The Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

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PART I: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Over the course of six months during the 2014-15 academic year, a working group of faculty and administrators at Emory University met regularly to explore and understand the development of a new model for supporting and disseminating book-length publication in the humanities. The challenges facing traditional university press publication of humanities monographs have been reported widely. A May 2014 article in *The Nation* quotes Peter Berkery, the executive director of the Association of American University Presses (AAUP), as saying: "University presses are experiencing acute and, in some ways, existential pressures, largely from changes occurring in the academy and the technology juggernaut. Random House can see the technology threat and they can throw some substantial resources at it. The press at a small land-grant university doesn't have the same ability to respond." As the article explains, declining library sales threaten the viability of monograph publication in some fields, and university presses are concerned by the shift in reading and publishing toward digital publication. The article continues by summarizing the position of the AAUP: "a digital transition is necessary and inevitable; the university press sector is doing it as fast and efficiently as it can; but the presses lack the economic resources to innovate and shouldn't risk smashing the fine china by pushing ahead recklessly." [1][#N1] As university presses struggle with these pressures, humanities faculty have expressed concerns about their ability to find outlets for publications in specialized fields of knowledge, particularly in those fields involving foreign or classical languages, literatures, and histories; any field requiring the reproduction of special scripts or musical scores; and fields that involve intensive work with images that are costly to reproduce.

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

Such a model raises complicated, broad questions about the future of humanistic scholarship. Should university presses continue to play the same role in the dissemination of scholarship as they have in the past? How can we balance the need to reach a broader audience with the importance of supporting more specialized scholarship for a narrower audience of experts? What is the future of the monograph in an age of digital publication? Should the monograph fundamentally change? How will the costs of publication affect the funding model for humanistic scholarship —

and the place of humanistic research within the contemporary university?

Within the framework of these questions, the Emory working group explored the viability of a pay-to-publish model that is focused on digital publication. The group both attempted to address several key questions about the implementation of such a model, and to raise new ones. Among the specific questions that we addressed, and that are addressed in the report, are the following:

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

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

> What would we expect in the contract concerning preservation, distribution, and open access licensing?

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

> Are there questions that this model raises for the tenure and promotion review processes? Would polces or practices need to change if Emory introduced this model?

Summary of Findings

Our working group endorses a model of university-funded publication that results in an open access digital publication, as well as a print-on-demand physical product that will be sold for an appropriate list price. In the report that follows, we explain the logic behind our endorsement, the issues that we considered, our reservations about such a model, and a plan for implementation at Emory. Among our most significant conclusions are the following:

> *We place a high premium on long-form scholarship.* The monograph has been deeply important for the humanities, and we seek to preserve and extend the research and thinking that it represents.

> *We endorse a model of university funding for digital monograph publication.* We believe that this model can play a role in the creation of structures that will allow for open access, digital publication, as well as incorporate features that are uniquely available in a digital environment.

> *We are entering a period of increased variegation in humanities publication.* The publication of print monographs will continue with the development of new forms of digital publication for long-form scholarship. We foresee a publishing landscape with a greater set of publishing options for scholars in the humanities.

> *We endorse open access publication of long-form scholarship.* We see significant value to open access publication of long-form scholarship in the humanities, and we are excited about the impact that such publication could have in cultivating new audiences for humanistic scholarship.

> *We believe that a program of university funding should be open to faculty of all ranks.* We do not believe that a program of this kind should be restricted to assistant professors or to more senior faculty.

> *We seek to ensure the high quality of scholarship.* As we discussed the digital publication of monographs, a key driver of our conversation was ensuring that the digital product was of high quality. Similarly, when discussing how projects would be selected for university funding, our greatest concern was ensuring a high caliber of

humanistic scholarship.

We have concerns about preservation and discoverability. Among the many issues about the digital publication of monographs, two emerged of particular concern: The long-term preservation of digital monographs, and the ability of university presses to ensure that digital publications reach their desired readerships, including new audiences that could be cultivated through digital dissemination.

We remain uncertain about the costs. At the time that we began our project, Ithaka S+R began its Mellon-sponsored study of university press publication costs. Though our principal investigator had several productive conversations with Nancy Maron of Ithaka, the Ithaka study did not yet have any available data at the time we concluded our work. Therefore, we discuss costs below, but we have not been informed by new data about the expenses of a potential program.

We believe that any program of this kind will require education and socialization. Our working group spent over a semester wrestling with issues related to the future of monograph publication. If humanities faculty are to embrace a move toward open access, digital publication, then we will need to find ways to engage more faculty in conversations about the advantages of this model.

Summary of Activities

In addressing the questions outlined above, our working group attempted to be as careful and comprehensive as our time allowed. We were aided by several factors:

The composition of the working group:

Our working group of 13 was composed with an emphasis on collecting as many perspectives relevant to humanistic scholarship as possible: The group included faculty who work in more established disciplines (such as Philosophy and English), as well as faculty with appointments in interdisciplinary departments (such as Emory's Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies). [2][#N2] The working group included faculty working in area studies outside the United States whose scholarship involves materials in languages other than English, as well as faculty who work intensively with still and moving images. The working group also included faculty from a variety of ranks, as well as faculty in a variety of administrative roles, including the Director of the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, the Director of the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence, and four department chairs. Finally, two especially important members of the working group hold positions in Emory's Woodruff Library, one as the Director of Scholarly Communications and the other as the Director of the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship. Taken together, the group represented a wide variety of publishing experiences, so that the group could engage in wide-ranging conversations together.

Outside consultants and information:

The working group brought in two consultants from outside Emory: John Sherer, the Spangler Family Director of the University of North Carolina Press; and Patricia Fidler, the art and architecture publisher for Yale University Press. These two consultants were carefully selected for the experiences that they could bring to the working group, and they provided an overview of the challenges facing academic publishers for our group. In addition to this broad orientation, they enabled our group to learn about specific strategies of their respective presses, both strategies being currently implemented and those still under consideration. The principal investigator on the grant also consulted with the leaders of a similar planning grant conducted jointly by the University of Michigan and Indiana University, in order that our group at Emory could hear about the way that our colleagues at these other universities were thinking about these same questions — and so that these same colleagues could learn from our deliberations.

In addition to consultants from outside the University, the working group also invited staff from within Emory—including people working on digital publication in the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship—to discuss their work and how they understand national trends.

Finally, the working group carefully read working papers, press releases, and news articles related to the issues under consideration. Several of these are included in our bibliography. What was perhaps most remarkable was that the period during which we met was punctuated by a series of press releases from university presses — including Stanford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and the University of Minnesota Press — about new digital publishing initiatives. [3][#N3]Though none of these initiatives replicate the model that we were discussed in this planning grant, they are clearly part of a process by which university presses are building an infrastructure for digital publication. These initiatives were also the subject of extensive discussion, and each provoked new questions.

The meetings of the working group:

One of the key features of our working group was our ability to have very full and frank, though always cordial, deliberations. At one level, our focus was on a particular question about the feasibility of a new model for monograph publication in the humanities. However, we found that this question raised large and complex issues that cannot be easily contained: the future of scholarship more generally in a digital age; the changing nature of reading and writing practices; our concerns about the place of the humanities both within and beyond the academy; the nature of academic labor; the reliability of peer review; the future of tenure—the list goes on. We were required to develop a collective ability to navigate these topics in a productive manner, and this report probably does not fully reflect the challenge of doing so. As we try to make clear, the future of the monograph cuts to core questions about the future of humanistic scholarship and the humanities professoriate.

Given these stakes, what is perhaps most remarkable is the degree of agreement that we reached on many of the issues discussed below. The group developed a shared sensibility that did not always equate with unanimity, but which provided a coherent foundation. Several members of the group remarked at the conclusion of its work that they were surprised to find themselves endorsing some of our recommendations. If nothing else, our process has taught us about the value of bringing together groups of this size, informed by carefully chosen experts, to deliberate on the issues facing our profession.

In the pages that follow, we provide more detail on our conclusions and recommendations.

PART II: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Value of the Monograph

As we contemplate the future of the monograph (by which we mean a peer reviewed, detailed written work on a single specialized subject, whose presentation of evidence, argument, and conclusions do not fit within the constraints of an academic journal publication), the Emory working group emphasizes the value that the monograph — or what we might more capaciously call long-form scholarship — brings to the humanities. We believe that the long-form possibilities of the monograph have a unique value in humanistic scholarship, and that outlets for its publication and distribution are vital to the future of our disciplines. Long-form humanistic scholarship has been an vital medium through which the humanities achieves impact both within and beyond the academy; it plays a role in maintaining a diverse ecology of inquiry and methods, so that the research of the humanities influences and is influenced by the work of the social and natural sciences.

During the last fifteen years, there have been a number of calls by professional organizations (such as the Modern Language Association) to reconsider the role that the monograph has played as the

major route to tenure and promotion in the humanities. Faculty at Emory have already engaged in discussion about this issue and concur that the monograph is not the only scholarly form in which one can make significant contributions to research in the humanities. Even so, we agree with Geoffrey Crossick's recent report to the Higher Education Funding Council for England, which reaffirmed the importance of the monograph for the humanities. As Crossick explains, the monograph remains vital because it represents a mode of scholarly inquiry that has particular power, not simply because of its role in tenure and promotion decisions. As humanists, we value the quality of duration of our scholarship as the product of sustained thought, investigation, and inquiry. The monograph is usually the best form for presenting both the argument and evidence that results from this mode of scholarly inquiry in a compelling manner. As Crossick writes, "Thinking through and writing a monograph can help the author to give structure to a body of research, to test out and analyse argument, and to identify links to other areas of research and directions for future exploration." Crossick also points out that the monograph offers "specific value to researchers keen to cross the bridges and explore the interstices between disciplines." Therefore, the monograph has played an important role in fostering interdisciplinary inquiry and disciplinary change. [4][#N4]

Our working group believes that sustaining long-form scholarship is paramount — and our own investigation was guided by this purpose. We realize that long-form scholarship may change as new forms of digital publication become available, and we affirm the value of other forms of scholarly publication, but we recognize that evolution of the monograph will be gradual. Moreover, those changes are largely unpredictable. As we have considered what new multimedia forms might mean for the monograph, our conversations have been most productive when we have regarded print and digital publication as complementary, rather than oppositional, means of dissemination. Indeed, we have considered in detail how processes of digital publication and distribution can sustain types of printed monographs that seem imperiled by the economics of our current moment. In other words, while we are ready to incorporate new means of scholarly production and publication, we also believe that there is much about the print monograph that should not be lost in our digital future.

A Changing Landscape

As we have thought about the future of the monograph in humanistic scholarship, we see the current moment — and the near future — as a time of increasing variegation in humanities publication. Multiple forms of publication increasingly co-exist and play different roles. This diversity creates both opportunities and challenges, particularly for graduate students and new faculty attempting to navigate the changing landscape as they establish their scholarly reputations. We believe strongly that an increasing variety of scholarly forms and means of publication will lead to a better environment for cultivating and sustaining long-form scholarship. Equally important, we believe that a university-funded model could play an important role in supporting this diversification and helping to increase the impact of scholarship across the humanistic disciplines.

As we have considered the future of publication for long-form scholarship in the humanities, we have thought about a continuum from the print monograph as it exists today to digital-only publications that could not be reproduced in print from. The future may hold permutations that we cannot imagine at this time. Nevertheless, it has been useful in our deliberations to consider four different categories to represent the variety of options for long-form humanities scholarship in the near future:

> 1. *Print Monographs*. The print monograph is a technology that has served the humanities well and has weathered changes over a long period from manual typesetting to word processing to Amazon.com. It clearly works well and for many works of long-form scholarship will continue to be the best medium. We do not imagine that humanities scholars or university presses will completely abandon the

print monograph in the near future, though what our working group has read and heard from directors of presses suggests that this option will be available to fewer monographs in the near future. Our project focused on university press publication, but we also note that some faculty currently choose to pursue publication with trade or non-profit publishing houses, and we believe that trend will continue as well. [5] [#N5]

As we begin to discuss the possibilities for the digital publications of monographs, we emphasize that certain types of monographs will not lend themselves easily to digital publication. As part of our work, we met with Patricia Fidler, the art and architecture publisher of Yale University Press. Currently, differences in the color processing of images between the printed page and the screen present obstacles to the digital presentation of such works. We are excited about the technology that Yale is planning to address such issues, as well as to address rights issues that will clear the way for a larger number of illustrated books to be republished in digital form. However, our discussions with Ms. Fidler also confirmed our suspicion that, at this time, issues of production and particularly of copyright will make the digital publication of many illustrated volumes prohibitively expensive at this time and in the near future.

2. *Long-form scholarship published digitally with a strong resemblance to print monographs.* One message that we have both read and heard from university press editors is that monographs with very small print runs — frequently, though not always, from first-time authors — will soon not be economically viable. In most cases, print is a suitable medium that is appropriate for the intellectual content and structure of the scholarship, but print publication may not be the most desirable or economically sustainable method of publishing these works. Such books could soon be published digitally by university presses in forms that largely resemble their print counterparts. We will discuss below the conditions that will be necessary for this type of digital publication to meet the needs of humanities scholars, but we do not believe that all books will require significant digital enhancement. From what we have learned, creating publications of this kind could be less expensive, and have a much wider distribution, than their print counterparts. In other words, the new terrain could yield substantial benefits for long-form scholarship that today it appears obscure, in part, because pricing and availability make it difficult for the public to access.

3. *Long-form scholarship published digitally that is substantially enhanced by the digital format.* Electronic journals such as Emory's own *Southern Spaces* (http://www.southernspaces.org/ [http://www.southernspaces.org/]) have demonstrated that digitally published scholarship allows for the presentation of different kinds of materials than print can typically offer. These might include moving images and sound, the ability to link to extensive documentation or datasets, and formats that will allow for navigation of scholarly work in ways different from those of works in print. These possibilities are evolving, and they will continue to do so as both technology and scholarship change. It is important that university presses work to create the infrastructure to support such publications, because they represent significant advances in humanistic scholarship. We understand, though, that such projects will require new investments, possibly including increased financial support from universities.

4. *Digitally published, long-form scholarship that is not suitable for print publication.* As digital publication options proliferate, we imagine a growing number of scholarly works in the humanities will be most effective in a digital environment. These may be high-quality, digital objects that are not intended to be read in a linear fashion — or they may be publications that require constant updating. Digital

publication may also allow for works longer than journal articles but shorter than traditional monographs; or works too long to be published as print books.

In much of this report, we will discuss a publication-funding model—with significant funds contributed by universities—that includes digital publication. However, we want to stress that digital publication may encompass the different categories discussed above. Just as important, we do not believe that this model should be the only future for the monograph in the humanities.

Finally, one of positive outcomes of our group has been the discussion we have cultivated between scholarly leaders in the library and faculty leaders in the humanities. The partnership between the library and the faculty is going to be increasingly important in this changing publishing landscape. We need the expertise of library staff in advising us about things like open access, metadata, storage and archiving digital work. Moreover, moving to digital publication will affect the library mission of collecting books. As discussed below, the partnerships with library-based digital scholarship centers are very important to the future of humanities scholarship.

Digital Publication and Digital Scholarship

One of our challenges in discussing the future of publication in the humanities has been in distinguishing between *digital publication* and *digital scholarship*. Our focus has been the former: The publication of long-form scholarship through digital formats. As part of our inquiry into digital publication, we have asked questions about the publication process, the standards for completed works, and problems of storage, access, and discoverability.

Many of these same questions are also important to the future of digital scholarship, which we understand to be more than a publication platform. Rather, we understand digital scholarship to encompass a series of methods and modes of engagement that focus on how digital tools and formats can facilitate new kinds of inquiry. Some products of digital scholarship will be long-form, and therefore could be supported through the kind of university-press publication models that we have considered. However, many works of digital scholarship take very different forms — including databases, visualization projects, interactive archives, etc. The working group eventually decided that it would focus on supporting long-form scholarship—the monograph and its digital counterparts—rather than these other forms of scholarship, as significant as they might be. As explained above, we believe that long-form scholarship, which advances an argument through a sustained engagement with a body of evidence, is particularly significant to humanistic research, and our primary focus has been in supporting such publications.

At Emory, the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship (ECDS) is an important asset for scholars in the humanities. We spent time learning about its work in order to understand more about the current landscape of digital scholarship and how it might shape the future of digital publication. We believe that ECDS has played — and should continue to play — a role in the incubation of digital scholarship, particularly by focusing on areas where Emory has significant material assets or faculty expertise. This mission is distinct, though, from that a university press, which has expertise in the selection, development, editing, curating, and distribution of long-form scholarship that digital scholarship centers are still acquiring. The future of scholarship in the humanities, at least in the very near term, requires that we both sustain the operation of digital scholarship centers like ECDS and explore models that ensure our university presses become outlets for digital publication and dissemination with the same level of sophistication that they have brought to print publications.

When discussing a university funding model for digital publication, members of our working group raised the question of whether faculty members might request funds to publish long-form scholarship through digital scholarship centers — whether housed at Emory or elsewhere — rather than through university presses. After much discussion, the group decided that such projects could be eligible for such funds, provided that the center could demonstrate a rigorous peer review

process, and that scholars could articulate the value of their works as similar in scope and impact to monographs. We would also expect the digital scholarship center to answer questions about the marketing and distribution of the scholarly work similar to those posed below.

As we investigated and discussed the future of the monograph, we repeatedly returned to the question of how monographs might thrive in a landscape that includes scholarship of the kind produced by our own ECDS. We believe that university presses and university digital scholarship centers can and should function side-by-side in the humanities ecosystem. The new publishing landscape should be capable of cultivating new research questions in the humanities as well as new forms of publication. We also discussed the desirability of partnerships, both formal and informal, between digital scholarship centers and university presses. Therefore, as we move forward, we would ask all stakeholders — university presses, digital scholarship centers, university faculty and administrators — to consider how their investments can help these different institutions within higher education to thrive and to find areas of convergence.

Evaluation, Tenure, Promotion

One question raised by those who have advocated for the adoption of digital publication formats is whether departments, promotion committees, and/or administrators will accept such publications as meeting the threshold for tenure and promotion. Given the significance of the tenure and promotion processes, it is not surprising that any changes will raise concern about how they will impact those evaluations. However, the working group has discussed these concerns at length and believe that they are overstated. [6] [#N6]

Although Emory has never formally addressed the question of digital publication (which has long been considered the norm in many disciplines), the leaders of the humanities at Emory have taken up similar matters. In November 2013, the Emory Humanities Council — composed of humanities department chairs and program directors — drafted and adopted a memorandum concerning the evaluation of digital scholarship. This memorandum (http://college.emory.edu/home/assets/documents/faculty/Digital-Scholarship-Memo-Nov2013.pdf [http://college.emory.edu/home/assets/documents/faculty/Digital-Scholarship-Memo-Nov2013.pdf]) affirms the importance of evaluating digital scholarship, and expresses confidence in the ability of Emory faculty to do so. The memorandum emphasizes that the core criteria for evaluation of digital scholarship are similar to those in any current scholarly evaluation: "Does the scholarship advance an original research question or approach? Will it have a significant impact on a community (or communities) of scholars?" To reiterate, this memorandum addresses *digital scholarship* rather than *digital publication,* but we quote from it here as evidence of the capability of our evaluation system to adapt to new publication forms and formats. There is no reason for these questions to change simply because a book is published digitally instead of (or in addition to) print. The memorandum concludes by stating: "Emory College has a history of evaluating new, emerging, and interdisciplinary forms of scholarship with both rigor and fairness, and the Humanities Council believes that the College's existing practices of review can accommodate new forms of digital scholarship as well." We are optimistic that this position will become widely accepted across research universities in the near future.

A significant concern in any evaluation process is also peer review. In the case of an university-funded model of digital publication, we expect that the university press would conduct its usual, robust process of peer review and manuscript evaluation. [7] [#N7] If the work in question were being published by a digital scholarship center, we expect that the center would solicit reviews from both experts in the content area and experts in digital methods. Moreover, we conduct our own peer review process through the solicitation of external evaluations during promotion and tenure. With these procedures in place, we have no doubt that the publication of long-form scholarship by university presses can satisfy the expectations of department, college, or university promotion committees. We will discuss elsewhere concerns that we have about university-press digital publication and about the university-funded model, but this working group agrees that the

evaluation of such scholarly works for tenure and promotion is not a substantial concern.

The Quality of a Digital Monograph

We are endorsing a model of university-funded publication that results in an open access digital publication, as well as a print-on-demand physical product sold for an appropriate list price. We are aware that several university presses are currently developing an infrastructure (often supported, it seems, by Mellon Foundation resources) for digital publication. We have followed these developments carefully and find them encouraging. If a model of university-funded publication is to succeed, *there must be a variety of presses that have the capacity and the willingness to participate in such a program*. One of the values that a university press brings is its ability to cultivate and market specialized lists of authors and titles in particular fields, and faculty will to continue to seek those presses that can place their scholarship in an appropriate intellectual network. Therefore, for Emory scholars in the humanities to embrace such a program on a wide scale will require a significant number of presses that are capable of producing high-quality digital publications.

Our deliberations included extensive discussion of the features that a digital monograph must have in order to advance scholarship and function within the existing practices of humanities scholars. We believe that the digital monograph must have the following features:

Robust Peer-Review. We have presumed that the university presses publishing digital monographs will continue their existing peer review practices. Though we cannot imagine that the presses would abandon such practices, we reiterate their importance. Indeed, a significant topic of discussion was whether moving to a university-funded model of publication (digital or otherwise) would negatively influence the peer review process in any way. In addition, if digital scholarship centers are to receive funds through this program, they must engage in similar review processes, both from content experts and faculty from outside Emory with expertise in digital methods. In all cases, the University will look for assurance that the scholarship under consideration has received careful scrutiny, so that the University feels confident that it is supporting scholarship of the highest caliber.

Marketing. One of the values that university presses bring to the publication process comes through their development of lists in particular subjects, and the marketing of those lists to readers. We believe that it will be important for university presses to market digital publications with the same level of skill and vigor that they bring to print publication. We understand that presses themselves are considering what the transition to digital publication will mean for marketing efforts that have been oriented to print sales. This issue seems particularly significant, since one of our biggest anxieties about moving to digital publication is the discoverability of a digital monograph. In our conversations about open access, it has occurred to us that open access monographs may require new and innovative forms of marketing to attract readers. We imagine that authors themselves will be — as they are now — partners in the process, by sharing their own work through platforms such as academia.edu and their own online social and professional networks.

Design. Another value of university presses is the depth of expertise that presses bring to the design of a printed book. A digital monograph will require similar expertise, to ensure a high quality reader experience that guarantees the publication is both navigable and accessible. Indeed, digital publication can allow for access by readers of differing visual abilities in ways that print publication cannot. One question that repeatedly recurred throughout our discussion is whether university presses currently have the infrastructure to produce high quality digital publications, and we hope this question will be answered in the affirmative.

Licensed for Reuse. One of our motivations in encouraging the publication of digital monographs is the possibility of greater dissemination of humanities scholarship, which we believe should include the reappropriation of that scholarship in new scholarly products. Therefore, we urge that digital

publications be distributed under a creative commons license that allows for circulation of the work for non-commercial purposes, provided that it includes proper attribution.

Sustainability and Preservation. One of our strongest concerns is about the long-term storage and sustainability of digital publication. Though we know that our books are subject to the vagaries of library storage and the physical decay of paper and glue, we nonetheless feel confident that the traditional form of print publication has allowed for the long-term availability of our scholarship. We require assurance that digital publication will function similarly, in the form of a commitment to maintain the availability of the monograph for the foreseeable future. For many humanities faculty, permanence and durability will be one of the greatest areas of concern moving toward digital publication. In fact, we believe that digital publication may remain severely limited until scholars feel confident that digital repositories will be permanent. As one component of permanence is preservation, we believe that our university library should receive preservation copies of all digital files related to open access publications funded by Emory. It is also possible that the library might be the repository for digital materials, such as media files, that enhance a manuscript. Finally, we strongly encourage the Mellon Foundation to work with university presses to build stable digital repositories and develop standards for digital preservation. The recent announcement by the University of Michigan regarding its grant from the Mellon Foundation to support the development of a platform for the repository of digital publications suggests that the Foundation is already taking this issue quite seriously.

Printable. While many will read digital monographs through tablets and other devices, many readers in the humanities may desire to print sections of them for a more traditional reading experience. In particular, we believe that the humanities classroom will still require print materials in the future; a landscape of entirely paperless reading and pedagogy remains distant (and perhaps undesirable as a future). Many humanities scholars and students still prefer to annotate print, rather than digital, copies of scholarly work. Finally, some teaching and research transpires in environments where digital access is restricted or nonexistent. Therefore, it will be important for instructors and students to be able to print monographs or portions of them for classroom use.

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

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

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

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

The Value of Open Access

Our working group became convinced of the deep significance of open access for digital publication

of long-form scholarship. [8][#N8] Currently, humanities scholars exhibit contradictory impulses in the ways that we publish our own work and evaluate the scholarship of others. On the one hand, we are reluctant to publish our work with anything but credentialed university presses – because of the value we place on peer review, the work of the presses in ensuring that published work is well-edited, and because of the prestige that university presses bring to their publications. On the other hand, we are delighted when those same presses make portions of those books freely available on the web, or when we share our journal articles on academia.edu. In other words, while there is much that we appreciate about the university press as a vehicle of publication, we believe that scholars in the humanities embrace the values that drive open access. Why is open access so important to the future of scholarship in the humanities?

To begin, open access aligns the humanities to our institutional mission to generate positive transformation through our scholarship. In support of this goal, the University Library has set up an Open Access Publishing Fund and has been helping faculty pay open access publishing fees for three years. However, these funds have been utilized for articles only; to date, no Emory scholar has applied to use the funds for monograph publication. The Library would like to broaden its investment in open access by cultivating more open access publishing in the humanities, and our working group supports that goal. Moreover, we have reason to believe that other universities share this goal as well: To determine if other university libraries with open access publishing funds provide faculty financial support for open access monographs, we sent an informal email to 37 librarians and received eight responses. Two of the libraries would fund open access monographs, four would not, and three would consider a request. One respondent, Berkeley Library, had provided financial support for an open access monograph, and Cornell's library was partnering with their university press for open access monographs in German Studies. Four respondents had received inquiries from faculty about funding open access monographs, and almost all agreed this was an important question that needs to be explored further.

The benefits of open access are numerous, but one of the most significant ways open access changes scholarship is by granting access to smaller, less financially secure colleges and universities that may not have the resources to purchase monographs or databases. This ethical imperative of equal access to knowledge, for scholars at smaller liberal arts-based colleges as well as first-tier research institutions, is a fundamental component of open access, and it seems especially significant as we seek to build truly global scholarly communities. For those scholars in the humanities whose research addresses the cultures and histories of the developing world, it would be a significant advance to be able to distribute their scholarship easily and inexpensively to faculty and students located in universities that may not have the resources to purchase print monographs.

We believe that open access could have a significant, beneficial impact on the future of humanistic scholarship by sustaining existing scholarly communities, as well as simultaneously cultivating new audiences for our work. Our group discussed at length the possibility open access publishing could help to ensure that significant scholarship of concern to a relatively small audience continues to find an outlet. In other words, as declining library sales have imperiled some forms of print scholarship, we hope those works could be sustained through open-access, digital publication. Equally important, circulating scholarship in the humanities to broader, more international audiences could allow scholars to find new, heretofore unknown audiences for their research.

It is impossible to predict the cumulative effects of open access publication of long form scholarship on the future of the humanities, but the spirit of experimentation in new modes of dissemination is a part of innovative scholarship. Open access publication could lead scholars to target a global audience with a narrow expertise in a particular field; or it could encourage scholars to seek audiences of non-specialists beyond the academy. It is also possible that the support of works with relatively small readerships will thrive and find larger ones.

University presses are already moving toward open access for some of their books, and we

encourage more presses to develop the infrastructure and practice of making books permanently available via open access. We believe that the Mellon Foundation may have a role to play in ensuring that a publishing process of this kind meets the standards of stability, discoverability, etc. We envision a time when a scholar would not need to choose between publishing open access or with a university publisher. However, we acknowledge that there still remains much collaborative work to be done by university presses and libraries in building a sustainable funding model. Even as these stakeholders work on this question, it should be noted that the federal government already requires all government-funded scholarship, including research funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to be published as open access. While this provision will not directly affect the publication of humanities monographs, we believe it signals an important trend.

As an important caveat, we acknowledge that it is not yet possible to publish certain kinds of works under an open access model because of copyright restrictions placed on images and other content created by third parties. We want to urge that rights holders allow for open access publishing, and we hope that the university funding model will encourage trends in that direction. We also need to advise less experienced colleagues carefully: we do not want them to prepare a digital publication that will founder, for instance, because the digital rights to the necessary film clips cannot be obtained. Finally, we also note that open access monographs are different from open access textbooks. This working group only assessed the outcomes for monographs and similar kinds of long-form scholarship; though monographs play a role in humanities teaching, they are distinct from textbooks and other materials designed solely for classroom instruction.

Implementation of a University Funding Model

The working group considered extensively how a university-funded publication model for humanities monographs might be executed at Emory. Examining data from the last six years from our faculty reporting system, we learned that Emory faculty in the humanities (and humanistic social sciences) published approximately 185 single-authored volumes over the last six years, with approximately 100 of these volumes appearing from university presses. The average number of university-press, single-authored volumes, therefore, is between 16 and 17 books per year.

In the preliminary remarks made by Mellon officers about a university-funded model of publication, the figure of 10 books per year has been used as a placeholder. We believe that this figure is a reasonable target for Emory, though we are not certain that in the initial years of the program there would be that many suitable books and presses. As we understand the current state of university press publishing, many of the university presses with whom our faculty publish are still building the kind of infrastructure necessary for the publication of digital monographs that would meet the standards outlined above.

The committee spent considerable time deliberating about how a university funding model might work in its day-to-day operation. Who would be eligible? When and how would funds be awarded?

In our discussions, our paramount concern became the academic quality of the scholarly work. Simply put, our priority is supporting the most significant work for the scholarly communities that it addresses, and ensuring that these works reach the widest possible audience.

We considered the possibility that such funds might distributed through start-up packages, but reached a consensus that an open, competitive process for university support would better insure the scholarly quality of the works selected. We view university publishing support as an act that recognizes excellence, not as an entitlement upon employment. Including this funding in start-up packages could potentially limit the range of the professorial ranks who receive it, an important consideration given that senior faculty's decisions to engage in digital, open-access publication could play a vital role in encouraging less senior faculty to do so. In a worst-case scenario, a commitment of this kind at the time of hire could influence the press's peer review process, leading presses to conduct less rigorous peer review. Finally, including this funding in hiring packages is a particularly volatile issue, because it will raise the expense of hiring research faculty in the

humanities, at a time when the number of such positions (on a national scale) seems to be imperiled.

Of course, the working group also realizes that within 5-7 years, it is possible that digital, open-access publication becomes so widely accepted, and the standards of the process so well-established, that the university would move from a competitive process to including funding in hiring arrangements. For now, though, we believe that a competitive process is necessary to encourage faculty of all ranks and to allow the university to play a role in articulating the practices and standards of digital publication. We have discussed how the funds to support such publications could be awarded on a rolling basis by a committee. This committee might comprise the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty, the Senior Associate Dean for Research, the Director of Scholarly Communications in the Library, the Director of the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, leadership of the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship, and additional faculty representatives selected with the aid of the College Faculty Senate. We understand that this group would not represent experts in the field of scholarship. The purpose of the committee would be to ensure that a thorough peer review of the book had been conducted, and that the press in question is prepared to execute the publication in a way that meets the standards we have discussed above.

We discussed at length when an application for funding should be submitted by the author of a monograph. While there would be certain advantages in securing funding before a manuscript is reviewed by the press, we have strong concerns that this funding stream might alter the peer review process, which is so important to the academic publication process. We need strong peer review in order to ensure that this additional funding from our university supports scholarship that is both innovative and influential, and that meets our highest standards of quality. Therefore, we do not believe that funding should be awarded until *after* the completion of the peer review process. [9][#N9] Indeed, the review of the application will include a review of the peer review reports as supplied by the press and the author

In order to be eligible for University funding, a proposal would need to include the following:

- A letter from the editor or publisher of a university press or digital scholarship center stating that the manuscript has been accepted for publication and been through the peer review process. The letter should also state that the press is capable of producing an open access, digital monograph meeting the standards that have been described above.

- The faculty member should provide copies of all readers' reports, so that the committee has evidence of robust peer review, as well as a copy of any author's responses to those reports.

- The faculty member should submit an abstract of the book, the table of contents, a representative chapter, and a one-page letter explaining why open access, digital publication is an attractive option.

In evaluating proposals, the committee would seek to ensure that a vigorous peer review process has been completed by reading carefully the reviewers reports on the work. The committee would also evaluate evidence that the press is able to publish the work meeting the criteria explained above. Finally, the committee would work to ensure that the funds allocated through this process support a diverse range of faculty, not only in terms of racial, ethnic, and gender identity but also in terms of scholarly field and rank.

At the beginning of our work, several members of the working group expressed concerns about urging untenured, assistant professors to publish their works digitally. *However, we have come to the conclusion that such a program should be open to faculty of all ranks, including lecture-track faculty who might have monographs suitable for university press publication.* We do not think it wise to implement a program, even in a pilot phase, that targets faculty at one particular career stage or in one particular discipline.

We described above four different options that a humanities scholar might have in the near future for the publication of long-form scholarship. We believe that one of the options will remain the print monograph, published on the current sales and pricing model, and that such books should not require the kind of university support that would be provided through this competitive funding model. Rather, in the competitive funding model, we believe that Emory should seek to support three kinds of publications in long-form scholarship, which correspond with items 2, 3, and 4 above:

> Monographs that are close analogues of print monographs in which the author believes that the project would benefit significantly from publication through an open access, digital form. These monographs would include scholarship on subjects or in fields where sales projections make publication through a traditional sales model unlikely, so that we could endeavor to support the publication of important scholarship that might otherwise go unpublished. However, it would not be limited to such cases, as this form of publication may have appeal for other humanities topics that could reach a broader, or different, audience.

> Digitally enhanced monographs that take advantage of the networked digital environment to provide reading experiences that cannot be replicated in print, such as by embedding audio or video, or by linking directly to primary evidence. These works might simultaneously be made available in a print form (probably through print-on-demand) without this digital enhancement.

> Long-form scholarly works that could not exist in a print environment. These works must provide evidence of significantly advancing a scholarly question or a field of research, and they must also be subject to vigorous pre-publication peer review, regardless of whether they are published by university presses or by digital scholarship centers.

Cost Structure

We have conducted our discussion without the benefit of detailed information about the costs of publishing digital monographs. Therefore, we have used the figure provided by the Mellon foundation of $10,000 per book when considering the costs for the kind of program outlined above. We realize that this figure is lower than many other estimates, including the $15,000 figure used in the AAUP report "Sustaining Scholarly Publication." However, it is a figure that our consultants have suggested is viable. [10][#N10]

Clearly, though, different books will require differing levels of investment for open access publication. Based on our conversations with university press editors, we can imagine that the publication of a relatively simple (in terms of production, not intellectual content) monograph might require university support of $6000, whereas a complex, digitally enhanced one might require 2-3 times that amount, or more.

We believe that the Mellon Foundation should play a significant role in helping to articulate a cost structure for publication under this model. If costs were to significantly exceed $10,000-$15,000 per volume, then we would question the value proposition of the program. At 10 books per year, funding of $10,000 per volume would require a total investment of $100,000 per year; funding of $15,000 would require $150,000 per year. Currently, Emory College is spending a much more modest amount on book subventions — approximately $25,000 per year — and we do not believe that this publication fund will reduce those subvention costs entirely, as that amount supports publications that will not necessarily be eligible for this digital publication model. For instance, that subvention fund is frequently used to support the translation of scholarly monographs into languages with a significant target audience, a cost that we presume will continue to be necessary even with digital publications.

The humanities at Emory, as at many institutions, receive most of their financial support from the tuition of our undergraduate students. Therefore, we have an obligation to ensure that publication support is invested wisely.

We believe that institutionally, the costs of this program should be borne jointly by the College of Arts and Sciences (75%) and the University Library (25%). The College is the home of the humanities faculty who will publish through such a program, which supports their research. However, the Library also has a significant stake in this program, as the publication of digital monographs directly impacts its methods of collecting, preserving, and disseminating knowledge. By jointly sharing costs and responsibilities in the implementation of this program, we believe that both the College and the Library will maximize our opportunities to ensure that our resources are deployed appropriately.

Because this program would be primarily funded through the College, it would not be available to faculty seeking to publish digital monographs from other schools (law, theology, medicine, etc.). However, should those schools elect to contribute to this fund to support projects of their faculty, the awards committee above would be available to share its expertise, if desired, in reviewing the publishing agreement and peer review process.

Pilot, Evolution, and Assessment

As explained above, we believe that participation in the kind of digital publishing program we propose will ultimately interest a wide range of Emory faculty; therefore, the figure of ten books per academic year seems appropriate. However, at the beginning of such a program, we will need to actively recruit, running the program with smaller numbers of faculty projects for at least one to three years.

In launching this program, we recognize that calibrating the timing will be challenging: Faculty will not be interested until the presses with whom they regularly publish (see appendix) are prepared to publish open access, digital monographs. Those presses in turn may not be ready to invest in the infrastructure for this kind of publication until they know that universities like Emory and faculty like ours are prepared to support publication in it. We hope that the Mellon Foundation might be able to offer this report as evidence to university presses of the substantial interest in this mode of publication.

As books are published through this process, each work will offer an opportunity to assess the quality and success of this project. We also believe that a more systematic review of this publishing program should occur after four years, and then in four-year cycles thereafter, would be important for judging its outcome and effect. This review could be conducted by the College's Senior Associate Deans for Faculty and Research, the Director of the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, the Director of Scholarly Communications in Woodruff Library, and the leadership of the Emory Digital Scholarship Center. Such a review might consider the following questions:

Do the quality of the digital publications meet the expectations of the university?

Are the digital publications being marketed and reviewed at a level commensurate with their scholarly significance?

What do authors report about their experience working with presses during the publication process?

What data do we have about the readership, citation, and circulation of these works?

To what extent are both university presses and other universities investing in similar digital publication programs?

Should the Mellon Foundation provide funding for such a publication program, we hope that it would include support for this work of assessment. Mellon could perhaps also assume a pivotal role

in helping to foster inter-university communication throughout the grant period, so that Emory could share with its peers the results of its assessments and learn about experiences elsewhere.

Equally significant is the evolution of faculty attitudes toward and interest in open access, digital publishing, which will depend on the ability of presses to create and promote attractive platforms. We have outlined a process and a model of funding that we believe will meet our current needs in a practical manner. However, operational flexibility will be vital to ensure that ongoing evaluations of this program can quickly lead to ameliorative adjustments when necessary. In the original concept articulated by Mellon officers, an eight-year timetable for such a program was announced. Though it is important that such a program have significant time to take hold and be assessed, the eight-year period may require significant adjustment in the set of practices that we have been recommended here.

One thing has been apparent to our working group as we have discussed this new model of monograph publication. Faculty in the humanities and their university administrations have played far too small a part in thinking about the publication and distribution of their scholarship. They have taken for granted the important role of university presses and, aside from individual contract negotiations over their own manuscripts, they have lacked the opportunities or the desire to engage in broad discussions about how presses disseminate their scholarship. One advantage of moving to a model of university support for digital publications is that it will afford faculty and administrators an opportunity to engage in sustained, thoughtful dialogue about publishing practices. The resources that universities invest will come with an obligation to understand how the landscape of academic publication is changing, and in so doing, to assume a larger role in informing its future.

Socialization and Education

While our group is in many different ways representative, we also recognize that the vast majority of humanities faculty at Emory have not had the opportunity to engage in prolonged investigation of the pressures facing the academic publication of monographs, the concerns raised by university presses, and the possibilities of digital publication — the kind of invaluable discussions that the Mellon Foundation has enabled our group to conduct over this last year.

We believe that in order for this program to be successful, sustained efforts will be required to engage faculty on these matters, and to explain the value of such a program. While open forums on such matters can be valuable, most faculty focus on their research and writing until they are near the completion of a major project, without giving much thought to the ultimate venue for its publication. Therefore, leadership at Emory—including the leadership of the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence, and the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship—will need to find opportunities to engage faculty, often in one-on-one settings, about the value of this program to the careers of individual scholars, focusing on those with projects that seem particularly suitable. We will also need to ensure that those in the initial cohorts of publication are widely recognized, so that others can see the value of this model. This process of socialization, which will necessarily be an extended one, will be crucial to ensure that this program succeeds.

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     Aslib Proceedings 61:1. 67-82. Print.

Notes

1. Scott Sherman, "University Presses Under Fire." *The Nation.* 26 March 2014. On-line
   edition. The AAUP's own report, "Sustaining Scholarly Publication: New Economic Models
   for University Presses," was released in 2011. [#N1-ptr1]

2. The members of the working group were: Tanine Allison, Assistant Professor of Film and
   Media Studies; Martine Brownley, Director, Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry and
   Goodrich C. White Professor of English; Lisa Chinn, doctoral candidate, Department of
   English; Vincent Cornell, Chair and Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Middle Eastern and
   South Asian Studies; Michael Elliott (PI), Executive Associate Dean, Emory College of Arts
   and Sciences, and Professor of English; James Hoesterey, Assistant Professor of Religion;
   Jeffrey Lesser, Chair and Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor, Department of History; Gary
   Laderman, Chair and Goodrich C. White Professor, Department of Religion; Lisa Macklin,
   Director, Scholarly Communications, Robert W. Woodruff Library; Sarah McPhee, Chair
   and Professor, Department of Art History; Andrew Mitchell, Associate Professor of
   Philosophy; Pamela Scully, Director, Center for Faculty Development and Excellence, and
   Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Allen Tullos, Director, Emory Center
   for Digital Scholarship, and Professor of History; Elizabeth Wilson, Chair and Professor,
   Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies [#N2-ptr1]

3. Stanford Press Release: http://library.stanford.edu/news/2015/01/stanford-university-
   press-awarded-12-million-publishing-interactive-scholarly-works
   [http://library.stanford.edu/news/2015/01/stanford-university-press-awarded-12-million-
   publishing-interactive-scholarly-works]
   Cambridge Press Release: http://www.cambridge.org/about-us/media/press-
   releases/cambridge-university-press-announces-new-partner-digital-publishing-platform/
   [http://www.cambridge.org/about-us/media/press-releases/cambridge-university-press-announces-
   new-partner-digital-publishing-platform/]
   University of Minnesota Press Release: https://www.upress.umn.edu/press/press-
   releases/manifold-scholarship [https://www.upress.umn.edu/press/press-releases/manifold-
   scholarship] [#N3-ptr1]

4. Geoffrey Crossick, "Monographs and Open Access," pp. 14-15, available at:
   http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2015/monographs/
   [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2015/monographs/] [#N4-ptr1]

5. A recent article on "The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities
   Research," published by several scholars at the University College, London, advances a
   similar argument: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/00012530910932294
   [http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/00012530910932294] [#N5-ptr1]

6. Several recent articles have articulated concerns about digital scholarship in the tenure and
   promotion processes, including:
   https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/02/20/essay-issues-related-what-digital-

scholarship-counts-tenure-and-promotion
[https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/02/20/essay-issues-related-what-digital-scholarship-counts-tenure-and-promotion]
http://www.mlajournals.org/toc/prof/2011/1 [http://www.mlajournals.org/toc/prof/2011/1]
http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-4/ [http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-4/] ⬆ [#N6-ptr1]

7. Some members of our working group raised concerns about whether *existing* practices of peer review provide the kind of rigorous, disinterested evaluation that we seek from this process. Peer review practices, and the role that peer review plays in the humanities, could be the subject of its own, extended report. In several disciplines, the subject of how best to review both narrative and data in a rigorous fashion is the subject of wide discussion. For our purposes, what is crucial is that most on our committee agreed that one of the key values that the university press brings to the dissemination of scholarship is a shared assumption that the press is conducting a thorough and fair review of that scholarship by qualified, disinterested scholars. Any shifts to digital, open access publication must assure scholars that this presumption can continue to hold. ⬆ [#N7-ptr1]

8. We have used the definition of open access provided by PLOS (Public Library of Science) at https://www.plos.org/open-access/ [https://www.plos.org/open-access/]. ⬆ [#N8-ptr1]

9. One possibility that we have discussed is allowing authors to submit a preliminary proposal for review before they have secured the publisher, and to receive a first review on that basis. ⬆ [#N9-ptr1]

10. Conducting this planning process in the absence of hard data about the potential costs of this model was one of our most significant challenges. Clearly, different stakeholders have reasons to arrive at higher or lower estimates for the costs that this model would require. We are hoping that the Ithaka study commissioned by the Mellon Foundation will provide more information on how to develop a fair cost structure, perhaps one that is tiered for different kinds of publications. Humanities scholars — like all research scholars in the academy — are currently competing for relatively scarce resources to fund their basic research. If the publication costs for digital monographs become too high, they will necessarily take away from other forms of research funding or result in the hiring of fewer full-time faculty. Our committee remains cognizant of these tradeoffs as we think about the size of the investment that this publication model would require. ⬆ [#N10-ptr1]