have already started to play a large role in promoting and facilitating interactions around research.

Types of Interaction

As part of our research we have identified several types of scholarly interaction taking place around books. The first part of this report is structured around some of the more common kinds of interaction that open access books afford: *open annotations*, *open peer review*, *remix and reuse*, *open and social scholarship*, and *emergent practices* (including versioning, forking, and computational interactions). This report doesn't aim to cover all forms of interaction around books but has chosen to focus on the kinds of interactions that publishers and scholars would be able to promote and recreate with relatively simple adaptations to their workflows, systems, practices, and licensing. Each of the above identified types of interaction around books will be discussed in the next section, including how we can stimulate them and what obstacles currently exist towards their more general implementation. Throughout the next part of this report we will also be providing examples from within humanities book publishing to illustrate the different kinds of interaction.

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Part 1: Interaction in Context

Janneke Adema, Sam Moore, and Tobias Steiner

Open Annotation

Web-based annotations of digital books enrich a scholarly text through overlays and filters that sit on top of the text in order to show additional commentary and feedback. Annotations—in short, a form of readerly or writerly interaction that consists of notes (in any medium) added to texts (of any medium)³—already have a long history in a print and manuscript context (e.g., marginalia, errata, rubrics), but the immediacy of two-way discussion between users is a notable feature of digital open annotations, both of comments at the bottom of a text and in-line text annotations. Bertino and Staines therefore liken annotation to a “conversation” between authors and audiences that was previously much less interactive (Bertino and Staines 2019). In addition to this, for Tara McPherson annotations (of e.g., digital visual archives) may also facilitate a more “seamless integration of research materials and scholarly analysis” through a closer presentation between commentary and the object studied (McPherson 2010). This is particularly useful in a scholarly communication environment where annotations enable discussions to take place in direct proximity to the material that is under consideration, for example with linguistic markup of text corpora.

Open online annotation fulfils several functions that can be beneficial for scholarly communication. Kalir and Garcia summarise the common purposes of annotation quite succinctly: “to provide information, to share commentary, to spark conversation, to express power, and to aid learning” (Kalir and Garcia 2021). Bertino and Staines mention that in addition to enabling collaborations and the opportunity to engage more directly with authors atop of research materials, open annotation allows feedback from readers, corrections and updates, enables inline (open) peer review, augmentation of publications with additional (multimedia) information, connections to related resources, further context around citations, and it offers opportunities within pedagogical settings.⁴ They also point out that, beyond human generated annotations, there are also opportunities to enhance content through auto-generated annotations which, as they state, “might include additional information around identifiers, controlled vocabulary, or recommendations” (Bertino and Staines 2019). In this context they explain that there are also opportunities for various semantic applications where

³ According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “Annotation” refers to “a short explanation or note added to a text or image, or the act of adding short explanations or notes” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021).

⁴ For an excellent overview of the possibilities and drawbacks of social annotation in open educational sections, which this report doesn’t engage itself with in depth, see [Brown and Croft 2020](#).

the open annotation of documents allows annotations to be “searchable by tags that make it possible to identify the type of annotation or its content” (Bertino and Staines 2019, Lange 2020).

In 2017, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the standards body for the web, published its recommended standards for web annotation in order to create, organise, and share annotations in an open way (previous annotation systems were often proprietary and closed). Their vision is for a standards-based, decentralised, and open interoperable, annotation infrastructure where open web annotation “can be linked, shared between services, tracked back to their origins, searched and discovered, and stored wherever the author wishes.”⁵ The Hypothes.is organisation—which designs annotation overlays for the Web—likens this standard, in which an annotation will be a web document itself, identified with its own URI (i.e., as they say “separating discussion about a page from the page itself”) to “democratisation” whereby users are able to share their direct comments on a publication for all to see, without permission from website gatekeepers (van den Broeke 2014).

This speaks of the participatory approach to annotated content and its potential to undermine traditional notions of proprietary authorship and authorial control over open content. Cameron Neylon describes the potential of annotation in terms of a placing the “document”, rather than the author, at the centre of attention in a way that allows the content to evolve over time based on a range of author-reader interactions (Perkel 2015). Annotation, and collaborative writing more generally, are also what Montgomery et al. describe in the introduction to their book *Open Knowledge Institutions* as an opportunity to “socialize the process of knowledge creation” by extending the “collaborative spirit” from authorship out to review and revision (Montgomery et al. 2018). There is thus an interesting interplay within open annotation between its ability to simultaneously foreground social processes of authorship while also questioning the very nature of authorial authority.

For Janneke Adema for example, annotation has the ability to enrich a document through its ability to “interweave” itself with the other voices in a project, thus presenting a textured, multi-perspective publication in one document (Adema 2018). But at the same time, for Adema, annotation poses questions about where the document actually begins and ends.⁶ Drawing on Derrida, she poses questions about how to locate the text itself once it has been annotated: “as Derrida has argued, writing in the margins—where the margin more in general takes in a liminal inside/outside position—forms a means of resistance, a disruption or blurring of the line between the central main text and the writing in the margins” (Adema 2018).

⁵ See <https://www.w3.org/annotation/>

⁶ Also see Lukas Zimmer's and Anthon Astrom's project *Lines* as a good example of the ever-expanding book (thanks to Rebekka Kieseletter for pointing out this project): <http://lines.thecafesociety.org/>

Annotation therefore points to a level of liquidity and intertextuality within a publication that disrupts what it means to have a fixed and final publication.

Rather than taking an understanding of annotation as revolutionary, some researchers of annotations have situated it as part of a continuation of the traditional standards of print publishing. For example, Kalir and Dean argue that although there may be “social, technical or political” implications of annotations for scholarship, these are ultimately “amplifications of traditional media practices” rather than entirely unique practices. Given this, annotation of scholarship simply “complements everyday activities associated with mediated information literacy, such as how people access media, curate resources, converse, and critique ideas and power” (Kalir and Dean 2017). As Kalir and Garcia argue therefore, annotation is essential to developing *knowledge communities*, where collaborative annotation technologies and practices are seen as an important social practice within these communities “to make their research processes more transparent, to participate in peer review, and to communicate with various publics” (Kalir and Garcia 2019). Kalir and Dean see annotation as a chance to fully explore the possible democratisation of media, rather than simply assuming that annotation leads to democratisation. They therefore see annotation as *performative* in the sense that it both “accentuates and helps record a number of distinctive and salient qualities about performance in scholarly production and interaction” (Kalir and Dean 2017), such as authorship, peer review, and fixity (among others). Annotation does not presuppose any specific practice, then, but may allow us to stretch the limits of certain taken-for-granted practices in scholarly publishing.

For example, through exploring the technical capacities of the born-digital monograph, Humphreys et al. show how notions of private note-taking can be upended through annotations. Marginalia, as mentioned above, is traditionally a deeply personal act whereby the reader describes their thoughts without an external reader in mind (Humphreys et al. 2018). But through digital technologies, readers are now able to export, share, and preserve their annotations for a range of audiences. It is perhaps worth mentioning the project *Derrida’s Margins* at this juncture, a project by Katie Chenoweth to transform Derrida’s personal marginalia (including post-it notes, bookmarks, index cards, and correspondence notes) into publicly-accessible annotations (Chenoweth 2018). Alongside exploring this tension between public and private, *Derrida’s Margins* highlights the technical affordances of the digital to reimagine the physicality not just of a book but of an author’s personal library too.⁷ There is thus a material component that experimental publishing through annotations sheds light on.

⁷ Also see the importance of pre-digital forms of (private) note-taking such as index cards and zettelkasten (e.g., <https://niklas-luhmann-archiv.de/>) (McCarty 2020).

As Kalir and Garcia note though, the power relations that determine who can and does write annotations and who can't and don't (*who gets to annotate*) "is bound by social norms, cultural practices, and enforced policies", which needs to be taken into consideration when we think about how we can cultivate participation and interaction around texts, especially within a scholarly communications realm (Kalir and Garcia 2021). This might explain why, as Lyle Skains sets out, notwithstanding several trials in the humanities, annotation as a form of public discourse "has not been a resoundingly successful venture" in these fields (Skains 2020). As Skains outlines, the culture of academia is to blame, which they summarise as "fears about being 'scooped', about blowback, about domineering commenters, and lack of time coalesce to result in extremely poor participation in this emerging form of discourse." In particular "time, effort, and accessibility" become barriers to participation in this form of academic engagement, especially in a context where annotations usually cannot be cited, which means that in the scholarly reward and reputation system "they offer no verifiable benefit to the contributor in either cultural capital or actual capital" (Skains 2020, Perkel 2015). At the same time, as Skains points out, the issue might have to do more with how publications themselves are perhaps not the best "platforms for interaction" because there is already ubiquitous social media (such as Twitter and mailing lists) on which publications are shared and discussions around them take place (next to our already established print-based environments dedicated to discussing books and research, e.g., conferences and book reviews). In this sense as scholars such as Skains and Faulkes argue, why would scholars duplicate that effort for specific platforms or on specific publications with more restricted audiences, with limited visibility, and with no benefit to their standing or career? (Faulkes 2014, Skains 2020)

To ensure annotations are citable research outputs, Bertino and Staines outline how preservation is both crucial and a challenge, as it should include clear practices around "storing annotations, sharing annotations, and reusing annotations." As they explain, certain organisations or knowledge communities would want to host annotations on their own servers (for example in hypothes.is they are by default stored on the hypothes.is servers), which is already being explored by some publishers.⁸ Similarly, discoverability of annotations remains an issue, where wider discoverability might to some extent address the issue Skains mentioned around the trouble with creating publics around texts. As Bertino and Staines explain, within the HIRMEOS project they worked on enhanced discoverability options for annotations made through hypothes.is. With HIRMEOS' Annotation Service, "annotations made on content that has a digital object identifier (DOI) or that refer to content that has a DOI (or both), are shared with Crossref Event Data for indexing by Google and end user

⁸ Hypothes.is can be configured to store annotation data somewhere else, which is what the HIRMEOS project and publishers such as OpenEdition Books (together with DOAB), Lever Press, and Pressbooks have done (see Part 2 for further details).

discovery. This expands the visibility of annotations and their associated content beyond the immediate context of the annotator, making them part of a wider scholarly communication infrastructure and again placing them in the context of FAIR data” ([Bertino and Staines 2019](#)).

In this respect, the promise of a platform such as [hypothes.is](#), and with that for the uptake of digital marginalia, is exactly its ubiquity. In addition to that, what makes this system potentially attractive to scholars is its options for, as Skains states “anonymity (and conversely, identification), permanent discourse records, public and private options, in-text linking, and the ability to toggle the overlay on and off” ([Skains 2020](#)). The issue of anonymity comes with both drawbacks and benefits though. As Skains explains it, where anonymity can stimulate participation (for example in peer review contexts where there is an imbalance of power), identification “encourages tactful participation”. For scholars, identification, plus the ability to cite or have a permanent record of discourse in the form of annotations, (i.e., permanent, identifiable, citable – or published – records) can be helpful for one’s standing in the field, for career progress, and for impact statements.

To ensure the power imbalances in open annotation do not lead to bullying, spam, micro-aggressions, or the domineering of certain voices, moderation of comments and annotations will be crucial, as well as—in certain academic settings—code of conducts or clear instructions for interaction. Kalir and Garcia outline how organisations such as [Hypothes.is](#) have been involved in facilitating conversations around “‘Consent and Abuse in Annotation Systems,’ with recommendations that include developing opt-out technologies for authors and strategies that balance author preferences with the public interest” ([Kalir and Garcia 2021](#), [Whaley 2016](#), [Gunn 2016](#)). There is a balance to be struck here between respecting “both authors’ ability to control how their content is annotated and the freedom of speech that protects annotation” ([Dyson 2017](#)) where many authors also see annotation as “intrusive”.⁹ Similarly annotation can both designate which voices get to count (i.e., further inscribing already dominant voices) as well as expand which voices count within a given discourse (e.g., by opening up scholarly discourses for wider public participation).

Increasingly publishers are accommodating annotation either on top of their open collections or on specific open titles, and annotations (either in the authoring environment or the reading environment) are also becoming a standard feature of long-form publishing platforms, from [CommentPress](#) to [Manifold](#), [Scalar](#), and [PubPub](#). One example of a press that has tried to accommodate annotation and conversation on some of its open access books is the MIT Press, who has been releasing various open access titles, for example from its [MIT Press Open](#) collection, on the [PubPub](#) platform to open them up for annotation and pre- or post-

⁹ See for example Audrey Watters’ argument on why she decided to explicitly block annotation overlay tools ([Watters 2017](#)) in her blog.

publication feedback. Part of this is done via their [Works in Progress programme](#), which involves works in early stages of their development that could benefit from community feedback to further develop ideas. The first work to pilot this service was [Open Knowledge Institutions](#), a book co-authored by 13 scholars as part of a “Book Sprint,” where the authors hosted the manuscript via Works in Progress. But the press has also released titles for formal assessment via their Community Review programme, which includes manuscripts of MIT Press contracted books, for example the manuscript for [Data Feminisms](#), that are posted for public comment prior to entering the publication process. But beyond these open and community review experiments they also make a selection of previously published titles available via PubPub where the content is the same as the final published version available from the Press, including a COVID 19 collection, and a selection of books from Goldsmiths Press ([Ahearn 2020](#)).

Open Peer Review

The term “peer review” did not come into widespread use until the 1960s and 70s to describe processes of “refereeing”, that originated in practices—based on an editorial system—developed by scholarly societies and communities of scholars to evaluate the intellectual merit of scholarly work. As Fyfe et al. outline, in the 60s and 70s the control of the measures of academic prestige (from the management of peer review to the development of metrics) was increasingly transferred from these communities of scholars or society publishers to commercial publishing organisations, who helped rebrand refereeing as “peer review” (([Fyfe 2015](#)), ([Fyfe et al. 2017](#))). As Fyfe et al. state, “the commercial publishers were able to colonise new sub-disciplines by adapting the societies’ editorial processes: they recruited academics to act as editors, editorial board members and referees.” This co-opted and rebranded “peer review” system turned into a vast industry and became a way for these publishers to legitimise their publications as venues for high-quality original research (([Fyfe 2015](#)), ([Fyfe et al. 2017](#)), ([Godlee 2000](#))).

This context is of particular interest if we look at the current changes again taking place and being proposed with respect to evaluation processes in a digital environment, as it makes clear, as Fyfe argues, that peer review is not inevitable and not the only possible marker of quality, but only “the currently dominant practice in a long and varied history of reviewing practices” ([Fyfe 2015](#)). The digital environment has made us question what authority is in an online setting, while at the same time offering potential opportunities to improve the evaluation and development of scholarship. This has led to various experiments with online and open peer review that focus on discussing the scholarship under review, which is what we will be focusing on in this section. We will support the argument that beyond evaluation and quality control, review practices within the humanities have been equally or more focused on

constructive review and on community knowledge production, or on the “process of collaborative improvement of research” as Knöchelmann calls it, instead of being used predominantly as a gatekeeping practice (Knöchelmann 2019). How can new forms of peer review further contribute to this co-production of knowledge?

Ross-Hellauer and Derrick, similarly moving away from a focus on quality and gatekeeping, state that peer review is a “central pillar of self-governance in all scholarly communities” (Ross-Hellauer and Derrick 2019). Yet they also acknowledge that it plays a central role in academic reward systems (from metrics to esteem and impact) as an audit and regulatory tool. They see the evolution of certain peer review practices in the humanities and social sciences derived from the sciences (e.g., its supposed role as a guarantor of facts and validity) as “a form of gradual colonisation of SSH by STEM values and notions of quality.” By regulating what counts as quality or excellence in the humanities, this is altering how these disciplines can self-govern and are able to determine what counts as qualitative independent from STEM disciplines (Ross-Hellauer and Derrick 2019). Knöchelmann argues in this respect how it is important that the humanities at large should have their own discussions around the future of peer review and around opening up peer review in a digital environment, and not leave this to be adapted from the STEM fields—or even from for example the Digital Humanities alone (Knöchelmann 2019).

Open peer review has been defined in various (sometimes contrasting) ways but in general it consists of a series of practices that aim to rethink how we conduct quality evaluation within scholarship, or otherwise filter research content. As Ross-Hellauer states “open peer review (OPR) is an umbrella term for a number of overlapping ways that peer review models can be adapted in line with the ethos of Open Science, including making reviewer and author identities open, publishing review reports and enabling greater participation in the peer review process” (Ross-Hellauer 2017).¹⁰ Not all of the practices they list under the banner of open peer review (such as open identities for example, or open review reports) necessarily stimulate online interaction with open texts. Open peer review does stimulate interaction when it takes place on the same online platform the publication has been published on, or

¹⁰ The full list of open peer review traits Ross-Hellauer mentions includes:

Open identities: Authors and reviewers are aware of each other’s identity

Open reports: Review reports are published alongside the relevant article.

Open participation: The wider community are able to contribute to the review process.

Open interaction: Direct reciprocal discussion between author(s) and reviewers, and/or between reviewers, is allowed and encouraged.

Open pre-review manuscripts: Manuscripts are made immediately available (e.g., via pre-print servers like arXiv) in advance of any formal peer review procedures.

Open final-version commenting: Review or commenting on final “version of record” publications.

Open platforms: Review is de-coupled from publishing in that it is facilitated by a different organizational entity than the venue of publication.

when it involves review on a more granular paragraph or sentence level. In this sense in a public setting, open peer review has been one of the more common applications of *open annotation* in scholarly communication. Here, annotation takes the form of open and collaborative peer review whereby researchers are invited to critique a work published online (most commonly pre-((formal) publication) using line-by-line commentary.

In comparison to the sciences, where, often in combination with the practice of publishing preprints, open peer review has really taken off, in the humanities and in the context of book publishing we haven't seen a similar development (yet). One notable and often mentioned example of open review by annotation is Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Planned Obsolescence*, a book published and reviewed online on the MediaCommons platform that allows line-by-line public annotation of texts (Fitzpatrick 2011).¹⁷ Fitzpatrick, as part of her experiments with open, community, or peer-to-peer review, has also formulated some strong critiques of the "traditional" or double-blind peer review model as it has been increasingly applied in the context of humanities book publishing too. For one, anonymous peer review, Fitzpatrick argues "effectively closes the author out of the main chronology of the conversation, which instead becomes a backchannel discussion between the reviewer and the editor" (Fitzpatrick 2011). The anonymity of authors and reviewers, implemented to prevent bias, is also seen by her and others as overrated in this system. As Fiona Godlee has argued, it doesn't seem right that authors are assessed or judged via reviewers "hiding" behind anonymity, where anonymous review "has the effect of giving reviewers power without responsibility" (Godlee 2000). This "veil of anonymity" and the assessment of research by only a very select group of experts has contributed to what Ross-Hellauer calls "the black box nature of blind peer review," and its lack of transparency and accountability (Ross-Hellauer 2017). Knöchelmann similarly talks about how double blind peer review is idealised as impartial and objective with respect to gender, nationality, institutional affiliation, or language (Knöchelmann 2019). As many scholars have already indicated though, blind peer review does not protect against reviewer bias, as the system has not been very effective in masking authorial identity (Godlee 2000, Eve 2013, Fitzpatrick 2009).

Fitzpatrick talks about alternative forms of "community-based authorisation" or crowdsourced review, that happen after publication instead of before. This opens review up beyond the opinions of a small selection of often senior scholars, which also runs the risk of being a system that breeds conservatism (e.g., towards emerging forms of knowledge). Open dialogue, as Rowe and Fitzpatrick argue "offers the possibility (...) of airing methodological or theoretical assumptions and biases rather than allowing them to remain covert points of

¹⁷ Fitzpatrick has since repeated this process for her book *Generous Thinking: The University and the Public Good*, which was available for open or community peer review on the Humanities Commons platform, again using CommentPress. The revised version was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2019.

contention within fields” (Fitzpatrick and Rowe 2010). In this context Martin Eve highlights the possible benefits of open peer review in the humanities for shedding light on what is often a secretive and opaque process where two or three reviewers have the ultimate say over whether a manuscript is published (Eve 2014). It may reveal some of the biases and unfair assumptions that can take place within traditional, closed peer review, potentially working in favour of more equitable methods of assessment.¹² It comes down to “laying bare” the mechanisms of review, making this more transparent, Fitzpatrick argues (Fitzpatrick 2012), and this includes being transparent over who the reviewers are. Their reputation might also add to the authority of the comments and with that the book under review.

An additional benefit is that readers and authors are placed in a conversation with each other, further, as Fitzpatrick calls it, “deepening the relationship between the text and its audience” (Fitzpatrick 2012). In this sense for Fitzpatrick open peer review of long-form text can help build a community around a publication in a way that starts to elide the difference between author, reviewer, and reader. Open review necessitates a collegiate approach to review, being “helpful” rather than demonstrating how “smart” one is (Fitzpatrick 2011). By facilitating a conversation between author and reviewer in the open, editorial feedback can be a collaborative process rather than one necessarily grounded in antagonism or gatekeeping. In a similar vein, Nawrotzki et al. employed open peer review on their monograph *Writing History in the Digital Age* in order to “reexamine our established practices and realign them with our scholarly values” (Dougherty and Nawrotzki 2013). Katherine Rowe talks in the context of open community review of “our crowd sourcing” where the crowd or public often remains a scholarly one, it isn’t “just anyone” commenting, there is a “preexisting community of practice” one is connecting to (Cohen 2010). Yet it also opens publications up beyond communities of practices, and to people from outside of academia, which can further enrich the dialogue.

Finally, open peer review offers improved options for the evaluation of digital scholarship. For Roopika Risam, digital scholarship necessitates a reassessment of peer review practices, particularly because it differs from traditional single-author work. Digital scholarship is “often collaborative,” “rarely finished,” and “frequently public,” meaning that new methods of assessment may be needed and appropriate (Risam 2014). As Odell and Pollock state in relation to this, “blind pre-publication peer review does not work for a digital project that (by necessity) may be required to grow, evolve and change on the open web” (Odell and Pollock 2016). Our common linear publishing and evaluation workflows therefore might need to be adapted. This would involve less assessment, validation, or gatekeeping, and more feedback

¹² Eve notes though that the problems with peer review are *social* in nature and cannot be fixed by “techno-fetishism” (Eve 2014: 146). There is therefore no guarantee that open peer review will not rehearse the biases of closed review or even lead to new forms of bias.

to roll into the next phase of the digital project. Risam argues that these qualities are affordances rather than limitations of experimental digital scholarship, meaning that it should be “best understood as part of an ongoing trend in academic discourse prevalent enough to require rethinking of the production of academic value” (Risam 2014).

One of the main drawbacks of open peer review is the tension between anonymity and openness, where open peer review can lead to the introduction of bias (e.g., gender bias) and of self-censorship, where reviewers might blunt their critique and opinions in an open setting out of fear to cause offence. The anonymity in double-blind peer review can also serve as a means to further protect early-career or untenured reviewers and authors and can provide a protective function for them in an open forum. But on the other hand, as Rowe and Fitzpatrick also indicate “junior scholars are rarely part of a traditional reviewing process” and in this sense open peer review might offer them more exposure to and experience with the review process (Fitzpatrick and Rowe 2010). Nonetheless this power imbalance in open peer review needs to be taken into consideration and should be seen as a clear challenge within open peer review practices, how can we create an online space safe for interaction?

Another clear problem is creating a sufficiently large community around a scholarly book or publication, where scholars such as Skains have also indicated that this remains an issue in open review. This relates back to what we discussed in the [previous section on open annotation](#), that there exists a general reticence to take part in open peer review having to do with the fact that (next to time-restraints) it is not sufficiently acknowledged in reward and evaluation systems. Yet at the same time the argument can be made that open peer review makes more visible the academic labour and service work that is actually done by reviewers to support their fields. In general, however, a more substantial cultural switch might be needed, in which we start to focus more on seeing review as a contribution to collective knowledge production.

A challenge that also needs to be taken into consideration is the amount of editorial labour that comes into play with setting up open peer review systems and with moderating the process. From designing and implementing a new workflow, to bringing together a community to review, there is substantial labour involved in curating this process. As Rowe and Fitzpatrick state, “in this context, the editor’s role entails something more complex than what is required when processing two reader reports, since publication decisions may involve arbitrating between multiple competing reviews” (Fitzpatrick and Rowe 2010).

What is clear is that in order to develop new systems of review online and rethink peer review both for a digital environment and in the context of the humanities and academic book publishing, the maintenance of a community around publications or publication platforms, or the creation of scholarly communication and publishing networks, might be key to any future publishing system. Scholar-led presses might have an important and privileged role to play in

this scenario as they are often deeply embedded already within certain research communities and fields. In addition to more communal forms of review, a move to forms of continual review, or review at different points of the research process, might also be needed (especially in the context of digital scholarship and experimental book publishing). This move might again also involve an investment in more *formative* forms of review. The *Public Philosophy Journal* already practices this type of peer review, which focuses, as they state on their website, on “transparency, community engagement, and ongoing, developmental conversations.” Their review process involves supporting both the publications as they go through their development *and* the people involved in the formative peer review process. They do this by setting up “review teams” which “develop an inclusive, supportive space in which ideas are explored and refined collaboratively”. For them this practice of formative review and publishing is a way to create a public and to support collegiality and academic service work.¹³ The focus here is shifted to producing knowledge as a community, which will prove essential to making this earlier mentioned cultural shift, where, as Fitzpatrick explains “for network-based publishing to succeed, the communal emphasis of network culture will have to take the lead over academic culture’s individualism” (Fitzpatrick 2009).

One research and publishing project that deserves highlighting here as it looked at annotation and open peer review as a means to foster communication between scholars, is the HIRMEOS project (High Integration of Research Monographs in the European Open Science Infrastructure). As part of this project hypothes.is was implemented as an annotation service on the OpenEdition Books platform to conduct an open post-publication peer review experiment. The objective of this experiment was to create a space both for scientific conversation around publications and to stimulate new forms of peer review. The project has been really well-documented, among others via an extensive article and a project report (Bertino and Staines 2019, Dandieu and HIRMEOS Consortium 2019). The open peer review experiment included 13 open access books from four publishers and took place over several months. The publications selected for this experiment were monographs already published and peer-reviewed and the annotations were public and open to everyone to contribute. Publishers were involved directly to act as moderators (with the aid of a project assistant), write guidelines, and suggest reviewers. Some of the more interesting takeaways of this project include the importance of community outreach activities (involving both publishers and authors) and the formulation of clear guidelines, user guides, and rules of good conduct. Workload was one of the biggest inhibitions to take part for publishers, where similarly ‘lack of time’ was the main reason for reviewers. A reviewer community was created by both publishers and authors mainly through promoting the book on social media (e.g., Twitter, blogs). One issue potential reviewers seemed to be concerned about when they were initially

¹³ See <https://publicphilosophyjournal.org/overview/> and <https://publicphilosophyjournal.org/instructions-for-participants/>

approached was that authors might not be aware that their books were being annotated, which, as the report outlines, highlights the focus on interpersonal exchanges in these kinds of experiments. This direct exchange with the author was also exactly what reviewers appreciated most about their participation. Two further observations from the publishers' side include how publishers mentioned that their first priority was to include open access in their editorial policy and workflows, where the practice of open annotation was not seen as a priority and more as something maybe for a next phase. Secondly publishers questioned whether accommodating open peer review and annotation in this way went beyond the scope of their mission as publishers. The project report has formulated various recommendations, which we will come back to in [part 3 of this report](#).

Reuse and Remix

In addition to annotation and open peer review, digital technologies afford the opportunity to reuse publications in a variety of ways through remix, reuse, and other post-publication experiments. Much of this is predicated on openly licensed research objects that enable reuse of scholarly publications. As Sarah Lippincott writes:

Digital publishing tools have emerged with a low barrier to entry and excellent user experience for both content creators and audience. These allow scholars to focus on making new forms of digital media-enhanced knowledge, rather than struggling with software. These tools work best when they exist on the open web – that is, when they can interoperate with other tools and systems, and when they facilitate reuse and remixing. Open texts facilitate creative use, reuse and engagement (Lippincott 2016).

For Lippincott, the “low barrier to entry” that digital publishing affords, coupled with the open licensing of digital texts, has created a breeding ground for experimentation through reuse and remix of long-form works.

Reuse and remix are probably most well-known within a scholarly environment through their connection to open licenses, brought on by the increasing adoption of Creative Commons licenses that allow (commercial) reuse or derivatives within academic publishing.¹⁴ In the context of the open access movement, reuse falls under the distinction introduced around 2006 by Peter Suber and Stevan Harnad between *gratis* and *libre* open access,¹⁵ capturing a positive connotation (describing kinds of access rather than kinds of access barriers) in relation

¹⁴ Lawrence Lessig research on remix has also been influential in this context where he refers to remix as a Read/Write (RW) culture, as opposed to a Read/Only (RO) culture (Lessig, 2008, 2).

¹⁵ As Suber explains, “Gratis OA removes no permission barriers and libre OA removes one or more permission barriers. (Both of them remove price barriers)” (Suber 2008).

to the removal of price and permission barriers as formulated in the 2002 Budapest Open Access Initiative (part of the BBB definition of open access). But the focus on reuse rights ultimately derives from computer science and from the open software movement, where the original *gratis/libre* distinction concerns software—or code.¹⁶

But reuse and remix can also be seen as lying at the basis of scholarly research and the academic writing process in general, where scholars build upon and extend the works and arguments of other scholars when they cite, reference, critique, analyse and reuse existing sources, and in this sense “derived use” can be seen as fundamental to the way in which scholarship builds on what has been published before and further progresses based on this. There are also specific reuse and remix practices that are already embedded in our publishing systems, such as the practice of including, republishing, or reworking previously published work in edited collections or into a monograph. And beyond that our publications themselves rework and incorporate different snippets of feedback from the various agencies involved in their production (from scholars to typesetters and designers). As Cullen and Bell argue in this context, “in its complex weaving and invocation of other works, the scholarly book is not only a fertile repository of ideas, knowledge, and research; it is also inherently social” (Cullen and Bell 2018).

Reuse and remix are practised in various ways in academia and are known under a variety of terms and concepts. *Adaptation* and *appropriation* are terms that are quite commonly used within an art and literature context, where they are mostly applied in a critical way to engage or critique issues of authorship, originality, intertextuality, ownership, and copyright. Within a legal context the terminology used most often is *open licensing*, which includes *modifications*, *derivatives*, *fair use*, or *transformative use* of texts, data, and resources, for example. And finally, within an open education context, the term *Open Educational Resources* (OER), indicating resources that are freely available for reuse by others, is most commonly used. Reuse and remix can include a variety of practices within humanities communication and publishing, including fairly common ones, such as republishing (as discussed earlier), translations, adapting books to new media (e.g., audiobooks), and the incorporation or mixing and sampling of different forms of media content (texts and images or videos for example); but they also include digital humanities derived methods of text and data mining, and data reuse (for example to create visualisations or image and media libraries or to adapt graphs, images, or diagrams). More experimental practices of remix and reuse include those in which open texts, images, or videos (e.g., vidding) are cut or mashed up or are re-interpreted as a form of critical engagement with the source texts, or are published with *libre* licenses to allow

¹⁶ Open source describes a model of peer production in which users are free to access and use (*gratis*), and modify, reuse, and collaborate on code (*libre*), for example to build new software following the reusability principles.

audiences to do so, or to explore and promote forms more equitable and collaborative forms of knowledge production.

Yet, as Martin Eve highlights, these practices are quite distinct or substantially differ from how reuse is perceived within computer science, and hence the argument for open licensing is different within the humanities—less about freedom of information and code, and more about the fact that existing copyright provisions (e.g., fair use) are not adequate to accommodate existing humanities research practices (Eve 2014). Yet beyond current copyright legislation not covering existing (collaborative and digital) research practices, many researchers also experiment with reuse and remix as a critical practice exactly *to challenge* existing liberal humanist copyright regimes and established ways of doing and publishing research and the connotations of individual authorship, originality, and the ownership of research that comes with them.

There are various reasons why open licensing might be beneficial for humanities research. For one, it can lead to a wider uptake of research, for example through translations of works. Vézina explains this as follows:

For instance, ND licenses prevent translations. Hence, given that English is the dominant language of academia, ND licenses place barriers to accessing knowledge by non-English speakers and limit the outreach of research beyond the English-speaking world. ND licenses also prevent the adaptation of the graphs, images or diagrams included in academic articles (unless separately licensed under a license permitting their adaptation), which are essential to achieve wider dissemination of the ideas expressed therein (Vézina 2020).

Peter Suber (2012) provides a quite extensive list of the benefits of academic reuse, or of libre open access, many of which involve increased accessibility:

- to quote long excerpts
- to distribute full-text copies to students or colleagues
- to burn copies on CDs for bandwidth-poor parts of the world
- to distribute semantically-tagged or otherwise enhanced (i.e., modified) versions
- to migrate texts to new formats or media
- to keep them readable as technologies change
- to create and archive copies for long-term preservation
- to include works in a database or mashup
- to make an audio recording of a text

- to translate a text into another language
- to copy a text for indexing, text-mining, or other kinds of processing

What is also important is that with open licensing reuse becomes possible without needing to request permission from the publisher or right owner. This permission seeking, as Martin Eve explains, exposes the power that publishers have to decide what gets published while at the same time putting researchers off from legitimate forms of reuse: “Such permission seeking puts copyright holders in a position to exercise veto power over the publication of research, especially research that deals with contemporary or popular media. These results demonstrate that scholars in communication frequently encounter confusion, fear, and frustration around the unlicensed use of copyrighted material. These problems, driven largely by misinformation and gatekeeper conservatism, inhibit researchers’ ability both to conduct rigorous analyses and to develop creative methodologies for the digital age” (Eve 2014). Similarly, with legislation differing worldwide, clear open licensing (for example in the form of Creative Commons licenses) supports the further uptake or reuse and remix practices in research.

Due to technological advancements, data-mining and associated technologies, such as visualisation and re-use of collections (e.g., large electronic text collections via methods of distant reading (Moretti 2000)) are now within the reach of even the “lay” humanist not well versed in computational methods. However, as Matthew Kirschenbaum points out, there “is a deep tradition of scepticism towards quantitative and empirical techniques among humanists, which too often smack of positivism and objectivity in domains for which interpretation, ambiguity, and argumentation are prized far above ground truth and definitive conclusions.” (Kirschenbaum 2007). Yet as Kirschenbaum makes clear, these methods are rooted in long-standing humanistic methods of reading and communication and are simply being further developed with the aid of the digital medium.

What is currently preventing the adoption of reuse, remix, and collaboration within the humanities is predominantly researcher inhibitions perpetuated by institutional structures and requirements. As Kathleen Fitzpatrick writes, academics are extremely conservative in their publishing practice and resistant to changing their ways of working, citing ‘We Have Never Done It That Way Before’ as a good motto for the academy more generally (Fitzpatrick 2011). One of the main critiques put forward by humanities scholars towards reuse and remix practices and open licensing is that they interfere with the academic integrity of their works, especially in cases where these practices concern perceived misuse of research (e.g., libel, plagiarism, false attribution, piracy). Yet as Vézina argues, copyright and open licensing in general are not the best frameworks to address issues of misuse of research, as this is mainly addressed through institutional and social norms and moral codes of conduct around plagiarism and misappropriation (Vézina 2020). Neither traditional copyright, nor open licensing protect against research misuse, as Eve argues: “After all, works whose copyright

has expired (therefore holding none of these protections and which the law explicitly permits anyone to use in any fashion) are still subject to these intra-academic norms. Conversely, others have sometimes built valuable, digital, scholarly projects around such works; enterprises that would be practically impossible without permission to modify the original" (Eve 2014).

Others go even further in their critique of these practices, where it is not only misuse that they condemn. For example, the historian Peter Mandler outlines how any remixing or reusing of humanities texts is problematic where he stands by the unique originality of our words as researchers. As he explains, "our form of words is unique to us and it cannot be dismembered and mixed with the words of others." This he states would lead to plagiarism as it doesn't allow us to distinguish anymore (through quotations) which words are owned by whom. Related to this is the strong normative assumptions of the proprietary nature of scholarship, or the idea that (the level of) reuse should be determined by the individual author of a publication. Many of these objections to reuse arise in the literature around Creative Commons licenses, particularly CC BY, that provide blanket permission to reuse scholarship (if attribution is provided). Mandler describes this as the "booby-traps" for humanities scholars that are embedded with the CC BY license, particularly the ability of a scholar to remix content in ways of which the original author does not approve:

Often it is very difficult to work out how the work has been changed, and meanwhile the new work acquires authority not only from the name but from the words of the original author. There are lots of reasons why humanities scholars – and indeed many scientists, who when given a choice most often prefer a 'non-derivative' license over CC BY – have promoted other CC licenses that facilitate open access but not this kind of reuse. For one thing, we do not have full ownership of our texts ourselves – we use others' words and images, often by permission (Mandler 2014).

Mandler posits an association with CC BY, reuse, and a lack of control over what happens to their work once it has been reused, where remixing and reusing scholarship for him undermines the authority of the original author. Such scepticism of the CC BY license is common within the humanities, particularly in response to policy consultations that mandate CC BY as the default license for open access (Kingsley 2016, The British Academy 2018, Arts and Humanities Alliance 2019).

Gary Hall interrogates the scepticism with CC BY from an alternative perspective that it affords *too much* control to the original author by requiring attribution and thus associating the work as property of the author. This works against reuse by preventing the creation of a "common stock" of digital materials to be used and reused by whomever wants to do so. Instead, CC BY presumes that the digital material is the author's "property" and so offers merely a reformist take on intellectual property instead of a fundamental critique of it (Hall

2016). For Hall, then, the kinds of reuse and remix encouraged (but not completely supported) by CC BY would thus depend on the dismantling of the “unified, sovereign, proprietorial subject” (Hall 2016). Similarly, Janneke Adema writes “although remix practices in academia (...) have the potential to shake up the authorship function, until now they have not managed to dethrone the traditional academic author-god—and in some cases, they even reinforce her or him” (Adema 2021a).

In practice though, many humanities scholars find potential remix of their books problematic as it interferes with their propriety and sense of ownership of their texts. This is not surprising given how authorship functions within academia, where, as we outlined previously, single authored, original thoughts and publications are preferred, and remix, reuse, and other more collaborative forms of research (e.g., creating databases) are not as readily acknowledged as scholarly research, meaning there is little incentive for scholars to (further) experiment with these forms and practices.

Another complication with reuse is in cases where it concerns the reuse of indigenous or community knowledge, for example in anthropological settings, where “questions of ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP) of intellectual property and cultural materials are key considerations for Indigenous communities, who since the time of contact with settler populations have seen their cultural content stolen, misappropriated, and misrepresented” (Cullen and Bell 2018). In addition to this traditional and indigenous knowledge often has its own cultural and access protocols, determining if and how that knowledge can be (re)used and circulated, by whom, and under which conditions, which also further complicates common open-closed binaries (Christen 2012). As Bell and Cullen point out, the publishing process, with its focus on copyright, single authorship, and the bound book (which implies knowledge is not always easily available for further remix by the community) often doesn’t accommodate collaboration with diverse knowledge communities. As they explain, “authors and local communities often note, however, that fruitful collaborations often end once a manuscript is ‘in press.’ At that point, the academic author assumes full responsibility for seeing the book through the editorial and production processes to publication. And when authors and publishers do attempt to do justice to the rich content at their disposal (audio files, film, images of cultural artefacts), they run up against a publication process that reinstates old authorial hierarchies and the limitations of the printed book” (Cullen and Bell 2018). Indigenous and traditional knowledge is often audio-visual, which modern digital recording, transmission, and preservation technologies lend themselves well to. In this sense, as they state: “In these fields, there is a pressing need for a different kind of publishing, both for collaborative authorship and for more flexible, interactive publications” (Cullen and Bell 2018). What is important in this context, as Okune et al. have outlined, is that clear research contracts with indigenous communities are set-up and co-

designed with the communities “to define when, where and how their community knowledge is used by external researchers” (Okune et al. 2019).

Cullen and Bell explain how the books they are publishing at UBC Press, which draw upon indigenous resources or databases, can, through open licensing (in their case through the use of [Traditional Knowledge Licenses](#)) be accessed, shared, and repurposed while respecting cultural protocols and different understandings of OCAP. For them, even though the books and the collections they draw upon remain separate, it proved essential to link the books back to the project or materials they were researching, to ensure the books themselves again become part of the indigenous commons: “It was critical to the research teams, however, that the books remain a part of the project’s full suite of outcomes and resources” (Cullen and Bell 2018). The reuse of resources included in books also remains an issue within other settings in relation to third-party rights, for example in the case of images, and/or musical, or choreographical scores included within books. In many arts and humanities disciplines the rights to research materials are owned by others who need to provide permission for their reproduction. This has made it more difficult to attach open licenses to books as a whole.

Due to these (often perceived) legal and moral difficulties around reuse and remix in the humanities and for books in particular, within the open access movement *libre* access has often (as a matter of strategy) been de-prioritised in order to focus first and foremost on making the majority of the research accessible online without a paywall (*gratis* open access) (Adema and Hall 2013). Once this is achieved, activists such as Stevan Harnad have argued, *libre* forms of open access can be explored (Harnad 2012). Yet many others fear that this strategy has led to a reduced uptake of reuse and remix within the humanities and further strengthens the general tension within open access between access and openness (Moore 2017). A further complication might be that the *libre* open access strategy has in most settings combined commercial reuse with the right to derivatives and modifications (i.e. a focus on the CC BY license), where for example in the context of much publishing in Latin-America—where, different national and regional contexts notwithstanding, the focus is predominantly on non-commercial scholarship and publishing—there is a distrust of CC BY’s focus on commercial reuse (Lujano 2017).

Other literature on inhibitions towards reuse and collaboration focus on more technical considerations around software design and implementation. Writing about University of Minnesota’s *Manifold* software, Kasprzak and Smyre highlight how experimental practices need to be embedded within a publishing workflow from the outset. As reuse tends to occur after a work has been published, workflows for iterative publishing need to adopt a more holistic approach to experimental publishing that recognises different starting points within each publishing process (the “end point” of one publication may be the beginning of another). Publishers need to therefore get involved with the editorial workflow in order to

“feel comfortable” with the ideas from the early stages (Kasprzak and Smyre 2017). Ball and Eyman explore similar issues from the perspective of the editorial workflow, or the lack of “any editorial management systems available to support this kind of publishing”. Editorial management system design requires consideration of a host of new practices of open review, citation, version control and collaborative review of what they term “webtexts” (Ball and Eyman 2015).

One often-cited example of reuse and remix is the *Living Books About Life* book series published by Open Humanities Press and edited by Clare Birchall, Gary Hall, and Joanna Zylinska. This series “repackaged” previously published open access content into curated edited collections on particular themes. The books in this series are “living” in the sense that they are “open to ongoing collaborative processes of writing, editing, updating, remixing and commenting by readers” (Birchall, Hall, and Zylinska n.d.). In doing this, the researchers showed the ability of reuse to deconstruct some of our preconceptions of what a book actually is, leading Gary Hall to pose the question: “What do we have the right not to call a ‘book’” (Hall 2013). As Janneke Adema writes, *Living Books About Life* displays a “continued theoretical reflection on issues of fixity, authorship and authority, both by its editors and by its contributors in various spaces connected to the project” (Adema 2015). Some observations from the original project included the lack of familiarity of the editors of the collection with open licensing and which publications they were allowed to reuse, next to a lack of actual remixing taking place on the level of the wiki-books (which might have partly to do with how they were still presented as “books” with clear authors and cover pages on the platform). However, on the level of conceptual experimentation with the aim of stimulating conversations around what a scholarly book is and can be (amongst others on the project blog) the project can be said to have made quite some impact (Adema 2021a). It has also stimulated experimentation with living books by other publishers and author communities, including at least three further adaptations of the model, namely *The Living Bibliography of Animal Studies*, *Living Books about History*, and *En busca del quelite perdido*.

Within the COPIM project we have been experimenting with still other practices of remix and reuse, including as part of one of our Pilot Projects, *Combinatorial Books: Gathering Flowers*, which explores and encourages the revisiting and *rewriting* of books within the Open Humanities Press catalogue as a means of generating radical new responses to them. This Pilot Project wants to create a research and publishing workflow that enables the creation of new combinatorial books out of existing open access books (or collections of books) that are available for reuse. For its [first iteration](#), a group of Mexican scholars and technologists is rewriting and “re-composing” *The Chernobyl Herbarium: Fragments of an Exploded Consciousness* by philosopher Michael Marder and artist Anaïs Tondeur “through disappropriation as much as appropriation” (following Cristina Rivera Garza), where the re-writing team is envisioning re-writing as an “exposing the incomplete, processual nature of

any text; it is about making time and taking the time, and it is about relating to others in accountable ways” (Adema, Hall, and Cota 2021).

Open and Social Scholarship

The opening up of scholarship (beyond gratis and libre openness) includes making sure that books and publications are connected or networked more directly and that conversations around scholarship can arise. For many scholars, “openness” does not mean a lot if there is no actual engagement around a work or if no further connections are being made with related scholarship. Open access, or making books openly available, is in this respect not an end in itself in a scholarly communication context, where openness might also have to include “active collaboration, community building, and knowledge mobilization” (Arbuckle, Meneses, and Siemens 2019). Scholarly conversations are partly reflected in our referencing systems, but digital tools and networked environments open up the possibility for our books to be engaged with more extensively and directly. However, this engagement can be hampered by the sheer volume of work being published and the lack of time available to scholars to interact with it in a meaningful way, which means filtering for relevance has become an essential knowledge management strategy (for example by publishing in certain venues). But beyond preventing “filter failure”, authors and publishers might also want to think about presenting open scholarship in such a way that others want to engage with it. As Alyssa Arbuckle argues: “straightforward access does not suffice for all readers—how can we present research in ways that our colleagues across disciplines and institutions, as well as other members of the general public, can find, understand, and use?” (Arbuckle 2019). How can we facilitate “social knowledge creation, public engagement, and broad collaboration” in a move that Arbuckle and her colleagues from the [INKE partnership](#) have formulated as a move from open access to open, social scholarship, or scholarship that is more socially engaged?

Social media has been very influential in this context, as has the increasing networked state of our knowledge, which has enabled us to create communities around our scholarship, and likewise open and digital books have played an active role in the creation of communities (Fitzpatrick 2011; Hyde 2016; McHardy 2021). As Maxwell argues in this respect “publication is not making things available to a pre-existing public; it is the very constitution or gathering of that public” (Maxwell 2015). Creating these relationalities around books to be able to connect with others also partly determines their relevance, where, as Maxwell argues, relevance is not only defined by our publication venues, but it is much more dynamic and is defined in an ongoing way by the engagement of readers. In this sense, as he argues, we can increase the relevance of our publications by “making it more easily linkable, shareable, portable, commentable, convertible, and transformable” (Maxwell 2015). McGregor and Guthrie are similarly interested in exploring how beyond offering free access to our publications, we can enable more “productive use” of our research (which relies on several

factors, from promoting literacy and awareness, to access to technology), where Maxwell focuses on how we can enable more “transformational uses by scholars and other readers” (McGregor and Guthrie 2015; Maxwell 2015).

Within the humanities and social sciences, most marketing, dissemination, and discovery has traditionally been done by publishers. But increasingly scholars themselves through their networks and via social media, and through their establishment as “academic brands” or “entrepreneurs of themselves” within the scholarly reputation economy, play an important role in the promotion of research (Hall 2013). Digital tools and networked environments make it easier to create communities around books, where a project or platform such as for example *CommentPress*, was set up to channel the social and participatory strengths of the blog format into a (book) publication platform. Fitzpatrick asked specifically whether we could refashion the blog form to “enable social interaction around long-form texts” (Fitzpatrick 2007). The digital text in this sense is very well suited to, as Fitzpatrick states “produces the greatest possible readerly and writerly engagement, that enables both the intensive development of an idea within the bounds of the electronic text and the extensive situation of that idea within a network of other such ideas and texts” (Fitzpatrick 2007). Hypertext, as a networked data structure, has been crucial in creating this interaction, for example by de-linearising text, and by promoting readerly interaction and interconnections between texts via hyperlinks. Hypertext, as Fitzpatrick argues was thus seen as “a means of creating a new, more active relationship between the reader and the text”, where *CommentPress* was set up to fulfill this need of situating long-form text “within a social network, within the community of readers who wish to interact with that text, and with one another through and around that text” (Fitzpatrick 2007). In a way what we want to recreate with our social and networked text, she argues, is the digital equivalent of a “coffeehouse” or even of a scholarly conference.

But next to engagements around or connected to books and their publication platforms—as exemplified in *CommentPress* or platforms such as *PubPub* or via practices such as open annotation and open peer review—social interactions and conversations around research also take place elsewhere (and maybe increasingly so), on different communication platforms. Similar to how we discuss research at physical or online conferences, conversations are taking place on social media or on dedicated and often proprietary platforms, making connections to the publications being discussed via hyperlinking and tags. Next to “academic” Twitter and Facebook these conversations are also taking place on Social Research Sharing Networks (SRSNs) such as Academia.edu, ResearchGate, and Humanities Commons. Although academics use of social media goes well beyond conversations or discussions around specific pieces of scholarship, there is of course a clear opportunity here for scholars and publishers to both explore how they can harness these platforms more to increase engagement around scholarship and how they can make links back to the scholarship under discussion to ensure these conversations are collected, findable, and archived. At the same time it is a matter of

concern how these “external conversations” for a large part take place on commercial networks or platforms, some of which (such as for example academia.edu) are directly invested in creating profits based on scholarly interactions on these platforms (and often ask scholars to pay to access their interactive features as part of their business models) (Adema and Hall ongoing). Making these kinds of conversations that take place elsewhere visible and findable is also increasingly being explored by alternative evaluation systems such as altmetrics that collect and collate these disparate online conversations, but in the form of a metric that says little about the actual conversations taking place or the relationalities between publications that are being woven. As Maxwell argues in this respect, how can we “re-inscribe the relation between works, publications, and discourse more broadly” (Maxwell 2015). Fitzpatrick makes clear here that “the issue of engagement, moreover, is not simply about locating the text within the technological network, but also, and primarily, about locating it within the social network” and from there “making those conversations as accessible and inviting as possible should be the goal in imagining the textual communications circuit of the future” (Fitzpatrick 2007).

One clear example of long-form scholarship that has made use of the affordances of social scholarship and social media are hashtag syllabi (#Syllabus), which are found on the Internet and are “often compiled by people inside and outside of the academe, including activists and scholars and are often People of Color, women, and other minoritized peoples” (Lyons 2019; Graziano, Mars, and Medak 2019). Other examples include crowd-sourced projects (often drawing on citizen science and citizen scholarship principles) such as *Transcribe Bentham*, where the public was asked to assist with transcribing the manuscripts of the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, which were subsequently used in the production of the edition of *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*. A great resource to explore additional works of open social scholarship is the *Open Social Scholarship Annotated Bibliography*, where the bibliography is itself an example of open social scholarship too, as “the authors of the ‘Open Social Scholarship Annotated Bibliography’ enacted social knowledge creation practices in the assemblage of this bibliography by collaboratively setting the intellectual direction of the work, compiling resources, and annotating them” (El Khatib et al. 2019).

Emergent Practices: Versioning, Forking, and Computational Interactions

Various forms of interaction and engagement around texts and publications are experimented with within a STEM or Digital Humanities environment initially, from where they then become more widely applied and used in general humanities and social sciences contexts too. This is the case with several of the practices described above, for example (open peer review, open annotation etc.)—although the humanities itself also has an established track record of being at the vanguard of experimenting with hypertext, networked books, and new emergent genres. This final section describes various interactive practices that are increasingly used in

STEM and DH but that are making their way into wider scholarly contexts too. One of these is *versioning*, also known as processual, iterative, or continuous publishing, which is a practice that within STEM fields has been initially pioneered with the use of preprints and postprints, for example. Adema (Adema 2021b) argues that as “a concept and practice, *versioning*, as it has come to be used within academic research and publishing, refers to the frequent updating, rewriting, or modification of academic material that has been published in a formal or informal way. As a practice, it has affinity with software development, in which it is used to distinguish the various installments of a piece of software.” However, she explains that versioning and revision has a rich tradition within the humanities too (see disciplines such as textual criticism, for example). Increasingly open publishing platforms that focus on humanities and social sciences fields have started to formally incorporate versioning and options to update and revise works. PubPub and the [Manifold Scholarship](#) publishing program are two key examples here, which allow material (text, data, sound, video) to be added to a publication as it progresses or is iteratively published. With the possibility to keep changelogs and previous versions available, the modifications, interactions, comments, annotations, and updates to publications can become more visible, which offers possibilities to highlight the co-creation of and engagement with scholarship. Various [experiments](#) with versioning in the humanities and social sciences have previously taken place, including Lawrence Lessig’s [Code 2.0](#) and McKenzie Wark’s [Gamer Theory](#), for example.

Another form of interaction not dissimilar from versioning is the practice of *forking*, similarly derived from software development. Forking refers to the creation of a derivative version of a previously published text or publication to make revisions to it or customise it to a different context. [Syllabi are for example sometimes ‘forked’](#) to be adapted to specific courses or educational environments. Where versioning often happens by the same (group of) authors of the original text, forking tends to involve different author communities, and can be seen as a more direct *reuse* of existing research in this sense. But forking books is also being proposed as a potential future for publishing by scholars such as Sarah Ciston and Mark Marino, who describe their experiment in forking Soon and Cox’s book *Aesthetic Programming* as “participating in the development of their book and the evolution of the codex book itself from a static product into an ongoing, iterative, process” (M. C. Marino and Ciston 2021). As they describe it their fork both reuses and extends the existing book and as to the conversation, as they state “following the ‘yes-and’ ethos of its collaborating first authors.” Previously developed forking and collaborative scholarship projects include [Workbench](#) (now obsolete), a fork of the publishing platform Scalar, designed by Jessica Pressman, Mark C Marino, and Jeremy Douglass in collaboration with Lucas Miller, Craig Dietrich, and Erik Loyer. Workbench promoted scholarly collaboration by allowing scholars to “create, join, or clone online arguments enhanced with multimedia content” where “the clone feature allows scholars to copy entire books so they can build their own interpretations” (M. Marino 2015).

Beyond versioning and forking, still based on human iterations and adaptations, interaction with texts increasingly also happens in automated ways (e.g., through automated discovery) or through computational interactions.¹⁷ Computational interactions are increasingly important to establish semantic links in plain texts, but what is needed to support this is that texts are machine readable, which will allow semantic discovery and the linking of online texts and data (for example indexes and references in scholarly books) as well as further text and data mining and distant reading applications (Kirschenbaum 2007). Yet beyond the lack of openly available books in the humanities, the prevalence of the static PDF format in open publishing has been much derided within DH circles and by scholars experimenting with networked books and semantic linking (Walkowski 2019). Notable projects that have explored linking and networking (collections of) books (or data within and connected to books) include the [Enhanced Networked Monographs](#) (ENM) project, an experimental publishing project funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which provided an integrated index based on back-of-book indexes of a corpus of 110 back-list scholarly monographs from various (mainly humanities) disciplines by extracting topics from indexes, which were subsequently curated and presented on a platform for reading (Provo 2019).

But beyond the need to situate texts and books into technological networks, there is still the need to situate them, as the Fitzpatrick quote mentioned earlier, within a social network too, “within the community of readers who wish to interact with that text, and with one another through and around that text.” Similarly, Christie (2014) argues that interactivity is “not (uniquely) a function of interface, but rather one of interpretation and argument.” In this respect, Christie argues, it is the combination of interactivity as both an aspect of scholarship *and* a design principle, that will help us make strategic infrastructural investments to ensure attention and engagement are optimally cultivated. The next section of this report will discuss some of the ways, tools, technologies and platforms can stimulate this kind of engagement, while discussing and showcasing examples of publishing projects, best practices, and guidelines to support this.

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¹⁷ There are also further options for augmented reality interactions, to bridge the connection between print and digital and enhance print or hybrid publications with digital interactions.

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Part 2: Tools and Technologies

Tobias Steiner, and Janneke Adema

The second part of this report outlines and showcases various open-source tools, software, technologies, platforms, infrastructures, guidelines, and best practices, that could be adopted by publishers and authors (or by publishers and authors working in collaboration with each other) to support and enable further interaction around their books. For a more general overview of collaborative tools, platforms, and workflows that support the creation of experimental books, we would like to refer you to COPIM's research and scoping report [Books Contain Multitudes](#) which we published earlier this year, with a particular focus on the report's [Part 3](#) "Technical Workflows and Tools for Experimental Publishing". As outlined in this report, we decided to limit our exploratory scope to open source solutions so as to maximise the possibility of re-use, which is what we would similarly do in this report. Similar to Sarah Kember's assertion that "[e]xperimenting with academic writing and publishing is a form of political intervention, a direct engagement with the underlying issues of privatization and marketization in academia" ([Kember 2014](#)),

we see this investigation of approaches of how to re-use digital long-form scholarship as a similar intervention. Following the different forms of interaction that have been identified in this report's [Part 1](#), we explore in this section forms of interaction such as open annotation, open peer review, remix and reuse, open social scholarship, and various emergent practices, on which we try and map the corresponding technological dependencies as well as tools and platforms that facilitate this interaction. Beyond dissecting the technical underpinnings of these different approaches to foster interaction with open access books, we also showcase potential re-use scenarios.

In the following paragraphs, we outline some of the affordances—and linked digital practices—of the tools and platforms we consider in this report, to provide an overview of their distinctive elements, but also to point to overlaps and conceptual entanglements where clear-cut separation of practices may not be desirable. As will become clear in the subsequent paragraphs, the tools and platforms presented here often do not directly mirror the forms of interaction that have been outlined in [Part 1](#) in a one-to-one relationship. On the contrary, many platforms make a point of seeking to establish an ecosystem that offers and connects several workflows.

As outlined in the first part of this report, we use "interaction" as an umbrella term to denote a set of practices that enhance engagement with a publication and, to borrow from literary theory, to extend its meaning through, for example, hypertextual modifications that, as Kathleen Fitzpatrick notes, "produce texts that are no longer discrete or static, but that live

and develop as part of a network of other such texts, among which ideas flow” (Fitzpatrick 2011).

Open Annotation and Open Peer Review

Following the first part of this report, web-based annotation of digital books can be thought of as “a way to enrich a scholarly text through overlays and filters that sit on top of the text in order to show additional commentary and feedback.” On a technical level, annotation usually happens *in situ*, i.e., on top of an existing publication. With physical books, this usually happens in the margins of a book or manuscript. In the digital realm, though, this practice has proliferated: one common form of *indirect* annotation includes commenting at the end of a publication, separate from the main text body (see for example the comments section of blogging platforms such as *blogger* or *WordPress*) or what the W3C describes as being “maintained separately from annotation document” (W3C Digital Publishing Interest Group 2014). Due to the detached nature of this form of annotation, such commentary tends to be more conducive to summative feedback.

Other more creative forms facilitate *direct* annotation by adding an extra (digital) layer over the original publication—a layer that often allows direct referencing of granular elements (specific words, segments, paragraphs), thus enabling the reader to provide feedback via textual or multimedia means, or by adding contextual references such as metadata to enrich the underlying text, e.g., by creating a semantic network that sets a given publication in relation to other publications (hyperlinking, linked open data).

As discussed in more detail in Part 1 of this report, **Open Peer Review** is “an umbrella term for a number of overlapping ways that peer review models can be adapted in line with the aims of open science”, and “a diverse cluster of interrelated yet distinct innovations that aim to bring open science principles like transparency, accountability, and inclusivity to the peer review process” (Ross-Hellauer 2017).

Open Peer Review of scholarly books can be facilitated through a variety of means, many of which make use of commenting, annotation and/or versioning, depending on the chosen mode of interaction with the publication under review. More traditional forms of peer review maintained a separation between the review and the book under review, for example by using structured review forms, or book reviews published post publication. Digital annotation enables reviewers to write directly in or on the book under review, creating a more immediate and interactive experience.

In the COPIM Report *Books Contain Multitudes* (2021), we broadly differentiate between tools and platforms: on the one hand, we consider tools that facilitate annotation as part of a larger collaborative environment that mainly focuses on the writing and publishing process (see platforms such as PubPub, CryptPad, etc. as discussed in the [Collaborative Writing](#)

[overview](#)). On the other hand, there exist a variety of specialist platforms that focus on the facilitation of annotation as their main purpose, either within a given platform's boundaries (see e.g., Rescogito, CATMA), or as tools that can be used across platforms and independently from their base text's locations (e.g., Hypothes.is).

Platform-agnostic / Overlay Annotation Tools

The following tools are highlighted here because they work as platform-agnostic/-independent implementations. Adhering to the [Open Annotation Guiding Principles](#), these tools facilitate an overlay service that can be used in conjunction with (almost) every existing website, platform and/or digital document.

hypothes.is

[hypothes.is](#) is an open source project that has evolved out of the development work undertaken in the W3C Web Annotation Working Group. As Mars et al. write,

“the project gathered a scholarly coalition (Annotating All Knowledge (AAK)¹⁸) — a group that includes more than seventy scholarly publishers and platforms. Their mission is to ‘deploy annotations across much of scholarship’ [and, to us] seems [a very] reasonable and hopefully sustainable [approach]. Hypothes.is has a special partnership program with publishers and educational institutions which often results in new features and spin-off projects, including a collaboration with the RadiumJS team to bring annotations to EPUBs, initiated by NYU Press” (Mars, Steiner, and Adema 2021).

[Hypothes.is](#) is seeing wide-spread adoption across the Higher Education sector, and is featured in a variety of open publishing as well as open education projects to foster uptake of social annotation practices (see (Kalir and Garcia 2021),¹⁹ and [Part 1](#) of this report), which is supported on a technical level through the provision of a set of tools to help integrate [hypothes.is](#) functionality in a variety of other platforms also used for open access book publishing such as WordPress, Omeka, Open Monograph System etc.²⁰

The platform-agnostic nature of [hypothes.is](#) makes the tool a versatile candidate for implementation in third-party environments. One example use case seems particularly noteworthy in this context. The High Integration of Research Monographs in the European Open Science (HIRMEOS) infrastructure project (also [discussed in Part 1](#))—sought to create a

¹⁸ See <https://hypothes.is/annotating-all-knowledge/> and the FORCE11 Annotating All Knowledge working group.

¹⁹ <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/annotation>

²⁰ See <https://web.hypothes.is/tools-plugin-ins-and-integrations/>

set of services to enhance re-use and integration of monographs into the larger European open science ecosystem. The project developed the **HIRMEOS Annotation service**, which facilitated open annotation for digital books for the publisher [OpenEdition](#), based on [hypothes.is](#). This service enhances capabilities towards creating annotations with an implementation of annotation-specific DOIs, and also enables storage and long-term preservation, re-use and sharing of the annotation record and associated data.²¹ The chosen approach is described in more detail in ([Bertino and Staines 2019](#)), as well as in the HIRMEOS Fact Sheet “[Annotation Service for Digital Monographs](#)”. An overview of the books selected for their annotation and open peer review experiment has been made [available online](#).

Another use case that deploys the [hypothes.is](#) model for annotation is **Fulcrum**. This publishing platform, which is developed by Michigan Publishing and focuses on the integration of a variety of multimedia content types such as interactive maps, datasets, 3D models, images, timelines, etc.²² into digital open access books—while also taking into account the preservation of these content types—announced in 2019 that it would implement [hypothes.is](#) annotation features with books published by Lever Press on the Fulcrum platform, while also [hinting at the possibility of making this feature available](#) for other publishers’ output on its platform at a later date.

PressBooks is another interesting use case to mention here because it integrates [hypothes.is](#) in their WordPress-based publishing platform via the annotation tool’s [excellent plugin](#) to facilitate reader feedback. As PressBooks is also used as a platform to publish and disseminate OER textbooks, the integration of an annotation layer is also key to fostering student engagement with a given text.²³

Pundit Annotator

Similar to [hypothes.is](#), **Pundit Annotator** has existed for quite some time, and is currently in the early stages of being re-developed from scratch to ensure full implementation of the W3C Annotation standard that came into effect in 2017.²⁴ Conceived as a peer-review platform that leverages openly-available open access content via arXiv, OAPEN, and Knowledge Unlatched, and supported by the European Commission-funded TRIPLE project that is part of

²¹ See the HIRMEOS Annotation service technical specifications at [10.5281/zenodo.1343519](https://zenodo.org/record/1343519)

²² For a presentation of Fulcrum’s capabilities, see e.g., <https://vimeo.com/390508545>

²³ See <https://pressbooks.org/> and <https://pressbooks.directory/> for a wide selection of examples of research monographs as well as textbooks.

And e.g., <https://guide.pressbooks.com/chapter/hypothesis-for-webbook-annotation-comments/> for Pressbooks’ implementation of [hypothes.is](#).

²⁴ See e.g., Grassi et al. 2013, and Di Donata et al., 2013.

OPERAS,²⁵ Pundit will become a service offered as part of the GOTRIPLE platform, which in turn is conceived to play its part in the *European Open Science Cloud* ecosystem, and is thus seeing integration of multi-platform sign-on capabilities,²⁶ which will allow researchers to use the annotation service Pundit Annotator. While the project used to have its own open-source repository, it is not clear at this point whether the new version 3.0 will also be made openly available.²⁷ What is also interesting is the fact that the development team hint at a collaboration with *hypothes.is*, which will potentially lead to more cross-platform interoperability in this space — with both tools soon being envisioned to enable re-use of each other’s annotation data.

“Standalone” Fixed-ecosystem Annotation Platforms

Many annotation experiments in scholarly communication happened in the early 2010s, when the development of a key javascript library (AnnotatorJS) meant that an introduction of annotation functionality would be rather easy to facilitate. Nonetheless, the creation of an efficient and sustainable annotation environment was not trivial. The subsequent inclusion of the work that had informed AnnotatorJS into the W3C Annotation framework in 2017 was welcomed by the community, but also meant that much of the earlier javascript-based development work had become obsolete. As evidenced in the overviews provided by [Max Planck Institute for the History of Science \(MPIWG\)](#) and AnnotatorJS’s own [showcase page](#), many of the platforms that had been established during the early 2010s to enable annotation subsequently [ceased active development](#), while a smaller subset decided to invest and re-build their platforms to implement the new W3C annotation standard.

²⁵ Pundit will become part of the GOTRIPLE platform, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9a6vDQYf4Q>

²⁶ Login is possible via Facebook, Google, and the federated EGI service, which in turn offers identification via ORCID, the eduGAIN consortium and its participating HEI’s logins, GitHub, Bitbucket, LinkedIn, WeChat, Elixir, etc.

²⁷ See <https://web.archive.org/web/20200910111747/https://github.com/net7/pundit2> for an archived version of Pundit 2.0.

Overview of annotation-specific standalone tools

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	ANNOTATION TOOLS	Short description	standalone or cross-platform	Collaborative / Multi-user annotation	Annotation as comment	Other forms of annotation? (beyond commenting)	Annotation export?	Level of expertise to use
2	hypothes.is	browser-based tool for making annotations on web pages. Can be integrated with other tools / platforms, functions as an overlay on existing content (so the annotation source can live anywhere on the web)	standalone, cross-platform	yes	yes	no	yes, in development	regular user
3	Recogito	a web-based environment for collaborative semantic annotation. It is open source software, and provides support for working with either text or image documents.	standalone	yes?	yes	yes	yes	regular user
		an online collaborative annotation tool. You can highlight, colour-code, write notes and action tags to						

Figure 1: Overview of open-source annotation platforms. Spreadsheet at <https://tiny.cc/copim-annotation-overview>

While annotation-specific platforms such as Rescogito, CATMA, Annotation Studio and eMargin are definitely worthy of further exploration, we'd like to take the opportunity here and highlight three emerging platforms that follow an integrated approach to collaborative writing and annotation and that also specifically accommodate books or long-form texts, focusing on the social aspect of collaborative interaction with the text, and thus aim to provide a seamless experience across many steps of the publishing workflow.

Scalar

Scalar, the multimedia publishing platform hosted by the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture (ANVC), provides options to annotate video, audio, images, source code, and text. By establishing relational links between various kinds of content, Scalar introduces an elaborate taxonomy to facilitate a wide range of potential connections between annotations and base content. In practice, this means that one can establish links between existing content types in a Scalar book, or add new content (a note, a video commentary, etc.) to an existing content type.²⁸ Scalar also features an API through which—as the manual states—“You can mashup your Scalar content with other data sources, build your own visualizations, or create completely new interfaces for your materials.”²⁹ While such a feature might not be relevant for every user, it is noteworthy because it offers possibilities for re-using Scalar content outside of the platform.

²⁸ See Scalar's User Guide, particularly sections “Annotating Media”, and “Whole-Part Relationships”

²⁹ See Scalar User Guide, “Working with the API”

Manifold

Developed as a successor to the *Debates in the Digital Humanities* hybrid print/digital book publishing platform (Kasprzak and Smyre 2017), **Manifold** leverages the social aspect of collaborative interaction through its annotation Reading Groups. As the [developers note](#), Reading Groups “are a way for readers to annotate and comment on Texts as a cohort and is geared toward classroom and peer-review use cases.” (Manifold, n.d.) Athabasca University Press and University of Minnesota Press are already using bespoke Manifold instances to foster engagement with their published books,³⁰ and pilot projects between the University of Washington Press and University of Washington Libraries, at City University New York (CUNY), and at Affordable Learning Georgia, are using the platform to explore the potential of extending student engagement with open texts through social collaborative practices, including annotation.³¹

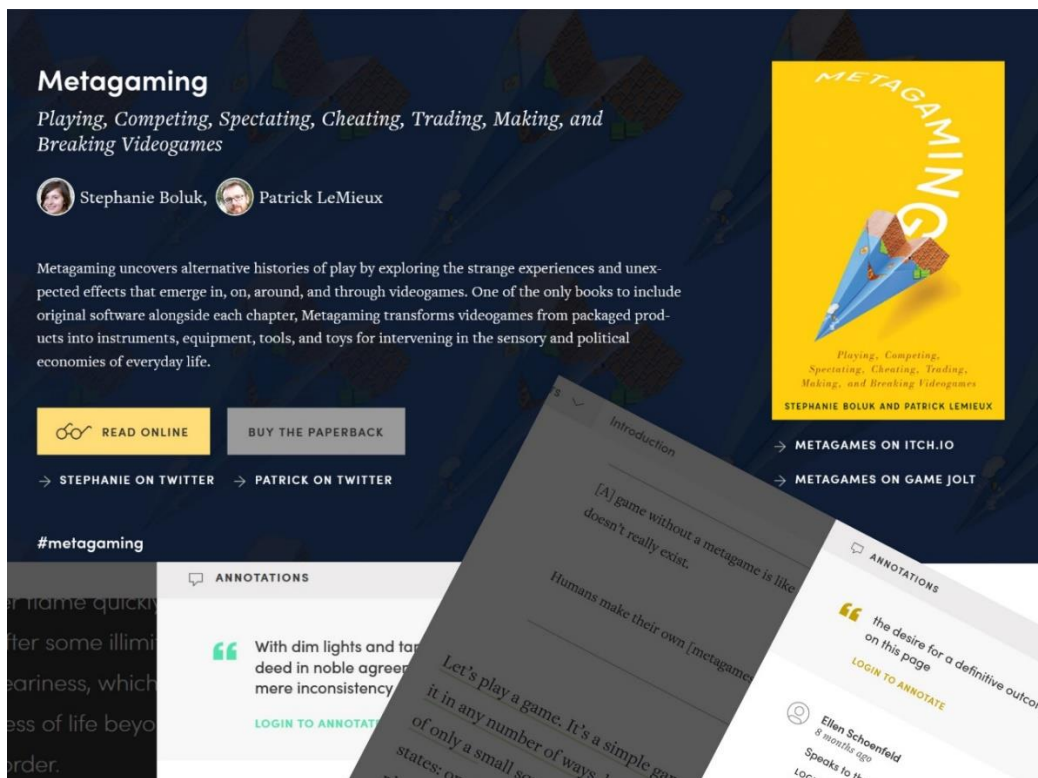


Figure 2: Manifold annotation and peer review cases: *Metagaming* (2017) and the *Middlemarch 150th Anniversary Symposium* collaborative edition project (2021).

³⁰ Examples considered here include annotations added to Parikka’s *The Anthrobscene* (2014) [here](#), to Boluk and LeMieux’s *Metagaming* (2017) [here](#), and to the Middlemarch 150th Anniversary Symposium’s collaborative edition (2021) [here](#). An overview of the more than 30 presses and publishing initiatives can be found on Manifold’s [Community](#) page

³¹ See e.g., CUNY’s [Quick Guide: Getting Started for Students](#), or University of Washington Libraries’ [Manifold Pilot Guide](#).

PubPub

As outlined in more detail in Mars et al. 2021, **PubPub** is a collaborative writing platform that also integrates an annotation layer to facilitate commentary and peer review. In an exemplary **Open Peer Review process via PubPub**, Remi Kalir and Antero Garcia made the manuscript of their—now published—*Annotation* volume, available [online via the PubPub platform](#), and invited feedback via in-platform annotations and comments from the wider scholarly community.

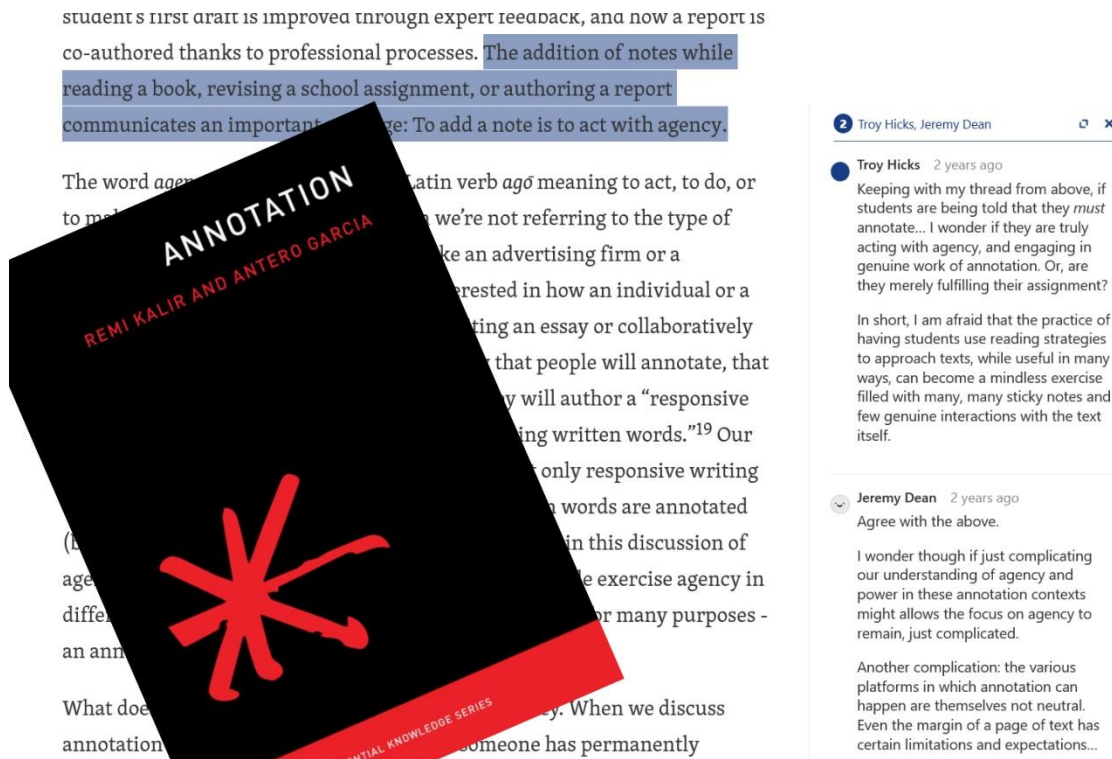


Figure 3: Sample screenshot of Kalir & Garcia's *Annotation* prepublication manuscript on PubPub.

In a similar vein, with her [preprint version released as open access text on PubPub](#), Sasha Costanza-Chock's *Design Justice: Community-Led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need* invites readers to share thoughts and comment on her MIT Press monograph that has been [published under the same title in 2021](#).

And the *Frankenbook* project, presented by the Center for Science and the Imagination at Arizona State University, has likewise employed PubPub's annotation capabilities to engage in a "collective reading and collaborative annotation experience" to reframe Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's original 1818 text of *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*.



Figure 4: Screenshot of <https://www.frankenbook.org/>

As a caveat, it remains to be seen if PubPub's annotation framework will, in the future, allow export and re-use of its annotation-specific data so as to more formally comply with the Open Annotation Guiding Principles³² and corresponding calls to make peer review data available independently from its publishing platform. Next to that, for the authors of this report, the mandatory sign-up / registration step that is required prior to gaining access to the interaction options of a given base text in PubPub poses an additional barrier that might deter some users from interacting with the text. Nonetheless, PubPub's support of annotation and peer review on the technical level of the tool and its affordances, but also on the level of fostering social interaction and community-building on and with PubPub (e.g., through the *Commonplace* publication outlet, led by Knowledge Futures Group, the community tasked to provide development of and user support for the platform)³³ makes for a rather convincing case of an emerging publishing ecosystem.

CommentPress

Leveraging a **WordPress + CommentPress** plugin setup that had been pioneered by The Institute for the Future of the Book (If:book, (Fitzpatrick 2007b)), Jason Mittell's Media Studies publication *Complex TV* had been publicly available for close to two years prior to its publication via If:book's **MediaCommons** platform, and the manuscript has subsequently undergone a thorough "Peer-to-Peer Review" (Fitzpatrick 2007a) process together with publisher NYU Press. Although it has already been published nine years ago, Mittell's book still is an interesting exemplar to consider here because it also conceptually combines a variety of open source platforms, **drawing on Scalar** to provide additional digital material to support the arguments made in the main publication.

³² "The effort focuses on interoperability for annotations. Its goal is to allow the sharing of annotations across clients, servers, and applications. It will not, in any way, prescribe user interfaces, internal architectures or internal data structures." (W3C)

³³ See e.g., the excellent *Pathways to PubPub* document that provides guidance and illustrative examples for MIT Press authors and editors using the platform for their publishing workflows.

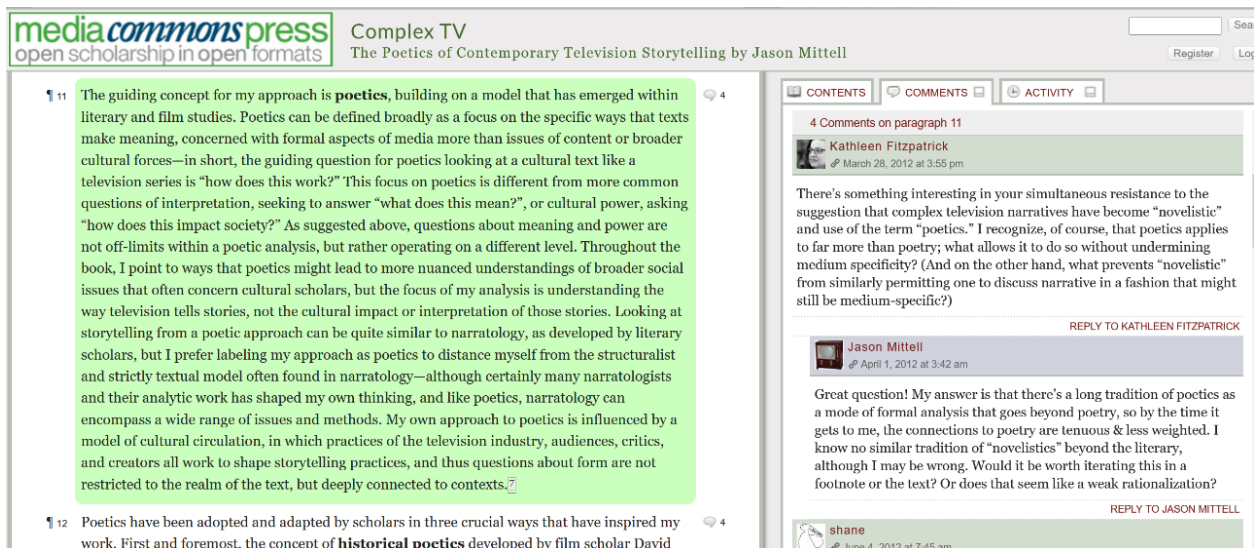


Figure 5: Review platform of Jason Mittell's Media Studies publication Complex TV, powered by MediaCommonsPress. The manuscript has been published in 2015 with NYUPress.

Similar processes have been employed for example by McKenzie Wark for her monograph *GAMER THEORY*, by Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki for their 2011 open review volume of *Writing History in the Digital Age* (published in 2013 by University of Michigan Press), and again by Kathleen Fitzpatrick, who had also used this process to invite feedback on her book *Planned Obsolescence* (2011) via MediaCommons, while her more recent book *Generous Thinking* (Fitzpatrick 2019) has been made available with a more up-to-date CommentPress setup hosted at Humanities Commons (see below).

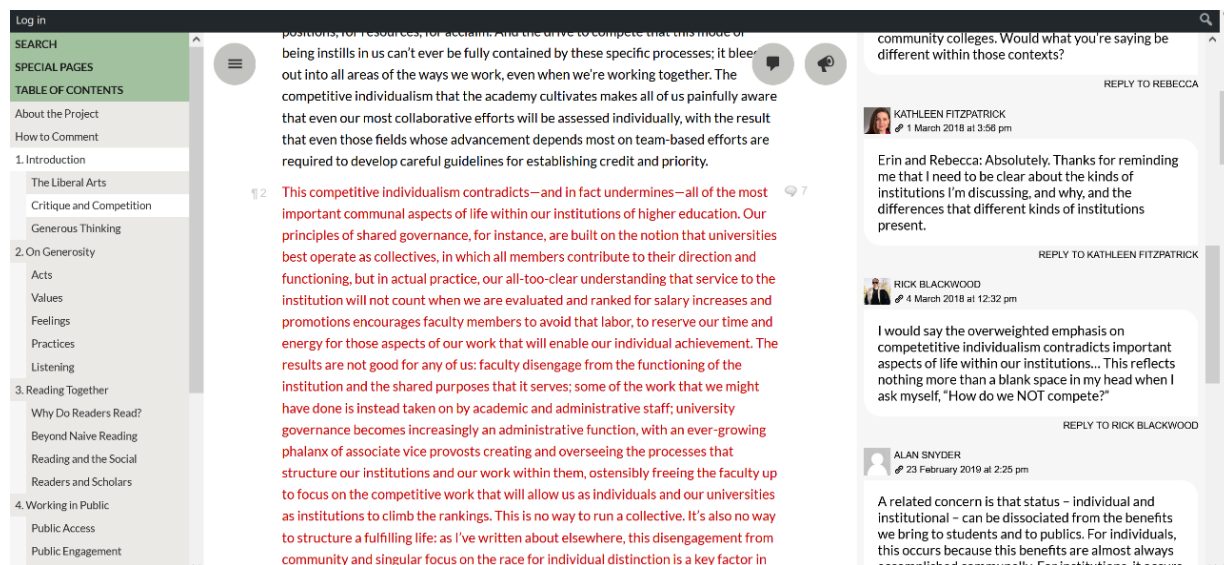
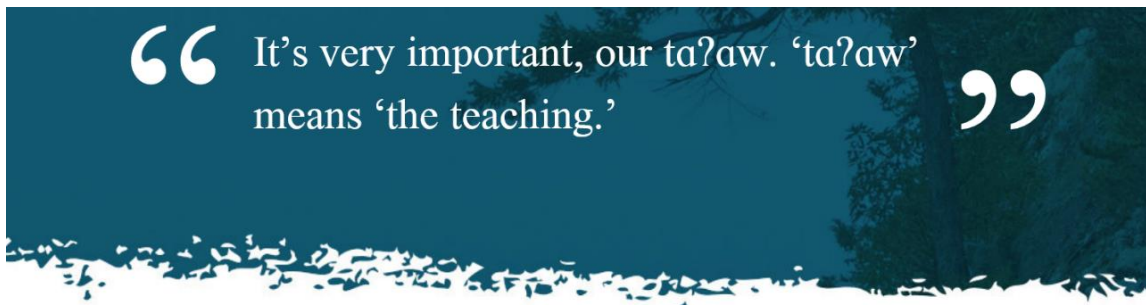


Figure 6: Humanities Commons / CommentPress-based review process for Kathleen Fitzpatrick's monograph Generous Thinking, published with Johns Hopkins University Press in 2019.

RavenSpace

RavenSpace is a collaborative publishing space developed by University of British Columbia Press in close collaboration with University of Washington Press, and focuses on digital workflows to extend the collaborative writing experience towards the provision of a robust peer review workflow that can also facilitate what they label “Community peer review”. Through Community Peer Review, [Ravenspace](#)

“seeks to extend the collaborative relationships of research and authoring into the publication process and to publish works that are meaningful and relevant for distinct communities of readers, both inside and outside academia, and specifically Indigenous peoples. It recognizes that expertise resides in many places and that publications benefit from Indigenous consultation or review beyond collaborative authorship. Because of the varied nature of collaborative relationships and the diversity in Indigenous customs, laws, and approaches to intellectual property and cultural heritage uses, flexibility is essential; the form of review and consultation responds to the nature of community protocols and the needs of each publication.”
(*Publish With Us – RavenSpace, n.d.*)



An Invitation to Listen



DESCRIPTION CITATIONS

ta?aw

Elsie Paul stresses the importance of "ta?aw," the traditional teachings.
Source: Courtesy of Elsie Paul

Well, my name is Elsie Paul. My ancestral name is qɑ?ɑystales, a name that was handed down to me by my grandfather. That was the ancestral name of his mother ... I grew up with my grandmother. As was the custom with our people, the grandmothers always helped with bringing children up. My grandmother had lost her vounæst daughter with that residential school

Figure 7: Ravenspace - *As I Remember It: Teachings (?æms ta?aw) from the Life of a Sliammon Elder.*

Mukurtu

Developed by the [Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation](#) at Washington State University, **Mukurtu** is an open-source Content Management System and publishing and archiving platform that has “the unique needs of Indigenous communities, libraries, archives, and museums in mind.” Relying on [Drupal](#) as its host system, Mukurtu has developed a strong community over the years, which is organised via a network of regional and local “Hubs and Spokes” ([Christen, Merrill, and Wynne 2017](#)) that fosters exchange of situational knowledge and practices. While it is not a book publishing platform per se, we are including it here as an interesting example of how communities can collaborate on digital collections and experiment with intriguing, novel ways to present, share and curate content.

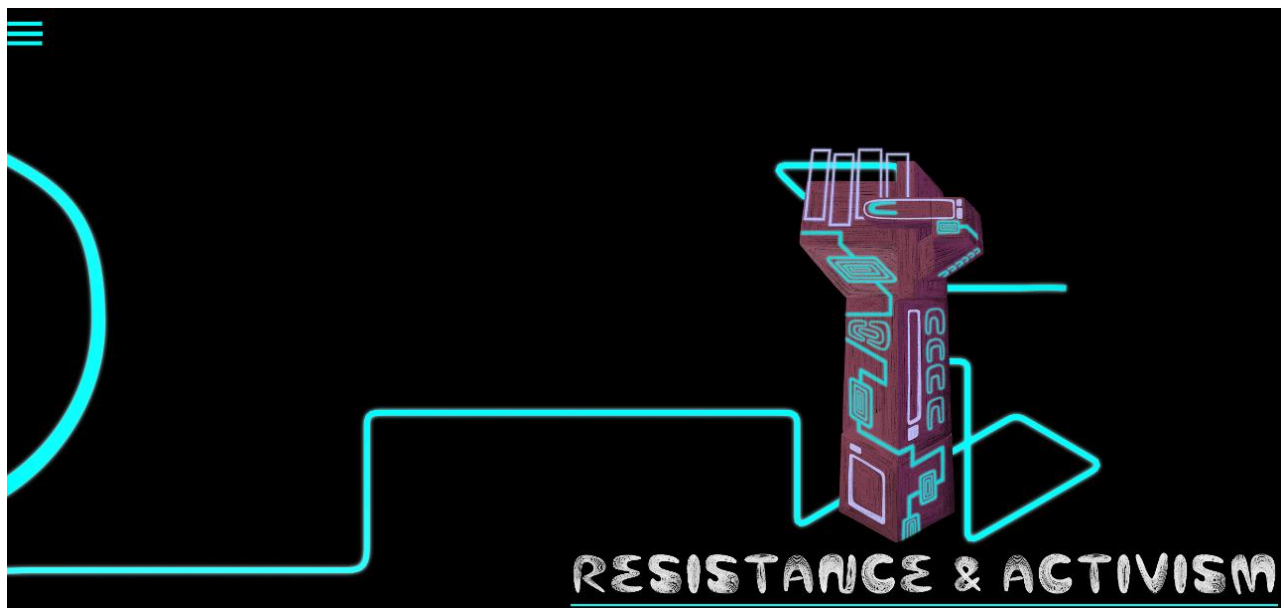


Figure 8: Gather project, State Library of New South Wales

Remix and Adaptation

While still focusing on the technical implementation of remix and adaptation via tools and platforms, we will, in the following paragraphs, also look at examples of academic publishing communities that are working with these tools to put the promise of remixing long-form publications such as monographs into actual practice.

Licensing and Copyright

A vital point towards enabling re-use and interaction with one’s content is to create amenable conditions for engagement. On the level of permissions, this is usually done in the form of open licensing.

Licenses are the most widespread way to signal what kinds of re-use and interaction are permitted by the original content creator / author. Releasing a book under an open license ensures that those interested in re-using your book (or contents thereof) would not have to reach out to you to ask for permission to do so.

Creative Commons

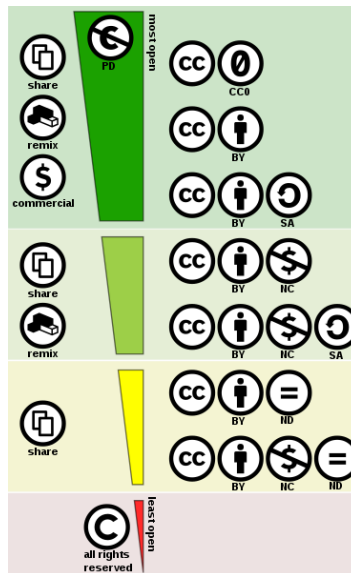


Figure 9: Shaddim; original CC license symbols by Creative Commons, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Creative Commons licenses are a way to express different levels of such permissions, with the general rule being that those licenses with the least exceptions are those most amenable to fostering re-use. An additional benefit of Creative Commons licenses is that each license comes in three versions — a clearly understandable summary of the terms ("human readable"), the license text ("lawyer readable"), and the metadata ("machine readable"). For more on the permissiveness of the six main Creative Commons flavours, see the infographic on the left.

Licensing Tools for Easy Attribution

Creative Commons license chooser

- <https://creativecommons.org/choose/>
- <https://chooser-beta.creativecommons.org/>

The CC license chooser enables authors and contributors to select a Creative Commons license that appropriately reflects their intended use cases. Through a set of questions, the tool can identify main criteria and permissions that an author wants to grant, and then presents the creator with a variety of media-specific license attribution options with

corresponding copy&paste templates (text-based, text/hyperlink, or HTML code that includes machine-readable licensing metadata)

Wikipedia & Wikimedia Commons attribution tool

- <https://lizenzhinweisgenerator.de/?lang=en>
- <https://github.com/wmde/Lizenzhinweisgenerator>
- https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Attribution_Generator

Flickr image re-use attribution generators

- Michael Hex, ImageCodr: <https://www.imagecodr.org/>
- Alan Levine, Flickr CC Helper: <https://cogdog.github.io/flickr-cc-helper/>

Guidelines and Tools for Open Licensing:

- Barnes (2018) Copyright and licensing – what do I need to know?
<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0173.0090>
- Borwick, C. (n.d.). *What is open access: Open access book publishing*.
<https://library.bath.ac.uk/open-access/whatisopenaccess>
- *Considerations for licensors and licensees—Creative Commons*. (n.d.).
https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/Considerations_for_licensors_and_licensees#Make_sure_you_understand_how_Creative_Commons_licenses_operate
- Kreutzer, T. (2014). Open Content: A practical guide to using creative commons licences. German Commission for UNESCO.
- Collins, Ellen, Milloy, Caren, Stone, Graham, (2013) *Guide to Creative Commons for humanities and social science monograph authors*. Eds. James Baker, Martin Paul Eve, and Ernesto Priego. OAPEN-UK and Jisc Collections.
<https://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/17828/>
- OAPEN. (n.d.). *Funder requirements: Licensing*.
- Copyright Literacy. (n.d.). *Copyright guidance from UK universities and colleges*.
<https://copyrightliteracy.org/about-2/copyright-guidance-from-uk-universities/>
- Specifically relating to the German legal system, which is not always compatible with the anglophone approach to Creative Commons licensing, see Kreutzer, T., & Lahmann, H. (2021). *Rechtsfragen bei Open Science—Ein Leitfaden* (2. Aufl.). Hamburg University Press. <https://doi.org/10.15460/HUP.211>

On re-using third-party material in your research publication

As the 2019 Universities UK's *Open Access Monographs: Evidence Review* report states,

Technical issues of inclusion of illustrations in an academic monograph is not the problem; rather, it is acquiring clearance permissions for the re-use of third-party material that adds an extra layer of complexity to publication, potentially making it very expensive to publish books with significant quantities of third-party copyright material (Universities UK 2019).

The following resources provide help along the often-difficult way through obtaining proper licensing for your third-party material.

- Rudy, K. M. (2019). The true costs of research and publishing. Times Higher Education (THE). <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/true-costs-research-and-publishing>
- Grosvenor, B. (2018, August 20). Why museums should abolish image fees (ctd.). Art History News. [https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/5241_Why_museums_should_abolish_image_fees_\(ctd\)](https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/5241_Why_museums_should_abolish_image_fees_(ctd))
- University of York. Using images. *Copyright: a Practical Guide*. <https://subjectguides.york.ac.uk/copyright/images>
- Aufderheide, P., & Jaszi, P. (2015). Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for the Visual Arts. Copyright, Fair Use, Scholarly Communication, Etc. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/scholcom/1>

Alternative License Models

Although Creative Commons is one of the most widespread licensing frameworks, there are alternative (e.g., copyleft) licenses that indicate permissions to reuse and remix. In the following, we will highlight two alternative license models.

Traditional Knowledge licenses

Inspired by Creative Commons, Traditional Knowledge (TK) seeks to address the diversity of Indigenous needs to retain control of their cultural heritage and resources TK “embraces the content of knowledge itself as well as traditional cultural expressions, including distinctive signs and symbols associated with TK.” Traditional Knowledge licenses are

“a tool for Indigenous communities to add existing local protocols for access and use to recorded cultural heritage that is digitally circulating outside community contexts. The TK Labels help non-community users of this cultural heritage

understand its importance and significance to the communities from where it derives and continues to have meaning” ([Program for Open Scholarship and Education 2021](#)).

The University of British Columbia [provides further details](#) on the uses of Traditional Knowledge licenses.

CC4r - Collective Conditions for Reuse

Understood as a critique on conceptions of property and copyright of the neoliberal system, the [Collective Conditions for Reuse \(CC4r\)](#) license is a reimagined copyleft license specifically geared towards reuse or remix scenarios in which collaborators do not want to “contribute to oppressive arrangements of power, privilege and difference.” Constant, the Brussels-based non-profit organisation behind this license, notes that “CC4r was developed for the Constant worksession Unbound libraries (spring 2020) and followed from discussions during and contributions to the study day [Authors of the future \(Fall 2019\)](#). It is based on the [Free Art License](#) and inspired by other licensing projects such as the [\(Cooperative\) Non-Violent Public License](#) and the [Decolonial Media license](#)” (Constant 2020).

Remix in Action: Tools and Communities

[pirate.care](#)

The [pirate.care.syllabus](#), which maps the increasingly present forms of activism at the intersection of “care” and “piracy,” showcases a combination of remix, versioning and updating where its platform draws on a git-based [single-source publishing](#) workflow that makes use of gitea, a lightweight open source git environment, to host markdown-based content that is then rendered as HTML via Hugo, a static site generator. The platform’s web layout is realized via CSS and Javascript adapted from a popular Hugo theme, while print layout is made possible via paged.js, a Javascript library that allows for the structuring of web content in a way that facilitates output of paginated and styled PDF output mimicking a book layout. The syllabus

“espouses a certain technopolitics. We have developed an online publishing framework allowing collaborative writing, remixing and maintaining of the syllabus. We want the syllabus to be ready for easy preservation and come integrated with a well-maintained and catalogued collection of learning materials. To achieve this, our syllabus is built from plaintext documents that are written in a very simple and human-readable Markdown markup language, rendered into a static HTML website that doesn’t require a resource-intensive and easily breakable database system, and which keeps its files on a git version control system that allows collaborative writing and easy forking to create new versions. Such a syllabus can be then equally hosted

on an internet server and used/shared offline from a USB stick" (Graziano, Mars, and Medak 2020).

Grafoscopio

In a similar vein to pirate.care, the **Grafoscopio** community seeks to comment on the perceived omnipresence of closed publishing platforms by way of reconstructing open monographs. It has developed "a moldable tool for interactive documentation and data visualization, that is being used in citizen, garage & open science, reproducible research, (h)ac(k)tivism, open & community innovation, domain specific visualization and data journalism." With a Free and Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) philosophy in mind, Grafoscopio "integrates simple and self-contained "pocket infrastructures", that can be execute On/Off-line, from a USB thumb drive, a raspberry-Pi alike computer, a modest server or any hardware in between and beyond."

One instantiation of the community's approach, is a creative remix of the *Data Feminism* publication (D'Ignazio and Klein 2020), which has been published by MIT Press and was made available openly via PubPub. The Grafoscopio Community describe the motivation behind their approach as follows:

"It is our way to make a (meta)comment on the book, by using alternative infrastructures and processes, developed for/from the Global South, and build on top of software that is mostly done in the Global North but not trendy, hyped, Big Data, crypto or artificial intelligence powered or buzz worded. [...] by moving the book from PubPub to our own pocket infrastructures and open sourcing it in the process, we hope to increase participation and make it happen more accordingly to the conditions in Global South, where connectivity (band width or other), huge computing resources or even proper leisure time are not a given" (The Grafoscopio Community 2020).

Through a creative remix that makes the book's text available in a git- and Markdown-based publishing workflow, their approach seeks to liberate the content from its original platform,³⁴ while also establishing a multilingual conversation as part of this process. All processual details have been [documented on the community's website](#), with links to meeting logs, a timeline, and agile teamwork organisation via a Kanban board.

³⁴ Note that while PubPub's code is also open source, engagement with the actual development remains limited to a predefined team of core developers that hold control over the central publishing platform, pubpub.org. In contrast, git-based toolstack workflows such as those established by Grafoscopio or pirate.care promise a more democratic approach to open source publishing that more closely embodies the FLOSS principles of open sharing of code, and active participation in the actual creation and development processes. Next to that, it's less resource-intensive, which, as Grafoscopio note, plays an important part in ensuring accessibility for those not able to connect to the Internet via high-speed connections.



Figure 10: *Photomediations* – introduction to the variety of outputs created as part of the project.

Photomediations deserves a special mention here: conceived as an experiment in open and hybrid publishing that celebrates open remixing, the concept developed into a variety of outputs including a [reader](#), a report, an exhibition, a set of [jam cards](#), a reflective [guide to open hybrid publishing](#), and an [image portal](#) developed in collaboration with Europeana. All of this is culminating in the experimental project's core output published as a [digital remediation & reimagining of a coffee-table book](#). Noting on remix's promise of potentially-endless permutability, the team of collaborators highlight that this collection is seen as only a small fraction of the iterations that might develop out of the the larger discursive space that gets introduced with *Photomediations*, and encourage others to explore this space to make their own versions of it.

As Joanna Zylińska, one of the project's co-leads notes in her introduction to *Photomediations: An Open Book*,

The framework of photomediations adopts a process- and time-based approach to images by tracing the technological, biological, cultural, social and political flows of data that produce photographic objects. [...] The notion of photomediations has made its way to an online platform called *Photomediations Machine*, set up by Joanna Zylińska and Ting Ting Cheng in 2013, which has served as a first practical testing ground for its conceptual and visual working. [...] *Photomediations: An Open Book* is the next step on this experimental journey with and across the photographic medium. [...] The curatorial paths proposed in the book (as evident in the chapter headlines), which bring together sequences of images from Europeana and other open repositories available on the Web, and which also go back to various spaces on- and offline, are only one possible way of tracing such a new story of photography (Zylińska 2015).

Electric Book

Electric Book uses a git-based toolchain and single-source publishing workflow that leverages Markdown-based content and Jekyll as static site generator to create visually pleasing epub and PDF book-form output that is also remixable due to its repository-based nature that allows for versioning and forking of base texts. A prominent example of a textbook produced with the Electric Book template is the introductory *The Economy* textbook, for which the print version has been published in the UK by Oxford University Press.

Contents Jews are morally repulsive, but they did not reflect a genocidal desire to see Irish men and women die. Instead, they were a consequence of one of the most influential economic doctrines of the early nineteenth century, Malthusianism. This was a body of theory developed by an English clergyman, Thomas Robert Malthus, in *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, first published in 1798. ¹

Malthus
His log
people

Thomas R. Malthus. 1798. *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. Library of Economics and Liberty. London: J. Johnson, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

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population growth would continue until living standards fell to subsistence level, halting the population increase. Malthus' vicious circle of poverty was widely accepted as inevitable.

Figure 11: Electric Book example *The Economy* – pop-up footnote.

25 Years of EdTech: from book to audio

Using Manifold as their digital platform, Athabasca University Press has made Martin Weller's book *25 Years of EdTech* available as an openly-licensed digital resource. The monograph has itself evolved out of an ever-growing collection of blog posts written by Weller, who provides insightful reflections on and critique of the developments happening in education technology over the past two and a half decades.



Figure 12: *25 Years of EdTech: The Serialized Audio Version* on <https://25years.opened.ca>

Following in the footsteps of Weller’s book publication, a group of open researchers has taken it upon themselves to remix the book in the form of an audiobook and podcast, which in 2021 culminated in the project **25 Years of EdTech: The Serialized Audio Version**. Produced by Clint Lalonde and Laura Pasquini and providing chapter readings as well as critical reflections on each chapter, the resulting podcast / audiobook collection has just recently received an **Open Education Award** in OEGlobal’s **Open Reuse / Remix / Adaptation** category.

Remix caveat: A note on the classificatory separation between academic books and OER

The intricacies of creating open content apply to both textbooks and research monographs, so it seems noteworthy that many of the practices underlying the creation of OER can also be applied to research monographs, and vice versa.³⁵



Figure 13: Image by BCOER Librarians CC 4.0 Taken From <https://nsufl.libguides.com/oer>

The facilitation of remix is a key affordance of open content in more general terms, and for both open access books and OER in very particular ways. According to David Wiley’s influential definition (Wiley 2010), open content is defined by their permissiveness along the lines of the “5R”, that is open content (including OER) explicitly permits users to retain and to redistribute copies of said content, while also openly allowing revisions, remix and reuse of the content.

For more on the 5Rs and their relevance in remix practice, see e.g. Jisc’s excellent **Open Educational Resource** guide, with a particular highlight the “Barriers/enablers to OER use,

³⁵ While there appears to be a long-standing tradition of arguing for the existence of vast conceptual differences between textbooks and research monographs (with a particular focus on the Anglophone world), it has to be noted that these boundaries can quickly become blurred when we take a closer look at the process of publishing a book. For one, it may be argued that many excellent OER textbooks can well be perceived as first-class academic output (see e.g. the REF eligibility of textbooks next to original research monographs in the UK, or the US-focused definition of Traditional Research Output, which also includes textbooks [1] [2]), while more “classical” research monographs that would fall under the classification of academic research output might well prove important pedagogical tools in their own right, and see active use in lectures and seminars around the world.

reuse and re-purposing” section, which might also be relevant for considerations of barriers and enablers to interaction and remix of open access monographs.

Versioning and Forking of Books

“Versioning” is the practice of documenting diachronic changes in a publication—a publication is updated until an agreed-upon amount of edits has been included; this then becomes fixed & time-stamped (“frozen” reference to content and corresponding time) in a new version.

On a conceptual level, Versioning and Forking can be seen as instantiations of the Remix paradigm. While the use of version control can be applied on the level of collaborative text writing,³⁶ the principle can similarly be applied on the level of an entire book, under the precondition that the book creation process is entirely based on a git-based workflow and its files stored in a version-control amenable repository such as GitLab, GitHub, or gitea.³⁷ In this context, forking denotes the act of remix realised by a third party that is not identical with the original author. Versioning, on the other hand, is the provision of a time-stamped update under the same general provisions of the original text.

An exciting use case of book forking has been initiated by Winnie Soon & Geoff Cox, who, with their book *Aesthetic Programming* ((Cox and Soon 2021), just recently published with Open Humanities Press), invited readers to create new versions of said publication. In response to said call, Sarah Ciston and Mark C. Marino created their own fork of the book via the **GitLab repository**, and introduced a new conversational layer—what they label “Code Confessions” and “Code Comments”—to engage with both the original text and their own remix practice (Ciston and Marino 2021).

Two of the earlier-mentioned platforms—**PubPub** and **Manifold**—have also integrated their own approaches to versioning within their respective publishing workflows. Reflecting on the iterative process of developing a set of versions over time on a variety of platforms that have accumulated into a book manuscript, Adema has written about her experience with versioning:

“Over the last decade my book *Living Books. Experiments in the Posthumanities*, has developed in an iterative way. From blogposts to papers and conference presentations, and eventually to a thesis, a wiki, a CommentPress version, and

³⁶ See git-based collaborative text editing in Mars et al. 2021, and PubPub’s in-editor versioning approach described in more detail in Steiner 2020.

³⁷ It might be noted here that while git is the most popular of version control systems, other forms such as Subversion, RCS, CVS, or Mercurial might also be amenable to setting up a publishing infrastructure (although we don’t know of any practical examples that use these ecosystems for the purpose of digital book publishing).

several articles, *Living Books* further evolved into a book published by the MIT Press, in addition to an online PubPub version that can be updated, remixed, and commented upon. [...]xperimenting with different versions, platforms, and media to communicate my research, served as an opportunity to reflect critically on the way the research and publishing workflow is currently (teleologically and hierarchically) set up, and how it has been fully integrated within certain institutional and commercial settings” (Adema 2021).

For a more expansive overview, may we refer the inclined reader to the typology developed as part of our *Books Contain Multitudes* report, with particular reference to the [segment on Versioned Books](#) in Part 2 (Mars, Steiner, and Adema 2021).

Semantic Web, Linked Data & Citations

Citing scholarly works is one of the fundamental re-use practices established in academic culture. Making citation data available in an open and machine-readable way is yet another way to invite re-use of one’s work.

As Frosio notes,

“empirical data collection and processing through advanced computational tools—that define research in digital humanities—may empower a discourse about the complex matrix of influence, borrowing, and reuse that characterizes creativity at large as “remix” creativity, while defying entrenched modern assumptions on the immutable, individualistic nature of creativity” (Frosio 2021).

That said, while the practice of using open references and citations in one’s output is seeing considerable uptake particularly in the STEM fields (see e.g., (Hutchins 2021)), an adaptation of workflows that make reference and citation datasets openly available is still lagging behind in the world of the Humanities and Social Sciences.

OpenCitations

Leveraging the principles of open data through PIDs and [Semantic Web \(Linked Data\)](#) technologies, **OpenCitations** seeks to collect citation data to create semantic, machine-readable networks that link citations and references across individual research outputs. Implementing OpenCitation standards in one’s monograph creation workflow can be another way to improve and invite re-use of original content, as machine-readable, standardised metadata promises to make proper attribution of sources more readily available. As the provision of open reference lists plays an important part in the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), this practice will surely see even wider-spread uptake across HE institutions and publishers against the backdrop of the larger move towards facilitating uptake

of practices on the spectrum of [Open Science and Scholarship](#). For a very recent discussion of the benefits and obstacles regarding OpenCitations, see e.g., ([Ayers and Klein 2021](#)).

Open Syllabus

One application use case of an open citation graph has evolved out of a project hosted at Columbia University's [Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities](#): the [Open Syllabus project](#) collects and scans openly-shared course syllabi for references, and makes the connected dataset and generated visualisations available via its dedicated not-for-profit platform at <https://opensyllabus.org/>. All scholarly references included in the scanned syllabi can be mapped across research fields (see e.g. the below visualisation of the most prominent texts across syllabi for media studies).

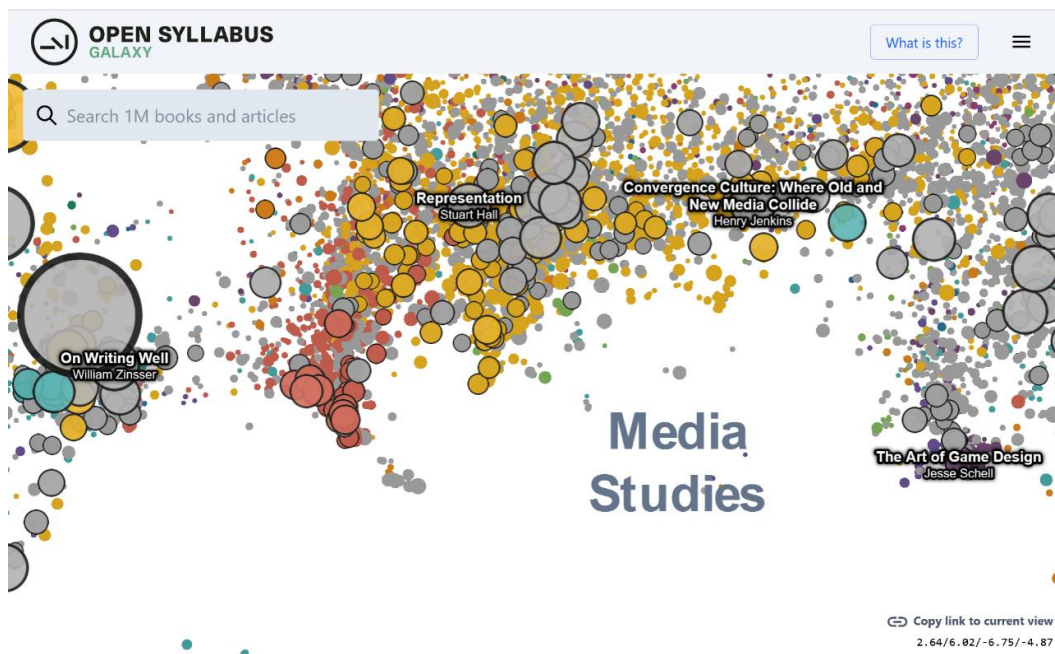


Figure 14: Open Syllabus Galaxy – focus on Media Studies..

Building Blocks: H5P

If you are planning to include interactive elements in your book publication, one of the best ways to foster engagement with interactive content is to rely on openly available elements that are amenable to reuse and remix. Following Wiley's open content paradigm, this can be achieved through having one's interactive content—such as images, tables, videos, slides, etc.—also accessible in an open and permissive way, i.e., in open formats and under open licensing .

One way to do this is through open web standards and re-usable building blocks. **H5P** (short for HTML5 Package) is an interesting example here because the tool supports exactly that: it

fully relies on open, platform-independent standards including HTML5 and Javascript and supports metadata input to facilitate easy attribution of authorship and licensing. H5P has a variety of interactive elements available, from remixable timelines to quizzes, graphs, image sliders to presentations to interactive videos (see examples [one](#) and [two](#) below). H5P elements can be created on the [tool's main platform](#) or be self-hosted on one's own WordPress or Moodle site. The resulting H5P compilation package output can then be embedded in any iframe-amenable environment, or get integrated through the variety of [existing platform implementations](#).

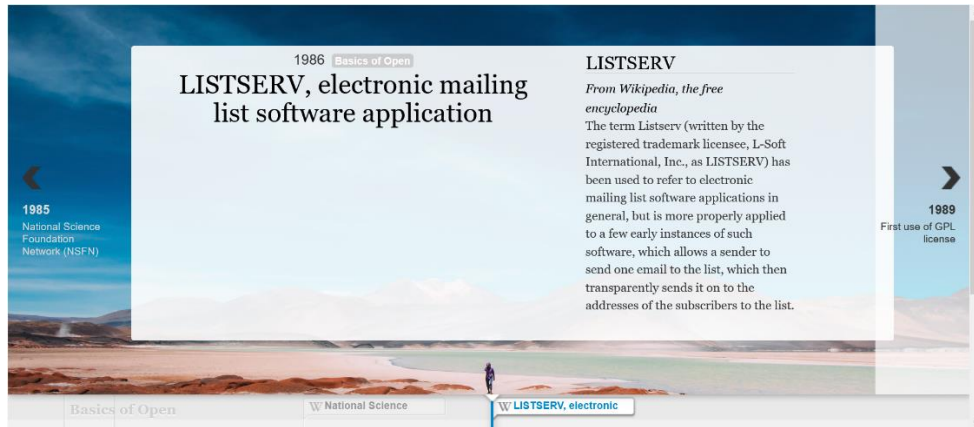


Figure 15: Screenshot of an *interactive H5P timeline*.

Pressbooks is using H5P for many of its publications, a variety of examples can be found on the [Pressbooks Directory](#). The University of Edinburgh's Interactive Content team provides an excellent in-depth [overview of the existing content types](#) that can be created with H5P.

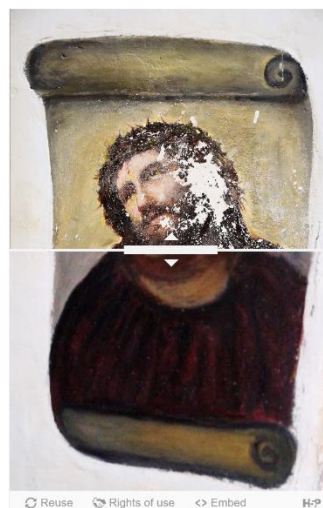


Figure 16: Screenshot of an *interactive H5P image comparison slider*.
Source: [University of Edinburgh Interactive Content team](#).

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Part 3: Recommendations, Guidelines, and Best Practices

Janneke Adema, and Tobias Steiner

In this section we have collected different guidelines, best practices, and recommendations for publishers and authors who want to promote further interaction with their open access book(s) or book collections and wish to implement or experiment with (libre) open practices. These best practices are based on the research we have conducted for [part 1](#) and [2](#) of this report and also draw extensively on three studies that have previously formulated in depth (structured) guidelines on open annotation and open peer review experiments and implementations. We can really recommend checking out these publications in more detail when introducing new interactive elements into your research or publishing workflows:

- Dandieu, C. and HIRMEOS Consortium (2019) *Report on Post-Publication Open Peer Review Experiment*. <https://zenodo.org/record/3275651>
- Fitzpatrick, K. and Rowe, K. (2010) 'Keywords for Open Review'. *LOGOS: The Journal of the World Book Community* 21 (3–4), 133–141. <https://doi.org/10.1163/095796511X560024>
- Ross-Hellauer, T. and Görögh, E. (2019) 'Guidelines for Open Peer Review Implementation'. *Research Integrity and Peer Review* 4 (1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-019-0063-9>

In this section of the report, we won't make a distinction between recommendations for authors and recommendations for publishers, partly in recognition that copyright (and hence rights to determine reuse levels) might lie with either party. Similarly, the distinctions between the researcher role and the publisher role, as earlier identified, can often become blurred in more experimental forms of publishing ([Adema, Mars, and Steiner 2021](#)). Especially when we consider how scholars who run scholar-led presses (one of the main groups of presses we are writing this report for) are often themselves both authors and publishers. Instead, we have divided the recommendations into three parts, broadly mirroring the implementation stages for a new open practice:

- Guidelines to implement or adopt a tool, technology, or open practice to promote interaction
- Guidelines to design a workflow that accommodates your open practice.
- Guidelines to engage communities in your open practice

Guidelines to implement or adopt a tool, technology, or open practice to promote interaction

As Fitzpatrick and Rowe have argued, when implementing a new tool into your workflow, “begin with your goals and core values, and choose the tools that support them, not the other way around” ([Fitzpatrick and Rowe 2010](#)). From there, assess specific affordances and the technological feasibility of different tools as well as the technical capabilities of your own publishing systems or workflows to be configured for (more) open elements.

- **Consider using open licenses on your book(s) or collections** (for example Creative Commons or Traditional Knowledge licenses) that clearly indicate if and how your book(s) or collections can be reused or remixed and by who. Our [Licensing section](#) will have more details on a variety of implementation options. One particular starting point we’d like to recommend here is the OAPEN-UK [Guide to Creative Commons for Humanities and Social Science monograph authors](#).
- **Consider using openly licensed content when working with third-party elements** as part of your publishing project. This will not only help with future reuse, but also make things easier for your publishing process, as this will help to steer clear of potential issues with third-party rights to images (see [Part 2: Licensing](#) for more details).
- **Consider enabling annotation on your book(s) or collections**, for example by integrating the [hypothes.is](#) plugin on your website/platform or collection/server, by selecting platforms that already have [hypothes.is](#) integrated with their workflows, or by publishing your books on an (open source) platform that accommodates build-in annotations.
- **Consider conducting an experiment with open peer review or remix and reuse** on your book(s) or book collections.
- **Consider enabling versioning** on your book(s) or collections, for example by publishing your books on an (open source) platform that accommodates versioning.
- **Assess the costs of various options/software/systems**, looking at implementation and development costs (staff and resources), and future sustainability (including preservation).
- With a particular **focus on preservation** of publications that leverage some of the platforms discussed in [Part 2](#), make sure to consider the recently-published [report “Guidelines for Preserving New Forms of Scholarship”](#) by the Mellon Foundation-funded project *Enhancing Services to Preserve New Forms of Scholarship*, led by New York University Libraries.

- **Consider potential barriers that readers might perceive** when they try to interact with your publication on your chosen platform, such as log-in or registration barriers to comment, annotate, or reuse. Also consider questions of accessibility regarding screenreaders readability, alt texts for images, etc.
- **Consider the longer-term sustainability implications of choosing a given tool or platform.** Will the platform be kept up and running over longer periods of time? How likely is the chance that a commercial provider of your platform will later decide to hide your book behind a paywall or login wall to generate more revenue (see e.g., Academia.edu); Is your book exportable to a alternative open, reuse-amenable formats (also important with respect to accessibility and preservation)?

Guidelines to design a workflow that accommodates your open practice

Similar to the first set of guidelines, the first thing you might want to consider is what you would like to achieve by promoting interactions around your book(s): what are your goals and values (e.g., improve peer review processes, stimulate conversations around books, promote their uptake and reuse) and how can you develop a technical and editorial workflow that reflects and supports those? What do you want to achieve and how does this line up with your values? You might want to consider setting priorities and implementing a phased approach prioritising the areas you would like to change most. Make sure to involve your colleagues and communities throughout when redesigning your workflows.

- **Try to be flexible** and consider identifying workflows, processes, and open practices suited to the book(s) or collections and the scholarly community in question.
- When setting up (new) open practices to promote interaction, **be sure to be involved as moderators and facilitators** within these kinds of experiments throughout (or identify others to do so).
- **Try to provide support and detailed instructions** on any of the (new) open practices, workflows, or platforms that you adopt **and overcommunicate these** (i.e., communicate them more often and in more settings than you think you should) to the communities involved in your experiment to ensure they can familiarise themselves with any new practice or technology and are engaged with the project and fully understand it.
- **Consider co-developing guidelines and code of conducts or regulatory systems** that also clearly outline the values, goals, and aims of your publishing project, in order to assist with the above.
- At the same time, **consider the editorial and authorial workload** when (newly) introducing and conducting open practices, including designing and implementing a

new workflow, communication tasks (including creating guidelines), consultations, screening, and monitoring. Ensure the labour involved for all participants remains sustainable over time.

- **Consider preservation and sustainability early-on as part of your workflow.** How will your annotations, open peer review reports, remixes, versions, or other forms of social engagement around books remain available in the longer term? How can these best be archived, what needs to be archived, and who needs to be involved in this process?
- **Consider offering anonymity as an option for participants in an open forum** (for example for early-career scholars).
- **Evaluate your adoption of (new) open practices.** Consider that setting up new open experiments takes time, and you might not get the intended uptake the first time around. Be pragmatic and see how the results line up with your values, aims, and goals and adjust your practices or experiments where needed.

Guidelines to engage communities in your open practice

- **Try to be conscious of, and sensitive to, community customs and differences where it comes to open practices.** Make sure to consult with your communities about their preferences, needs and attitudes, and what open practices they feel comfortable with and which ones they are not.
- **Try to explore beforehand how to (best) generate critical mass and engage communities around an open practice or experiment** (for example in the case of open annotation or open peer review) before it is implemented. Think through how participants can be best mobilised and which fields and communities to target and engage.
- **Try and set-up advanced commitments from participants** to kick-start a project and find incentive factors (e.g., a workshop or conference) to mobilise participants and make use of social media to promote your open experiment where needed.
- **Where possible and appropriate, involve your communities** (for example authors, editors, editorial boards, reviewers, scholars) in developing workflows, protocols, and guidelines, or survey their opinions.
- **Consider making some open practices optional**, which might be especially important for so perceived 'controversial' practices. Opt-out (after consultation and overcommunication) might sometimes work better here than opt-in though to encourage participation.

- **Explore ways to establish connections between books** (e.g., in your collection) through hyperlinking or annotations for example, but also by making sure your books are published in machine-readable formats and with enriched metadata to encourage automated discovery.
- **Explore ways to stimulate interactions with books on social media**, for example by using hashtags.
- Explore ways how to more actively present your book or collections in ways that **colleagues from different fields and members of the general public can find and engage them**.
- **Consider running pilots or experiments** first of perceived controversial open practices.

References

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