

The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities Research

*A research project carried out by CIBER / UCL Centre for Publishing
for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, UCL*

Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3
PRIOR LITERATURE	3
DEFINITION.....	4
DECLINE IN SALES.....	4
DECLINE IN USE.....	5
WHY THE DECLINE?.....	5
PROBLEMS FOR ACADEMICS.....	6
HOW PUBLISHERS HAVE REACTED	6
THE FUTURE OF THE MONOGRAPH	7
METHODOLOGY	9
METHOD.....	9
SAMPLE.....	10
RESULTS	10
GENERAL PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS	10
<i>Meaning of the term 'monograph'</i>	10
WRITERS.....	11
<i>Factors leading to writing one's first monograph</i>	11
<i>Career enhancement</i>	11
<i>Intrinsic value</i>	11
<i>Importance of publisher/editor etc.</i>	12
<i>Difficulties in getting monographs published</i>	12
<i>Writers' monographs in e-form</i>	13
READERS.....	14
<i>Discovering / locating monographs</i>	14
<i>Where does it fit in with other scholarly communication?</i>	15
GENERAL QUESTIONS	16
<i>Using monographs with students</i>	16
<i>Electronic v paper</i>	16
<i>The problem of the Internet</i>	17
<i>RAE (Research Assessment Exercise)</i>	18
<i>Subsidising monographs</i>	18
<i>The Future of the monograph</i>	19
CONCLUSION.....	21
REFERENCES.....	22
APPENDICES	24
APPENDIX ONE: QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE.....	24
<i>Questions are for monograph writers</i>	24
<i>Questions for monograph users</i>	24
<i>General questions for all respondents</i>	24
APPENDIX TWO: LIST OF PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS SURVEYED	26
APPENDIX THREE: INFORMATION SHEET FOR POTENTIAL INTERVIEWEES.....	27

Introduction

This report describes a research project research to determine how the academic monograph is perceived and valued as a means of scholarly communication within the Arts and Humanities (hereafter abbreviated as 'A&H') community. Also explored was its possible future, with particular regard to the possibilities occasioned by the widespread availability of digital documents. Although academics interviewed for the project were asked to define the monograph, it can nominally be defined as a short run hardbound printed specialist book-length study of a research based topic, usually but not necessarily written by a single academic author from their own primary research or its equivalent in downloadable digital form or other electronic format.

It is generally perceived that the publication of scholarly work in this form is more valued than journal articles and is a pre-requisite for promotion to senior academic posts in the A & H community ('You won't get a Chair without a book'). This assertion has not previously been rigorously tested nor has there been a systematic study of the role monographs play in A&H scholarship and its dissemination. John Thompson's *Books in the Digital Age* (Thompson, 2005) is the only research-informed investigation of the monograph but is primarily from the point of view of the publisher.

The research problem is to discover how the writers and users of A & H research monographs ascribe value to this means of scholarly communication, the roles they play in building academic reputation and careers and what their attitudes are towards the potential electronic publication of monographs in the future. The research used the technique of open-ended interviews with a sample of the A&H research-active community of

University College London. This was a pilot study in preparation for a larger scale research project that will seek external funding to consider the whole scholarly infrastructure that supports A&H monograph writing and publishing. At this stage the role of publishers will not be considered but this will be a central topic to be developed later.

Aims and objectives

These were:

- To measure the role and value of A & H research monographs to their writers (actual and potential) in intellectual, personal fulfilment and career-related terms;
- To measure the role and value of A & H research monographs to their readers;
- To explore the interplay between monographs and other scholarly means of publication for both readers and writers;
- To elicit any differences in monograph perception and use between A & H disciplines;
- To establish attitudes towards, and the possible role of, the e-monograph;
- To explore views regarding the possible future of the monograph, and how it might change in relation to digital publication, and
- From the research findings, to inform the A & H research community of the role played by monographs in their scholarly activities;

Prior literature

It is surprising, bearing in mind how important the monograph is for researchers in the arts and humanities, that there have been so few studies in the formal literature. The book by Thompson (2005) stands out. In order to provide a context for the new research set out in this

article less formal material has been drawn upon. At the same time, because it is not the purpose of this article to provide an exhaustive literature review, citations of previous literature and comment has been highly selective and essentially illustrative of the breadth of views available under the various headings.

Definition

There is considerable agreement amongst authors about what constitutes the core element of a monograph. Chodorow (1999: unpaginated) offers perhaps the lengthiest definition and explanation. He sees the monograph as 'a large, specialized work of scholarship that treats a narrow topic in great detail. Size is a critical characteristic, because it distinguishes the monograph from the article, which has the same purpose, but is small'. He goes on to add that the monograph is 'usually' single authored, and 'presents what the scholar has concluded is the truth about some set of historical events, the characteristics of some work of art or literature or the biography of a historical figure, an artist or a writer'.

John Thompson (Thompson, 2005: p84-85) agrees, stating that the monograph is 'a work of scholarship on a particular topic or theme'. However, Thompson is less certain about the unique authorship, continuing that it is 'written by a scholar (or scholars) and intended for use primarily by other scholars'. Anthony Watkinson (Watkinson, 2001: p15; 70) emphasises the dissemination and target readership. Opining that monographs 'are books, which are records of primary research intended for other researchers and bought mainly by libraries... In (certain) disciplines such work represents the main channel for communication of research and is recognised as such for purposes of tenure and promotion.'

It is worth emphasising, from these definitions, what is not included in the definition of a monograph. Chodorow (1999) points out that the monograph is not merely a book having a minority interest:

According to McBride (2006: pp132-133) 'typically, publishers categorise scholarly books in the social sciences into three types: works of original scholarship, "trade" titles that may be able to reach an audience broader than only specialists, and textbooks, which vary according to approach and course level'. McBride enlarges upon the 'trade titles', stating that 'for a scholarly publisher, this usually means a "star" author or accessible and/or polemical coverage of a highly topical issue... They are cheaper than textbooks and monographs, ... and more unpredictable [in terms of sales]'

Decline in sales

There is no doubt that the monograph has suffered declining sales over the last twenty years, although it would appear that only Thompson (2005) has had access to hard evidence from publisher records. Darnton (1999: unpaginated) goes so far as to say that 'the monograph look(s) like an endangered species', and Thompson (2005: p93) describes the decline as a 'key development in the field of academic publishing over the last few decades that stands out above all others'. A number of authors cite sales figures to show the decline. Thompson (2005: P93-94), for example, writes that 'in the 1970s academic publishers would print between 2000 and 3000 hardback of a scholarly monograph.... Today many academic publishers say that sales of hardback-only monographs are often as low as 400-500 copies worldwide' Indeed, according to Steele (2008) global sales can now be as low as 250 or 300 in some fields. Darnton

(1999) agrees, putting 1970s sales of monographs at around 800, with the figure is 400 in 1999, 'not enough in any case to cover costs'. 'In the 1970s, many publishers required authors of monographs to produce 'camera-ready copy' of their books, at first type-written and later word-processed. These pages were simply photographed to produce printing plates thereby saving the publishers the costs of copy-editing and typesetting, but the practice gained a poor reputation for its products which were regarded as unedited and shoddy 'book substitutes'. With the advent of digital technologies to capture authors' keystrokes, the practice disappeared but it did cast an unfortunate shadow over the production of monographs among readers and writers.

This decline is also happening in the USA, as was noted nearly a decade ago by Chodorow (1999: unpaginated) who blamed the US Congress. This is because in the 1980s Congress decided 'to tax the inventories of publishers, and it was no longer possible to keep slow moving monographs in stock'. In fact, Chodorow feels there has been a general political attack on the humanities from Congress.

Decline in use

Not surprisingly, there is evidence that this decline of monograph sales has affected scholarly use of monographs. Yates and Chapman (2007) examined references from three journals, *Communication Monographs*, *Communication Research*, and *Journal of Communication*, for the years 1985, 1995, and 2005 to investigate the role of the scholarly monograph in the discipline of communication studies. The authors found that both the percentage of references to monographs and the average number of monograph references per article dropped between 1995 and 2005.

A study by Johnson and Luther (2007) suggests that the monograph looks set for a further decline in production the coming five to ten years

Thompson (2002) declared, however, from his review of the citation practices of authors in the humanities, that the university press monograph is still arguably the most significant vehicle for scholarly publishing in the humanities. The consistent proportion of citations of monographs to citations of articles over time does not indicate to her that articles are, as yet, becoming a substitute for monographs in humanities research. However, her research predates that of both Yates and Chapman (2007) and Johnson and Luther (2007) by five years, so it is possible that the decline in use of monographs has been more sudden than that of the decline in sales.

Why the decline?

There appear to be several reasons why the monograph is in apparent decline. Thompson (2005: p98) notes several:

- financial pressures on research libraries which started in the 1980s, squeezing budgets and making it hard for them to afford monographs
 - expenditure on ICT (Information and Communication Technology) which has shifted spending away from books;
 - more periodical buying, which has further reduced financial power.
- Thompson notes that new journals are increasing in number, and so is the price of each – but claims that universities need complete collections, and are therefore reluctant to terminate subscriptions.

Steele, (2008: unpaginated) adds that 'the high prices of academic monographs are often an insurmountable access barrier for many academics, let alone students. The strength of the UK pound in recent

decades has also meant that UK publisher prices have significantly increased in Commonwealth countries such as Australia, Canada, and South Africa'. Steele adds that some American university presses, such as Yale and Harvard, are 'notable exceptions' to this high pricing rule.

Publishers themselves are suffering from the high prices accrued when producing monographs. Wyndham (2007) outlines the situation in Australia, describing in particular the University of New South Wales Press (UNSWP). This does not receive a university subsidy, and is doing less academic publishing than previously. He quotes a senior figure in the company as saying that academic publishing is 'unsustainable' and that 'Australian academics do research that is too specific to work in book form in the Australian market'. (Wyndham 2007) The article notes that UNSWP now encourages academics to pitch their books at a wider readership or to write journal articles and opinion pieces.

Another reason for lack of monograph use – though not necessarily for the decline in production – may be due to the way in which monograph indexing is undertaken in online databases. East (2006) concluded from his study of subject retrieval of scholarly monographs found inadequate indexing of monographs in online databases and suggested that 'current and planned digitization projects need to incorporate improved search facilities, either by automatic generation of subject-rich document surrogates, or by the incorporation of author-generated metadata' (East, 2006: p597).

Problems for academics

The decline in monograph production has created problems for academics. Steele, (2008: unpaginated) notes that many

academics 'spend years researching and writing a scholarly book, but then find themselves either without a publishing outlet or with relatively few sales, and commensurate low exposure for their research'. Darnton (1999: unpaginated) highlights specific examples of the commercial failure of monographs, such as a volume on Islam in Central Asia that 'received ecstatic reviews and four awards' but sold only 215 copies in cloth and only 691 in paperback. John Byron, executive director of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, has also cautioned that 'a failure to disseminate research will be read as a failure of quality'. (Byron 2007: p10)

How publishers have reacted

According to Thompson (2005: p283), publishers have sought to shift their attention away from scholarly monographs towards textbooks. However, academics in the United Kingdom feel more and more obliged to produce work which will be of most value to the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which is not textbook publishing. The latter is looking for research excellence. The RAE tend to put 'great emphasis' in this regard, on monographs. McBride (2006: p134) agrees that 'scholars often do not want to write textbooks' and admits that 'textbooks usually are not at the cutting edge intellectually, and they do not help in the tenure process'. 'In other countries, most notably the United States, although there is no formal research assessment operation, monographs are often seen as vital in the process of evaluating young scholars for promotion or even for consideration for 'tenure-track' positions. Without having a published a monograph, an American A&H academic may find themselves confined to a career of short-term appointments and post-doctoral fellowships and will find obtaining a permanent position difficult, if not impossible.

Apart from in encouraging the production of textbooks, Thompson (2005) outlines various other ways in which publishers are dealing with the falling demand for monographs. These include:

- Reducing typesetting costs, possible because of technological changes associated with digitisation and computerisation.
- Lowering royalties – it was argued that scholars were already being paid by universities to do research and write books, and so a reduction in royalties was seen as fair.
- Streamlining production processes by, for example, standardising templates and simplifying cover designs.
- Bringing down overheads, by using freelancers (in copyediting, for example, who ‘could work from their own premises and use their own equipment’ (Thompson 2005: p115))
- Increase prices.

Darnton (1999) adds that many presses have begun concentrating on subjects that are fashionable and will therefore sell copies: books about gender, sex, feminism, homosexuality, lesbianism, women’s studies, African-American studies, post-colonialism, and postmodernism.

The future of the monograph

Thompson (2005) feels that because of the current problems associated with monographs, scholars in many disciplines will publish their work in journals – as is already the case in the natural sciences and the harder social sciences such as economics. He opines that humanities subjects (such as literary studies and ‘certain fields of history’) are vulnerable to this change, as it is in these disciplines that sales have been vulnerable. (Thompson 2005)

According to Chodorow (1999), monographs can only be revived by reducing costs, and feels that ‘we will save the monograph if we provide a way to publish it online’. As contributors to Nicholas and Rowlands’ (2008) book on ‘*Digital Consumers*’ state, there has been an inexorable rise in electronic information provision, occasioned by the near universal availability of the Internet. Thompson (2005: p332) outlines many reasons why there is much discussion of the electronic publication of monographs. These are itemised as:

- the ‘bandwagon effect’ – as scholarly journals are being published electronically, why not books?;
- the wish to experiment (albeit cautiously);
- electronic monographs (e-monographs) could lead to a new source of revenue and a reverse the decline in sales

Thompson (2005: p332) feels that ‘liberating scholarly work from the constraints of the medium of print... length would no longer be a critical issue, illustrations (including colour) could be used in abundance, archival material could be added and the written text could be supplemented with sound and streaming video’. Thompson also advocates treating individual books online as part of a ‘scholarly corpus’ enabling end users to be able to search and cross-reference.

Darnton (1999: unpaginated) is a vociferous proponent of e-books in the scholarly field, and envisages a pyramid structure, containing various layers or levels. The outer layer would consist of concise account of the subject, with subsequent inner layers becoming more and more specialised, to include:

- Expanded versions of different aspects of the argument;

- Documentation and interpretive essays;
- Theoretical or 'historiographical' information - including previous scholarship and discussions of them;
- Pedagogic information, consisting of suggestions for classroom discussion and a model syllabus;
- Readers' reports, exchanges between author and editor etc.

One example approximating to this is the Gutenberg-e project run by Columbia University Press, which provides open-access to the electronic versions of monographs of emerging scholars. In addition to providing the full text, the project offers elements that cannot be conveyed in print: extensive documentation, hyperlinks to supplementary literature, images, music, video, and links to related web sites (See: <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/index.html>).

This project and other related projects in the USA do not appear to have (yet) achieved sustainability in economic terms and recently a frankly Open Access approach has been adopted in some of the new monograph programmes. Steele (2008) has been the driving force between one such programme (at the Australian National University) which is dependent on a subsidy from the university. Other small presses are aiming to rely on author fees - see in particular the OAPEN (Open Access Publishing in European Networks) project (http://www.oapen.org/about_OAPEN.asp) in Europe. OAPEN is a project in Open Access publishing for humanities and social sciences monographs involving a consortium of University-based academic publishers. As its website says (OAPEN, 2008) 'Jointly the members have digital publishing programmes, conduct experiments with OA, make use

of digital repositories, publish in different European languages, have a worldwide distribution network (including the USA), and cooperate closely with university libraries.'

The electronic solution may not be a panacea, however, and some of the e-solutions attempted have not been shown to be sustainable. Thompson (2005: p90) cautions against any undue optimism, claiming that digital production is 'unlikely to be the salvation (of academic publishers)'. This is because of various problems associated with the medium. One issue is the revenue electronic versions might take away from hardcopy sales. Thompson feels that although this is a potential problem, evidence suggests that there would be no loss of revenue. He cites *The City of Bits*, (Mitchell 1994) an examination of architecture and urbanism in the context of the digital telecommunication revolution which was made freely available online by the author, Bill Mitchell and the publisher - MIT partly to measure the effect on sales. In fact, the hardcopy of the book actually exceeded what was expected with a print copy run only.

Darnton (1999: unpaginated) has highlighted another potential economic problem regarding the production of electronic monographs. Darnton points out that start-up costs are 'high, because publishers need to design search engines and hyperlinks and also to train or acquire technical staff'.

There are other problems not related to the economies of producing and selling e-monographs. One is the issue of copyright. As Thompson (2005) states, most publishers deal with the lack of clarity in original publishing agreements by simply asking authors for their permission to allow an e-version.

However, the problem lies in 'embedded' copyright – drawings or quotes from various sources, some of which might not even have had clearance to be reproduced in hardcopy.

Thompson (2005) highlights another problem, that of the 'cultural value' of a hardcopy book, partly in terms of its 'expression of [scholars'] research effort and creativity'. Jennifer Thompson (Thompson, 2002) also discusses this point. She notes that the report of a 2001 roundtable discussion sponsored by the ARL, the National Humanities Alliance and the Knight Higher Education Collaborative observed: 'there is a strong cultural attachment to the printed page among scholars in these disciplines... young scholars know that their portfolio is weakened if they abandon the high road of print' (Knight Higher Education Collaborative 2001, quoted in Thompson, 2002: p123). Thompson also reports that, in her citation analysis of nineteenth century British and American literary studies scholars' work, there was only a 0.07% citation rate for web sites as primary materials and the 0.08% citation rate for web sites as secondary sources. This might be the result of lack of material on the web dealing with the subject, however, rather than an antithesis towards the electronic medium.

Despite the problems, Thompson (2005) points out that there may be a future for the e-monograph, as the market for them is likely to be institutional rather than individual: 'librarians are accustomed to purchasing content in electronic form, and many are receptive to the idea of acquiring scholarly book content online'.

Methodology

Method

The exploratory nature of the study, and the opportunity the research team had in terms of access to individual scholars, suggested that a qualitative depth-interview approach was the most appropriate research method. Interviews are the most utilised data collection method in qualitative research (Rogers and Bouey, 1996), which is not surprising, as a tremendous amount of data can be gathered by talking to people, exploring their experiences and allowing them a degree of latitude (Silverman, 1999; May 1997). Semi-structured interviews were carried out (see Appendix one for the set of questions used) in which the areas of research interest were covered, but enabling respondents to answer in their own words, 'constrained by the predefined categories of a fixed questionnaire. The questions were not necessarily asked in the order presented in the appendix – how the information was elicited depended greatly on the direction the interviewee took.

Interview transcripts were 'framework' analysed (Richie and Spencer 1994). This approach has been previously used successfully in studies undertaken by the present writers (Nicholas et al 2003, 2005; Williams 2005), and involves a systematic process of 'sifting, charting and sorting material according to key issues and themes.' (Richie and Spencer 1994: p177) Once such key themes were established, including a-priori topics informed by the research aims, together with issues raised by the interviewees, the original notes were thematically indexed and 'charted'. This operation requires data to be lifted from their original context and collated according to their thematic indexing. These 'charted' data were further examined to complete the research, by eliciting concepts, finding

associations, assessing the strength and extent of elicited views and behaviour.

Sample

A sample of 30 academics reflecting a wide range of experience, status and subjects within the broad area of 'Humanities' was chosen, from which 17 were interviewed. A list of departments included (and hence, subject areas) can be found in Appendix Two. Two to three academics were approached from each department, making sure there were potential interviewees at the beginning and well into (or nearing the end) of their academic careers.

Results

Overall results suggested that the monograph remains the single most valued means of scholarly publishing and communication within the A & H field, and is widely seen as essential in making career progress. There were no discernable differences between disciplines, except with regard to aspects of information science, an area on the periphery of the A&H field for which the academic journal article reigns supreme, mainly due to the exigency in this rapidly changing field to disseminate research as rapidly as possible.

General preliminary questions

Meaning of the term 'monograph'

There was general agreement on the definition of the word 'monograph', which echoed those definitions found in the literature. That is that a monograph is:

- A scholarly work written for a specialised and academic audience (distinguishing it from a textbook, which was designed for a more general and less knowledgeable audience) which 'pushes a discipline forward', or 'a reshaping and recasting of old material';
- It is usually single-authored, although

some respondents said that multi-authored tomes could be classed as monographs (though not edited volumes) and one felt that there was a trend towards multiple authorship, although this would not include edited volumes;

- 'Book-length' (there was variation in the word-count, where people offered one, from 50,000 words upwards, although all respondents used the word 'book').

There were, however, some interesting specific comments which enriched, qualified or extended this general definition. One interviewee, for example, felt that there were some 'grey areas', between textbooks and monographs, occasioned by the need to seek wider audiences. Another felt that it was possible to even have a kind of hybrids book, in which one part of it had the characteristics of a monograph. The example given was that of the manual of the British Library Information Sciences Service (BLISS). The first 100 pages of this volume describe its cataloguing practice and the theory behind it, in such detail, and to such a specialised audience, that it could be classed as a monograph.

There was also a variation in respondents' definitions of 'specialised', with many respondents feeling that both the intellectual and academic standards of monographs, their accessibility, and the degree to which they specialised, were very variable. Reference was made by a minority of interviewees to the current imperative on young academics to publish, with consequent implications for quality and intellectual rigour. One respondent felt a clear definition was impossible. 'Where does it end?' she asked, referring to the degree of specificity of the subject. Some books on, for example, general history may be

classed as monographs, she felt. As noted later, there was a wide variation in the extent to which monographs were used with students.

Writers

Factors leading to writing one's first monograph

Unsurprisingly, first monographs were often re-workings of PhDs. As one interviewee remarked 'this is how an academic first makes his mark'. This was not the only route, however. Another wrote her first monograph as a result of a post-doctoral research post, and there were cases of people deliberately not publishing PhD theses. One made a 'very deliberate decision' not to do so. She wanted to be contrary, although her monograph obviously took longer to complete. Her decision was based in part on her view that a thesis is not the same as a book. The latter has a wider audience, and is more about 'raw material'. It is also, of course, a piece of work written to be examined. In one unusual case, a monograph came after the publication of several books for a more generalist audience. Indeed, this particular volume was only written at the invitation of a fellow author to be co-writer, and even then only became a monograph when the text they were working on became too large to be a journal article.

Career enhancement

There was universal agreement that a monograph was essential for promotion, and increasingly for obtaining a first position. Even more established academics spoke of their monographs having some influence on their careers. This included being speaker at places and for organisations which might not have otherwise extended an invitation, or writing for journals by invitation.

The need to write a monograph to

enhance one's career was not, however, seen universally as a positive thing. One interviewee pointed out that newly graduated PhD students may make better lecturers or researchers. Others felt that the pressure to write to obtain one's first academic post was devaluing the quality of the monograph. Perhaps not surprisingly, 'career enhancement' was not the only reason for writing, as noted below.

Intrinsic value

A strong intellectual / intrinsic motivation in writing a monograph came out – it was clear that career advancement was only one (albeit important) motivation for writing a monograph. In addition, respondents were keen to convey a body of ideas or a philosophical reflection. One author said her monograph constituted a complex argument within the context of a comparative study.

Monographs were also written in order for researchers to pursue intellectual interests and clarify their own positions on various aspects of their specialisms. One interviewee, for example, wanted to bring different methods within the same work. She felt it was also a good vehicle for playing with ideas, and offered more room for greater analysis than a journal article. In short, it provided for depth and flexibility. There was an element too, unsurprisingly, of people staking their claim to a particular piece of intellectual territory. One respondent, for example, wished 'to fill a gap in the literature' and to have the satisfaction of being the person to occupy that specific intellectual terrain.

One scholar appeared to not place much emphasis at all on the intrinsic value of monograph writing. She is currently writing two, in parallel, but finds it 'hard going'. In fact, she has not produced many journal articles either – wishing to write 'significant and well crafted pieces that I

feel proud of, and to place them somewhere that matters', rather than a greater number of inferior articles. She also emphasised the importance of teaching and administration. She pointed out the difference between doing research and publishing, and said she likes reading, and getting ideas, and feels that publishing can be 'boring' because in order for things to be publishable they need a lot of time-consuming, detailed 'finishing', and this process she finds boring. She is especially concerned about making sure she does not duplicate ideas for different publications, although points out that this is something of a luxury.

Importance of publisher/editor etc.

Publishers were important in many ways. First, of course, publishers provide the gateway to getting one's work disseminated and, therefore, to accruing the benefits of producing and publishing a monograph listed above. For many interviewees, however, there was an importance attached to the choice of publisher. It was felt that top publishers – generally the big university presses – add 'prestige'. One case vividly illustrates this. One interviewee obtained an academic post within six months of completing a DPhil, but even after completing her monograph, did not get the promotion for which she hoped. She saw others who were of similar standing making career progress, and felt somewhat aggrieved. When she asked about this she was told that she was being overlooked because of the publisher she chose which did not have the kudos of CUP or OUP or other academic press. In fact, she had submitted to those publishers, and a further 13, before her work was accepted.

From the experiences offered regarding working with publishers, it was apparent that there was often little interaction between editors and writers. One

interviewee felt that editors nowadays do not apply the same scrutiny as previously. He claimed it is rare now for an editor to sit down with an author and engage with him/her on their writing. The only editing undertaken is by the peer reviewers. This situation has arisen because the resources of academic publishers are stretched too tightly. Another said she had virtually no guidance for either of her works, although a language textbook she was writing was written to a formula. There were also cases where the editors were not particularly knowledgeable about the discipline covered by the monograph submission, and requested – for example – inappropriate titles, to attract a wider audience. In one case, the editor wanted the word 'romance' to feature, although this word does not have its current meaning in the historical context in which the book was placed, and was not an appropriate word to use.

There were many other examples of publishers errors. Just to give one example, one interviewee explained how he sent a draft of his potential monograph to a publisher, simply to find out if it would be suitable for inclusion into a particular (prestigious) series being produced. In fact, the draft was sent to peer reviewers, who made a series of recommendations (not surprisingly, as the text wasn't considered to be ready for publication by the authors). They then wrote a second version of the book, which was again peer reviewed, this time requiring only minor changes.

Difficulties in getting monographs published

There were many indications that it is getting harder to publish monographs. One interviewee said it was difficult to publish in the UK. She tried CUP, OUP, Ashgate, Manchester UP, Liverpool UP, IB Tauris, Palgrave Macmillan, and others

and they all declined, because they considered the work to have too much of a minority interest only. She 'naively' and 'out of the blue' wrote to UK publishers with details of her book. She later felt that most people appear to rely on contacts or connections, such as one's PhD supervisor, to get published. She admits to have no firm grounds for saying this, but it is her impression.

In another indication of the current difficulties in publishing monographs, a medievalism interviewee felt she needed the interdisciplinary nature of her specialism to be able to 'sell' a monograph to a publisher (although, to a non-specialist, 'interdisciplinary' would mean within a very narrow band). She said her career spanned early medieval French; later medieval French, and later medieval English. A monograph by her could have chapters on all three periods, thus attracting a wider range of scholars.

Finally, regarding the difficulties of publishing monographs, an interviewee researching the social and cultural history of a particular country, said that her potential monograph (a re-worked PhD thesis) could be considered to be on a 'quirky' subject. It is in English but is about a very specialised topic related to another European country. She tried various English publishers, but they all said 'no'. They wanted something with a wider appeal – something more 'universal'. She has, however, found a good publisher in the country she writes about, through her supervisor. To publish with them, she will have to translate the book, and also 'de-academicise' it, also for a wider audience.

Interestingly, one interviewee spoke of the model adopted in some Scandinavian countries (Sweden and Finland at least). Here, PhD theses are published even

before they are defended, and are often available as print-on-demand, a solution a minority of interviewees felt could be the way forward in the United Kingdom – as outlined in more detail later in this document. It was pointed out that the OUP is producing a series which consists of short monographs, which may be another way forward.

Despite some of the negativity with which interviewees spoke regarding the relationship between themselves and publishers, and of their experiences and opinions about the declining production of monographs (supported by statistics, as shown in the review of the literature for this study) interviewees pointed out that publishers do seem to regard monographs as prestigious to their organisations, taking the attitude that they need to publish them to be taken seriously. The problem, according to one interviewee, was that their marketing and sales people hate them. However, the 'bottom line' appeared to be that this need creates a form of mutual dependency between author and publisher. If publishers don't publish 'serious' books, academics won't credit what they do actually publish, therefore won't recommend, cite, review or teach from them, etc.

Writers' monographs in e-form.

These were very rare. In fact, only in one case did an interviewee confirm that a full monograph he had written had appeared in electronic form (by Oxford Scholarship Online). The same writer had three books on 'kindle', an electronic text reader¹. 'Kindle is not currently available nor supported outside the United States and at the time of writing Amazon, its distributor, has made no indication of when it will become more widely sold.

¹ See: http://www.amazon.com/Kindle-Amazon-Wireless-Reading-Device/dp/B000FI73MA/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=electronics&qid=1223554057&sr=8-1

He does not worry about author 'control' with digital versions of his works. He receives a royalty from a more popular book he has written, and 'the odd 15p' he might gain per e-copy doesn't worry him.

In two other cases, individual chapters have been published online. In the case of a musicologist, a US publisher got her permission to publish some chapters of a monograph of hers online. Interestingly, a number of her journal articles have been published online, and this is linked to the music it discusses – echoing Darnton's (1999) idea of the future monograph as incorporating various levels. Whilst he envisages additional textual information, the idea of adding non-textual information has already been undertaken in the Gutenberg-e project.

Readers

Discovering / locating monographs

It may be more profitable in this section to highlight unusual sources and tactics used to find out about and then obtain monographs, plus the difficulties encountered in accessing them, rather than go through a list of all sources and methods. Unusual or notable methods elicited were:

- Contacting authors
- Amazon's 'Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought...'
- Google – including Google scholar
- Physically going to libraries
- Using Reference Manager

The practice of contacting the author is an interesting one. This is, of course, a common practice when seeking journal articles, but was mentioned with regard to monographs by a respondent who needed monographs from Scandinavia. In Sweden, it is often possible to get monographs by writing to the author, because Swedish publishers are 'quite

generous' with the number of author copies allowed (100, in the interviewee's case).

Electronic means were employed commonly, but in three possibly surprising ways. First, when copies are searched on the Amazon online shop, there is a facility stating 'Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought...' which proved very useful in pointing out other related works. Second, three interviewees mentioned using Google scholar or Google books. This, unexpectedly, contained many chapters and sometimes even the full text of monographs from the nineteenth century. Another unusual electronic method was to use the software 'Reference Manager', networked at UCL, to find specific references, (an example of a search term might be 'reflexive anthropology'), from which one can see what libraries house the book. In the case of journals, reference manager provides a link to the full text article, if available via UCL. Only one interviewee suggested this method, which may suggest a certain lack of knowledge on the part of academic staff regarding available network facilities.

Physically going to libraries was of particular importance to those studying foreign countries or languages, where there is, of course, a wider selection of original language texts. However, this was a practice of more than just those academics interested in foreign language work, and was indicative of three things:

- the lack of availability (i.e. production) of monographs in electronic form,
- an antipathy to reading on-screen
- the pleasure of visiting physical libraries and handling hardcopy books.

One note of caution was expressed, however, regarding physical access to

material. One respondent uses the British Library as a last resort. This is because volumes are often in external storage, so pre-ordering is required, incurring a 48 hour wait. Also, one only has 'reader' (rather than 'borrower') access to much material.

Only one general barrier, and two subject-specific barriers to finding out about or accessing monographs were noted. The general barrier was that bibliographic databases tend to concentrate on journal article entries, and thus it was not common for monographs to be mentioned, and so anyone only using this method – students, as one interviewee suggested – would miss some crucial material.

Specific problems were noted with monographs that pertain to the discipline of information science and to Spanish literature studies. With regard to information science (IS), the problem lies in the lack of reprints and scarcity of original historic monographs. After the second world war the world of IS changed dramatically, with bibliographic standards and control coming in, plus an emphasis on what would now be 'inter-operability', as information sharing was a priority. Pre-war literature on the subject was not considered very valuable any more, and were not reprinted. It is now very difficult to find pre-war monographs in the subject of IS.

Spanish studies scholars suffer from the problem that much valuable research is carried out in Japan and Russia. These studies are often written only in the original language of the researcher (e.g. Russian or Japanese). Thus, Spanish literature scholars from the UK, or anywhere else in the world, who cannot read these languages do not have access to the research being produced. It is

worthwhile noting that Germany also produces much research in this area, about which the same applies, except that the particular person interviewed could access this material as he was a German as well as Spanish speaker.

Where does it fit in with other scholarly communication?

Despite a number of other means of scholarly communication, the monograph appeared to be the most important form to disseminate scholarly work in the A&H generally. As one interviewee said, monographs are like the main course of a meal, journal articles and other scholarly communication are like tapas – they stimulate the appetite. They were said to have shaped the debate more than articles. Indeed, according to all but one of the interviewees, (who said monographs were merely 'one useful format') the monograph has overwhelming importance – the discipline is 'monograph-driven', and the monograph represents the 'gold standard' – ahead of articles or other means of information dissemination. This was not necessarily seen as fair: one interviewee acknowledged that it was not always easy to publish. People who work in small universities often have a very heavy teaching load which precludes this kind of scholarly activity.

One major exception to the centrality of monographs is that of library and information studies. Both interviewees from the School of Library, Archives and Information Studies felt that monographs did not play a very big part at all in most areas of that discipline, which itself, did not occupy a prominent position within the A & H field. Many areas of librarianship research deal with advances in technology, and so research dissemination has to be current – a delay of even one or two years between research completion and article publication would,

in some cases, make the research look dated. Thus, for these scholars, the journal article and conference proceedings were more appropriate media.

For the A & H community generally, the journal article appeared to be important for keeping abreast of things. They were are 'immediate'. Monographs, by contrast, make wider arguments and make more connections. However, this does not mean they always need to be read cover to cover. Articles were said to be good to write to work out ideas in detail, to 'try them out' 'float' them etc, usually in anticipation of a longer piece of work i.e. a monograph.

The situation with journals is interesting. One interviewee, a historian looking at the modern history of a particular culture, felt that some of the A & H fields are so fragmented (covering history and language, and possibly politics), that it is difficult even to name the most authoritative journals. Another interviewee spoke about the proliferation of journals making it hard to keep abreast of the subject and also to determine authority, and a third pointed out that many A & H journals do not appear in electronic form for two years, thus being harder to obtain than might be the case in other disciplines.

Textbooks were mentioned, but rarely with much praise or enthusiasm. A common theme was that there 'aren't many coherent text books' in specific A & H fields. Indeed, to an extent, this was why some respondents used monographs in their teaching. Only one interviewee had written both a textbook and a monograph, although it was quite common to have written generalist books for the 'educated lay' reader as well as subject-specific monograph tomes.

General questions

Using monographs with students

A major finding was that nearly every interviewee used monographs with their students – some even with under graduates, suggesting that the role of the monograph is, perhaps, wider than may be thought – particularly with the emphasis in people's definitions (both the sample reported on here and in the literature) on specialised and scholarly works. Indeed, at graduate level, where students do study at a more specialised level, monographs are considered 'very important'. It is considered 'the best way of transmitting higher level research to graduate students' by one interviewee, and another claimed that around 40% of the reading she gave to this cohort was from monographs

Interviewees felt that monographs could also be useful for under-graduates too, (although the consensus was that it may not be an appropriate source for first year undergraduates). As one interviewee pointed out, it was important to resist the notion that only textbooks are suitable for students. Indeed, another interviewee felt that students need to learn to reflect on what to expect from a *book*. Books take a long time to assimilate and require concentrated reading. Students who are used to 'picking things up off the web' haven't had that training, and may expect less and less of their reading. It is the role of the university to teach people to concentrate, reflect, take their time – this is all part of what is need to educate students.

Several interviewees suggested either that textbooks were not of a high enough level of quality, or even that they did not exist and that therefore monographs were used as a substitute.

Electronic v paper

Some reluctance was expressed, with

regard to the production of electronic versions of monographs, in terms of themselves as readers, but most interviewees could, as one put it, 'live with e-copy and h/c side by side'. Despite this reluctance, certain advantages of the electronic medium were offered. These were that this version was easier to search, easily accessible (removing the need to go to a physical library) and portable. With regard to the latter, one interviewee said that when he travels he likes or needs to take several books with him – it would be far more convenient to have these electronically on his laptop or text reader.

The disadvantages of the electronic form were that it was hard to read on-screen; hard to get overview of contents, not possible to browse, and one can't 'home in' on a particular page (one can argue about all these points, but these were the views of the interviewees). One respondent opined that if monographs could be loaded on to 'really comfortable e-readers' then this might prove an acceptable medium for the monograph, adding that the 'new generation' of readers may 'fit that bill'. It was already getting easier because, he said, one can tilt the screen to suit the eye.

Against this are the advantages of the hardcopy. These were listed variously as appearance, the ability to browse, and the aesthetic appeal. A historian felt that in his subject, authors would always prefer to publish in a hardcover monograph given the chance. This is not totally irrational. Over the last generation softwares have proved astonishingly transient, whereas a hardcover book is a sure thing for future centuries – and in subjects like history, research has a much longer shelf-life than in natural science. There was also the question, raised by one interviewee, of the hardcopy – in terms of its production, cover, sleeve notes etc., being a historical

record. Indeed, these aspects of books form an acknowledged field of research

Finally, costs were mentioned. The electronic copy was recognised by interviewees as being cheaper. It was also claimed that publishers charge too much here in UK (compared to USA). For some, these facts meant that there was a certain inevitability in its rise – as mentioned in the section on 'The future', below.

The problem of the Internet

Often, the concern amongst interviewees was that of the prevalence of poor quality information on the Internet. Several interviewees felt that there is a tendency amongst the students to simply cut and paste, with a consequent lack not only of analytic thinking but also of actual reading. A minority of interviewees – who tended to be those well into their careers, did not consider the presence of authoritative material on the Internet, apparently considering it only to contain dubious unregulated writing of a poor standard.

Of much interest was the view of one respondent who felt that the Internet had even changed the nature of academic writing. She said that the accessibility of articles online – Google-books, for example – has caused people to 'get lazy', so that they are beginning to read and cite only articles which happen to be accessible – not necessarily the most appropriate. There is an assumption that there is a process of selection online that applies to the print world, when there isn't. It is the smaller journals and publishers which have their material online. On the other hand, peer review does discourage innovation. It may not necessarily be a good thing to get rid of the 'loonies' and the 'visionaries'. There is also a role for dispensing with citations – this would allow for more 'blue-sky'

thinking. Then however, the problem would be sifting or grading such articles for quality.

RAE (Research Assessment Exercise)

There was universal agreement that the RAE was not an ideal system for evaluating research output, nor or encouraging scholarly activity. One history respondent went so far as to say that the RAE was 'generally evil' and that 'if the monograph is in bad shape, it is because of the RAE'. He felt that the system makes monograph production more difficult, because of the artificial time limit and consequent pressures of time and space – factors detrimental to the kind of scholarship that produces monographs. He contrasted this situation with that in the USA, where the research culture allows for the kind of environment that produces top-class monographs. Another has been deliberately less research-active following the introduction of the RAE, and is 'temperamentally and ideologically hostile to it'.

With regard specifically to the monograph, there was a general feeling that these are the currency of the RAE and thus there may be an undue emphasis on them. This has had the result that books are being produced too quickly, usually from PhDs, where the authors have not had time to reflect – a similar problem to that mentioned with regard to new staff members feeling pressured into writing to obtain their first academic position. The quality of a monograph is related to the time taken to undertake the research and to ponder the contents, and thus the RAE has led, ironically, to a lowering of standards. In fact, the quality of material in monographs, no less than in journal articles, was said by several interviewees to be wide – there are sometimes excellent articles in lesser journals, and poor ones in 'the more established' journals.

One example of the apparent decline in quality came from a language interviewee who felt under pressure to write, and so produces articles that are not good quality and about which, therefore, she doesn't feel very proud. This is, she said, what she sees as a reader – only 10% of articles she reads are 'of interest'. Most consist of reshuffling ideas for specific journals. She has done this herself just to get material published.

Whilst agreeing with this point, a musicologist felt that at least the RAE had 'goaded' people into writing when they might not otherwise, and she considered this a good thing. Another interviewee felt that the problem was the way people approached the RAE rather than the RAE itself. Thus, in his view, people attempt to gain the greatest number of publications they can in preparation for it, hoping that four of them will be of the necessary quality.

Three interviewees were very concerned about HEFCE proposals for the new Research Excellence Framework (REF) to replace the RAE, with its proposed use of bibliometrics to evaluate research. One said that she and her colleagues often published in 'obscure journals in obscure languages'. Their work can't be evaluated properly without being read – statistical analysis of citations was not enough. Another also felt that using bibliometric data as a measure of quality was not appropriate, as it takes 10 years for the quality of a monograph to become apparent using this method. Indeed, during the first two years of publication, a monograph may not be cited at all.

Subsidising monographs

In Sweden 'and other Scandinavian countries, academic writers are usually required to finance the publishing of their

works. This is usually undertaken by obtaining a grant from a research funding body. Often the organisation which has funded the research will also fund publication, or publication costs are met with small grants from various different sources. Some foundations specialise in offering publication grants. To obtain the funding one usually agrees a contract with a publisher (which will specify the costs of publication) and then submits the manuscript of the book to a research funding body. In the interviewee's case, this was to the Swedish Research Council, from which she won a grant of around £7,000.

Some larger UK publishers can feel that this method is a bit suspicious, and akin to 'vanity publishing'. In Scandinavia it is driven by the size of the market and the rules of doctoral submission which demand 'publication', which means that no academic book is ever going to be a viable commercial proposition. One interviewee said, 'it is only my impression that UK publishers are suspicious, and I know some smaller ones do rely on grants' (e.g. Norvik Press, which is the only specialist publisher of Scandinavian works (usually literature in translation and works of literary and cultural criticism) relies on grants.)

The advantage is that it removes the need to make a *commercial* case for publication, and the proposed work can be evaluated purely on its academic merits. One interviewee felt that "academic presses may already rely on cross-subsidisation in any case, e.g. they expect to make losses on monographs and make it up with textbooks, reference books etc. And this is not to suggest that commissioning editors, series editors etc. don't already do a good job of evaluating proposals and ensuring the quality of what they publish. For another interviewee, subsidisation is

essential. She is currently putting in a proposal to the British Academy to write another monograph. Funding will enable her to write it, as she will be able to buy herself out of her teaching. Without the funding she will have to restrict herself to journal articles.

There was only one disadvantage mentioned – this was the question as to who would do the subsidising. In Sweden funding organisations expect to fund publications, and there are a lot of small organisations offering small grants for this purpose. This infrastructure may not currently exist in the UK, as there isn't the same expectation that publication will be funded independently.

The Future of the monograph

Interviewees were asked about how, in their view, the monograph would continue in the future. For most respondents, the monograph seemed to be so entrenched in the discipline that it was hard to see too much change. The main themes were that:

- The monograph is becoming less scholarly
- Small presses will assume monograph role
- Monographs will be based more on collaborative and interdisciplinary work
- The monograph will become less specialised:
- The electronic form will not necessarily take over
- 'Print on demand' may become viable
- The RAE would dictate the future

Each of these themes is discussed in turn below.

A 'less scholarly' monograph: Although many interviewees felt this from their own reading, one person gave a concrete example. This is the OUP decision to no longer use footnotes, but have endnotes

instead. It was felt that it is more difficult for scholarly study to keep having to refer to the end of a chapter or the end of a book. In the USA too, there are ways in which the monograph is becoming less scholarly – this is through a trend towards ‘cross-over’ books. ‘Crossover’ here relates to the intended audience, i.e. academic/non-academic, as in ‘popular science’ books. This might comprise: academic scholars in the field, but also scholars in other disciplines, and also non-academic readers who are nevertheless loosely called the ‘intelligentsia’, e.g. readers of the New Year Review of Books, London Review of Books, etc.

Small presses and monographs: One interviewee felt also that the big publishing houses (e.g. CUP) appear to be publishing monographs less and less – preferring more general subject overviews or subject guides. This has left the way open for small scholarly presses to take over, especially in more specialist fields. An example is Boydell and Brewer, which used to concentrate on ‘vanity’ publishing, but now publishes monographs. ‘founded by a leading Cambridge academic, it began its publishing by concentrating on local history but has since developed into a major publisher of scholarly monographs in history and related fields with a broad focus.

Monographs based on collaborative and interdisciplinary work: This is a prediction based on the views of various interviewees who felt that funding bodies were now requiring proposers to emphasise this kind of work. Thus, the form of any resulting monographs had to be adapted for ‘current audiences’ and ‘the rise of multi-disciplinarity’. There is now (one interviewee felt) a tendency for people to read the introduction and just one or two chapters; implying that the

book has to be differently conceived. It was linked by two respondents to the point that monographs will continue to become less specialised, as outlined below

A less specialised monograph: One interviewee felt that the nature of the monograph was ‘breaking down’. Her discipline is rather specialised (or rather, she has a number of specialisms under a broad historical topic) and she feels that a monograph by her could have chapters on all of her specialisms, thus attracting a wider range of scholars, but, as she pointed out ‘fewer readers of the whole thing.’

The electronic form: The possible increase in availability of electronic text was not something that jumped readily to mind for the majority of the interviewees. A history scholar felt that even if electronic versions take over as the normal ‘support’ for the monograph, the paper version is likely to continue as the ‘top of the line Rolls Royce option’, rather as hard cover expensive books coexist with paperbacks, or as expensive cars coexist with perfectly serviceable relatively inexpensive models.

Print on demand: The idea of increasing the electronic availability of monographs lead onto consideration of this possibility for the future, mentioned by three of the younger academics. This would solve the financial crisis in the publishing industry, as regards to monograph production. One suggested that companies such as Amazon could provide such a service. Another felt that a pricing model needs to be set where potential readers of electronic text have to pay for access. Journals are under pressure, with universities questioning why they have to pay for journal access when they have already paid for the articles comprising the journals, in the form of academic salaries.

The role of the RAE: Finally, several interviewees – even those offering possible scenarios – felt that the future of the monograph is dependent very much on the future direction of ‘whatever research evaluation procedure that will replace the RAE, and that it was difficult to see how this will play out. One suspects ‘more of the same’, which is people frantically producing monographs of decreasing value.

Conclusion

This research has demonstrated that despite financial, institutional and publishing constraints and changing opportunities provided by new digital models, the value of the monograph, as a print-on-paper record of substantial research is still recognised and valued in the arts and humanities research community. The importance of research papers in journals has advanced, and their supporting technology has eased their access, but for many scholars in this area, the monograph continues to enjoy unique appeal and status. These findings raise important questions for wider research as well as policy issues for research funding and academic practice. It is common in the sciences for publication costs to be met and factored into research funding. This is not generally done in the arts and humanities. Funders in this area must now clearly begin to consider how to fund publication for if they do not, and the research they fund cannot be disseminated, then why bother to fund research in the first place? Perhaps Arts and Humanities funders should go even further and consider creating their own publication services networks for the projects they pay for? Self-publishing operations using print on demand technology, like ‘Lulu’, may provide a cost-effective way to print and distribute monographs. (see www.lulu.com).

A concern among those interviewed was the archiving function of the monograph and the observation that print-on-paper possesses a recognised and defined life which certain digital formats do not guarantee. Unlike in scientific or medical research, arts and humanities scholars need access to old (indeed often ancient) texts and if monographs migrate to a totally electronic format, these may be restricted in availability. The whole question of ‘transience’ as against ‘permanence’ is an important area for further research in scholarly communication and this research shows that it is an urgent and central consideration among Arts and Humanities authors and readers. This pilot research has touched on a number of key questions about the present and potential future use of the monograph. The research team consider that their findings show that the concept remains central to the successful prosecution of the Arts and Humanities research enterprise. A wider and deeper investigation is required to establish the detailed value of monographs and to develop a policy agenda for government, funders, universities, researchers and scholars, libraries, archives and others for whom the continued health of Arts and Humanities research is important. In addition to the themes touched on here, it is clearly essential to look at the attitudes and aspirations of a wider sample of early career researchers, as well as the emerging models for new means of scholarly communication, while also considering new players, like Amazon and Abebooks who may provide appropriate digital platforms. Further research, as they say, is urgently required.

References

- Byron, John. 2007. "Foreword." In Neave L, CArts of Publication: Scholarly Publishing in Australia and Beyond. Edited by Lucy Neave, James Connor, and Amanda Crawford. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing.
- Chodorow, S (1999) Specialized Scholarly Monograph in Crisis or How Can I Get Tenure if You Won't Publish My Book Association of Research Libraries (1999), Washington DC. Available online: <http://www.arl.org/scomm/epub/papers/chodorow.html>. (accessed 12.03.08)
- Darnton R (1999) The new age of the book *New York Review of Books* 18.05.99 Available online: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/546> (Accessed 19.08.08)
- East JW (2006) Subject retrieval of scholarly monographs via electronic databases. *Journal of Documentation*; 62(5) pp597-605
- Johnson, RK., Luther J. (2007). "The E-only Tipping Point for Journals: What's Ahead in the Print-to-Electronic Transition Zone." Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, [http://www.arl.org/libproxy.lib.unc.edu/bm~doc/Electronic Transition.pdf](http://www.arl.org/libproxy.lib.unc.edu/bm~doc/Electronic%20Transition.pdf) (Accessed 23.10.08)
- May T (1997) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process* Buckingham: OUP
- McBride D (2006) The future of the scholarly monograph *Urban Affairs Review* 42(1) pp132-135
- Mitchell B (1994) *City of Bits* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Nicholas D, Rowlands I (Eds) (2008) *Digital Consumers: reshaping the information professions* London: Facet
- Nicholas D, Williams P, Huntington P, Gunter, B (2003) Broadband nursing: a multi-method evaluation of a one-way video-conferencing health information and advice service: 'In-vision'. *Journal of Documentation* 59(3) pp 341-358
- Nicholas D, Williams P, Smith A, Longbottom P (2005) The information needs of perioperative staff: a preparatory study for a proposed specialist library for theatres (NeLH) *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 22(1) pp 35-43
- Richie J, Spencer L (1994) Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research in Bryman A, Burgess RG *Analyzing qualitative data* London: Routledge pp 173-194
- Rogers, G Bouey, E. (1996). Collecting Your Data. In L. M. Tutty, M. Rothery, R. M. Grinnell, Jr. (Eds.), *Qualitative Research for Social Workers: Phases, Steps, and Tasks* Boston: Ally & Bacon (4th ed.) pp. 50-87.
- Silverman D (1999) *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* London: Sage
- Steele C (2008) Scholarly Monograph Publishing in the 21st Century: The Future More Than Ever Should Be an Open Book. *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 11(2) Available online at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=jep;view=text;rgn=main;idno=3336451.0011.201> (ACCESSED 18.11.08)

- Thompson J (2005) *Books in the digital age* Cambridge: Polity
- Thompson JW (2002) The death of the Scholarly monograph in the humanities ? Citation patterns in literary scholarship *Libri* 52(3) pp121-136
- Watkinson A (2001) *Electronic Solutions to the Problems of Monograph Publishing* London: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. Available online: <http://www.publishing.ucl.ac.uk/papers/2001Watkinson.pdf> (accessed 20.09.08)
- Williams P (2005) 'Using information and communication technology with special educational needs students: the views of frontline professionals' *Aslib Proceedings* 57(6) pp539-553
- Yates SD, Chapman K (2007) An Examination of the Use of Monographs in the Communication Journal Literature. *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian* 26(1) pp39-51

Appendices

Appendix One: Questionnaire schedule

- Can you tell me what you understand by the term 'monograph'?
- Have you written a monograph yourself?
- (If so) Can you tell me what motivated you to do so?
- (If not) do you have any concrete plans to do so at some point in the future?
- What do you think is the value of writing a monograph?
- What do you think is more important, academic articles or monographs, and why?

Questions are for monograph writers

- How did you come to write your (first) monograph? (academic cudos, departmental pressure etc.) Did it lead to anything? (recognition. Promotion etc.)
- What are the major factors for you in writing monographs? (Prompt for: prestige of publisher/series: need to communicate research to peers: career advancement: pressure of RAE: need to write and length to explain complex ideas: enjoy writing: permanence of work)
- Was the publisher/imprint/ series in which your monograph was published important to your decision to publish and selection of output?
- Did you have an (academic) series editor? Describe your relationship with the series editor. How much support did you get from him/her?
- How long did it take to write your monograph, including research?
- Was it a revised dissertation? How long did the revision take?
- Did you prepare your manuscript digitally (including camera-ready copy)?
- When it was published, was it only in

print or did the publisher make it available electronically?

- Was your work peer-reviewed? If so, was this helpful? How important would you regard peer review as to a successful monograph?
- Was your monograph copy-edited? How helpful was the process?

Questions for monograph users

- Do you think monographs are more important in your discipline than articles?
- Do you read monographs relevant to your research?
- How do you find out about them?
- How important are monographs to your work? (essential/relevant/marginal?)
- Do you recommend them to students to read? Or to the library for purchase?
- Are monographs easily accessible in your experience?
- For print monographs, how important to you is the physical appearance? (binding, jacket, quality of paper, style of print, layout and design?)
- If monographs were available on line for download, would you be more/less likely to use them?
- Have you ever bought a monograph from your personal resources? If so, how many, and when?
- What do you think of the pricing of monographs?
- Do you have a personal limit in £ for what you would pay for a monograph?
- What role and form do you believe that monographs will have in the future development of your discipline?

General questions for all respondents

- Do you think the role of the monograph in the future will be enhanced or weakened, as compared to its value today?

- What is your view on print as compared to electronic formats for the future?
- are there any disadvantages in the subsidization of monograph publication by research funders, AHRC, British Academy, Leverhulme?
- Thinking about trends in non A&H disciplines (science, medicine, social sciences, engineering) do you think that A&H subjects require a different form of publication from them? If so, why?
- Are there any other points you would like to make?
- Thank you for your time.

*Appendix Two: List of
participating departments
surveyed*

Dutch
English Language & Literature
French
German
Greek & Latin
Hebrew & Jewish Studies
Italian
School of Library, Archive & Information
Studies
Philosophy
Scandinavian Studies
Slade School of Fine Art
Spanish & Latin American Studies

*Appendix Three: Information sheet
for potential interviewees*

**The Role and Future of the
Monograph in Arts and
Humanities Research**

Information for interviewees

**1. Introduction and purpose of the
research.**

The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities Research is a research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Faculty

The purpose of the research is to determine how the research monograph is perceived and valued as a means of scholarly communication within the Arts and Humanities (A&H) community within the context of other ways of communicating and dissemination information. There does not seem to have been a systematic study of the role monographs play in A&H scholarship and its dissemination, although the matter is touched upon from the point of view of the publisher (Thompson 2005).

The research will interview a sample of the A&H research-active community of University College London to determine the value of monographs to them, both as writers and users, and the roles they play in building academic reputation and careers. Of importance also will be the impact of the digital medium, and the future of the monograph in the digital age.

This is a pilot study in preparation for a larger scale research project planned to consider the whole scholarly infrastructure that supports A&H monograph writing and publishing. At this stage the role of publishers will not be

considered but this will be a central topic to be developed later. Indeed, it is hoped that this piece of research will contribute towards a much bigger AHRC study, which would involve other interested AHRC departments.

2. Research method.

A select group of A&H colleagues from UCL will be interviewed, and asked about their production and use of monographs and their attitudes, perceptions and understanding of the role of the monograph in communicating research. Interviews will be semi-structured, in that although the interviewer will have particular ground to cover, there will be a certain flexibility in questions and question order, to enable the interviewees the opportunity to discuss their views and experiences in their own way and for unforeseen issues to come to the fore.

Interview responses will be collated and analysed, and the resulting findings circulated to the participants for comment and revision, before the research is written-up for publication.

3. Research team

The principal investigator is Professor Iain Stevenson, Centre for Publishing (CfP) at UCL. The interview research and write-up will be conducted by Peter Williams. Additional research and review will be provided by Dr Ian Rowlands and Anthony Watkinson, also from the CfP.