PUBLISHING MEANS BUSINESS

AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVES

EDITED BY AARON MANNION, MILLICENT WEBER & KATHERINE DAY

PUBLISHING MEANS BUSINESS

PUBLISHING MEANS BUSINESS

Australian Perspectives

Edited by Aaron Mannion, Millicent Weber and Katherine Day

MONASH University Publishing

Publishing Means Business: Australian Perspectives

© Copyright 2017
© Copyright of this collection in its entirety is held by the editors, Aaron Mannion, Millicent Weber and Katherine Day.
© Copyright of the individual chapters is held by the respective authors.
All rights reserved. Apart from any uses permitted by Australia's Copyright Act 1968, no part of this book may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the copyright owners. Inquiries should be directed to the publisher.

Monash University Publishing
Matheson Library and Information Services Building
40 Exhibition Walk
Monash University
Clayton, Victoria 3800, Australia
www.publishing.monash.edu

Monash University Publishing brings to the world publications which advance the best traditions of humane and enlightened thought.

Monash University Publishing titles pass through a rigorous process of independent peer review.

www.publishing.monash.edu/books/pmb-9781925523249.html

Series: Publishing

Design: Les Thomas

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Title: Publishing means business : Australian perspectives / Aaron Mannion, Millicent Weber, Katherine Day, editors.

ISBN: 9781925523249 (paperback)

Subjects: Publishers and publishing--Australia.
Electronic publishing--Australia.
Book industries and trade--Australia.

Other Creators/Contributors:
Mannion, Aaron, editor.
Weber, Millicent, editor.
Day, Katherine, editor.

ISBN: 9781925523249 (pb)
ISBN: 9781925523256 (PDF)
ISBN: 9781925523263 (ePub)
ISBN: 9781925523409 (Mobi)

Contents

Cover

Publishing Means Business: An Introduction vii
Katherine Day and Aaron Mannion

1. Commerce or Culture? Australian Book Industry Policy in the Twenty-First Century 1
David Throsby

2. 'More Opportunities for Staying Published, but Less Income?' Australian Authors Speak about Their Experiences in the Contemporary Book Industry 22
Jan Zwar

3. Proactivity and the Entrepreneurial Self-Concept of Book Publishers 47
Susanne Bartscher-Finzer

4. Going over to the Other Side: The New Breed of Author–Publishers 69
Sophie Masson

5. The Death and the Life of the Publisher: An Emergent Examination of Publisher as Curator and Cartographer 87
Alexandra Payne

6. Australian Literary Journals and the Postcolonial Cultural Cringe. 108
Emmett Stinson

7. Who Are the New Gatekeepers? Literary Mediation and Post-Digital Publishing 125
Mark Davis

8. Australian Stories: Books and Reading in the Nation 147
David Carter and Michelle Kelly

9 Discipline and Publish: Disciplinary Boundaries in Publishing Studies 182
Millicent Weber and Aaron Mannion

Author Biographies 207
Editors' Acknowledgements 211

Back cover

Publishing Means Business

An Introduction

Katherine Day and Aaron Mannion

Throughout the history of the book, publishing has been a battleground for the competing demands of business and culture. Authors, editors and booksellers all struggle to balance financial and cultural considerations. The struggle is a complex one, which can see the public's desires at odds with the public good—as is evident in the competing claims of both Amazon and traditional booksellers to be representing our best interests, a problem that raises questions about the conflation of consumer and citizen in cultural and policy debates. But these tensions are not new, and can be traced back to the birth of publishing, as evidenced in early sixteenth century stoushes over monopolisation in copyright law, when booksellers argued for protected status for themselves and restricting free public access to their products—such access being 'to the great Discouragement of persons from writing Matters that might be of great Use to the Publick' (Parliament (Great Britain). House of Commons, 1706). Similar debates continue today: the recent Productivity Commission recommendations to reassess Australian fair dealing laws and territorial rights (PCIR 2016) again places book publishing, as a vehicle of our national cultural identity, at odds with commerce and competition. For example, mergers have created a new brand of multinational publisher—one that prioritises shareholders' interests and eliminates risk by utilising up-to-date data to inform their publishing decisions. The emergence of Neilsen Bookscan as a contributing factor has been well documented (Magner 2012, 243), illuminating the growing influence of sales data on what had previously been considered 'editorial' decisions.

Where once the role of cultural intermediary was primarily the territory of professional editors, reviewers and booksellers, now we see new actors taking the stage beside them: literary agents, who often edit or direct manuscript development long before the book sees a publisher; online reviewers, who work outside the previously restricted 'industry loop'; and self-publishing authors, who bypass gatekeepers altogether, returning to the traditional model, if they do at all, only when they have proven their value to the market. This complex tug of war continues to fascinate academics and industry professionals in the 'post digital' mediascape (Murray 2015, 311).

Technological disruption has also undoubtedly changed publishing. The rise of social media has transformed both the author–reader and publisher–author relationship. Developments in digital publishing have changed industry workflows, and have enabled the self-publishing revolution. And, in turn, such developments have led to the emergence of new publishishing models that have disrupted the established relationships of author, editor, publisher, printer and bookseller, and have provided fertile ground for further research.

John Thompson's classic summary of contemporary publishing companies as 'content-acquiring and risk-taking organizations oriented towards the production of a particular kind of cultural commodity' (2005, 15) still rings true. But anyone who works with books—authors, publishers, editors and printers—feels acutely that, in the last decade, developments such as digital publishing and the disintermediation of a traditional publishing model have fundamentally altered the fulcrums and levers, if not the general mechanics, of the 'post-digital' field of publishing (Ludovico 2013, 153).

But despite the tighter focus of 'big publishing' on the bottom line, publishers, writers and readers are finding ways to pursue projects of cultural value. Small presses, often with tightly focused lists, are emerging as important cultural players, vying for, and winning, major awards, notably the 2016 Miles Franklin (with Alec Patric's

Black Rock, White City published by Transit Lounge). Self-publishing has flourished as a complement, rather than an alternative, to traditional publishing, with authors often shifting between models multiple times.

In our first chapter, David Throsby raises the pertinent question: 'should the book industry be regarded as an industrial or a cultural sector?' Throsby offers a searing critique of the Australian government's cultural policy, which has consistently prioritised economic considerations over Australia's cultural identity. In response to such government disregard, Throsby argues that 'an appeal to books' cultural value can be admitted as a valid argument for government policy concern'.

Jan Zwar explores how a rapidly changing marketplace has affected authors' ability to publish their work. Since the collapse of RedGroup and the increased emphasis on Neilsen Bookscan as a sales guide, commercial houses have actively worked to minimise risk while maximising revenue from an increasingly limited number of titles. Despite these challenging circumstances, Zwar finds that authors have proven adaptable, discovering new ways to reach readers.

Susanne Bartscher-Finzer uses the concept of 'proactivity' to examine the differences between Australian and German publishing. Supported by a robust quantitative study, Bartscher-Finzer finds evidence to support her contention that the differences between the two countries' publishers are driven by their responses to differing market dynamics and economic stimuli.

Sophie Masson focuses on the author-publisher—authors who began as self-publishers and subsequently established enterprises that publish the work of multiple authors. Mason explores how, operating in the post-digital paradigm, authors are driven to create their own publishing opportunities, bypassing the traditional publishing path. While creating exciting opportunities, the author-publisher category raises interesting questions about these new roles, such as 'how do

they negotiate the social spaces and traditionally binary intersections of creativity and production, business and art?'

Alexandra Payne presents the publisher as cartographer and curator—mapping the planning of the publishing list—a creative and inspiring position from which to view this role. Her engaging discussion of 'whether publishers censor, influence or engender the experience of the author and reader' highlights the adaptability of the contemporary publisher.

Emmett Stinson places the issue of Australia's 'cultural cringe' in a transnational context. Stinson charts how Australian literary journals, while claiming equality with their international peers, nevertheless feel compelled to justify their value in reference to established overseas institutions and their symbolic capital—the publication of overseas writers and artists thus consecrates local content, while, symbolically, reinscribing 'Australia's position of inferiority within Anglophone cultural exchanges'.

Mark Davis examines the fate of literary culture in the post-digital literary field, where social media platforms engage audiences in ways new to the 'literary sphere'. Davis finds this emerging digital literary field to be more fluid than its precursors and difficult to capture. Through his deft analysis, Davis reveals how the embrace of digital technologies both supports and compromises literary culture.

David Carter and Michelle Kelly provide a detailed analysis of the reading habits and tastes of Australian readers. The analysis is based on Carter and Kelly's unrivalled large-scale social survey of over 1200 Australians. The research breaks down what Australians read, offering insights into how age, gender and occupation influence reading decisions.

Closing the book, Millicent Weber and Aaron Mannion examine how publishing studies has developed, mapping the forces that shape the discipline and thinking through the affordances and limitations of its current path.

This book grew out of the 2016 Independent Publishing Conference run by the Small Press Network. The conference brings publishers together with researchers from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, including publishing studies, literary studies, creative writing and cultural studies. What unifies all is a shared understanding that publishing is—while also fun, exciting, uncommercial, whimsical, profitable or even quixotic—serious business deserving study. The essays collected here clearly demonstrate the value of thinking seriously about both the commercial and cultural aspects of the publishing industry.

Works Cited

Davis, M citing Bourdieu, P 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R. Nice, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Ludovico, A 2013, *Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing Since 1894*, Onomatopee.

Magner, B 2012, 'Behind the BookScan Bestseller Lists: Technology and Cultural Anxieties in Early Twenty-First-Century Australia', *Script & Print*, vol. 36, no. 4, Bibliographical Society of Australia & New Zealand.

Murray, S 2015 'Charting the Digital Literary Sphere', *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 56, no. 2, University of Wisconsin Press.

Parliament. House of Commons (26 February 1706) 'Copyright of Printed Books', *Journals of the House of Commons*, vol. 15, (1803). H.M. Stationary Office, London.

Productivity Commission 2016, 'Intellectual Property Arrangements', *Productivity Commission Inquiry Report*, no. 78, Canberra.

Thompson, JB 2005, 'Publishing as an Economic and Cultural Practice', *Books in the Digital Age*, Polity, Cambridge and Malden, MA.

Chapter One

Commerce or Culture?

Australian Book Industry Policy in the Twenty-First Century

David Throsby

Introduction

From an economic viewpoint, books are a commercial commodity. They are the output of a long supply chain beginning with authors, and proceeding through a series of value-adding stages including agents, publishers, editors, printers, distributors, and booksellers, before finishing up in the hands of the consumer—the book reader. The collection of individuals and business firms comprising the Australian book industry, although like other manufacturing industries, is actually a complex web of separate industries—the arts industry, the publishing industry, the printing industry, the retail industry, and so on. Nevertheless, it is possible, for example, to estimate the gross value of the output of books as a commodity in the national accounts, such that an economic assessment of the contribution of 'the book industry' to GDP can be undertaken. Thus the industry can be seen as an identifiable component of the manufacturing sector and can take its place alongside other industries for the purposes of determining government industry policy.

But, of course, books are not articles of commercial merchandise in the same way as footwear, beer or automobiles. Economists interested in the economics of art and culture classify books as cultural goods; they are defined as goods or services that embody or give rise to some form of value, termed cultural value, in addition to whatever economic value they may possess (Hutter and Throsby

2008; Snowball 2011). Although book lovers will have no difficulty recognising a purely artistic or cultural quality attributable to books, especially to literary works such as novels or poetry collections, the specification of an objectively measurable cultural value of books, whether expressed in qualitative or quantitative terms, is a task that has challenged literary theorists and cultural economists for many years (Connor 1992; Throsby 2001: Ch. 2). Suffice to say that, for the purposes of this essay, we can assume the existence of an identifiable dimension to the value of books, separate from their financial worth, that reflects, in some way, the contribution they make to the cultural life of individuals or of the nation.

The presence of these two contrasting dimensions to the value that this industry generates presents a dilemma for the policy-maker: should the book industry be regarded as an industrial or a cultural sector? If the former, a government's dealing with the industry will be motivated by economic concerns and any assistance deemed necessary on these grounds will form part of overall economic policy. In such circumstances policy interventions might be limited to dealing with employment and training issues, export market development, assistance for small business etc. If, on the other hand, the production of books is regarded as a cultural industry, policy towards the industry will fall into the ambit of the government's cultural policy, and the motive for supporting it, if support is warranted, will be to pursue cultural, not economic, objectives.

This dilemma has troubled Australian governments for many years, and has had a significant effect on the direction of book industry policy. In this paper we examine the evolution of policy towards the book industry in Australia over the last decade, and assess the extent to which changing policy settings have affected the industry. The paper is structured as follows: in section 2 the major milestones in the development of book policy as represented in significant government processes are discussed; in section 3 the current state of play is

assessed. Section 4 addresses the normative question: what should a future book industry policy for Australia look like? The final section draws some conclusions.

Milestones in the Development of Australian Book Industry Policy

The evolution of policy towards the Australian book industry over recent years can be charted as a series of milestones corresponding to major government inquiries and processes. These inquiries and processes have identified significant concerns, which have led to a series of reports and recommendations that have had some impact on book policy deliberations. Three such processes are discussed below.

The Productivity Commission's 2009 Inquiry into Parallel Importation Restrictions

Parallel importation restrictions (PIRs) were introduced by the Australian Government in 1991 as an amendment to the Copyright Act (1968). The PIRs provide protection for authors or publishers holding rights in Australian-published books, against the importation and sale of the books from overseas suppliers. To qualify for protection under these regulations, a book published in Australia must be released to Australian customers within 30 days of its publication elsewhere in the world, and resupply must be guaranteed within 90 days.[1] The PIRs provide a level of (temporary) protection for the domestic book industry against foreign competition. In 2008 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) discussed PIRs in the context of possible reforms to competition policy. The outcome of these discussions was a reference to the Productivity Commission to inquire into the competitive impacts of the PIR regulations.

1 Since 2012, the Australian Publishers Association and the Australian Booksellers Association have entered into an industry-wide agreement known as the Speed to Market Initiative, voluntarily reducing the 30/90-day rule to 14/14. See Australian Publishers Association (2014, 3).

In its report released in July 2009, the Productivity Commission recommended repeal of the PIRs on the grounds that they placed upward pressure on book prices, restricted the commercial opportunities available to retail book suppliers, and were ineffective as a means of delivering support for the generation of the acknowledged cultural benefits yielded by the industry (Productivity Commission 2009). The Commission also recommended a review of existing mechanisms for encouraging production of these cultural benefits.

After due consideration of the Productivity Commission's report, the Government reached the view that lifting the restrictions would deliver little or no net benefit, and, hence, decided not to accept the recommendation for repeal of the PIRs (as had a succession of Australian governments on both sides of the political fence in earlier years). At the same time, however, it was recognised that the book market was undergoing significant structural transformation as a result of digital technologies, and that these trends would only grow more intense. Accordingly, the Government decided to initiate a review of the book industry and its adaptation to a rapidly changing technological environment. This review process was established as the Book Industry Strategy Group.

The Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG)

The decision to set up the BISG was driven by the then Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator Kim Carr, whose interest in books as an industry and as a cultural phenomenon is well known. In a reference dated April 2010, he asked the Group to examine the impact of digitisation on the Australian book industry and to develop a comprehensive strategy for securing Australia's place in the emerging digital book market and for making the domestic industry more efficient and globally competitive. The Group's terms of reference covered a range of data-gathering and assessment tasks, and required the Group to put forward recommendations based

on its findings. Given that it was operating under the aegis of the Industry Department, its focus was on industry-led proposals for reform. Nevertheless, the final item in its terms of reference sought advice on how existing Commonwealth Government programs and activities might be refocused to support the industry's adaptation to new technologies.

It is fashionable these days for business corporations, government instrumentalities, universities, and all types of organisations to have a vision statement, and the BISG was no exception. It articulated its vision for the Australian book industry as follows:

> To ensure that the Australian book industry is innovative, prosperous and sustainable for the long term, develops Australian creators and creative works and encourages investment in new technologies. (BISG 2011, 11)

Like all vision statements the BISG's was long on rhetoric and short on detail, but the Group's report released in September 2011 did in fact canvas a wide range of issues and generated a lot of data about the state of the industry. Its recommendations were grouped under six themes:

- integrating the book supply chain
- competing in the global market
- improving efficiencies
- rewarding and protecting creativity
- supporting the business environment
- supporting Australian culture.

Altogether, a total of 21 recommendations were presented to the Government.

The last of the six themes had a special resonance for the chair of the BISG, Barry Jones. As a well-known polymath and cultural omnivore, Jones was deeply engaged with the cultural importance

of books. The fact that the BISG was operating under an industry rather than an arts or cultural ministry meant that its deliberations had to be orientated towards economic rather than cultural concerns, and its recommendations had to address issues of economic rather than cultural policy. In an effort to redress the balance, Jones contributed a learned prologue to the BISG Report entitled 'Cultural development and creativity in the digital revolution—a personal perspective', which concluded with the statement 'Books are more than an industrial output, as conventionally defined. The book culture must be stimulated and transformed' (BISG 2011, 20).

The Government's response to the BISG Report dated June 2012 accepted some recommendations and rejected others, offering little in the way of increased resources for industry support (Australian Government 2012). One proposal that was readily accepted, however, was the Group's first recommendation—that a Book Industry Collaborative Council be established to carry forward the implementation of the BISG's reform priorities. Thus does one government process give rise to another.

The Book Industry Collaborative Council (BICC)

Planning for the BICC commenced in the early months of 2012, even before the formal release of the Government's response to the BISG recommendations. As a result, the new Council was able to begin operation on 1 July 2012, with a 12-month timeframe to complete its work. The 20-member Council comprised representatives from peak book-industry associations as well as experts in fields related to the book industry. The Council was chaired by the present author. Four members of the BICC had also served on the BISG.

As with the BISG, the BICC's operations were set up within the Industry portfolio. This time the relevant minister was Greg Combet, a politician not particularly noted for his interest in books. His ministry

had acquired some additional responsibilities since its earlier incarnations—it was now the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, with an unpronounceable acronym. During the progress of the BICC, the Minister appeared to be too preoccupied with the other areas in his portfolio to be concerned with the book industry. Be that as it may, the industrial orientation of the BICC's terms of reference was clear and, indeed, unlike the BISG, the membership of the Council included an *ex-officio* representative of the Industry Department.[2]

The BICC, guided by the findings of its predecessor, defined seven priority areas for in-depth attention. In order to provide expert consideration of these areas and to propose forward-looking strategies for industry progress, the BICC set up seven Expert Reference Groups:

- Copyright
- Data
- Distribution
- Export
- Lending rights
- Scholarly book publishing
- Skills.

Each Group was chaired by a member of the Council, with membership drawn from key experts in each field from across the industry and beyond.

The BICC's final report was submitted to the Government on 28 June 2013. The 250-page report laid out a blueprint for industry reforms, which ramified into all sectors of the supply chain. It advocated an industry-wide approach to achieving distribution efficiencies based around principles of speed-to-market, availability and value,

2 It should also be noted that both the BISG and the BICC processes were supported by excellent and well-resourced secretariat services provided by the Department.

and placing the consumer at the heart of business decision-making. The recommendations in the report canvassed a wide range of reforms aimed at improving the industry's capacity to meet the challenges of the digital economy.

As noted above, the BICC was a creation of the Industry Department and its focus was firmly on industry-led reform. Nevertheless, the Council recognised that the book industry's claim on the attention of government lay primarily in its cultural role, pointing out that book industries in many countries 'have become a focus for public policy because … they provide a link between the production of economic benefits and the generation of cultural value' (BICC 2013, 47). Thus the Council devoted a section of its report to discussing the ways in which books contribute to the development of literary and broader culture, and to pointing out that the cultural importance of the Australian book industry is manifest at all points in the supply chain from author to reader (BICC 2013, 47–49).

The weeks surrounding the submission of the BICC Report to government were a period of considerable political turmoil, in which the Prime Minister changed from Julia Gillard to Kevin Rudd, and responsibility for the Industry portfolio was returned to Senator Carr. Not surprisingly, Carr was strongly supportive of the Council's recommendations, but there was no time for any formal response from the Government; an election date had been set, after which the caretaker period ensued. At the election on 7 September 2013 the Labor Government was defeated, and was replaced by a conservative administration led by Tony Abbott.

Mid-2013 proved to be an inauspicious time for Australian cultural policy. It was not only the BICC Report that was consigned to the political wilderness as a result of the change of government. The same fate befell the Labor Government's long-awaited cultural policy report *Creative Australia*, which had been released in May (Commonwealth of Australia 2013); this document was the culmination of a long

process of analysis, consultation and policy development undertaken under the direction of the then Arts Minister, Simon Crean. It represented the most comprehensive effort to spell out an Australian cultural policy since *Creative Nation*, the Keating Government's cultural policy of 20 years earlier (Commonwealth of Australia 1994). The *Creative Australia* report deals with all the arts; it makes reference to the book industry as a significant cultural sector in the economy (Commonwealth of Australia 2013, 92), and to books as an important contributor to Australian cultural life.

One of the most important tasks of the BICC was to assess options for moving towards a self-sustaining industry body to carry through the needed reforms. The Council recommended establishment of a body to be called the Book Industry Council of Australia (BICA), to be funded jointly by the industry associations, with possibly some seed money from government (BICC 2013, 50–52). The fate of this recommendation is discussed in the next section.

Recent Developments

When a government changes, it is not uncommon for the new administration to discard policy initiatives of their predecessors, either by explicitly reversing or repudiating them, or simply by ignoring them. In the cultural arena, for example, the incoming Howard Government in 1996 dismantled what remained of *Creative Nation*. Similarly, the Coalition Government that took office in September 2013 effectively buried *Creative Australia*. Likewise the BICC Report's proposals were not commented upon by the new government—there was no launch of the report, no media publicity, no stimulus to public, or even to industry, awareness. The BICC Report was a major resource to guide processes of book industry reform, but a strategy for their implementation needed a focal point to coordinate the necessary action. Such a focal point was intended to be provided by the proposed BICA.

In the early months of 2014 an informal group that included several former members of the BICC met on several occasions with a view to pushing the BICA proposal forward. It was thought that a case could be put to government for funding to help establish a Book Council if the rationale for such a case were cultural rather than economic. The prospect that such a case would be listened to was boosted by the fact that the new Minister for the Arts, Senator George Brandis, was widely known for his devotion to books and his literary interests.

Accordingly, in October 2014, two members of the group met with Senator Brandis to press the argument for a Book Council.[3] The Minister confirmed that the book industry was much more likely to receive a sympathetic hearing from Government if it was 'sailing under my flag' rather than being located in the Industry portfolio. At the same time, officials from the Department of Industry re-affirmed that, as far as they were concerned, there was nothing special about the book industry and that it would be treated the same as any other manufacturing sector wanting to claim industry assistance. The outcome of these discussions was that policy responsibility for the Australian book industry effectively moved from the Industry to the Arts portfolio, and the focus of book policy was transferred from economic policy to cultural policy.

On 8 December 2014 the Prime Minister's Literary Awards ceremony was held in Melbourne at a dinner in the National Gallery of Victoria, an unusually lavish event in accordance with suggestions that the awards should have a more prominent profile in promoting Australian writing and publishing in the public arena. In his speech to the assembled book industry players, the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, announced that his Government would set up a Book Council of Australia, with funding of $2 million per year over three years.

3 The two members were Louise Adler, CEO of Melbourne University Publishing and President of the Australian Publishers Association, and the present author.

The industry's joy at this announcement was considerably soured when it was also learned on the same evening that this funding would not be new money but would be taken from the Australia Council budget.

The Minister for the Arts ignored continuing criticism of these funding arrangements and proceeded with planning for the new Book Council in the first months of 2015. A chair and members were appointed, objectives were laid out, and governance and operational issues for the new body were decided.[4] However, before the Council could hold its first meeting, further political turmoil ensued—this time on the coalition side—resulting in the replacement of Tony Abbott by Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister and, in due course, the removal of Senator Brandis as Minster for the Arts.

The ceremony for the 2015 Prime Minister's Literary Awards, held at Carriageworks in Sydney on 14 December, was a much less opulent affair than the previous year's. In his speech, Turnbull managed to alienate the entire book industry, first by declaring that he supported the Productivity Commission's latest recommendation to scrap the PIRs, and then by announcing that the Book Council would be abolished.[5] He offered the gratuitous observation that authors would go on producing books regardless of these decisions. Hopes for the emergence of a rational book policy to sustain the industry into the future had proved to be short-lived.

During 2016–17 there has been little to report on the cultural policy front. The book industry associations have found themselves having yet again to fight the same battle against the Productivity

4 It was thought that the Book Council might be able to fulfil some of the functions for the book industry such as promotion, exports, training, data collection etc. that were beyond the resources or remit of the Australia Council's grant programs for literature. For some further speculations as to what the proposed Council might achieve, see Glover (2015).

5 The formal announcement was made in the 2015 Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook released the following day, which also contained other cuts to arts funding.

Commission's recommendations on copyright (Productivity Commission 2016). Most of the funding that had been taken away from the Australia Council was eventually returned, but Australia remained without a formal cultural policy at the national level, and with the Book Council gone there was no specific government policy towards books. In these circumstances it is appropriate to ask the question: what should Australian book industry policy look like? If the BICC blueprint for industry-led reforms were implemented, what, if any, role would remain for government?

Book Policy: Is There a Future?

An ideal policy towards any cultural industry is one that acknowledges the complementarities between the economic and the cultural value of the industry's output.[6] In considering the make-up of such a policy, we can leave aside the usual arguments that industries make for government assistance relating to protection of employment, job creation, regional issues and so on which, as we have noted, are not likely to elevate books to the head of the queue of industries demanding attention. Instead we can focus on general principles that underlie a possible case for public assistance to a cultural industry. Two possibilities are indicated: an economic case and a cultural case.

In terms of economics, a rationale for public intervention in support of any industry may exist if it can be shown that the industry gives rise to positive externalities or public-good benefits that are not captured in private-market processes. This argument is frequently made in regard to the arts in general, when it is suggested that the existence of literature, the theatre, music, museums, galleries, and so on, gives people a sense of pride and satisfaction from knowing that

6 Whether such an ideal policy exists in other countries is debatable. For instance, a number of European countries, including in particular France and Germany, rely on fixed book price arrangements, whereby publishers set a price and discounting is severely restricted or prohibited. The effects of such a policy on competition, efficiency and authors' rights are unclear. See further in Canoy et al. (2006).

they live in a civilised society, even if they don't actually partake of these cultural experiences themselves. In formal terms, such benefits are defined as being non-excludable (no-one can be excluded from enjoying them) and non-rival (one person's enjoyment of the benefit does not diminish the amount available for others). The economic case for intervention relies on its being possible to show that the benefits of intervention outweigh the costs involved. Since this is an economic argument, the benefits must be expressed in financial terms, enabling comparison with the financial costs of whatever level of public subsidy or other assistance is to be recommended. Estimating a monetary value for these benefits can be achieved via a survey of the relevant population in which respondents are asked about their perception of these benefits and their willingness to pay for them, for example out of their taxes.[7] This justification could be made in support of the book industry if the above conditions apply i.e. if book publishing in Australia does indeed give rise to these diffused community benefits and the public is prepared to pay for them.

There is another economic argument sometimes invoked to rationalise government support for a cultural industry: the so-called 'merit good' argument. A merit good is defined in economic terms as something the government considers to be so intrinsically worthy that it should be supplied regardless of whether or not people demand it (Musgrave 1990). In formal terms, the process is described as one of preference imposition, i.e. the government's assessment of the worthiness of the good is sufficient to justify its provision, and hence it is the government's preference rather than the consumers' that determines the consequent resource allocation. It can be suggested that there are elements of a merit-good attitude reflected in the former Arts Minister's approach to the arts in general and to books in

7 The appropriate methodology for estimation of non-market values is contingent valuation; for an overview of applications in art, culture and heritage, see Cuccia (2011).

particular—Senator Brandis made no secret of the nature of his tastes in art, music and literature, and his preferences clearly influenced his policy decisions. Despite their descriptive appeal, however, there can be little normative justification for merit-good arguments in a democracy; they are relevant only in dictatorships or other authoritarian political systems.

Turning to the cultural case for government policy towards books, we return to the arguments discussed earlier that were put forward in both the BISG and BICC reports regarding the contribution of books to Australian culture. It can be seen immediately that these arguments are not unrelated to the public-good case outlined above, since, presumably, people's recognition or non-recognition of the cultural value of Australian books will underlie their perceptions of a public-good benefit and, hence, will influence their willingness to pay for it. But here we focus on non-monetary assessments of value, in line with the proposition that the cultural value of books, as of other cultural goods, is calibrated against qualitative scales relating to such attributes as their aesthetic value, their capacity to stimulate reflective thought, their social significance, their educational importance, and so on. These sorts of considerations do affect politicians, who generally recognise that their collective responsibilities extend beyond economic management, notwithstanding the dominance of economic objectives in determining most governments' political agendas. Such responsibilities include maintenance of a civilised and cultured society, where quality of life and non-material values are respected. To the extent that these obligations are accepted, cultural policy can claim a seat at the table in its own right, and not simply as an arm of economic policy. This being so, an appeal to books' cultural value can be admitted as a valid argument for government policy concern.

So much for general principles; how do they play out in the practical world of policy-making? An obvious question at the outset is:

how do we define the Australian book industry? Or, which part of it would warrant assistance on any of the grounds we have discussed? From the Government's point of view it seems clear that the issue is likely to be resolved on nationalistic grounds, i.e. for policy purposes the Australian book industry will be taken to comprise those industry participants who are themselves Australian, or who make, facilitate or receive a cultural contribution that is specifically Australian; one would not expect the Australian Government to be willing, for example, to finance the expression of Indian culture by Indian writers for consumption solely by Indian consumers (except as a form of foreign aid, perhaps). Nationalism may be an outmoded, divisive and dangerous concept in an increasingly globalised world, but for internal political purposes it continues to determine how policies across the board are framed.

Under such a regime, suitable candidates for Australian book industry support more or less define themselves. They include, not in any order of priority:

- Australian authors, whether or not writing in Australia or on Australian subjects;
- Australian publishers, whether local independents or Australian-based subsidiaries of international publishing houses;
- Non-Australian authors or publishers writing or publishing books on Australian subjects;
- Australian readers;
- Overseas readers of Australian books such as may be pursued via Australian representation at international book fairs;
- Other Australian literary professionals such as editors or agents;
- Australian booksellers if they are regarded as essential for the promotion of Australian culture;

- Literary festivals held in Australia; and
- Book industry organisations such as authors' and publishers' associations.

However, as obvious as the dimensions of the Australian book industry from a pragmatic policy perspective may seem (as noted above), definitions become problematic if attention is focused on a subset of Australian books, i.e. those contributing to what is generally known as Australian literary culture,[8] both fiction and non-fiction, on the grounds that literary works have the strongest claim to cultural content. There has been exhaustive debate as to whether a definable field that can be labelled 'Australian literature' continues to exist or, indeed, whether it ever did. Issues raised in this debate concern whether there are canonical works in Australian literature and, if so, whether they should form part of an English curriculum in schools and universities;[9] whether the work of Australian writers living overseas or of non-Australian authors writing about Australian subjects can be counted as Australian literature;[10] whether Australian literature has been absorbed into an internationalised literary landscape in which national literatures no longer have meaning (Dixon 2007; Dixon and Rooney 2013); what genres might or might not be counted (Gelder 2000); whether a critical intellectual tradition has helped to define the field (Carter 2000); or, finally, whether the idea of Australian literature can rise above these concerns and survive as a recognisable and distinctive field of cultural endeavour (Birns 2015).

---

8 Thus excluding non-literary Australian books like technical manuals, cookbooks, travel guides, etc.

9 As discussed in a roundtable on the study of Australian literature in schools and universities hosted by the Australia Council on 7 August 2007; see further, for example, in McLean Davies (2008) and Hassall (2011).

10 See, for example, discussion on 'What makes Australian literature Australian', Brisbane Writers Festival, sponsored by AustLit, September 2008; see Heiss (2008).

Certainly the concept of a distinctive Australian literature has driven Australia Council grant programs ever since their establishment and is consistent with the Council's statutory obligations to foster excellence in and access to the Australian arts. In the end it may be that the alternative concept of 'Australian writing' may be a more flexible notion—one that, as David Carter suggests, has the added virtue of 'bridging the gap between industry and policy' (Carter 2016, 56).

Whatever the outcome of discussions among literary scholars concerning the existence or otherwise of Australian literary culture, it is useful to challenge the question of support for an Australian book industry and the concept of Australian literary culture in the court of public opinion. A recent survey of readers, undertaken as part of an ARC-funded project on the Australian book industry in the Department of Economics at Macquarie University,[11] throws some light on two aspects of these questions: whether there is community approval for the provision of public support for an Australian book industry, and whether a recognition of a distinctive Australian literature influences consumers' reading choices.

In regard to public awareness of and support for the industry, the survey found an appreciable level of agreement with statements about the cultural dimensions of the book industry and its importance in Australia's cultural life. For example, about two thirds of respondents agreed with the proposition that an Australian book industry is part of Australian culture and that books by Australian writers about Australian subjects help us understand ourselves and our country, even if the respondents didn't necessarily read such books themselves. Just over half agreed that there should be public funding for

11 The survey of Australian adult readers, their attitudes and behaviour is reported in Throsby, Zwar and Morgan (2017). Descriptions of results of the survey as reported in the following paragraphs are taken from this publication, where more detail of the data quoted may be found.

Australian writing, and 59 per cent thought it important that books written by Australian authors be published in Australia. About 65 per cent were willing to make a voluntary contribution to a fund to support Australian authors. Overall the results of this component of the study 'point towards a generally positive attitude in the community towards some level of public support for Australian writers and publishers in the production of Australian books' (Throsby, Zwar and Morgan 2017, 17).

The question of a distinctly Australian literature was pursued by asking respondents about their attitudes to books by Australian authors, including books set in Australian settings. About one-third of respondents expressed a clearly positive attitude towards Australian-authored fiction, somewhat fewer for non-fiction by local writers. But almost half of respondents said they don't think much about it, and a further 20 per cent said they didn't know or couldn't say. As for books with Australian settings, between 40 and 50 per cent of respondents said they like such books a little or a lot, with about one-third indicating that they didn't care one way or the other. In other words, although there is some appreciation of specifically Australian books in the community, there are significant numbers who don't particularly care about, or even recognise, this characteristic when choosing books.

The survey also looked at attitudes to literary fiction as a specific genre. Just under half of respondents indicated a liking for literary classics, and a slightly larger proportion said they liked literary fiction by contemporary writers. Just under half of respondents expressed a liking for literary fiction specifically by Australian writers, past and present; more than half of respondents agreed that such books were important for Australian culture. It was found that age was an important factor in determining preference, with older readers liking literary classics and literary fiction by contemporary writers, and younger readers showing little interest in literary fiction by Australian

writers. A similar age-related response was evident in opinions about the importance of Australian literary works for Australian culture. These results appear to reflect uncertainties among young people concerning the term 'literary' as well as a lack of interest in or comprehension of a concept of Australian literary culture.

Conclusions

Can we draw any conclusions from the evolution of Australian book industry policy in recent times, if such a phrase can be used to describe the haphazard trajectory of the public sector's involvement with the book industry over these years? Certainly there was a period of purposeful progress, when the government brought industry representatives together for two successive processes to discuss the industry's difficulties and to propose remedies. And the industry body that was set up in response to these processes had every prospect of carrying these remedies forward, if only its life had not been prematurely terminated. So an assessment of the situation at the time of writing can be summarised in the words of the ancient cliché: so near and yet so far. The foundations have been laid in detail for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to Australian book industry policy through the strategies articulated first by the BISG and then reformulated and elaborated by the BICC. Implementation of the policy blueprint put forward in the BICC Report could enhance the industry's economic contribution at the same time as celebrating and advancing the essential role of books in our cultural life. All that is lacking, now, is a willingness to put these proposals into effect.

Acknowledgements

With the usual *caveat*, I express my thanks to Louise Adler, Michael Webster and Jan Zwar for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

Works Cited

Australian Government 2012, *Book Industry Strategy Group Report: Government Response*. Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, Canberra.

Australian Publishers Association 2014, Submission on the Competition Policy Review Draft Report. APA, Ultimo.

Birns, N 2015, *Contemporary Australian Literature: A World Not Yet Dead*. Sydney University Press, Sydney.

Book Industry Collaborative Council 2013, *Final Report*. Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, Canberra.

Book Industry Strategy Group 2011, *Final Report to Government*. Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Canberra.

Canoy, M, Van Ours, JC, & Van Der Ploeg, F 2006, 'The Economics of Books', in V Ginsburgh & D Throsby (eds) *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture Vol. 1*, North-Holland/Elsevier, Amsterdam, pp. 721–761.

Carter, D 2000, 'Critics, Writers, Intellectuals: Australian Literature and Its Criticism', in E Webby (ed), *Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 258–293.

——— 2016, 'The Literary Field and Contemporary Trade-Book Publishing in Australia: Literary and Genre Fiction', *Media International Australia* vol. 158, no. 1, pp. 48–57.

Commonwealth of Australia 1994, *Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy.* Department of Communications and the Arts, Canberra.

——— 2013, *Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy*. Australian Government, Canberra.

Connor, S 1992, *Theory and Cultural Value*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Cuccia, T 2011, 'Contingent Valuation', in R Towse, (ed), *Handbook of Cultural Economics*, 2nd edn, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp. 90–99.

Dixon, R 2007, 'Australian Literature—International Contexts', *Southerly*, vol. 67, nos. 1–2, pp. 15–27.

——— & Rooney, B (eds) 2013. *Scenes of Reading: Is Australian Literature a World Literature?* Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne.

Gelder, K 2000, 'Recovering Australian Popular Fiction: Towards the End of Australian Literature', *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*, pp. 112–120.

Glover, S 2015, 'When They Come to Save Books, What Will They Save?', *Overland*, 218, Autumn.

Hassall, T 2011, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Literature in the Universities?', *Quadrant*, vol. 55, no. 10, pp. 30–34.

Heiss, A 2008, 'What Makes Australian Literature Australian?' blog accessible at anitaheissblog.blogspot.com/2008/09/what-makes-australian-literature.html

Hutter, M & Throsby, D (eds) 2008, *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics, and the Arts*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

McLean Davies, L 2008, 'Telling Stories: Australian Literature in a National English Curriculum', *English in Australia*, vol. 43, no. 3, pp. 45–51.

Musgrave, R 1990, 'Merit Goods', in G Brennan & C Walsh (eds), *Rationality, Individualism, and Public Policy*, Centre for Research on Federal Financial Relations, Australian National University, Canberra, pp. 207–210.

Productivity Commission 2009, *Restrictions on the Parallel Importation of Books: Productivity Commission Research Report*. Productivity Commission, Canberra.

——— 2016, *Intellectual Property Arrangements: Productivity Commission Inquiry Report*. Productivity Commission, Canberra.

Snowball, J 2011, 'Cultural Value', in R Towse (ed), *Handbook of Cultural Economics*, 2nd edn, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp. 172–176.

Throsby, D 2001, *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

———, Zwar, J & Morgan, C 2017, *Australian Book Readers: Survey Method and Results*. Macquarie University Department of Economics Research Report No. 20.

Chapter Two

'More Opportunities for Staying Published, but Less Income?'

Australian Authors Speak about Their Experiences in the Contemporary Book Industry

Jan Zwar

Introduction

This paper examines the responses of Australian authors to contemporary changes in Australia's book publishing industry based on qualitative research conducted by researchers at the Australian Society of Authors (ASA). During 2013, Sophie Masson, Chair of the ASA, interviewed 39 authors, mostly Australian writers with a long career of publication, plus a small number of international and newly published Australian authors. Five Australian publishers and five literary agents were also interviewed. In these interviews, which were conducted by a long-standing member of the profession and prepared mainly to be read by other authors, the interviewees spoke with candour and humility that is in some ways at odds with their public personas as successful writers. Following the publication of these interviews (Masson 2014), this chapter analyses the transcripts with the aim of constructing an overview of the authors' experiences and their forecasts for the industry. The authors gave wide-ranging responses to a series of key questions (see Notes), with their points of view about the changes ranging from, 'I'm glad I had my shot when I did and was able to write in the traditional way' (Horowitz in

Masson 2014, 191) to 'This is the most exciting and wonderful time to be a storyteller' (Mawter in Masson 2014, 153).

Are Conditions Getting Tougher for Authors?

The Australian retail market for books has contracted over the last few years, with onshore print trade sales in 2016 valued at less than $1 billion, plus another $410 million in educational sales (Nielsen BookScan in Zwar 2016, 3; Australian Publishers Association in Zwar 2016, 6). Although the industry's sales are substantial, several hundred million dollars of annual sales have been lost offshore to online retailers such as Amazon, and through ebook sales, with no hope of recovering them (Coronel 2013, 25). This has contributed to more constrained circumstances for Australian publishers and authors. Many of the authors interviewed believe that it has become more difficult to stay published, particularly by 'legacy' or established, mainstream publishers. Several authors drew attention to the impact of Nielsen BookScan data on getting published: if their book had sold lower numbers than anticipated, it was a hard proposition to get the next book accepted, even if it was a better book. Literary agents and publishers agreed. In the words of an Australian multinational publisher, 'In the past, publishers were far more inclined to give an author five, maybe six, books to make their mark and slowly build a relationship. That is much shorter now—maybe three if you're lucky' (Anonymous in Masson 2014, 231).

Many authors had experienced such pressure. Two commented that 'you're only as good as your last book' (Marillier in Masson 2014, 148; Pullman in Masson 2014, 169). After 30 years as a writer, Sally Odgers made the wry observation that writing 'must be one of the only occupations where practice is not seen to be a good thing' (in Masson 2014, 158). Digital-only publishers were noted as an exception: 'These publishers are not so obsessed with previous sales figures as the model

is such a different one and the investment much smaller' (Inglis in Masson 2014, 221–2). However, other respondents believed that it was no more difficult to remain published currently and that the industry has always experienced shocks and destabilisation. Natalie Jane Prior says:

> There has always been some current 'crisis' preoccupying authors and their publishers—the paper crisis, the introduction of the GST on books, the GFC and now ebooks … The big publishing mergers of the 1980s must have been appalling to work through—and going back further, how do you think publishers of cheap hardcover editions felt when Allen Lane started Penguin? (in Masson 2014, 162)

Margaret Connolly injected a steely reminder: 'Fact is, there's no golden age. I remember that in the 1980s … the contracts were brutal, the advances and royalties stingy, and there was little promotion of the general range of books going on. It certainly was not an easy time for authors' (in Masson 2014, 215). However, even authors who didn't think it was more difficult to stay published referred to 'a kind of anxiety about publishing, [which] does affect you' (Dubosarsky in Masson 2014, 83).

Increased competition for readers' time was acknowledged, and also the increasing number of aspiring authors. Some interviewees were very critical of tertiary creative writing courses, either for unrealistically inflating the number of would-be authors or for injecting a 'sameness' in the graduates' writing styles. 'The Creative Writing class has been the main instrument by which the mystery of imaginative writing has been rendered shopworn' (Gould in Masson 2014, 121). However, other authors had undertaken such courses and many had taught in them, which provided a useful secondary income stream.

Changes to Authors' Income Streams

Many authors were pursuing a writing career while undertaking other paid work. Most authors spoke about developing multiple income streams. Their own examples included journalism, writing a column, film and TV writing, having a paid day job, teaching creative writing, providing manuscript assessment services, running a creative speakers bureau, and public speaking (at schools, festivals, libraries, and conference dinners). Their advice was often to 'diversify'.

It was widely acknowledged that advances have shrunk considerably. One agent said, '[I]n the last five years we have seen advances go down by about 20 per cent across the board. These days we are thrilled if we can get an advance that's greater than the last, or even one that matches' (Inglis in Masson 2014, 221). Many authors gave examples, such as Pamela Freeman, who lamented, 'I'm getting the same advance for my kids' fantasy novels that I got for my first book in 1994' (in Masson 2014, 110). Some authors also observed that schools were less likely to buy class sets of books, contributing to a reduction in the number of writing assignments on offer in the education market. Meredith Costain noted that educational publishers were offering fee-for-work deals rather than royalties, which precluded the authors from being eligible for Public Lending Rights (PLR) (Masson 2014, 77).

The authors interviewed described different career paths. Some expressed gratitude for the opportunity to establish themselves in their profession at a young age. However, several also spoke eloquently about career dry patches lasting years, in which they were not able to secure publication for their work. Richard Harland spoke with candour:

> My own career has been a rollercoaster of ups and downs—at least, that's how it seems to me. … Now I've hit lucky with my steampunk novels *Worldshaker*, *Liberator* and (I trust) *Song of the Slums*, which came out in May 2013. To an outsider, it

> probably looks as though I've been steadily on the rise ever since my first small press publication, *The Vicar of Morbing Vyle*. But it's not true—and the more professional writers I share confessions with, the more I discover it hasn't been true for them either. Not naming names, but even authors with the biggest reputations seem to have had times when their next novel was knocked back, when publishers lost interest in them, when they seriously suspected their career had come to an end. (in Masson 2014, 128–9)

More than a few authors described periods when they seriously considered leaving the profession. Other writers portrayed themselves as having steady, if unspectacular, career trajectories: 'I've never been in the position of being a big-selling writer and then becoming unfashionable' (Blackford in Masson 2014, 51). A small number had completed a doctorate in Creative Arts as a way of having (very modestly) paid time to work on a novel and to increase their employability as a writing teacher. Most of those who spoke about other forms of paid employment to supplement their income had undertaken this work for up to 20 years or more. Some spoke about a moment of realisation that they would never earn a living from their books alone and about making peace with their career choice: 'I have also accepted the possibility that I may not ever make a living out of writing … Sometimes I fear I will regret having given up the chance to have a high-flying career in a good profession, but on the other hand I do love the writing' (Anonymous in Masson 2014, 41).

Relations with Publishers

Many authors were sympathetic to the financial constraints publishers experienced: 'It's genuinely tough for publishers' (Earls in Masson 2014, 88). However, an interesting theme was the discontinuity in author relations with their editors and publishers, even for authors

with long track records, unless the author was 'an A-lister' (Edwards in Masson 2014, 97). Russell Blackford referred to 'the death of Byron Preiss in 2005 and the subsequent bankruptcy of ibooks, Inc.' (in Masson 2014, 50) as a difficult, disruptive period. Publishing staff cutbacks meant that many authors had to wait to find out whether their work would be of interest to the next person filling the role:

> In 2010 two New Zealand publishers were sold to bigger firms. I had six junior fiction titles with one of them and these were just dropped. The letter I got said that the books were no longer selling. While they certainly weren't on the bestseller list, they were steady sellers but that wasn't enough to entice the new publisher to keep stocking them. (Beale in Masson 2014, 180)

> When an editor leaves a company, sometimes the market is lost because the incoming editor has a new direction in mind. I once telephoned a company to ask for the current guidelines and the editor told me kindly that she preferred working with existing authors. I pointed out the company had published a dozen of my books. (Odgers in Masson 2014, 155)

Some authors were experiencing longer waiting periods for responses from their publisher. 'The company sat on my fifth book—a sequel—for almost two years then asked for a rewrite and sat on it for another two years before they passed on it' (Anonymous in Masson 2014, 38–9). One established literary author drew attention to long periods (11–12 months) before he received a response from major publishers to his manuscripts. It 'renders what should be a dignified vocation to beggarliness' (Gould in Masson 2014, 125).

The authors' responses to these circumstances could be summarised as resilient. They gave advice not to take rejection personally and referred to their own long histories of rejected manuscripts. Despite these disruptions, many authors referred to a manuscript they were

working on with the intention to offer it to a large, mainstream publisher first, which still appears to be the preferred option overall.

The growth in the number of small presses was often pointed out—'Small press publication is bigger than ever' (Pierce in Masson 2014, 195). Small publishers were perceived as more adventurous than large, legacy publishers. They were said to be 'often more prepared to take on books considered to be too "risky" by a larger "name" publisher' (Costain in Masson 2014, 79) and willing to identify and build the profiles of new authors. The professionalism of small publishers was praised, with Alan Gould saying, '[T]he [small press] publisher of my latest novel has turned out to be the most attentive, intelligent, fastidious, courteous and energetic person I have met in forty years' exposure to publishing' (in Masson 2014, 124). Gould characterised a good relationship with a publisher as a 'safe home' where an author 'knows his work is valued by another' (in Masson 2014, 126). The limited budgets and other resources were also acknowledged, as were lower advances and smaller resources overall. Digital-only publishers do not usually pay advances, but royalties are paid from the first sale (Inglis in Masson 2014, 222).

Authors as Publicists and Promoters of Their Backlists

Apart from a couple of established writers who had been able to avoid online media throughout their careers and who intended to do so in the future, most authors were experimenting with websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter and other social media such as Goodreads. Some found it particularly useful for keeping in touch with their overseas readers. Michael Pryor referred to a narrowing of the distance between readers and writers: '[T]he notion of fandom—of committed super-readers who are active advocates—is an important one to nurture' (in Masson 2014, 167).

Authors noted that publishers expected them to cultivate an online presence, and most also underlined that they did not expect publishers

to promote their books beyond their initial release. Some authors blogged on a topic different to their books to avoid appearing as self-promoters—'I don't find other people's blogs about their writing very interesting' (Anonymous in Masson 2014, 40)—with one posting restaurant reviews (which led to paid work as a reviewer) and another blogging about her work in a railways customer-service office.

Extensive advice was offered about ways to promote backlisted titles. In this sense, authors were active entrepreneurs finding ways to breathe new life into reverted titles by offering them to smaller publishers or by self-publishing, either as print on demand (POD) or ebooks. Tara Wynne, an agent at Curtis Brown, described working with Momentum, Open Road, the Kindle Direct White Gloves Scheme and other ebook publishers to return her authors' backlisted titles to print 'and potentially giving them a new lease of life' (in Masson 2014, 227). Nick Earls's initiatives in republishing his backlist are discussed in the next section on epublishing. Authors also worked collaboratively with their publishers to give new sales impetus to backlisted works. Isobelle Carmody described the reissue of the *Obernewtyn* series by Penguin, which aimed to draw in a new audience by using 'a slightly romantic new cover, though I was a bit resistant to a cover change … They convinced me and the new covers were so dynamic and attractive that both the U.S. and U.K. publishers adopted them, which is rare' (in Masson 2014, 62).

Many authors had at some stage of their career participated in the schools speaking circuit as a way to supplement their income and to build readerships (plus, as Fleur Beale said, '[I]t's huge fun', (in Masson 2014, 182)). However, an established author reflected that recently she had resumed this work for financial reasons and if other established writers were doing this too, it reduced access to a valuable income stream for new and emerging authors (Masson 2014, 63).

Epublishing

Several authors spoke about their experiences of epublishing. One of Nick Earls's books was ranked in the top 100 in the US Kindle Store, which he attributes to a recommendation by BookBub, which then had 700,000 subscribers. The title 'sold 1000 copies in a matter of hours' (in Masson 2014, 93). Hazel Edwards noted that the title and cover were particularly important for ebook sales. She cautioned against expecting ebook publishing to produce 'instant income and celebrity status' (in Masson 2014, 99). Rather, authors viewed epublishing as a way to keep their work in print and hopefully to generate longer-term revenue streams.

Earls has been actively experimenting:

> … ebooks also create an opportunity for stand-alone short stories and novellas, and I hope we can grow a commuter market for them (among other markets). Already, it's possible for people on a commuter train to use the free wifi to download a story when they get on and read the whole thing on the way to work, for a fraction of the price of a cup of coffee, but with most of the money ending up in the author's pocket. I'm hoping that's only the start. (in Masson 2014, 89)

Some authors had the same title simultaneously published in multiple formats. John Knight, publisher of Pitt Street Poetry, discussed the publication of books by two poets, John Foulcher and Jean Kent, in 2012:

> In each case we published them as an ebook ($5), a slender paperback in understated design with a plain white cover and rich creamy paper ($20) and a cloth-bound limited edition, numbered and signed by the author, with beautiful illustrations ($50).

> Perhaps counter-intuitively, the hardbacks have been the most popular and the ebooks the least popular. At least in the case of these two poets, readers have been prepared to pay ten times as much for exactly the same words, in order to have them in a sumptuous hardbound edition. (in Masson 2014, 246–7)

This supports the prediction, discussed further on, that some print books will be desired as beautiful cultural artefacts described by economists Bounie et al. as titles with 'print-preferred' characteristics (2013, 52).

Natalie Jane Prior expressed concern that income to authors would be reduced as readers switched to ebooks because 'authors make far less money on the sale of an ebook than a printed one' (in Masson 2014, 165). Alison Goodman speculated about a possible insistence on the part of authors that they retain the ebook rights separately from pbook rights if the royalties on ebooks were not increased. In some cases authors would receive greater returns by publishing the ebook component themselves:

> I am interested to see whether writers will start refusing publishing deals that insist on ebook rights that only offer twenty-five per cent of net receipts (which are not dollar for dollar receipts). It is a very poor rights split, considering that a self-epublished book can earn up to seventy per cent of full receipts. Recently, there have been a few reports of writers with a sought after book who have refused ebook rights to publishers and subsequently secured print-only deals with an eye to epublishing their book themselves. Will the publishing houses realise that the current ebook industry standard of twenty-five per cent of net receipts (on something that takes them so little effort and money to produce) will need to be improved if writers are going to grant them digital rights as well as print? We shall have to wait and see. (Goodman in Masson 2014, 119)

Self-Publishing

Authors and agents referred to a softening of the stigma associated with self-publishing. With the availability of cost-efficient, high-quality options such as digital printing and POD, a number of authors have self-published reverted works or works that had not been taken up by their publisher, with some success. Alison Goodman's 'traditionally published' books have been on the *New York Times* bestseller lists and have been shortlisted for, and sometimes won, literary awards. Her second book was published in the US in 2007 and titled *Killing the Rabbit*. When rights reverted she published it in Australia as *A New Kind of Death* with Clan Destine Press and as an ebook.

> My agent has a 'White Glove' agreement with Amazon, which includes a certain amount of promotion in exchange for exclusive ebook rights for a year. The percentage that I receive for each sale is more than double than (sic) what I would receive if I sold the ebook rights to a publisher, and that percentage is taken from full receipts not net receipts, as is most often the case with mid to large publishing houses. More and more authors are recognising that they can publish their own ebook without a publishing house behind it. (in Masson 2014, 117)

However, Goodman noted that this strategy is usually only viable for established authors with a base of readers, and industry commentary supports this view (Flood 2012). Likewise, Felicity Pulman self-published the last two books in her Janna Mysteries series after her publisher declined them. Although she has found a new publisher for her next (different) book, she would consider self-publishing again (Masson 2014, 170). Authors commented on the heavy workload required to distribute and market books. Isobelle Carmody published *Greylands* as an ebook and concluded, 'I have to say that it would

not be my choice to go that way, based on that experiment. There were not significant sales …' (in Masson 2014, 55). Authors such as Hazel Edwards, who actively manage their own backlist as ebooks, also cautioned that the range of skills and time required would not suit all authors.

Steven Herrick self-published a travel book, *baguettes and bicycles*, through Amazon. Although the book is available in pbook and ebook, ebook sales comprise nearly 90 per cent of total sales (Herrick in Masson 2014, 82). Herrick noted, 'I earn a similar amount from my $2.99 *baguettes and bicycles* ebook ($9.99 in paperback) as I do from my $17.95 paperback. This means both the reader and the writer benefits (sic)' (in Masson 2014, 133). The experience has been sufficiently positive that Herrick recently self-published his sixth book on Amazon. In contrast, Hazel Edwards was critical of poor returns on Amazon and preferred to self-publish her backlisted titles directly from her online platform.

There was considerable criticism of the high number of self-published 'very cheap, often sub-standard products, which threatens to devalue the industry as a whole' (Forsyth in Masson 2014, 102). Sally Odgers was more positive: 'I have read some brilliant books that have been self- or small-press-published. Many were never offered to traditional publishers at all, simply because the authors couldn't find an open door or didn't want to wait for years' (in Masson 2014, 156). To place these responses in context, a widely reported survey of over 1,000 US self-publishing authors found that over half earned less than US$500 per annum from their titles (Flood 2012). The opportunities for established authors with a loyal readership are seen to be significantly greater than for new entrants.

Apps

Although some writers referred to friends who were involved in picture-book apps (Mawter in Masson 2014, 78), there was less detail about authors' experiences. Jeni Mawter was one of the few authors interviewed who had direct experience of writing apps, with 'three children's apps ready for publication' (in Masson 2014, 151). Aleesah Darlison commented that 'lots of authors and illustrators are doing DIY ebooks and apps' (in Masson 2014, 205) because children's publishers don't have the budgets. Felicity Pulman predicted: 'We're already seeing interactive ebooks and I think that's going to take off, with apps for music, scene-setting and role-playing, characters and their blogs, alternative storylines, reader-written plots and characters, etc.' (in Masson 2014, 172). However, the type of work and the different forms of rewards are unclear, and could form an area for further research.

New Forms of Collaborative Writing

Few authors spoke about being involved in new forms of collaborative writing; instead, some referred to traditional forms of collaboration, with colleagues, to boost one's career. An exception was Jeni Mawter, who referred to working on stories that are 'participatory and interactive' (in Masson 2014, 151). John Knight of Pitt Street Poetry described John Foulcher's experiment with '"crowdsourcing" a poem—putting up different versions of the same piece and asking his blog-readers which version worked the best, and why. Participation was lively' (in Masson 2014, 241). Although some authors speculated about transformations in existing forms, such as novels, the area of collaborative writing—for example, with readers—had not yet received much attention.

Predictions for the Industry

Bearing in mind the diversity of views expressed, and the nuances outlined in the previous sections, the following section draws together the interviewees' overall predictions for the industry. Respondents forecast continued consolidation among the large trade publishers, with suggestions that three or four major international corporations would dominate in the future. Most authors believed it would become increasingly difficult to be published in pbook format by a traditional or 'legacy' publisher. These publishers would move to more of a 'top 20' business, as Joel Naoum, then publisher at former digital e-press Momentum, described it (in Masson 2014, 237). The trend towards selling pbooks through discount department stores was expected to increase, while independent booksellers would benefit from location in an area populated by consumers with book-reading demographics or, one author suggested, by specialising in particular types of books (e.g. military, sports, cookery).

Large publishers would make more conservative choices when compiling their lists, with more titles 'booked up' in advance and fewer slots available for proposals from their mid-list authors. Ghost-writing work would continue to be available, for books by celebrities, sportspeople and other public figures. Likewise, large publishers would seek to replicate recent sales successes from their authors rather than encourage experimentation. It can be easier for publishers to attract publicity for new, young authors; therefore authors who have had long careers but who were not high-profile writers anticipated they would have to continue to work hard to keep their publishers' interest. Authors also spoke of the need to work with publishers to design a series that would give some brand longevity, but they were also aware that if sales of the latest book in a series were disappointing, their next book might not be accepted, leaving them to search for other publishing options.

On the other hand, publishers were increasingly expected to approach established authors to write books or series conceived by the publisher. Authors have been given shorter timeframes in which to complete books recently, and this trend was expected to continue. As such, pbooks based on trends and personalities could go out of print more quickly with a faster transition to POD or ebook formats. Some authors predicted that large publishers would make self-publishing avenues more easily available for their authors if they didn't take up their titles or renew rights. An Australian multinational publisher pointed out that the creation of digital-only lists by large publishers would create opportunities for authors in genre titles such as romance.

Authors predicted that the tendency of bricks-and-mortar booksellers towards reducing shelf time would continue—books would need to perform immediately or would not be kept in stock. This would potentially increase authors' ability to promote their backlist via their own initiatives. However, authors can only self-publish previous works if the rights are reverted to them. Isobelle Carmody noted that publishers could argue that if a book is available in ebook format, even if it is passively listed without marketing support, it is still in print and should not be subject to reversion clauses (Masson 2014, 58). Carmody's solution was to tie rights-reversion agreements to sales thresholds or to link ebook and pbook rights. She wondered, however, if authors would have difficulty gaining rights reversions for current backlisted titles if the contracts they signed at the time were not specific.

Large publishers will also source manuscripts by engaging people to monitor the popularity of online self-published books: 'They will employ people to roam the net to determine, a la *Fifty Shades of Grey*, which books are doing well through word-of-mouth and through the efforts of their media-savvy authors. These are the books that will see print editions' (Collins in Masson 2014, 73).

Low-priced, downloadable 'convenience-reading' eproducts may become widespread, particularly supported by the branding of well-known publishers and authors. Short stories or other forms of writing for consumption while commuting or filling in time, may become profitable niches in their own right. For example, they may potentially introduce readers to new authors if they are branded according to their genre. Tamora Pierce was optimistic about the prospects for emagazines:

> Paper magazines, the desired market for short stories, have been steadily vanishing, but in niche markets electronic magazines have begun to take up the slack, when for years the prophets said short story markets were dead. (For a while they were.) I know science fiction, fantasy, and horror markets best, and magazines that pay at professional rates there are blossoming. (in Masson 2014, 194–5)

Similarly, John Knight was upbeat about the outlook for publishing poetry:

> … paradoxically these global, industry-wide changes have opened up opportunities for new small presses such as Pitt Street Poetry. We are very much the new kid on the block. Other successful local examples include Puncher and Wattman, Giramondo, John Leonard Press and Black Inc. By rigorously controlling costs and by using modern production methods such as digital printing and print-on-demand, direct online sales and distribution through festivals and readings (as well as in selected bookshops who still take poetry seriously) these new-style poetry publishers have created a small but flourishing new market for Australian poetry books—around seventy to eighty new collections are published each year, which is a surprisingly large number for a small country like Australia. (in Masson 2014, 242–3)

Authors paid strong tribute to publishers' strong editorial teams, and many predicted that the quality of books would decline because of the reduced budgets for editorial work on manuscripts—'editing standards have slipped (a lot)' (Bates in Masson 2014, 44)—and self-published authors who may have bypassed an editorial process altogether. Many authors had developed manuscript-assessment services in order to create another income stream and some expressed pride in the skills they discovered they could provide.

Natalie Jane Prior predicted that, speaking of publishers, 'the major players ten years from now will not be the names we are familiar with today' (in Masson 2014, 165), although Amazon and Apple were expected to remain 'huge players' (Masson 2014, 225). Sophie Hamley predicted growth in the divide between digital and print publishing and the skill sets required by them. Each 'will start to look like a completely different industry' (in Masson 2014, 219).

The shift to ebooks would continue for genre fiction titles such as romance, detective stories and science fiction, with Hamley predicting that 'a great deal of fiction will be available in digital form only quite soon, and probably exclusively digital within the next ten years' (in Masson 2014, 218). Prices for trade ebooks were predicted to continue their downward trend. Academic books that are frequently updated, such as textbooks, dictionaries and encyclopedias, would be increasingly released as ebooks. On the other hand, books as special artefacts for gifts or collectibles would attract a price premium. Printed books would be marketed 'as a luxurious alternative to the everyday digital experience in this increasingly frantic world' (Carter-Henson in Masson 2014, 70):

> Non-fiction and children's books are often given as gifts—it's likely there will be a range of these books available in print for a long time to come. The more obvious gift books—such as cookbooks—will likely also become more lavish. (Hamley in Masson 2014, 219)

Small publishers would become an increasingly important option for authors who are not frontlist bestsellers, and this trend would continue. While many authors appreciate the personal service and passion brought by small publishers, they would also be affected by the companies' narrow margins and smaller budgets. The implication is that more books by small (and large) publishers would be published 'straight to digital' (Masson 2014, 24) without an advance on royalties. Masson summarised this as the possibility of 'more opportunities for staying published, but less income' (2014, 27), or as Paul Collins expressed it, 'It's certainly easier to get published now with POD and ebooks, yet conversely it's harder to sell what you write' (in Masson 2014, 72). Not all authors agreed, with some arguing that the environment has always been tough.

Rights agreements were expected to increasingly cover global territories. This would make it more straightforward for entrepreneurial authors and publishers to market books in overseas territories online, but they would need strategies to develop potential readerships. Masson highlighted an initiative by Bloomsbury's Australian, UK and US publishers: a young adult digital imprint called Spark, with books simultaneously marketed in the three territories.

Several authors drew attention to Public Lending Rights, which do not apply to ebooks. They anticipated that after sustained lobbying, provisions would be revised to catch up with the technology. Piracy was not mentioned by authors as an issue, although Masson noted in her introduction that from mid-2013 Australian publishers reported increased instances of piracy.

The portrait that emerged was of authors who would be writing for a variety of platforms, including pbooks, POD, ebooks and apps. Many aimed to work in a variety of genres to help ensure the longevity of their careers: 'More opportunities, less money up front' (Wilkins in Masson 2014, 178). Adopting a new pseudonym was fairly widely accepted and recommended as a means to restart a

career that had stalled, or to enable an author to move into new genres as a fresh 'brand'.

Most authors found it beneficial to stay with one main publisher, if possible, although children's publishing was an area identified in which it is more common to be published contemporaneously. In the broader industry, as rights revert or if an author's main publisher declined to take up particular books, it may be possible that more authors will have concurrent publishing arrangements for various books and formats, with the consent of their main publisher.

Authors saw themselves as active promoters of their books, and most expected to take responsibility for publicising their books after their initial release. Kate Forsyth predicted that 'writers will be expected to do more and more public appearances' (in Masson 2014, 105). This meant being active in speaking circuits such as writers festivals, schools and libraries, and engaging actively with social media. It involved engaging with their readers, as 'the distance between writer and reader is narrower than it's ever been' (Prior in Masson 2014, 167). It also meant authors taking an interest in the sales of their titles and investigating initiatives when titles were reverted or sales were stagnant.

Authors also predicted a continued increase in self-publishing, with former employees of legacy publishers available for outsourced services such as editing, proofreading, graphic design and layout. One author forecast an increase in these cottage industry operations, which large publishers would draw on when needed (Carmody in Masson 65). Creative writing classes were also expected to remain popular.

Many authors believe that, over time, readers will buy fewer unedited, self-published ebooks, and that readers will begin to turn to brands they trust, in the form of authors and publishers with known reputations. One author predicted that popular book-bloggers would become increasingly influential in guiding readers' online choices, and that readers would increasingly be guided by bloggers whose taste

they shared (Carmody in Masson 66) or by reader websites such as Goodreads and Shelfari: 'I think this is wonderful, and returns a great deal of power to the writer's hands' (Forsyth in Masson 2014, 102).

Alan Gould wondered if 'the proliferation of books and authors has created a fatigue in the community for the claims of literary art, a sense of its becoming stale because somehow we have become bewildered as to its value' (in Masson 2014, 126). And although John Knight was optimistic about opportunities for the publication of poetry among niche readerships, he also expressed concern that broad, contemporary public attitudes towards notions of 'literary' writing are not well understood.

PricewaterhouseCoopers' report for the Book Industry Collaborative Council (BICC 2013) identified new markets for English-language books: Brazil, South Korea, India, China, Argentina, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. But the authors did not refer to potential sales in these markets, and if these opportunities are viable, they appear to be some way off. Nerrilee Weir, International Rights Manager at Random House, noted 'wonderful success stories in recent years across literary, crime and commercial titles' (in Masson 2014, 254), but observed that strong regional variations in markets precluded the prospects for many titles being sold into a large number of territories. Weir gave the example that 'outback romance is popular in Germany, but not in many other markets' (in Masson 2014, 253). A couple of authors noted that the UK and US markets have become difficult to penetrate for Australian authors without a high profile because of tight financial conditions there, but were hopeful the situation would improve (Masson 2014, 28; 111). Tamora Pierce was critical of US children's book publishers' wariness of the potential responses of conservative sections of the market (Masson 2014, 198). Taking a global perspective, Pierce also forecast a contraction in children's and young adult publishing in a decade due to demographic shifts as this proportion of western countries' populations declined (Masson 2014, 201).

Conclusion

The emerging portrait of authors is one of committed, resilient, resourceful professionals. These are the characteristics of authors who have, for the most part, sustained long careers during which their works achieved publication, despite difficult periods sometimes lasting years. They were selected for interviews on the basis of this longevity. Further, the ASA works hard to emphasise the professionalism of its members.

The interviews give some cause to wonder about the ways in which Australian writing will be resourced in the future. Authors predict that personal projects will be increasingly self-funded until a point of development at which a publisher can respond to the manuscript. If it is published by a small press or self-published, the author may see little or no advance. However, many authors maintained confidence that good writing would eventually achieve publication, although years of patience could be required. Despite the rapidly moving marketplace, authors encouraged each other to maintain a long-term perspective on the reception of their work. Alan Gould said:

> I have been struck by how often a book of mine has been rejected by a publisher or received lukewarmly in the first instance, then proceeded subsequently to win prominent literary awards or shortlistings and acclaim in reviews. This has illumined for me the caprices of taste and the capacity for 'blindspots' by even seasoned publishers. (in Masson 2014, 121)

Their responses can be briefly considered in an international context. In 2014 Robert McCrum, former editor-in-chief at Faber and Faber and a respected author in his own right, published an article in *The Observer*, which caused quite a stir online. Provocatively titled 'From bestseller to bust: is this the end of an author's life?', McCrum's article argued that a brief period during which award-winning, literary authors could earn a comfortable living (which he characterised as

roughly from 1980 to 2007) had passed, and 'writers are now being confronted with the hardship of literary artists through the ages'. The article provoked considerable discussion, not the least because some readers pointed out that the examples cited by McCrum were, in their view, a middle-class or privileged version of hardship. These contributors noted that constrained, uncertain financial conditions now apply to most workers since the global financial crisis. Certainly, many of the Australian authors interviewed by Masson have won literary awards, but few are able to support themselves through the income earned via their books. This is consistent with the findings of a major survey of Australian book authors conducted by David Throsby in 2015, which found that "annual income from practising as an author lies between $9 thousand and $15 thousand for most genres of creative writing; poets are the exception, with average annual incomes from their writing of only $4 thousand" (Throsby, Zwar & Longden 2015, 21).

Literary agent Sophie Hamley suggested that the relationship between publishers and authors needed to be reconfigured: 'We possibly all need to reconstruct the relationships and ask each other how authors can stay published, not whether or not they should stay published' (Hamley in Masson 2014, 217). The Australian industry is large enough to pull some weight on the margins of the international English-language book industry, but small enough to be collaborative. Perhaps industry members, including its professional associations, could find ways to work together to support the publication of Australian authors—in a variety of formats—and to enable the development of readerships, so that it's easier for authors to build author–reader relationships and to stay in print.

The authors' predictions about the changing nature of book markets can be considered in the context of debates about whether blockbuster economics will predominate in the digital, networked era (that is, a small number of heavily marketed titles will generate

disproportionately large sales) or alternatively Chris Anderson's 'long tail' theory (2008) that niche products will become increasingly viable. Anita Elberse, a marketing professor at Harvard, examined online movie and music markets while making reference to the book industry, and concluded: 'The importance of individual bestsellers is not diminishing over time. It is growing' (2008, 3). She found that niche consumers also buy popular products; hence even those organisations promoting relatively obscure products should base their marketing efforts around their most popular items and keep production costs of niche products as low as possible. It's possible that the unknown environment for which the authors surveyed are preparing themselves is a cross between Anderson's and Elberse's: experienced authors are maintaining their links with large publishers but are simultaneously extending the life of their own reverted works by securing digital-on-demand agreements or self-publishing, where the majority of production costs only apply on receipt of a customer order.

The authors interviewed by Sophie Masson were in many ways remarkably prescient. Their analysis of changes to the professional practices of book authors was born out in Throsby's findings approximately two years after Masson's interviews (Throsby, Zwar & Longden 2015). His survey found that conditions are getting tougher for some authors (especially literary authors) and more volatile for others and that very few are able to earn a living from their creative practice alone. Authors are diversifying their income streams, experimenting with self-publishing and ebooks, and over half of trade authors are spending more time promoting their books. The portrait which emerges in both studies is of creative practitioners who endeavour to respond to changes in the industry with sufficient ingenuity and professionalism to maintain their commitment to their craft.

Notes

The questions asked were the following:

> Can you give a short overview of your publishing career? Has it changed in the last few years? In what way/s?
>
> Do you think it has become harder to stay published? Or have more opportunities arisen?
>
> What strategies for 'staying published' have you adopted—and how have these changed over the years?
>
> What do you think are the main pitfalls today for writers aiming to maintain a long career?
>
> Do you have any advice for writers who have already started their publishing career—i.e. have had one or two books published—but are having trouble maintaining publisher interest?
>
> Wearing your prophet's hat—how do you see the publishing industry in the future?

Further information about David Throsby's research at Macquarie University on the Australian book industry: http://goto.mq.edu.au/book-industry

Works Cited

Anderson, C 2008, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More*, Hyperion, New York.

BICC 2013, *Book Industry Collaborative Council Final Report*, Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, Canberra, https://www.publishers.asn.au/documents/item/157

Bounie, D, Eang, B, Sirbu, M, & Waelbroeck, P 2013, 'Superstars and Outsiders in Online Markets: An Empirical Analysis of Electronic Books', *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 52–59.

Coronel, T 2013, 'What Next for the Australian Book Trade?', in E Stinson (ed), *By the Book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia*, Monash University Publishing, Melbourne, pp. 22–28.

Elberse, A 2008, 'Should You Invest in the Long Tail?', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 86, no. 7-8, pp. 88–96.

Eisenstein, E 2005, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York.

Flood, A 2012, 'Stop the Press: Half of Self-Published Authors Earn Less Than $500', *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/may/24/self-published-author-earnings

Masson, S 2014, *The Adaptable Author: Coping with Change in the Digital Age*, Keesing Press, Sydney.

McCrum, R 2014, 'From Bestseller to Bust: Is This the End of an Author's Life?' *The Observer* Viewed 24 August 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/mar/02/bestseller-novel-to-bust-author-life

Throsby, D, Zwar, J & Longden, T 2015, *Book Authors and Their Changing Circumstances: Survey Method and Results*. The Australian Book Industry: Authors, Publishers and Readers in a Time of Change. Macquarie Economics Research Paper 2/2015, Macquarie University. http://www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/our_departments/Economics/econ_research/reach_network/book_project/authors/BookAuthors_WorkingPaper_2015.pdf

Webster, M 14–15 November 2013, *Australian Publishers and Their Reading Publics*, Keynote Address, Independent Publishing Conference, Wheeler Centre, Melbourne.

Zwar, J 2016, 'Disruption and Innovation in the Australian Book Industry: Case Studies of Trade and Education Publishers'. The Australian Book Industry: Authors, Publishers and Readers in a Time of Change. Macquarie Economics Research Paper 1/2016, Macquarie University. http://www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/faculty_docs/DisruptionandInnovationintheAustralianBookIndustryFINAL16Feb.pdf

Chapter Three

Proactivity and the Entrepreneurial Self-Concept of Book Publishers

Susanne Bartscher-Finzer

Introduction

This paper examines the relationship between the entrepreneurial self-concept and the proactivity of owners and managers in running their publishing businesses, and is based on the results of empirical studies in Australia and Germany. In parallel surveys, we asked the owners and top managers of book publishing houses about their motivations and attitudes towards their work and towards their publishing outcomes—the results of their work. Why did we choose this particular industry for our research? Book publishing is an interesting industry to examine since the criteria for evaluation of its products, to a large extent, is derived from (or based on) immaterial, cultural value systems. Therefore, one can assume that the producers and mediators of these products should have strong missionary and cultural ambitions. But these ambitions and the underlying motivation to become a publisher and work within this cultural industry does not naturally align with the logic a publishing house, as an economic organisation, has to follow. From this, the question arises whether and how the predominant motivations of publishers affect their entrepreneurial behaviour.

Why should a comparison of the Australian and the German situations be instructive? One reason is that the underlying economic, cultural and legislative conditions in the two countries are quite

different in some interesting aspects (e.g. in respect to price-fixing, distribution of booksellers, and literary climate). The common feature in both countries is that most publishing houses are small and medium-sized firms. This is a fact that underscores the crucial role of the publishing-firm owner and the respective role of the top manager in defining and executing the policy and strategy of the publishing house. Therefore, there should be significant differences dependent upon whether their motivations are more strongly rooted in the economic or in the cultural sphere. Certainly, book publishing is a commercial industry, and publishers have to deal with all the forces and constraints of the marketplace (Carter & Galligan 2007, 3 f.). From the perspective of the standard economic theories, book publishers are just normal firm owners with a distinct interest in profit. But in reality, one finds, more often than not, that publishers have an intense sense of mission, which may dominate their economic goals. The purpose of our study is to investigate and to explain whether the motivations of the book publishers have an impact on their entrepreneurial orientation and whether there are differences between the Australian and the German book publishers in respect to these motivations.

Theoretical Considerations

This paper is not about differences. Quite the opposite; its core hypothesis is that the proactivity of book publishers is strongly determined by their economic orientation both in Germany as well as in Australia. Institutional and cultural differences between these two countries may be responsible for the degree of proactivity of the publishers and whether more or fewer publishers have an economic or cultural motivation (i.e. for the marginal distributions of these variables). But the *relationship* between the economic (respective of the cultural) orientation and the proactivity of the publishers should be

unaffected by the institutional and cultural differences between the two countries. This is because publishing and the publishers' work in this *métier* is, in most cases, a central life interest and therefore closely related to the publishers' self-concepts, and as such determines, in a fundamental way, their thinking, their attitudes, their behaviour, and their habitus. It makes a difference whether one sees oneself primarily as an agent for cultural development, or whether one sees oneself primarily as an entrepreneur whose interests are somewhat independent of the intrinsic nature of the products and the industry in which one works.

Actually, book publishing has a hybrid nature between culture and commerce. Entrepreneurship, therefore, has a special flavour within this mixed field. A publishing house's success is highly ambiguous and precarious due to several underlying factors indicating that publishing is not a high-profit industry. There is a low predictability concerning the success of its products; there is strong competition with substitutional products (other media, manifold forms of entertainment); and the nature of the products position books as a kind of luxury. This indicates that the publisher is a person of special interest and could provide valuable insight into the machinations of this hybrid industry. Our study focuses on one special aspect of this person: the publisher's commitment—on the one hand their cultural mission and on the other hand their economic motivations and the influence this has on their stance and subsequent activities in making and marketing books.

Much of the literature on entrepreneurship dwells on the question of which dispositions a firm owner and manager should have to lead a company on a successful trajectory. This question has two parts. One part has to do with the inner motives of an entrepreneur and their ultimate aspirations and self-image in relation to being an entrepreneur; the other part focuses on their behaviour in exerting their role in leading the company, their behaviour and their aspiration to achieve

results. Both parts are important elements of a publisher's drive, and they are closely interconnected. In our analysis, we look at two selected variables that represent central aspects of the motivation and the behavioural parts.

Regarding the motives, we are interested in whether the publishers have a strong cultural mission—that is, whether they are driven to contribute to the cultural development of society and of their readers, or whether they are, in a more conventional way, primarily interested in their own economic welfare. A widespread view assumes that the behaviour of entrepreneurs is merely determined by economic aims such as profit, growth and gaining strategic advantages. However, research has shown that entrepreneurs are driven by many other motives as well (Amit et al. 2001; Cassar 2007; Carsrud & Brännback 2011; Estay, Durrieu, & Manzoom 2013).

Amit et al. (2001) for example discuss eleven motives that may guide the decision-making of entrepreneurs. Wealth is only one of these, along with the desire for stability, independence, challenge, lifestyle, innovation, reputation etc. Interestingly, though, the list does not mention cultural motives. From the motives that Amit et al. cite, the need to 'contribute' comes closest to the wish to foster the cultural climate of the society. However, this derivation is not quite the same because contributing is directed towards helping others, making a difference to one's organisation, community and industry, and creating opportunities. In contrast, the cultural motive means manufacturing intellectually and aesthetically sophisticated products, and promoting knowledge, education and enlightenment. To be sure, not all publishers will follow this ethos. Alongside high quality books one also finds books with trivial content, simple entertainment or offering functional advice. Nevertheless many, perhaps most, publishers would not be publishers without some idealistic stance. This is all the more true since most book publishers will not be able to accumulate great wealth. Being a publisher is more a profession

than a job. It is not simply an instrumental activity to earn a living; it is a passion and, as such, closely linked with the person and their self-image and self-concept.

Does that mean that publishers with a dominant cultural orientation develop a different behavioural style in regard to leading their publishing enterprises than publishers with a more dominant economic orientation? We expect that a more cultural-oriented publisher is not engaged in the entrepreneurial side of his publishing business with the same drive as a more economic-oriented publisher. The typical entrepreneur is characterised in relevant literature primarily as innovative, risk-taking, and proactive (see Miller 1983; Covin & Slevin 1993; Rauch et al. 2009 amongst many others). There are further characteristics associated with entrepreneurship, such as the strive for autonomy and aggressive competitive behaviour (Lumpkin & Dess 1996), but already the classical theories of entrepreneurship (Schumpeter 1912; Kirzner 1973; Casson 1982) emphasise the importance of proactivity as the most essential characteristic of entrepreneurial orientation. Therefore, we took this variable in our own study as an indicator of an entrepreneurial attitude and behavioural style in fostering one's business and striving for growth and innovation (see also Stanworth & Curran 1976; Carland, Hoy, Boulton, & Carland 1984; Vesala, Peura, & McElwee 2007). In accordance with this literature, which associates this entrepreneurial orientation primarily with innovation and growth, we formulate the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis

Book publishers who accentuate economic interests are more likely to have a proactive entrepreneurial orientation than book publishers who accentuate cultural interests.

The hypothesis is based on the assumption that publishers whose behaviour is strongly determined by economic considerations correspond more to the classic image of an entrepreneur than publishers

with a strong cultural orientation. Because of its general nature, the hypothesis should apply to all developed countries. We will examine our hypothesis on the basis of the data we collected from our surveys of publishers in Australia and Germany.

Methods

This article reports a central result of a quantitative study on the motivation of book publishers. Before using this type of research method, my colleagues and I had numerous discussions with book publishers about the entrepreneurial characteristics of their roles. In these conversations, the publishers repeatedly pointed out that there are quite different types of book publishers—for example, publishers with a high sense of idealism and cultural commitment, which could also determine their economic behaviours. These book publishers have often established themselves in a niche market and have no further economic ambitions. On the other hand, one also finds among the book publishers the classical entrepreneurial type, who only incidentally works in the publishing industry, and who acts not so much cultural- but primarily business-driven. In the quantitative study, which I undertook with Albert Martin and Anne Richards, we wanted to look at whether these presumptions could be proven on a broad, empirical basis. The underlying survey was conducted in 2013, first in Germany and then in 2014 in Australia.

Surveys are not without methodological problems. One of these problems comes from the requirement of representativeness. In our study we did not need to use special sampling procedures because we used the complete lists of all book publishers in the Publishers and Booksellers Associations in both countries, which reflected the sample populations. There may be possible biases because of the moderate response rates. Nevertheless, there is no indication of special problems in our study. For example, the demographic variables (e.g. firm size, age of the firm, publishing program) as well as the

behavioural variables (e.g. motivations, attitudes, satisfaction) have sufficient variance. Furthermore, representativeness in a strict sense is imperative only for exact propositions about the distribution of variables. For the relationships analysis (which is the focus of this paper), it is of minor relevance because, with the help of multivariate analysis, it is possible to control potential distortions.

A main task in quantitative studies is to construct and select the items used to measure the theoretical-derived variables. In respect to the proactivity variable we were able to refer to the literature on entrepreneurship, which delivers a theoretical foundation of this variable as well as proven measurement items. In respect to the cultural vs economic orientation variable we decided to ask the publishers in a very direct way for their primary motivations. To answer such questions undoubtedly requires some faculties of abstraction and some intrinsic interest in the aim of the study, but it is very plausible that the publishers who decided to participate in our study were able to understand the meaning of the questions and were also willing to report about their motivations.

An inherent limitation of quantitative studies lies in their constrained ability to reconstruct the subtle and complex considerations that may determine a publisher's decisions, an undertaking which is even not easy in elaborated case studies. Notwithstanding this limitation, surveys and quantitative studies can also deliver valuable insights into fundamental behavioural dispositions and their relationships, and give advice for further in-depth studies.

Our surveys were directed at the owners and top managers of small and medium-sized publishing houses in Germany and Australia. To get a list as complete as possible we used the address list of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association (with few exceptions practically all book publishers are members of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association). Therefore we used their address list, wrote to its members and asked them to participate in

our survey. We did not use all 1,629 addresses—we omitted music publishers, publishers of calendars, forms etc. and public-relations agencies. Furthermore we included only publishing houses with less than 200 employees. Ultimately, 1,105 publishers were contacted; 51 questionnaires could not be delivered (because the company was dissolved, moved to an unknown address etc.). The basic population, therefore, consists of 1,054 cases. We received answers from 196 publishers (return rate 18.6 per cent). In Australia the procedure was similar. We used the address list of the Australian Publishers Association Members Directory and wrote to all 234 usable addresses. The return rate was 23.1 per cent (54 responses).

The aim of our study was to gain insight into the tasks and motivations of the publishers. We asked about the content of their work, their workload and time use, as well as questions on personal dispositions and behaviours such as risk preference, intuitive thinking and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, we asked for attitudes (e.g. about agents, institutions and economic conditions in the book market), strategic orientations (product policy, book program), sociographic variables (gender, age, experience as a publisher), and general properties of the firm (size, legal form and ownership). The items were taken from proven scales (for details cf. Martin, Bartscher-Finzer & Richards 2017).

The two variables, which are the focus of this article, are based in both cases on the answers to two questions. For the exact wording of the economic orientation see the two questions in table 3.1; for proactivity see the two questions in table 3.2 in the next section. It must be observed that the variable *proactivity* in the context of this study is to be understood as entrepreneurial proactivity (as can be seen from the wording of our questions in table 3.2). It does not suggest that other forms of intensive engagement (for example task-orientated dedications) are of minor significance or worth. In regard to the second (the independent) variable in our hypothesis—the *economic orientation*—

we asked the publishers, directly, whether they accentuate more the cultural or the economic side of their business. The second item asks whether non-economic goals have the same importance as profit goals (see table 3.1).

The correlations of the index items we used to measure the economic orientation were r=0.58 for Germany and r=0.62 for Australia, and the correlations of the index items we used to measure proactivity were r=0.53 for both countries, which is an acceptable result for surveys.

To check the validity of our hypothesis, that the proactivity of book publishers is strongly determined by their economic orientation, we looked firstly at whether the data shows a substantial correlation between these variables. In a second step, multivariate regression analysis was used. Because proactive entrepreneurial behaviour has multiple causes, one has to consider whether other determinants of proactivity can explain the empirical relationship between economic orientation and proactivity. Some of those determinants are described below. In our regression analysis we used these variables to control the effect of economic orientation on proactivity. If the relationship between economic orientation and proactivity is quite high in the bivariate case and essentially stays the same when the control variables are included in the regression equation, this would be a good proof for the validity of our hypothesis. In addition to its use for testing our hypothesis, the regression analysis can also show whether the relationships between our variables are the same for both countries and whether the proactivity of the book publishers are determined by the same factors.

Results

To what extent do publishers follow a cultural mission? Our results show that most publishers accentuate the cultural side of their business when contrasted with the economic motive. This applies to the Australian as well as the German publishers (table 3.1).

Regarding our second variable—proactivity—we find remarkable differences. Whereas more than 60 per cent of the Australian book publishers endeavour to be innovative by creating new markets, the corresponding number is only 25 per cent on the side of the German book publishers. In addition, whereas 50 per cent of the Australian publishers concentrate on their existing sales markets, the equivalent figure on the side of the German publishers is around 70 per cent (table 3.2).

When looking at table 3.1 and table 3.2 we can state that both German and Australian book publishers (in their majorities) ascribe themselves a strong cultural mission; regarding their economic proactivity, the Australian book publishers' entrepreneurial orientation seems to be much stronger than their German counterparts.

As already described, our main interest refers to the question of whether a predominant cultural or economic orientation will have an effect on the entrepreneurial orientation—that is, the entrepreneurial proactivity. We found a significant correlation between both variables ($r=0.27$, $n=234$, $p < 0.001$). However, that relationship only holds for the German case ($r=0.35$, $n=196$, $p < 0.001$). For the Australian publishers, the correlation is zero ($r=0.01$, $n=51$, $p =0.959$). Table 3.3 illustrates this result. In the German case, the percentage of proactive publishers rises from 32 per cent to 53 per cent when changing from a predominant cultural to a predominant economic orientation. In the Australian case, the percentage of proactive publishers remains the same; in both cases it is rather high. Even the more cultural-oriented publishers in Australia are more frequently proactive than the economic-oriented publishers in Germany.

The non-existent relationship for the Australian book publishers between a strong economic orientation and pronounced entrepreneurial proactivity is astonishing because this relationship should be of a general nature and not so much country-specific or culture-specific.

Table 3.1: Extent of economic orientations of the publishers

Various tensions exist in any cultural industry between making a profit and satisfying a broader cultural agenda. How do you negotiate these tensions in your company?					
Cultural orientation	❑	❑	❑	❑	Economic orientation
Germany	27.8%	32.1%	33.7%	6.4%	n = 187
Australia	31.4%	27.5%	23.5%	17.6%	n = 51
The profit margin is only one of several equally important company goals	❑	❑	❑	❑	The profit margin is our most important company goal
Germany	32.6%	37.3%	23.8%	6.2%	n = 193
Australia	34.0%	35.8%	24.6%	5.7%	n = 53

Table 3.2: Extent of proactivity of the publishers

Various tensions exist in any cultural industry between making a profit and satisfying a broader cultural agenda. How do you negotiate these tensions in your company?					
Concentration on existing sales markets	❑	❑	❑	❑	Endeavour to break into new markets
Germany	20.9%	50.0%	16.8%	8.2%	n = 188
Australia	13.0%	37.0%	33.3%	13.0%	n = 52
Concentration on existing product segments	❑	❑	❑	❑	Endeavour to be innovative by creating new markets
Germany	24.0%	35.7%	25.5%	12.2%	n = 191
Australia	11.1%	25.9%	44.4%	16.7%	n = 53

So we have to ask, how can the lack of a relationship in the Australian case, and the difference between the Australian and the German publishers, be explained? One way to develop an explanation is to look at further variables that might have close empirical relationships to both of our two variables and convey theoretically relevant connections, too (for possible logical configurations see Lazarsfeld 1955; for statistical assumptions and factors influencing the correlation see Chen & Popovich 2002).

An interesting variable that may moderate the relationship between economic orientation and proactivity is whether the publisher is the manager as well as the founder of the enterprise. In contrast to a manager who is a salary earner, someone who has started the business might be more deeply motivated to promote that business. However, as our data shows, this variable has no effect on the proactivity, neither in the Australian nor in the German case. Regarding the economic orientation, we find an illuminating result: founders are not primarily focused on making money; instead, for most of them, their prime motivation comes from the cultural appeal of this industry.

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 show some further variables, which may explain the lack of a relationship between economic orientation and proactivity, in Australia. It seems likely that the first years of starting a new business are especially demanding and therefore require a high degree of proactivity. However, as can be seen in table 3.5, such an influence is not apparent in Australia. The reason for this may be that proactivity for the Australian publishers is high in any case. In the German results, one also finds only a slight effect, but closer inspection shows that female publishers in Germany, in their first years, are more often proactive (58.3 per cent) than in later years (25 per cent). For the male publishers in Germany, there is no such effect.

Regarding gender, remarkable differences are found for the Australian case where a distinct proactivity is a characteristic especially

Table 3.3: The frequency of proactive dispositions in relation to fundamental orientations and country.

	Cultural orientation		Economic orientation	
Germany	32.1%	(n=106)	53.2%	(n=77)
Australia	66.7%	(n=27)	62.5%	(n=24)

Proactivity and economic orientation are dichotomised at the median of the index-values of the pooled Australian and German data.

Table 3.4: The frequency of dominant cultural orientation of book publishers

	Australia		Germany	
Male	50.0%	(n=24)	60.0%	(n=135)
Female	55.6%	(n=27)	52.9%	(n=51)
Publisher is the founder	59.4%	(n=32)	69.4%	(n=111)
Publisher is not the founder	42.1%	(n=19)	42.6%	(n=68)
Years in publishing < 11	68.4%	(n=19)	57.7%	(n=52)
Years in publishing > 10	43.8%	(n=32)	64.4%	(n=118)
Size < 5 Employees	60.6%	(n=33)	71.2%	(n=111)
Size > 4 Employees	31.3%	(n=16)	38.9%	(n=72)

Table 3.5: The frequency of economic proactivity of book publishers

	Australia		Germany	
Male	45.8%	(n=24)	40.7%	(n=135)
Female	78.6%	(n=28)	45.1%	(n=51)
Publisher is the founder	63.6%	(n=33)	42.9%	(n=112)
Publisher is not the founder	63.2%	(n=19)	39.7%	(n=68)
Years in publishing < 11	63.2%	(n=19)	50.0%	(n=52)
Years in publishing > 10	63.3%	(n=33)	37.8%	(n=111)
Size < 5 Employees	55.9%	(n=34)	36.0%	(n=111)
Size > 4 Employees	75.0%	(n=16)	50.0%	(n=72)

for female publishers. In fact, the difference in proactivity between the German and the Australian publishers as shown in table 3.2 comes almost entirely from the outstanding proactivity of the female Australian publishers.

Company size has a very strong influence on both variables. A cultural orientation dominates the small publishing house, while a strong economic proactivity is, in contrast, a characteristic of the larger publishing houses. Both results seem plausible because as corporations grow they often expand their programs and cannot remain in protected, niche markets, and therefore have to adapt to a more unfriendly, competitive environment.

Interesting as these results may be to our main question, we have to ask whether they can help us understand the difference between the German and the Australian cases regarding the relationship between the predominant orientation (economic or cultural) and the proactive behaviour of the publishers. To answer that question we sought to undertake multivariate analyses, which used the variables in tables 3.4 and 3.5, as well as additional variables, which might have an influence on the proactive behaviour of book publishers. For example, of high relevance for organisational as well as entrepreneurial behaviour is the *friendliness* of the economic environment (Khandwalla 1976; Covin & Slevin 1989); a hostile environment requires special efforts, but can also induce cautious rather than courageous behaviour.

Another significant behavioural drive is the *intrinsic motivation* of the book publishers. Whoever does her job with enthusiasm may develop the desire to enhance her activities and expand her business. On the other hand, this may cause additional *work strain*, which may reduce an excessive engagement. Finally, it is the satisfaction with and the results of one's behaviour that may induce more or less effort in developing and advancing their own firm (for a more detailed discussion of these relationships see Martin & Bartscher-Finzer 2014).

Table 3.6 shows the results of a regression analysis, which includes all variables listed above. As can be seen, the difference between the Australian and the German book publishers remains the same: even when controlling for these variables in the German case, in contrast to the Australian case, we find a significant relationship between economic orientation and entrepreneurial proactivity. Whether the book publisher is the founder or not seems to have a certain effect, especially in the Australian case, though it is not significant in the statistical view (which may be because of the small sample size). The size variable loses some of its importance in the multivariable view and the effect of publishing experience mirrors the bivariate result for the German case. Remarkably, the gender effect remains very strong for the Australian case, an effect that deserves closer consideration. The remaining control variables do not have significant correlations with the proactivity of the book publishers.

Table 3.6: Determinants of proactivity

Independent Variables	**Australian Publishers**		**German Publishers**	
	Beta	**p**	**Beta**	**p**
Dominant economic orientation	-.012	.944	.298	.001
Hostile economic environment	-.027	.877	.083	.341
Satisfaction with success	.204	.269	.118	.202
Intrinsic work motivation	-.061	.734	.044	.588
Strain	.098	.598	.069	.397
Satisfaction with work	.037	.844	.036	.658
Publisher is the founder	.247	.165	.150	.069
Years in publishing	.113	.506	-.139	.068
Gender (1=male, 2=female)	.315	.110	-.011	.887
Size (<5 versus > 4 employees)	.106	.569	.159	.079
N	49–54		170–195	
R^2/adj.R^2	0.194/0.143		0.192/-0.033	
p	0.581		0.000	

Discussion

Our analysis shows that the difference between the entrepreneurial proactivity of publishers in Australia and Germany is not resolved by taking additional variables into account. So we have to look for alternative explanations, which may be theoretical or methodological.

Surveys have methodological limits. They are based on self-assessments and, therefore, may be biased because of social desirability. However, such a distortion is unlikely with respect to the questions we used. Whether or not someone has a cultural or economic orientation, or whether or not one strives for entrepreneurial growth, does not necessarily determine social approval. Another methodological problem may be incomplete measurement. In our study we could not use scales with a lot of items—a fact which may reduce the reliability of the measurement. However, as factor-analytic studies show, the items of our main variables load on distinctive factors, and the divergent correlations of our two main variables with other variables suggest a good discriminatory validity (cf. Martin, Bartscher-Finzer & Richards 2017). Another methodological problem may arise from insufficient representation in the sample. We focused on small and medium-sized publishing houses. This does not represent the whole book publishing industry, but it encompasses an important part of it. Although our sample is about one-fifth of the industry, the small Australian sample size, which limits the possibilities of statistical analyses, is problematic.

Halfway between a methodological and a theoretical problem, one can suspect a base effect in our data. The missing correlation between economic orientation and proactivity in the Australian case might be explained by the fact that Australian publishers are exceptionally proactive from the outset. In the German case, because the German publishers start from a relatively low level of proactivity, a strong economic drive may stimulate additional proactive behaviour;

for the Australian publishers, the potential for additional proactivity is already exhausted.

Another theoretical problem might be that while we have captured a whole series of control variables, they may not be the most decisive ones. Perhaps the inclusion of differing societal values would be more suitable as a control variable. For example, Australian managers rate high in humanistic and moralistic orientation (England 1975; Westwood & Posner 1997). As well as economic motives, social values are sources of strong commitment and therefore may explain the relatively high degree of proactivity amongst Australian publishers. In addition, besides cultural specifics, country-specific economic and legal conditions have to be taken into account. Further research is needed to examine how the book publishers assess their institutional surroundings and the peculiarities of their individual firm, and how they react to these potential influences. Surveys are only partly suitable for answering such in-depth questions. Therefore, in follow-up studies we will be using a case study methodology.

Outlook

Why does an economic orientation significantly affect proactivity with German book publishers but not Australian book publishers? We are carrying out a qualitative study that aims to explain the differing orientations and motivations of the publishers in the two countries in a wider context. We want to clarify why we have different relationships in Australia and Germany between the economic orientation and the entrepreneurial proactivity of book publishers. We also want to embed this question into a more general study about the formation of the publishers' entrepreneurial dispositions in relation to their self-concept. With the help of in-depth interviews we will ask experts from the publishing industry to share their insights about these questions and about the peculiarities in both countries.

Our theoretical frame of reference includes, as a first group of variables (as in our survey), the personal motivations of book publishers, their aims, needs and aspirations. Therefore we also need to discuss the various meanings (and examples) of economic and cultural orientations, (intrinsic) motivation, and strategic orientations (aggressiveness, adaptation, proactivity, cooperation etc.) and their significance for Australian and German publishers. An important factor that affects the self-concept of publishers is their personal image about publishing; that is, the publishers' beliefs, perceptions and theories about their industry.

In respect of these issues we will ask publishers in both countries whether we have to consider different types of book publishers. Maybe the experts can identify typical clusters or categories of publishers on the basis of self-concept, strategic orientations, and their perceptions of different groups of publishers. It would be interesting to know if differences are identified, for example, between publishers in large companies and small, independent companies, and what kind of differences will be mentioned.

A second group of variables refers to the possible determinants of the entrepreneurial dispositions and motivations of book publishers. On the one hand, we explore the socialisation of book publishers and the nature of the selection process, which characterises the career of an entrepreneurial book publisher. On the other hand, we have to look at the characteristics of the book publishing industry and ask whether the properties of the product and particular economic conditions have an impact on the dispositions of book publishers. The other question, here, is whether these factors can explain differences in the dispositions and motivations between book publishers and entrepreneurs in other industries.

Selection and socialisation processes can shape the character of publishers differently. So we have to ask: what are the typical biographical steps that characterise the careers of publishers and their

experiences with the task of publishing? What are the occupational backgrounds of book publishers? What kinds of competencies do publishers in each country need to be successful? Is there a special criterion of success for book publishers? It can be assumed that the book publishing industry in Australia is less valued than in Germany because of the lack of a long industry tradition and because of the perceived limited economic and cultural relevance. These differences could also, of course, have an impact on the self-concept of a book publisher.

A third group of variables refer to the framework conditions of the book publishing industry; that is, to the different socioeconomic opportunities and constraints, and to cultural specifics which might moderate the influence of the explanatory variables just mentioned, on the motivations of the book publishers.

For example, big book publishing dominates in both markets. However, although many high-profile, medium-sized publishing houses in Germany are subsumed into multinational companies, these firms have maintained their individual identity and have great freedom in determining their firms' policies. The Australian experience is a striking contradiction, where smaller publishing firms tend to disappear in takeovers.

Another economic opportunity of the German book publishing industry compared with the Australian book publishing industry is the highly efficient warehouse and distribution system in Germany and their close cooperation with all sectors of the book trade. In Australia, distribution has always been a major hurdle. Most small publishers rely on the multinationals to distribute and warehouse their stock. Additionally, in Germany there exists the regulation of fixed book prices, which enhances their income security. The Australian book publishers in general have to deal with more competitive pressure, which inevitably affects the book publishers' motivations.

Finally, other cultural factors may play an important role. These include the reading habits of the public, institutions such as book fairs and the various state writers centres, author readings, reading groups, literary clubs, the role of literary prizes, libraries, and reviews in the newspapers and in broadcast media. Of special interest is whether we can identify important cultural-based values, which come into play in defining the role and the image of entrepreneurs in general and of book publishers in particular. An example might be the egalitarian attitude often quoted as a characteristic of Australian society (Fiske, Hodge, & Turner 1987; Thompson 1994). Since it is frowned upon to stand out, one needs a justification for being special. Being a hardworking and aspiring individual can deliver such a justification and may explain the high level of proactivity of the Australian book publishers. The low level of uncertainty avoidance in the Australian culture may be another reason for the higher level of proactivity of the Australian book publishers compared to their German colleagues who live in a country where the level of uncertainty avoidance is relatively high (House et al. 2004).

These (and other) queries ultimately lead to the broader question of how book publishers combine their cultural aspirations with their economic aspirations, whether the result of this dualism results in tension, and how the book publishers deal with this.

Works Cited

Amit, R, MacCrimmon, KR, Zietsma, C & Oesch, JM 2001, 'Does Money Matter?: Wealth Attainment as the Motive for Initiating Growth-Oriented Technology Ventures', *Journal of Business Venturing*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 119–143.

Carland, JW, Hoy, F, Boulton, WR & Carland, JA 1984, 'Differentiating Entrepreneurs From Small Business Owners: A Conceptualization', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 12, pp. 354–359.

Carsrud, A & Brännback, M 2011, 'Entrepreneurial Motivations: What Do We Still Need to Know?', *Journal of Small Business Management*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 9–26.

Carter, D & Galligan, A 2007, 'Introduction', in D Carter & A Galligan (eds), *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, pp.1–14.

Cassar, G 2007, 'Money, Money, Money? A Longitudinal Investigation of Entrepreneur Career Reasons, Growth Preferences and Achieved Growth', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 89–107.

Casson, M 1982, *The Entrepreneur: An Economic Theory*, Martin Robertson, Oxford.

Chen, PY & Popovich, PM 2002, *Correlation: Parametric and Nonparametric Measures*, Sage, Thousand Oaks.

Covin, JG & Slevin, DP 1989, 'Strategic Management of Small Firms in Hostile and Benign Environments', *Strategic Management Journal*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 75–87.

——— 1993, 'A Response to Zahra's "Critique and Extension" of the Covin-Slevin Entrepreneurship Model', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 23–28.

England, GW 1975, *The Manager and His Values: An International Perspective From the United States, Japan, Korea, India, and Australia*, Ballinger Pub. Co, Cambridge.

Estay, C, Durrieu, F & Manzoom, A 2013, 'Entrepreneurship: From Motivation to Start-Up', *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 243–267.

Fiske J, Hodge, B & Turner, G 1987, *Myths of Oz: Reading Australian Popular Culture*, Allen & Unwin, Boston.

Furnham, A 1992, *Personality at Work: The Role of Individual Differences in the Workplace*, Routledge, London.

House, RJ, Hanges, PJ, Javidan, M, Dorfman, PW & Gupta, V 2004, *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks.

Khandwalla, PN 1976, 'Some Top Management Styles, Their Context and Performance.' *Organization and Administrative Sciences*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 21–51.

Kirzner, IM 1973, *Competition and Entrepreneurship*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Lazarsfeld, PF 1955, 'Interpretation of Statistical Relations as a Research Operation', in PF Lazarsfeld & M Rosenberg (eds), *The Language of Social Research: A Reader in the Methodology of Social Research*, Free Press, Glencoe, 115–125.

Lumpkin, GT & Dess, GG 1996, 'Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Orientation Construct and Linking It to Performance', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 135–172.

Martin, A & Bartscher-Finzer, S 2014, 'The Self-Concept of Book Publishers and Its Significance for Job Satisfaction and Satisfaction With Economic Success', *Management Revue*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 285–313.

——— & Richards, A 2017, *The Motivations of Book Publishers in Germany and Australia*. [In Revision.]

Miller, D 1983, 'The Correlates of Entrepreneurship in Three Types of Firms', *Management Science*, vol. 29, no. 7 pp. 770–791.

Rauch, A, Wiklund, J, Lumpkin, GT & Frese, M 2009, 'Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance: Cumulative Empirical Evidence', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 761–778.

Schumpeter, JA 1912, *Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung*, Duncker & Humblot, Leipzig.

Shane, S 2003, *A General Theory of Entrepreneurship: The Individual-Opportunity Nexus*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Stanworth, MJK & Curran, J 1976, 'Growth and the Small Firm—an Alternative View.' *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 95–110.

Thompson, E 1994, *Fair Enough: Egalitarianism in Australia*. University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.

Vesala, KM, Peura, J & McElwee, G 2007, 'The Split Entrepreneurial Identity of the Farmer', *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 48–63.

Westwood, RI & Posner, BZ 1997, 'Managerial Values Across Cultures: Australia, Hong Kong and the United States', *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 31–66.

Chapter Four

Going over to the Other Side

The New Breed of Author–Publishers

Sophie Masson

Introduction

It's a challenging time in the publishing industry, for authors as much as publishers. Industry changes have greatly impacted creators as much as traditional publishers' profit margins. But challenges can also bring unexpected possibilities, and one of the most interesting is the rise of the author-directed small press.

This development comes to us against a background of remarkable growth in small press publishing generally. In 2008, Nathan Hollier (commenting on a report on small Australian publishers conducted the previous year by Kate Freeth on behalf of SPUNC) indicated that only 122 publishers had been identified as 'small and independent'. The report surveyed 46 of these publishers. Eight years later, Jan Zwar's working paper *Disruption and Innovation in the Australian Book Industry*, which surveyed Australian publishers as part of Macquarie University's three-year study of the Australian book industry, included statistics from Thorpe-Bowker. These statistics showed that 251 Australian publishers had released between 6–20 titles in 2014—figures which could be taken to indicate the approximate number of small publishers currently in operation. Add to this figure some of the 1,156 publishers who released 2–5 books in that year and the figure is substantially higher.

The jump in numbers emphasises both the speed of change in the industry and the lowering of entry barriers, both financial and

technological, to starting a publishing company. It's not just numbers, though; the literary reputation of small presses has grown exponentially in recent years, to such an extent that, in a recent article in the *Australian Humanities Review*, Emmett Stinson (2016) proposed that 'a fundamental shift has occurred in the mediation of literary production, which is now principally undertaken by small and independent publishers'.

Within this flourishing of small press is a growing phenomenon: that of authors who, not being content just to write books, also start their own small publishing companies. And it's not just aspiring authors doing this, but also established authors with long careers. Perhaps initially driven by frustration at being rejected by conventional publishers, these author-directed start-ups soon expand into something well beyond self-publishing, taking on other authors' and illustrators' works and building reputations as small, independent publishing companies, such as Paul Collins' Ford Street, producing high-quality books. Self-publishing has received scholarly attention: research from Macquarie University indicates that over one quarter of Australian authors surveyed had self-published a book (Longden, Zwar and Throsby 2015). But growth in contemporary author-led small presses has not attracted equivalent attention. And yet it brings up some interesting questions: what effect does 'going over to the other side' have on author-publishers' experience of the industry? How does it affect their writing career and self-image? How do they negotiate the social spaces and traditionally binary intersections of creativity and production, business and art?

Author-Led Publishing: A Short History

The author-directed small press is not a completely new phenomenon. The most famous classic example is The Hogarth Press—Virginia and Leonard Woolf's publishing enterprise, which, from

1917 to 1941, when it was absorbed into Chatto and Windus, published over 500 books and launched the careers of writers such as T.S. Eliot, Katherine Mansfield, Vita Sackville-West, Robert Graves, E.M. Forster, and many others. It also helped to bring non-anglophone literature to English-speaking readers, with Virginia Woolf herself translating Dostoyevsky, for instance. The Press's success also gave Virginia Woolf a new publishing outlet and the freedom to write exactly on her terms. One of the interesting things about looking back at the Hogarth Press is that, as pointed out in John H. Willis's book *Leonard and Virginia Woolf as Publishers: The Hogarth Press, 1917–41*, it was founded at a tumultuous time in the publishing industry, when a decline in readers and rising production costs forced the contraction of publishing lists. Of course, the Woolfs had the independent means to support their printing, which was a costly enterprise and a labour-intensive process at the time. They knew of many talented writers who were not getting the breaks they deserved, and founded the Press in part to provide opportunities, much as many small presses (whether author-directed or not) are doing today.

Jump forward 70 years to 1987, when Australian poet Michael Sharkey, writing in *Meanjin*, recounted the story of two small presses he, his wife, artist Winifred Belmont, and another poet friend Tony Bennett founded in 1979. From Sharkey's narration another story emerges, one of the difficulty of running a small press under great financial constraints. Fat Possum Press, founded by Sharkey and Belmont, and Kardoorair Press, founded by Bennett, both operated from a regional base in northern NSW; both focused on poetry, a literary field in which small-press publishing has been perhaps most active in Australia until recent times. Because of the perceived commercial unsustainability of poetry, it has long been accepted by poets that small press is important to poetry's ability to reach an audience. However, even then, financial considerations loom. As Sharkey (1987) ruefully observes:

> Winifred Belmont and I ploughed our own cash into Fat Possum Press, which we wound up in 1986, while Tony Bennett funded Kardoorair Press through a co-operative membership: Kardoorair continues to operate and produce substantial volumes.

Despite the difficulties, however, Sharkey remained positive about small-press publishing, observing, moreover, that 'the point isn't to compete with the mainstream publishers on their own terms.' (Ibid.)

The Contemporary Scene for Author-Directed Small Presses

Twenty years on from Michael Sharkey's observations, and 90 years after the founding of the Hogarth Press, the author-publishers interviewed for this chapter are working with similar opportunities and challenges to the earlier situation, yet distinctively different. Capitalisation remains a crucial factor, but the initial cost of setting up a small press has been reduced considerably, in large part due to the opportunities afforded via developments in digital technology not only for ebooks, as is often assumed by commentators from outside the industry, but for print books, too. A diversification in production formats, such as print on demand, ebooks and audio books, has also expanded commercial options for small-press publishers. Access to the marketing and publicity opportunities afforded by the internet, including the creation of professional websites and social media pages, is also an important factor. The ease and ability to work with authors over distances via the transferral of digital files is also a benefit of new technologies. But balanced against these opportunities are some perennial challenges: as Nathan Hollier's summary of the Freeth Report (mentioned earlier in this chapter) indicates: distribution, marketing, funding and time constraints continue to be key areas of concern for small publishers.

However, for author-publishers running small presses there are additional challenges. An author might start a small press in a flush of enthusiasm and goodwill for other authors who might be struggling, but the questions identified in the introduction remain: what effect does 'going over to the other side' have on their experience of the industry, and how it does it affect their writing career and self-image. How they negotiate the social spaces and traditionally binary intersections of creativity and production, business and art is also a major issue. As an author-publisher, balancing my work as an author published by big publishers and my work as a director of the small press I co-founded, Christmas Press, which mainly publishes the work of other authors and illustrators, I have encountered these questions; but I wanted to get a broader view and see how other author-publishers view them.

I interviewed nine Australian author-publishers with one British author-publisher added to the list by way of comparison. Five of the Australian interviewees—Paul Collins of Ford Street, Dianne Bates of About Kids Books, Kathy Creamer of Little Pink Dog Books, Naomi Hunter of Empowering Resources and one other respondent, who chose to remain anonymous, are operating solely within children's and youth literature; of the other four, Julian Davies, of Finlay Lloyd, publishes literary adult fiction; Raghid Nahhas publishes literary fiction and poetry, in translation; Keith Stevenson, of Coeur de Lion, publishes adult speculative fiction; Anna Solding, of MidnightSun, publishes a list that ranges from adult fiction—both novels and short stories—to young adult novels and children's picture books. Meanwhile, Mary Hoffmann, of Greystones Press, in the UK, specialises in adult fiction and non-fiction as well as young adult fiction.[1]

1 All interviewees, including the one person who chose to remain anonymous, have given their full consent and permission for their words to be quoted. Interviews were conducted in 2015 and 2016. All interviews were conducted by email. Some were published initially in a series entitled Double Act, published on my writing

The length of time that their small presses have been operating also varies—from starting in 2006 to launching in 2017: the latter being the case for three of the five children's publishers. It is interesting to note, incidentally, that children's publishing is fast becoming a growth area for author-directed small presses. This could be explained by an apparent contraction in publishing in that traditionally stable sector, as indicated by the falling incomes of children's authors reported in Macquarie University research findings in 2015 (Longden, Throsby, Zwar 2015).

Motivations of Author-Publishers

In an article in *Overland*, Mark Davis comments that small publishers are frequently motivated by 'social and cultural values that are pursued irrespective of their ultimate market worth. The wilful altruism of small publishers cuts across the belief, central to economic libertarianism, that people are motivated primarily by rational self-interest.' (Davis 2008) Author-directed small presses are similarly 'wilfully altruistic'. Several of the interviewees had prior experience in publishing, including magazines and books, before starting their own small press, but others had no previous experience of 'the other side' and had to learn on the job. The fact all were authors, however, clearly informed decisions, particularly in the initial stages. Thus a concern about the narrowing of options for authors in the current publishing climate was a major reason for author-publishers to start their small press:

> The scope and tone of the content of picture books has become more and more circumscribed and conservative. There is little or no room any more for the ambiguous, challenging,

---

blog, *Feathers of the Firebird*, www.firebirdfeathers.com, in October 2015, with one, Anna Solding's, published in May 2016. The interviews with Mary Hoffmann, Naomi Hunter, Keith Stevenson, and the anonymous respondent were conducted in October 2016, solely for this paper, and were not published in any form in the Double Act blog series.

> open-ended, subtle … and there is a horror of 'quiet' books. (Anonymous, October 2016)

> On our website we say, MidnightSun Publishing has grown out of a disenchantment with the established publishing houses in Australia. We know there are plenty of fabulous manuscripts about unusual topics floating around, but publishing new and unknown writers poses a big risk. MidnightSun is prepared to take that risk. (Solding, May 2016)

> I suspect my disappointment with publishers never acknowledging receipt of manuscripts or responding with rejection is a large part of it. I'd like to see publishers go back to being respectful of authors. (Bates, October 2016)

> Many of my writer friends were finding it harder and harder to get publishing contracts for novels. I'm talking about really good, long-established, prizewinning writers … Many, many good books never see the light of day. (Hoffmann, October 2016)

> I wanted to offer a counter-model, however modest, to commercial publishing. Our aim was to make well-designed paper books while encouraging and supporting the sort of inventive writing that the big presses were too risk averse to back. (Davies, October 2015)

Meanwhile, Naomi Hunter reported that it was her previous publisher going into liquidation that prompted her to start her own company, which republished not only her own book but those of other authors whose works had also been affected:

> We learnt about Jedidah Morley, who had written a book called *You're Different, Jemima*, which had been illustrated by Karen Erasmus, who illustrated my book, *A Secret Safe to Tell*. It was to be published by the same publisher, but they

> went into liquidation just days before it was to be sent to print. We had just connected with an Australian Foster Care agency who had purchased over 500 copies of *A Secret Safe to Tell*, and we thought we could use the money this generated to help Jed publish *You're Different, Jemima*. I had always had a vision of developing Empowering Resources, a banner under which I would publish my books, but very quickly we had launched into publishing other people's work. (Hunter, October 2016)

For writer and editor Raghid Nahhas, who has published several bilingual translations of Arabic works into English, and Australian works into Arabic, in both book and magazine form, began translating, publishing and marketing his own books as a matter of necessity after the decline of the publishing industry in Beirut, once a centre of the Arab literary world:

> Dealing with publishers there would now cost you an arm and a leg. Not only do they want to sell you the number of copies you require, but also they force you to buy some 1000 copies and to forfeit any rights for a period of five years. I wanted to publish my recent Arabic books there (a logical thing to do), but aside from the few who never respond to you, some leading ones were difficult to deal with. I can see now why even some of the greatest of Arab writers opted to self-publish. (Nahhas, October 2015)

Negotiating New Relationships and Spaces

Distribution, finance and time constraints continue to challenge small press generally, and this is no different for author-directed small-press enterprises. Keith Stevenson encapsulated these problems when he observed of a previous publishing venture: 'We had some critical

successes but those didn't really turn into profitable outcomes. That's been a challenge for every small press I know and it was a constant struggle.' Many small publishers would also agree with Anna Solding that one of the biggest challenges is to overcome the perceived prejudice against small press, and get noticed in the mainstream press.

But for many author-publishers, there is another distinctive and particular issue, which I will now discuss. In my book *The Adaptable Author: Coping with Change in the Digital Age*, I reported on how changing author-publisher relationships meant, amongst other things, an increased willingness of established authors to work with small press. These authors provided favourable comments centring on the much more personal attention they could expect from small publishers, as opposed to larger ones (Masson 2014). But therein lies the paradox for author-publishers: when you have been primarily on the author scene, and have worked mainly as an author presenting work to publishers, how do you respond to work being presented to you, especially by authors you know personally? How do you negotiate this new relationship and new space? It is something that has to be worked out individually, yet also needs an agreed professional framework that may in some cases go beyond contract terms, and in all cases requires a great deal of diplomacy. At Christmas Press, for example, there have been occasional uncomfortable moments when experienced authors have submitted substandard work or work outside the (very clear) parameters of our publishing list; at times there has been an implication that the Press should take on a work, without the usual business considerations. It's a little dismaying to realise that it's not only aspiring authors who, as Kathy Creamer observed, 'do not always read the full criteria for submissions' (October 2015).

Paul Collins lists 'finding suitable books, and getting authors and illustrators to promote their own work' as key challenges, and Dianne Bates observes that despite the apparent plethora of submitted manuscripts, what surprised her was 'generally how mediocre the writing

and storytelling is. But perhaps I'm too fussy. I know that I am seeking quality material.'

> As a small author-directed press, it's imperative to stay totally professional and to avoid being seen by fellow authors as a more indulgent, even easier, outlet than other publishers, and that includes feedback after submission:
>
> We've learned not to engage in too much discussion with those who have submitted manuscripts/portfolios that did not meet our criteria; and also discovered that expectations with regards to timing for publication by new writers/illustrators are invariably unrealistic. (Creamer)

However, the challenges of negotiating those new spaces are balanced by stimulating discoveries and pleasures, as is apparent in these observations from interviewees:

> I've found helping other writers realise their projects as well as possible an intriguing and valuable experience. It has given me a greater perspective on writing, publishing, and bookselling. Perhaps the keenest pleasure has been learning at close quarters how other writers think as they respond to editorial input. (Davies)

> I love finding new talent and nurturing writers from the beginning. The pleasures of seeing a project through from manuscript form to the final product, a beautiful and thought-provoking book, clearly outweigh the challenges. The buzz of opening a box from the printer to see a new book for the first time is very special and I don't think I'll ever get tired of that feeling. (Solding)

> Pleasures are creating books, working for myself, thereby having very flexible working hours (I work seven days a week, but that's my choice), the joy of knowing a book is selling really well, or

> selling overseas rights, taking on books that major publishers have rejected and seeing sales go through the roof! (Collins)

One of the most rewarding of the books we have published with Christmas Press has been *Jules Verne's Mikhail Strogoff*, which was translated by Stephanie Smee, and launched our new fiction imprint Eagle Books, in 2016. The great adventure novel by Jules Verne, recognised in his native France as his finest work, is a book that was very close to my heart as a young francophone reader and which had a permanent effect on my literary interests and creativity. To be able to publish Stephanie Smee's sparkling, perfectly-pitched English translation—the first in over 100 years—and bring this great French classic back to the anglophone world, was a deep pleasure which overrode every production challenge we encountered. It could be said that this was our Hogarth Press moment.

Changing Self-Image?

For nearly all the interviewees, continuing to see themselves as an author, while also publishing other authors' works, was still an important part of their self-image, but it was acknowledged that actually being able to work at their writing could be a struggle:

> Working as a publisher[2] did, unfortunately, have a negative impact on my career as a children's illustrator and author, as running the end-to-end production process, with just two people, there wasn't much time to be innovative, especially with the artwork. Once you have your working model it was too tempting to continue with the same, rather than experiment. (Creamer)

2 Before starting Little Pink Dog Books, which is based in Australia, Kathy Creamer co-owned and operated a publishing enterprise in the UK, Creative Characters Partnership, with her husband and business partner Peter, who is also a director of Little Pink Dog Books.

> I guess it (publishing) gave me a profile in the local community, which helped when I put my work in front of publishers. But there are probably easier ways of doing that so I wouldn't really recommend it as an 'author career path'. And I definitely think of myself as an author first. Another reason for going digital and focusing on short stories is how much time publishing can take up. (Stevenson, October 2015)

> It has made me self-conscious about how difficult it is to write something unique and publishable! When I sit down to write a narrative of my own, I feel I have at least a dozen other publishers, directors, sales and marketing people and editors sitting on my head watching every move I make. It has possibly prevented me from exploring my more original and creative side. (Anonymous)

And Anna Solding admitted that:

> I don't think of myself as a writer first and foremost any more. Publishing has taken over my life, but I have let it happen and I love my job passionately so I'm certainly not complaining. I work with interesting people who all love books, so that has to count for something. Last year (2015), I was fortunate enough to be awarded two writers' retreat residencies, one month in Finland and one month in Perth, which were both fantastic months when I felt like a writer again.

However, for some interviewees, the balance between author and publisher has not been difficult and the two occupations have simply complemented each other and provided unexpected opportunities for the authors' own works. Raghid Nahhas wrote: 'I don't believe it is a question of fitting together or complementing each other. Some people, like me, have varied interests. As such, the struggle is to find time to achieve in every case.' Meanwhile, Julian Davies revealed

that 'Although this was not my intention in starting the press, Finlay Lloyd has finally provided a means to publish my own books in an inventive, unconstrained way, free from the commercial imperatives of the big presses.'

Similarly, Paul Collins saw no conflict between his work as an author and his work as a publisher:

> I don't think it (being a publisher) has had any negative impact. I can publish my own work if I wish. All modesty aside, my titles are among Ford Street's best-selling books. *Trust Me!*, which I edited, is our number one top seller. *Wardragon* (fourth of the 'Jelindel' books) comes in at second. And I still write for other publishers. In 2015 I had six books in the *Legends in their Own Lunchbox* series (Macmillan) and in 2016, two short-story collections in collaboration with Meredith Costain (Scholastic) and three plays (Pearson), due.

The pleasure of publishing their own works, which had been rejected by big publishers but under their own imprint had gone on to do very well, was cited not only by Julian Davies and Paul Collins, but also by Anna Solding, whose first MidnightSun title was her own novel, *The Hum of Concrete*, which was shortlisted for several major awards. However, it's a very fine line to tread, and Paul Collins raised a point that resonates with most author-directors of small presses (as opposed to straight-out self-publishers):

> Be careful publishing your own work. If you do, ensure you get it professionally edited. Make it the best you can. And publishing your own books works if they're selling, but if they're not, you risk bringing down your brand, and appearing like a vanity press.

I would add that for us at Christmas Press, a director-created-and-owned title (*Two Trickster Tales from Russia*, where both author

and illustrator were in-house) was a very useful way to test the waters in the publishing world because no other creator's work but our own was at risk. The title's success gave us the confidence to proceed with a list based on the work of other authors. This was also an advantage cited by Anna Solding, who reported that her novel's success meant 'we were off to a promising start and felt that perhaps we could keep doing this.'

Interestingly, as noted earlier, Solding went on to say that, since, she has put her own writing aside to concentrate on the work of other authors.

Straddling both worlds, that of the author and that of the publisher, can be uncomfortable at times, but it can also give some valuable insights:

> I think it is easy for creators to be a little bit blind to the broader landscape of their particular field. We tend to think what we have created ourselves is pretty darned excellent, and this is not always a useful position to take. We have to have a broad view, a realistic view of our own creative shortcomings, and be prepared to take a whole lot more hard knocks as publishers than as individual creators. (Anonymous)

> Being a publisher gives me a better perspective on the other side of the industry. I knew that "margins were tight" but not that the phrase meant the publisher gets only 44% of the cover price and the writer 10% of that! (Hoffmann)[3]

> There are many different kinds of authors, just as there are many different types of publisher. Both need to have a love of words, but a publisher is about finding good work—regardless of their personal preferences. A publisher also has to respect

3 The figures Mary Hoffmann quotes form only one individual example of profit margins. In Australia small-press publishers, whose books are handled by third-party distributors, generally get a lower percentage of RRP than that quoted here.

> the voice of the author, not just dive in and rewrite them in a way that sounds right to them. Some authors can do that. Some can't. (Stevenson)

Learning the Hard Way

When it came to advice for other creators considering setting up their own small press, interviewees cited tips from things they had discovered after making mistakes or missteps. Learning the hard way is very much part of the process of building a sustainable, thriving press, but it is interesting to note that the interviewees were willing, indeed glad, to pass on the benefit of their experience and insights, even if this could help potential competitors. This could be seen as a feature of small press, generally, with its less-corporate structure, and of author-directed small press, in particular. Amongst authors and illustrators, particularly within children's/young adult literature and genre fiction, including speculative fiction, crime and romance, the sharing of information is not only common but integral to the author-directed small-press scene, and perhaps author-publishers carry that generosity over onto the 'other side'.

Learning the hard way, through experience, Anna Solding observed that it is about 'learning to wear many different hats; as editor, publicist, sales director, head of marketing and the one who is ultimately responsible—whether things go fabulously or the complete opposite'.

Her advice suggests that potential author-publishers should do their research and understand the business they are entering into:

> Become deeply knowledgeable about the gritty business of publishing. I don't really think that just being creative is a key criterion for being a publisher. Publishing is mostly about dollars and cents, about design that does or doesn't work, about the minutiae of typesetting, about chasing up

> slow creators, about guiding, goading and inspiring creators without offending them, about distributors taking massive margins, about sitting up late blinking at spreadsheets that never add up. (Anonymous)

One side of understanding the 'gritty business' was stressed by Mary Hoffmann, who said that at Greystones Press they had initially been so focused just on book quality that they had neglected other matters:

> Don't plan your publications before you have found out how much it is going to cost you to produce each book. Then work out your publicity, marketing and sales strategies and set yourself a period of time within which you must be making a profit.

Paul Collins warned against a common misstep in new author-publisher enterprises:

> Don't print too many copies. I know the more you print the cheaper the unit cost, but if you wind up with 2000 books in storage, it doesn't matter how little they cost you—you're still stuck with 2000 books (and hopefully not paying for storage!)

Julian Davies recommended 'having a broad and perceptive curiosity about all aspects of writing, typography, design and book production. I can't stress that enough. Small publishers should be self-critical and nimble enough to reinvent what they do imaginatively.'

Keith Stevenson felt that informed preparation well before setting up an enterprise was key: 'Start by volunteering with another small press so you can learn the ropes and get to know the pitfalls. Then decide if it's really what you want to do.'

Pre-launch preparation was also foremost in Dianne Bates's advice: 'Like any new venture, you need to do your homework: for example, check out printers, designers, distributors, book clubs and library

suppliers before you take the first step. Having some capital behind you is also a must!'

Naomi Hunter stressed having a clear vision for your press and working with people who share it: 'Keep the vision in mind and don't stray from that. With all of that in mind, don't be afraid to take risks. Make them smart, calculated risks and then go for it. Don't let little failures hold you back and keep striving.'

And finally, Raghid Nahhas spoke of considering himself, as translator and publisher, 'a trustee of other people's work' with all that implied for a publishing enterprise, while Kathy Creamer reminded author-publishers to 'ensure that it remains fun and enjoyable and does not become over burdening. And make time to be creative!'

Conclusion

The emergence of the author-directed small press within the rapid growth of small-press publishing in the last decade means that more creators are 'going over to the other side' and experiencing the publishing business from a new position, largely unfamiliar. From the admittedly small sample of author-publishers surveyed for this chapter, it seems clear that setting up a small press appears risky, but that it is also viewed as an opportunity. This is similar to what other small press participants have reported in other studies such as Freeth's and Zwar's, but for author-directed small press the extra challenge of balancing the two roles —author and publisher—impacts positively and negatively on personal, creative work and on relationships within the authorship community and the wider publishing scene. The respondents' answers to questions identified at the beginning of the chapter, on the effect that 'going over to the other side' has on the creative and professional careers of author-publishers, their experience of the industry and ability

to maintain the balance between two aspects traditionally seen as binary, present a complex picture of changing roles and relationships within the industry. This can be seen as a source of tension but also a catalyst for innovation, and it will be interesting to see how author-publisher growth will influence future perceptions of authorship and publishing in the small press sector and beyond.

Works Cited

Davis, M 2008, 'Literature, Small Publishers, and the Market in Culture', *Overland*, Autumn, no. 190, pp, 4–11.

Hollier, N 2008, 'Australian Small and Independent Publishing: The Freeth Report', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 165–174, Viewed May 15 2017, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12109-008-9078-7

Longden, T, Throsby, D & Zwar, J 2015, 'Book Authors and their Changing Circumstances', *Macquarie University Department of Business and Economics*, Viewed September 20 2016, http://www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/our_departments/Economics/econ_research/reach_network/book_project/authors

Masson, S 2014, *The Adaptable Author: Coping with Change in the Digital Age*, Keesing Press, Sydney.

Masson, S & David, A 2014, *Two Trickster Tales from Russia*, Christmas Press, Armidale.

Solding, A 2012, *The Hum of Concrete*, Midnight Sun, Adelaide.

Stinson, E 2016, *Small Publishers and the Emerging Network of Australian Literary Prosumption*, Australian Humanities Review, no. 59, Viewed October 10 2016, http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2016/03/18/small-publishers-and-the-emerging-network-of-australian-literary-prosumption/

Willis, JH 1992, *Leonard and Virginia Woolf as Publishers: The Hogarth Press, 1917–41*, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Zwar, J 2015, 'Disruption and Innovation in the Australian Book Industry: Case Studies of Trade and Education Publishers', *Macquarie University Department of Business and Economics*, Viewed May 15 2017, DOI:10.13140/RG.2.2.24585.03685

Chapter Five

The Death and the Life of the Publisher

An Emergent Examination of Publisher as Curator and Cartographer

Alexandra Payne

Introduction

I am a book publisher. My creative practice involves, deceptively simply, *making books*. In an era of digital evolution and the oft-touted 'death of the book', will the future of the book publisher be one of innovation, or one of obsolescence? In this chapter I provide an abridged introduction to my ongoing research into the future of the publisher, particularly the logic behind this research investigation. I consider the benefits of—and I advocate for—practice-led research in a creative industry such as publishing. Finally, I explain what has led me to develop two emergent conceptual models of future practice for the publisher: *publisher as curator* and *publisher as cartographer*. Worth noting is the fact that I approach this research without nostalgia, well aware that I may indeed be foretelling my own (professional) death. So be it.

Publishers have long been acknowledged as playing a significant role in the production of cultural objects. In 1975, sociologist Lewis Coser stated publishers 'stand at a crucial crossroads in the process of production and distribution of knowledge in any society' (1975, 14). More recently, in 2008, futurist Bob Stein said publishers in 'the networked era have a crucial role to play' (2008, 6). Publishers certainly 'exert considerable power in the selection and legitimisation of a text and its author' (Richards 2016, 170).

Yet the practice of a publisher needs unpacking. It is complex and mostly un-interrogated. Overall, many scholarly accounts of publishing and the practice of the publisher are written from a place of theory, not practice, and the publisher's role is not analysed in any depth. This speaks to both the contested space between the professional and the critical, and of what is *not* known: *how (and if) publishers will function in the future*.

In unpacking publisher practice, I'm seeking to answer—through a publisher's lens—the questions Amy Hungerford asks in *Making Literature Now*: 'How are books made today? From what social world does literature arise?' (2016, 27) and 'What if literary culture is a culture of making rather than a culture of reading?' (2016, 9). (These questions guide my research; I present no definitive answers here.) So, to paraphrase reflective practice theorist Donald Schön, I am investigating how publishers *practise their practice* (1983, 60).

Context

An all-encompassing history of the book and a full account of the publishing industry is beyond this chapter's scope. Rather, I briefly explore the existing publishing field[1] to set the scene for an examination of the research on, perceptions about, and practice of the contemporary publisher.[2]

For such a long-standing creative industry, it is odd that book publishing is one sector 'about which little is known' (Thompson 2012, viii), though I suggest collections such as this one, and the

1 Though much is happening in the fields of scholarly, educational and professional publishing, this chapter centres on the adult trade (or consumer) publishing industry—that is, books published into the commercial book trade for general adult readers—across the English-language territories.

2 In this chapter, the term 'publisher' refers to the individual role of publisher, commissioning editor or acquiring editor; I will use 'publishing house' to distinguish between individual publishers and publishing companies.

conference from which it was drawn, are changing this. While there is considerable scholarly research on books themselves and an academic tradition around the history of the book, theories about publishing itself are rare. Though digital technologies have 'led to a raft of introspection within publishing studies and the industry itself, there is little explanatory theory predating it, looking at publishing in particular and not the book as a whole' (Bhaskar 2012, 26). Publishing, an industry that *makes culture* (Nash 2013), has not been adequately theorised (Bhaskar 2013, 4).

In his own sociological study *Merchants of Culture*, John Thompson notes that there have only been a couple of inquiries into the modern publishing industry (Coser et al 1982 and Whiteside 1980); most other books on the industry have been written by publishers themselves and 'are inextricably entangled with their own personal experiences and career trajectories' (2012, 24). For Nash, most accounts on publishing are 'autobiographical, hagiographic, or histories of literature, avoiding the business and economics of it all' (2013). While I would add other research to Thompson's list, such as Albert Greco's two monographs on publishing, Richard Guthrie's 2011 work and the wide-ranging *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing* (Carter and Galligan 2007), it is accurate to state that existing literature falls into two broad categories: academic studies, and publisher biographies and memoirs. More can be written about the changing practice of twenty-first century publishers facing the implications of seismic shifts in writing, reading and publishing cultures.

Indeed, the book publishing industry is undergoing significant and expansive change. After decades of 'business as usual', new technologies, reduced margins and competing entertainment options are forcing publishing houses to reassess their *raison d'être* (Thompson 2012; Clark and Phillips 2008; Greco 1997). Publishing has always been a fraught field, a 'business that brings its own veterans to tears' (Levine 2010, 137), particularly due to the challenges of negotiating

space between commerce and culture (Bhaskar 2013; Young 2007). Publishers are 'caught between the Janus-faced imperatives of symbolic worth and economic expediency' (Bhaskar 2012, 16).

For some, despite this uncertainty, book publishing is a long way from being a dying industry (Guthrie 2011, 73), regardless of the fact that there are few industries who have had their 'death foretold more frequently than the book publishing industry' (Thompson 2012, viii); this is perhaps evidence of the pervasive 'death discourse' existing around publishing (Richards 2016). While for others, it is already dead:

> Publishing is not evolving. Publishing is going away. Because the word 'publishing' means a cadre of professionals who are taking on the incredible difficulty and complexity and expense of making something public. That's not a job anymore. That's a button. There's a button that says 'publish', and when you press it, it's done. (Shirky 2012)

Dying or not, the publishing industry is in flux because of a number of fundamental trends. These include globalisation, disintermediation,[3] convergence and discoverability (Phillips 2014, xiii); the changing format of the book (Freeman 2012); self-publishing (Baverstock 2012); and the growth of the bookselling retail chains (and broader changes in the bookselling retail environment), the rise of the literary agent, and the growth of transnational publishing corporations as a result of decades of mergers and acquisitions (Thompson 2012, 22). Broader trends impacting the publishing industry include a rise in alternative media options, the decrease in long-form reading and an increase in pressures on audience time (Bhaskar 2013, 3). Some predict that the big corporate publishers will collapse within the next ten years (Nash 2010, 116), and new media companies such as

3 No longer are mediators such as publishers or booksellers required.

Amazon, Google and Apple will continue to be major industry players (Guthrie 2011, 100).[4]

The convergence of different media on to mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets creates 'diversity and dynamism' in the spectrum of digital publishing (Robinson 2012, 7) but also adds a new challenge for book publishing. Books have always competed with other entertainment options but 'never has book publishing competed with these media on the exact same devices. The battle for eyeballs and dollars has never been so intense' (McIlroy 2015).

With continuing innovation, complexity in digital publishing will only increase and it certainly pays to be 'tolerant of ambiguity' when considering the future of the digital market (Jones 2015). What is unambiguous, however, is that the digital effect is 'transforming commercial trade publishing' (Levine 2010, 138).

Ambiguity or not, opportunities arising from digital publishing will create a dynamic new publishing ecosystem (Robinson 2012, 7). For optimists—and I am one—the digital evolution will not change 'the human need to read and write' and in fact indicates a renaissance for the publishing industry (ibid., 8). It is indeed a fascinating time to be in publishing: 'new attitudes mix with old standards, sometimes constructively and sometimes with struggle' (ibid., 18). Certainly, the exploration and growth of digitally native books, including books that 'cannot be printed', heralds a 'coming generation that is bound to the cloud, not the page, nor the pixel' (Uglow 2014). So, perhaps, as Richards states, the 'book is not dead, just morphing and playing around', and publishing itself is not dead, but may simply have a few 'major identity issues' (2016, 184).

---

4 As an example, in 2013 the industry saw the merger of two of the biggest corporate publishing houses when Random House and Penguin joined to form one conglomerate, with the expected redundancies occurring since. As another, Amazon's revenue grew from US$511,000 in 1995, its first year of operation, to US$1.64 billion in 1999, US$74.45 billion in 2013, and an expected US$100 billion in the next year or two (Milliot 2015, 4).

Publishers and Complexity

I have briefly set the landscape in which the publisher operates; I now expand on the practice. Publishing is a complex professional practice; its negotiation between commerce and culture involves subjectivity and uncertainty. It is at once a solitary and social practice. These multifarious interactions—these negotiations, this creativity—lead to the often fraught nature of publishing.

Publishers, as noted, are pivotal in knowledge production, or were considered so by Coser in 1975. Coser titled his paper 'Publishers as Gatekeepers of Ideas', noting that those who 'control access to the medium that Gutenberg invented are still in a position to channel the flow of ideas and control a central, though by no means the only, medium for ideas' (1975, 15). Publishers are gatekeepers in as much as 'they are empowered to make decisions as to what is let "in" and what is kept "out"' (ibid.). Though it may be useful to consider publishers this way, 'the notion of gatekeeper greatly oversimplifies the complex forms of interaction and negotiation between authors, agents and publishers that shape the creative process' (Thompson 2012, 17).

Despite publishing sometimes being considered an accidental profession, attracting staff for the cultural experience rather than the salary (Guthrie 2011, 75), a range of diverse and intricate skills are required to be a good publisher, including the ability to blend together 'intellectual creativity and marketing nous' (Thompson 2012, 19). The acquisition of content, and the interaction between publisher and author is 'much more complex than it might at first seem' (ibid., 16).

In the existing literature there is limited in-depth analysis of what the publisher does—the actual ontology, epistemology and practice of *being* a publisher. Publishers themselves may not know or may have no inclination to know what it is they do (Bhaskar 2012), which is in itself a point worthy of investigation.

Concisely (and I write as a publisher currently working in independent publishing), publishers create the 'book' as the text beyond the manuscript and as an object. They discover authors, create new book ideas and pro-actively commission works; they publish with a broad view on the shape and tone of their list over time; they gamble on the market; they negotiate contracts; they read, rewrite, cut and edit manuscripts; they envisage the finished book, commission cover designers, brief sales teams; they advocate for the author in the publishing house, and for the book in the wider world. And certainly in independent publishing they may have considerable autonomy. While there is a 'fundamental simplicity' to publishing—it 'grows from the human need to communicate and a desire to do so in a way that survives time' (Robinson 2012, 8)—the process of commissioning books is 'in fact deeply troubled, and the whole gamut of editorial or creative input on the publishing side can tell us no more than that publishing involves content' (Bhaskar 2012, 25).

Perhaps this is the case because publishers are seen as 'backdrops' and 'keepers of many secrets' in a culture in which 'editor invisibility still dominates' (Richards 2016, 171). Or perhaps the 'complex layering of intangible values' involved in creating books makes measuring or investigating publishing processes a challenge (ibid., 170). To counter this invisibility (for the purposes of research) and to understand the publisher role in the production of literature and the making of books, we need to:

> … become as specific in our knowledge of the seemingly functionary figures as we are in the knowledge of the visionaries. Such 'neglected agents' of cultural formation not only play a crucial role in the cultural field but also constitute a set of actors for whom literary or artistic production matters beyond the moment of ordinary consumption. (Hungerford 2016, 38)

Publishers may still be considered the 'mechanics of culture', to use a term for book-trade workers in the first age of print (Brooks 2003, 678). Also, in the digital present, it may be easier to unpack publisher practice, particularly as 'the digital literary sphere renders the actual functioning of cultural brokerage more transparent and more readily documentable than ever before' (Murray 2015, 331).

Will publishers even be necessary in a new media world? In 2008, futurist Bob Stein acknowledged that in a networked era, publishers have a crucial role to play. Stein notes that the position will involve being:

> … a producer, a role that includes signing up projects and overseeing all elements of production and distribution, and that of course includes building and nurturing communities … Successful publishers will build brands around curatorial and community building know-how *and* be really good at designing and developing the robust technical infrastructures that underlie a complex range of user experiences. (6)

Foretelling Stein's publisher as brand-builder, scholar Robert Iliffe says eighteenth century editors and publishers were valued for their 'ability to make "names" for their authors and construct public "identities" for them. They were supposed to be trustworthy managers of the transit of private and personal material into the public sphere' (2013, 168).

Publishing is a practice that is multifaceted and exists in a field undergoing digital, creative and economic disruption. Maybe these factors limit investigation into the specifics of publisher practice. Or perhaps it is because there may not be a happy ending. In a 2010 interview, Clay Shirky recounted the Upton Sinclair observation: 'It's hard to make a man understand something if his livelihood depends on him not understanding it.'

Practice-Led Research

Given some of the nebulous skills and services publishers provide—creativity, emotional intelligence and intellectual curiosity—any research needs to allow for such uncertain terrain. There are, of course, numerous possible methodologies; however, as a working publisher, practice-led research was the most relevant approach for me, and I outline its benefits to publishing research below.

Practice-led research is an experiential methodology that blends theory, practice and evaluation in a sophisticated form of investigation. It allows for the complexity and uncertainty of the current publishing field along with the subjective experience of publishing practice. Practice-led research leads to 'new understandings about practice' (Candy 2006, 3),[5] and it has innovative and critical potential because of its:

> … capacity to generate personally situated knowledge and new ways of modelling and externalising such knowledge while at the same time revealing philosophical, social and cultural contexts for the critical intervention and application of knowledge outcomes'. (Barrett and Bolt 2007, 2)

It is a hybrid research strategy in which the creative practice is the central organising role. By placing creative practice at the centre, it subscribes to Heidegger's theory of praxical or emergent knowledge—that is, that 'ideas and theory are ultimately the result of practice rather than vice versa' (Barrett and Bolt 2007, 6). Thus, practice-led research 'improves both the practice itself and our theoretical understandings of that practice' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 14). It is

5 In an often contentious field, Candy makes a constructive distinction between practice-*led* research and practice-*based* research: 'If a creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge, the research is practice-based … If the research leads primarily to new understandings about practice, it is practice-led' (2006, 3).

'critical, reflective, investigative praxis', which 'involves the crucial and inextricable meld of theory and practice' (Stewart 2007, 124).

As noted, publishing is a subjective, creative profession and any investigation into publishing practice requires a research strategy that deals with this subjectivity. Practice-led research achieves this; it is 'characterised by specific difficulties associated with the articulation of subjective decisions and aesthetic judgements' (de Freitas 2002, 7). A research strategy 'characterised by emergence and complexity' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 217), practice-led research is 'unruly, ambiguous and marked by extremes of interpretive anxiety' (ibid., 220)—much like the practice of publishing itself I suggest. In fact, practice-led research *embraces* these challenges: ambiguities, complexity, emergence and other such qualities must be at 'the heart of [the] research enterprise' (ibid.). There is a synergy, a reflexivity, that evolves from the synthesis of creative practice and research itself; more than the sum of its parts, practice-led research 'becomes truly emergent in its outcomes' (ibid.). It is the appropriate strategy for this research because it contributes to both knowledge and practice and is 'concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice' (Candy 2006, 3).

In the creative industries, research is often 'motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns', therefore practice-led research 'operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit knowledge' (Barrett and Bolt 2007, 4). Critical reflection and specific research into *tacit* knowledge in publishing practice are limited. Perhaps this is because, in our apparent desire for certainty in 'professions where ambiguities abound, we forget to ask personally and professionally developing reflective questions' (Bolton 2010, xv). Practice-led research requires the researcher to 'cultivate and render explicit the tacit knowledges which are being deepened through the research' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 223). This explication of tacit knowledge is valid in the publishing field.

While publishers may have a practical understanding of the field, *they are not necessarily able to explain it*: they 'know how to play the game … but they may not be able to formulate these rules in an explicit fashion' (Thompson 2012, 12).

This lack of reflection *within* the profession has created a tension between practice and theory, with much of the research in publishing studies necessarily undertaken by academics rather than practitioners. Though scholarly research is clearly essential and eminently valuable (and requires skills that practitioners may not have), knowledge of the industry can only be enhanced with more practitioner-driven research. Thus, this research seeks to answer a key question driving practice-led research in the creative industries: 'how can theory and practice be linked more productively and creatively in the future, in a search for a genuine praxis?' (Yeates 2009, 139). I use practice-led research to connect theory and practice by engaging in a dialogue between critical publishing theory and my own publishing practice, along with the practice of other publishers. Practice-led research connects experience of the work and its explanation (de Freitas 2007), and thus offers a deeper understanding of this field.

Emergence and reflexivity are 'foundational and constituting' aspects of practice-led research (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 218), and reflective practice is a sound research method within practice-led research. In publishing, where practice may be unquestioned, it is especially relevant and involves 'interrogating both our explicit knowledge … and implicit knowledge' (Bolton 2010, 43). It challenges the practitioner to get to the heart of their practice, by critiquing any aspect of their professional life, anything '*taken for granted*' (ibid., 48; my emphasis). From my experience, it seems much is taken for granted or considered a *given* in the publishing world, and this would benefit from more investigation.

A central challenge in practice-led research is to operate from this place of reflexivity while remaining immersed in, and open to, 'the

possibilities generated through creative practice' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 222). In my view, using a reflective practice framework helps to find a critical space from which to witness one's creative practice *and* research, so the researcher can 'reflect upon and view the work they are creating, analyse the dynamics of their practice, be alert to the larger patterns emerging in the work, engage in theory building and claim significance for the work' (ibid.). Reflexivity requires the researcher to 'stay with personal uncertainty, critically informed curiosity, and flexibility to find ways of changing deeply held ways of being: a complex, highly responsible social and political activity' (Bolton 2010, xix).

Reflective practice is used when there is incongruity between traditional ways of practice and knowledge and a diverse and uncertain practice situation. As Schön states:

> Let us search, instead, for an epistemology of practice implicit in the artistic, intuitive processes which some practitioners do bring to situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict. (1983, 49)

Choosing reflective practice as a primary research method for practice-led research into publishing allows for uncertainties, doubt and states of unknowing. It is 'central to the art through which practitioners sometimes cope with the troublesome "divergent" situations of practice' (ibid., 62), such as the troubled, uncertain state of the publishing profession. Indeed, disconcerting questions are expected to arise in the research because reflective practice is 'essentially personally, politically and socially unsettling' (Bolton 2010, 6). Reflective practice and reflexivity are 'transgressive of stable and controlling orders' (ibid., 7), involve 'making aspects of the self strange' (ibid., 14), and can lead to powerful emotions arising both in practice and reflection (ibid., 36).

With the goal of practice-led research being to 'advance knowledge about practice, or to advance knowledge within practice' (Candy

2006, 3), I ask the key practice-led research question: 'How can the findings of a practice be best represented?' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 216).

Conceptual Models of Practice

In an attempt to answer the above question, this research is developing—or perhaps playing with—conceptual models for the future publisher. This is an appropriate analogical approach given that the qualitative researcher 'may be aided drawing from different perspectives on the same question or topic' (Richards and Morse 2007, 91). Particularly, the use of metaphor and analogy allows for, and helps to communicate, new creative perspectives. Metaphors and analogies are a 'way of making sense of the world' and make the 'abstract concrete' (Bolton 2010, xx).

The two conceptual models I am developing—curator, cartographer—provide the scaffold for my ongoing investigation and may contribute to this research's 'theory-engaging' and 'theory-recrafting', an emerging integrated approach to practice-led research in the creative industries (Yeates 2009, 140). Will conceptualising the publisher as curator or cartographer articulate the future practice and value of publishers?

These two models arose from my initial research, which was situated in a number of theoretical theoretical frameworks: the fields of publishing studies, curatorial studies, and social cartography and cultural geography. These broad disciplinary fields form the critical contexts for, and help to frame, the research and practice by triangulating 'the practice, the professional and critical contexts' (Haseman and Mafe 2009, 224); by providing a 'means through which to discuss practice as research and to locate the studio enquiry within the context of historical, social political and contemporary ideas relating to practice' (Barrett and Bolt 2007, 193); and by synthesising contexts

to offer new insights. It is through these lenses that the influence and future of the publisher will be interrogated and envisaged.

Publisher as Curator

Curation has been a buzz word for the past few years, particularly with regard to online content creation. Research on curation has focused on its origination in fine arts culture or, more recently, its role as an active practice that implicates artist, viewer and curator (Martinon 2013). The concept of *publisher as curator* has not been examined extensively, though the comparison has been mentioned (Stein 2008) and questioned (Nash 2015). There are many parallels between publishing and curation that could inform future publishing practice—for example, seeing changes in publishing mirrored in the move from curating as 'vocational work in institutional contexts to a potentially independent, critically engaged and experimental form of … practice' (O'Neill 2012, 2). In an era of profligate content creation and consumption, content curation itself is a disputed practice: while Maria Popova's curator's code (2012) drew both considerable criticism and support, Eric Schumacher-Rasmussen argues that curation is overvalued (2013). The consideration of curation as a political tool that can be used outside of politics (O'Neill 2012, 2) connects with my personal interest in publishing as a catalyst for social change.

It is a logical analogy because publishers 'cultivate authors and act like gallery or museum curators when they nurture their artists and their art' (Robinson 2012, 17). The future publisher will 'command multiple platforms, all with a digital heart. This raises the question—if the publisher is a curator, for content and for the consumers of it—of what his or her preferences will be. What content will the publisher be bringing to the party?' (ibid., 18).

It may be asked, what does the curator contribute to the artist and art, so we can—or perhaps *should*—also ask, what does the

publisher contribute to the author and book? One scholarly support for this kind of investigation is sociologist Howard Becker's theory of art as collective action. As Becker states: 'All the arts we know about involve elaborate networks of cooperation' (1974, 768) and support personnel; and these networks, these relationships, both engender *and* constrain the creative artistic process (770). This can apply to publishing: analogies considered for this research included publisher as midwife and nurturer—support personnel, in essence—but also censor and anachronism, in effect constraining the artistic process.

In conceptualising art as collective work, we can move away from 'framing the curator's role as … neutral provider (and, therefore, invisible)', which 'only reinforced a modernist myth that artists work alone, their practice unaffected by those with whom they work' (O'Neill 2012, 128). In fact, some take the curator's influence further: 'the role of the curator is to make art' (Wade 2005). Paying heed to the role of curator as an artistic contributor and as part of a creative support network also bridges the oppositional divide between artist and administrator that appears in Adorno's theories around cultural production (O'Neill 2012, 88). And yet the importance of the curator has been disputed and even noted as having a deleterious impact on artistic agency, though this may result from a 'nostalgia for the perceived certainty of the fixed division of labor between artist, curator, and critic' (ibid., 123). As curator Hans Ulrich Obrist states: 'Artists and their works must not be used to illustrate a curatorial proposal or premise to which they are subordinated' (2014, 33).

I see the shifts and emergent ideas in curating being mirrored in the opportunities and challenges to the status quo prompted by the digital disruption occurring in the publishing industry. For example, the relationship between artist, curator and audience is 'being replaced by a spectrum of potential interrelationships' (O'Neill 2012, 129), much like the spectrum of interrelationships I see as being

potentially offered by transmedia storytelling, alternative publishing, the democratisation of authorship, the dissolution of traditional publishing models and more.

But the relevance of curating to publishing has been questioned by some, which leads to the next mode of practice. From the synergy of publishing studies and curatorial studies, a second conceptual model arises: *publisher as cartographer*.

Publisher as Cartographer

This concept extends an idea posited by publishing innovator Richard Nash—that is, that the term curation is abused and, when considering publishing, we are 'too focused on filter, and not enough on map … map, on the other hand, is about finding user-friendly ways to display *all* the information, not a tiny subset of it. It's about saying, we'll show you everything, and give you the means to navigate towards it' (2015).

Nash explains the idea of mapping further:

> Effectively we're way too focused on processing data, and not enough on how to effectively render data for the human brain to process it itself. Moreover, and I can't emphasize the significance of this: maps are fun in themselves. Filters are not. Map is where the cultural action is. (2015)

My research takes this emergent concept and extends it beyond rendering data with this analogy of publisher as cartographer. There exists logic in this analogy, for mapping and story have long been entwined: 'narration is historically part of cartography, which, after all, concerns the story of a place and has at times even embraced fictional forms of representation' (Bruno, in Smith 2008, 157). Expanding on this metaphor, my research draws on the discipline of cultural geography and cultural cartography to explore what shape publisher as cartographer would take.

The analogy connects to ideas around whether publishers censor, influence or engender the experience of the author and reader. Cartography has an 'insistent ethical dimension' (Cosgrove 2008, 160) and yet the making and subsequent reading of a map involves considerable subjectivity and interpretation. As Cosgrove articulates, in a digitised, new media world, the idea of the map as 'a tangible, finished object and mapping as a specialised scientific activity seem[s] to be giving way to a virtual cartography in which the map image is avowedly provisional and ephemeral, and mapping a creative, participatory activity no longer the preserve of professional cartographers and geographers' (ibid., 162).

In his discussion of mapping as a tool for literary analysis, Franco Moretti noted that a map isn't an 'explanation'; rather, it offers 'a model of the narrative universe which rearranges its components in a non-trivial way, and may bring some hidden patterns to the surface' (2007, 53). Maps can be 'more than the sum of their parts: they will possess "emerging" qualities, which were not visible at the lower level' (ibid.). Emergent cartographic concepts and practices are 'generating an active and intensely practical engagement with everyday cultural life' (Cosgrove 2008, 178), a cultural life in which publishers are immersed. Cultures themselves (and the cultural products produced) are 'maps of meaning through which the world is made intelligible' (Jackson 1989, 2). If maps are more than just the terrain they may represent, if (to echo Baudrillard) maps precede the territory, then the role of cartographer—geographic, social or cultural— is a most intriguing one when superimposed on the role of the future publisher.

Conclusion

It is important to investigate, to paraphrase Hungerford, the institutions and relationships that organise and shape literary work—that is, both the works themselves and the work, the labour, itself—and

consider the provocative question noted earlier: 'What if literary culture is a culture of making rather than a culture of reading?' (2016, 9).

In researching this culture of making, I continue to focus on the two models of publisher practice identified and to explore what these models will look and *feel* like to a practising publisher. I am finding many rather elegant parallels between publishing and curating, and publishing and cartography. And the creative, digital, radical shifts in publishing find counterparts in the shifts occurring in curation and cartography. Indeed, a connection also exists between curating and cartography—curating can be considered a 'form of map-making that opens new routes through a city, a people or a world' (Obrist 2014, 1). Perhaps that is the life of the future publisher.

Works Cited

Barret, E & Bolt, B (eds) 2007, *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, IB Tauris & Co, London.

Baverstock, A 2012, 'Why Self-Publishing Needs to Be Taken Seriously', *Logos*, vol. 23, no.4, pp. 41–46.

Becker, H 1974, 'Art as Collective Action', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 39, no. 6, pp. 767–76.

Bhaskar, M 2012, 'The Problem of Publishing', *Logos*, vol. 23, no.1, pp. 16–29.

——— 2013, *The Content Machine*, Anthem Press, London.

——— 2015, Personal communication via email, 5 June.

Bolton, G 2010, *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*, Sage Publications, London.

Brooks, DA 2003, 'Gadamer and the Mechanics of Culture', *Poetics Today*, vol. 24, no.4, pp. 673–694.

Candy, L 2006, 'Practice-based Research: A Guide', *CCS Report*, V1.0, November, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://www.creativityandcognition.com/resources/PBR%20Guide-1.1-2006.pdf

Carter, D & Galligan, A (eds) 2007, *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane.

Coser, LA 1975, 'Publishers as Gatekeepers of Ideas', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 421, pp. 14–22.

Coser, LA, Kadushin, C & Powell, WW 1982, *Books: The Culture and Commerce of Publishing*, Basic Books, New York.

Cosgrove, D 2008, 'Cultural Cartography: Maps and Mapping in Cultural Geography', *Annales de géographie*, vol. 2, no. 660–661, pp. 159–178.

de Freitas, N 2002, 'Towards a Definition of Studio Documentation: Working Tool and Transparent Record', *Working Papers in Art and Design 2*, Viewed 26 February 2017, https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_le/0011/12305/WPIAAD_vol2_freitas.pdf

——— 2007, 'Activating a Research Context in Art and Design Practice', *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, vol. 1, no. 2, Article 14.

Freeman, O 2012, 'An Australian Perspective on the Future of Book Publishing', *Logos*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 34–47.

Greco, AN 1997, *The Book Publishing Industry*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey.

Greco, AN, Rodriguez, CE & Wharton, RM 2007, *The Culture and Commerce of Publishing in the 21st Century*, Stanford University Press, California.

Guthrie, R 2011, *Publishing: Principles and Practice*, Sage Publications, London.

Haseman, B & Mafe, D 2009, 'Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-Led Researchers', in H Smith & R Dean (eds), *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, pp. 211–288.

Horne, A 2012, 'The Future's Live, the Future's Digital', *Logos*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 7–13.

Hungerford, A 2016, *Making Literature Now*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Iliffe, R 2013, 'Author-Mongering: The "Editor" Between Producer and Consumer', in A Bermingham & J Brewer (eds), *Consumption of Culture*, Taylor and Francis, Hoboken, pp. 166–192.

Jackson, P 1989, '*Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography*', Routledge, London.

Jones, P 2015, 'What We Have Learned from Ebooks 2014', *The Bookseller*, May 8, Viewed 10 May, http://www.thebookseller.com/futurebook/what-we-have-learned-e-books-2014.

Levine, C 2010, 'Introduction to the Logos reviews of *Merchants of Culture*', *Logos*, vol. 21, no. 1–2, pp. 137.

McIlroy, T 2015, 'Is Publishing a Complex Industry?', *The Future of Publishing*, March 15, Viwed 26 February 2017, http://thefutureofpublishing.com/2015/03/is-publishing-a-complex-industry/#more-6342.

Martinon, JP (ed) 2013, *The Curatorial: The Philosophy of Curating*, Bloomsbury Academic, London.

Milliot, J 2015, '20 Years of Amazon.com Bookselling', *Publishers Weekly*, vol. 262, no. 36, pp. 4–5.

Moretti, F 2005, *Graphs, Maps and Trees*, Verso, London.

Murray, S 2015, 'Charting the Digital Literary Sphere', *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 311–339.

Nash, R 2010, 'Publishing 2020', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 114–118.

——— 2013, 'What Is the Business of Literature', *VQR Online*, vol. 89, no. 2, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://www.vqronline.org/articles/what-business-literature.

Nash, R & Inman, T 2015 'Q&A with Richard Nash on the Future of Publishing', *whitefox*, April 23, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://wearewhitefox.com/qa-with-richard-nash-on-the-future-of-publishing/

Obrist, HU 2014, *Ways of Curating*, Penguin Books, London.

O'Neill, P 2012, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

Phillips, A 2014, *Turning the Page: The Evolution of the Book*, Routledge, London.

Popova, M 2012, 'Introducing the Curator's Code', *Brain Pickings*, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://www.brainpickings.org/2012/03/09/curators-code/

Richards, A 2016, 'Coming Out: Reframing the Public Face of Publishing', in A Mannion & E Stinson (eds), *The Return of Print? Contemporary Australian Publishing*, Monash University Publishing, Melbourne.

Robinson, H 2012, 'Digital Publishing: Does it Herald a Renaissance for the Industry', *Logos*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 7–20.

Schön, DA 1983, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, Basic Books, New York.

Schumacher-Rasmussen, E 2013, 'Why Curation Devalues the Product, Creator and Viewer', *Streaming Media*, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://www.streamingmedia.com/Articles/Editorial/Featured-Articles/Why-Curation-Devalues-the-Product-Creator-and-Viewer-91308.aspx

Shirky, C 2010, 'Here Comes Clay Shirky', Interview with P Sehgal, *Publishers Weekly*, June 21, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/authors/interviews/article/43565-here-comes-clay-shirky.html.

——— 2012, *Interview with Clay Shirky*, Genius, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://genius.com/Clay-shirky-how-we-will-read-annotated/ (republication of Shirky, C 2012, *How We Will Read: Clay Shirky*, Interview with S Sarayia, from the now unavailable Findings Blog, http://blog.findings.com/post/20527246081/how-we-will-read-clay-shirky)

Smith, M 2008, 'Cultural Cartography, Materiality and the Fashioning of Emotion: Interview with Giuliana Bruno', in *Visual Culture Studies: Interviews with Key Thinkers*, Sage Publications, London.

Stein, R 2008, 'A Unified Field Theory of Publishing in the Networked Era', in *Proceedings of the 2008 ACM Workshop on Research Advances in Large Digital Book Repositories*, BooksOnline, California, pp. 5–8.

Stewart, R 2007, 'Creating New Stories for Praxis: Navigations, Narrations, Neonarratives', in E Barrett & B Bolt, *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, IB Tauris & Co, London, pp. 123–33.

Thompson, JB 2012, Th*e Merchants of Culture*, 2nd edn, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Uglow, T 2014, 'pBooks, eBooks, and dBooks: Why We are Hooked on Books and Bookness', *teau*, Blog Post, December 22, Viewed 26 February 2017, http://teau.co/words/aboutbooksthatcannotbeprinted

Wade, G 2005, 'Quote From Interview', in O'Neill, P 2012, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

Yeates, HL 2009, 'Embedded Engagements: The Challenge of Creative Practice Research to the Humanities', *The International Journal of the Humanities*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 139–147.

Chapter Six

Australian Literary Journals and the Postcolonial Cultural Cringe

Emmett Stinson

This chapter examines the ways in which the cultural cringe presents an ongoing set of problems for Australian literary journals, and looks at how some journal editors and publishers—as literary intermediaries—respond to and perpetuate the logic of the cringe. I will argue that the cringe persists in a postcolonial form because it is a cultural manifestation of material realities pertaining to both Australia's colonial history and its current position in the global political order. In this sense, the cringe constitutes a means of reckoning with the status of Australian culture within what Pascale Casanova has termed 'world literary space' (2004). This is so because the cringe embodies a set of anxieties about Australia's relation to global culture—thus making the cringe an inherently transnational phenomenon. Literary journals, despite their small readerships, remain a key cultural site for both shaping and debating the notion of Australian literature, and thus also present a unique locus for understanding the persistence of the cultural cringe.

As Ken Gelder and Rachael Weaver have noted, Australian journals have always been situated in transnational contexts (2014). Even a colonial journal such as the *Melbourne Journal* advertised itself as providing 'Over 150 pages of the best Australian, English, and American Novels', which indicates that its editors 'recognised that mixing local and imported content was still the most economical way to attract broad colonial readerships' (Gelder and Weaver 2014, 12). Gelder and Weaver also note the irony that the colonial journals'

nationalistic 'investment in "Australian literature" as an identifiable field of writing' occurred amidst a great deal of 'transnational literary circulation' (2014, 12). In this sense, journals' discussions about Australian literature have always been shadowed by comparisons—whether explicit or implicit—to other national literatures.

Phillip Edmonds, in his survey of literary journals between 1968 and 2012, argues that even in the late 1970s and early 1980s—typically viewed as a golden era of Australian literary production—'the "cultural cringe" lurked' behind the 'upsurge of the local' (2015, 51). He examines how several journals positioned themselves as international journals in ways that signalled continued anxieties about the quality of local culture. Edmonds discusses how the journal *Helix* was described as 'being comparable with the most attractive literary publications to be found anywhere in the world' and examines how *Scripsi* conducted interviews with major international writers, such as Northrop Frye, Basil Bunting, and Gary Snyder, as a means of transferring the symbolic capital of established overseas authors to its local content (2015, 51). On the face of it, these gestures may simply indicate a preference for internationalism, rather than the anxieties of the cringe. But journals in the US and the UK don't *need* to position themselves as international in this way, and no benefit would necessarily accrue from such framing. In this sense *Helix* and *Scripsi's* leveraging of symbolic capital from overseas only makes sense in a cultural field where there is a perceived lack of such capital within the national sphere; their internationalism takes place within the cultural matrix of the cringe.

As I have previously noted, it has become increasingly common to assert that the cringe no longer applies to contemporary Australian cultural products (2013, 90–2). Susan Johnson's *Sydney Morning Herald* article 'Measuring the Cultural Cringe', for example, argues that, for people of her sons' generation, 'the cultural cringe has disappeared' (2010). Nick Bryant in the *Griffith Review* argues that

the cringe is dead because Australia is currently 'punching above its weight in the arts and culture' (2012, 94). The claims asserted in these works of cultural journalism also (perhaps surprisingly) reflect scholarly positions on the cringe. Graham Huggan, for example, argues that the cultural cringe 'is now considered by most Australians to be an irrelevant issue' (2007, 27), while Ken Gelder and Paul Salzman argue that Australia is no longer 'riven by cultural cringe, but … enabled by cultural incorporation' (2009, 113). My point in listing these perspectives is not to engage at length with these various and often complex claims, which present different and nuanced accounts of changes to Australians' perceptions of the value of their own culture. Rather, I want to suggest that, despite the proliferation of these obituaries, many of the core anxieties of the cringe continue to haunt Australian cultural production and affect the ways that intermediaries, such as literary journals, position themselves within the cultural field.

While the cringe continues to affect contemporary cultural production, I also want to argue that its form and contexts have been altered by historical change. In order to do this, it is necessary to briefly re-examine A.A. Phillips's own account of the cringe and examine several notable scholarly accounts that have sought to situate Phillips's notion in relation to larger cultural, social and political forces. As I have argued elsewhere (2013, 98–9), the transnational nature of the cringe is already evident in Phillips's account since, for him, the cultural cringe was grounded in Australia's history as a colonial nation; Phillips views the cringe as a subjective, psychological manifestation of Britain's material and cultural hegemony over Commonwealth nations: 'in the back of the Australian mind, there sits a minatory Englishman … that Public School Englishman with his detection of a bad smell permanently engraved on his features … whose indifference to the Commonwealth is not even studied' (Phillips 2012, 84). Australia's subjugation to British rule was so

ingrained, that most educated Australians ashamedly viewed their own culture from the (imagined) perspective of the hegemon.

For Phillips, the cringe was not to be resisted through a knee-jerk nationalism that valorised all things local—a position that he characterised as the 'cringe inverted' (2012, 81)—but rather through the studied rejection of colonial anxieties that resulted in making 'needless comparisons' between Australian and overseas culture (2012, 81). In Phillips's view, shaking off the cringe was a necessary corollary of creating a robust local culture without advocating for a reductive nationalism. Here, as Rollo Hesketh has argued, Phillips's position reflects a program for the creation of national culture articulated by W.A. Amiet in a 1941 *Meanjin* article: 'Rule 1. Get rid of the inferiority complex … Rule 2. Get it clear that ours is a literature, not a branch of literature … Rule 3. To obtain "national" results, don't harp on the "national"' (2013). In this sense, Phillips critiques the cringe to advance a national culture, but this nationalism is forged out of an understanding of Australia's relationship to other nations and cultures in ways that stop it from becoming simple jingoism.

Sneja Gunew has further analysed the relationship between Phillips's concept of the cultural cringe and Australia's status as a colonial nation. Gunew argues that Phillips's desire to slough off a subaltern mentality is itself a complex response to colonisation, since 'white Australia has always been riddled with anxious cultural debates concerning its national identity' (1990, 103). This is so because 'white settlement initially took the form of penal colonies', which produced a view of Australia as a 'postlapsarian' rather than an Edenic nation; for Gunew, the cringe represents a desire 'to confirm a coming of age' of the colony, which, after an extensive project of nation-building, can finally be recognised as a 'New Eden' (1990, 103). From this perspective, Phillips's account of the cringe is restorative and ameliorative in ways that cannot be easily separated from the project of colonialism itself; both the cringe and Phillips's critique of it remain inevitably

tied to Australia's colonial history. Gunew even suggests that the valorisation of certain forms of multiculturalism—and particularly of the post WWII European migration (as opposed to other non-Western waves of migration)—reinforces the notion of Australia as a newly cosmopolitan nation that has surpassed its uncertain origins in ways that extend rather than contradict the ameliorative discourse of colonialism (1990).

Bruce and Judith Kapferer have mapped the persistent cultural effects of the cringe by translating Phillips's notion into Bourdieusian terms. They argue that, for Australia, symbolic capital is 'generated in a world outside and beyond the nation' in the same way as economic capital; as a result, the 'owners and controllers of the means of cultural production are always positioned elsewhere' (1997, 82). From this perspective, the anxieties that motivated the cringe in a colonial era have been transposed into the postcolonial by the interweaving of economic and cultural exchange. Though Australia may no longer be subordinate to British colonial power in a direct way, it is still effectively a net importer of overseas culture, with the result that its local institutions lack the symbolic capital of those in the UK and the US. As the Kapferers note, this imbalance in symbolic capital—which the cringe historically indexed in relation to high culture—is also reinforced through consumption patterns of popular culture, which is largely dominated by television and cinema 'emanating from the United States' (1997, 80).

The Kapferers' account of the cringe as a representation of the unequal transnational exchange of symbolic content is particularly useful because it enables the analysis of Phillips's concept within the Bourdieusian, mediating 'world literary space' envisioned by Pascale Casanova (2004). For Casanova, this space is 'a parallel territory, relatively autonomous from the political domain, and dedicated as a result to questions, debates, inventions of a specifically literary nature' which is also 'a market where non-market values are traded, within

a non-economic economy' (2004, 71–2). Here, Casanova's notion of world literary space is informed by Bourdieu's concept of 'fields', which are systems of social positions whose various power relationships are internally structured (Bourdieu 1993, 37–40). Fields are autonomous insofar as they operate according to their own rules and hierarchies; while social positions in the literary field are influenced to some degree by external factors within the field of power, such as wealth or inherited status, the literary field cannot simply be reduced to these factors.

I would argue that the notion of the cultural cringe serves as both a manifestation and a partial contestation of Casanova's notion of a 'world literary space'. On the one hand, the cringe takes seriously the notion of a global market for culture that is based on non-economic notions of literary value; Phillips's concern, in fact, is that Australian works are automatically presumed to have less literary value. From this perspective, the cringe then seems to characterise Australia's view of itself within the world literary space. Put more simply, the contemporary form of the cringe constitutes an acknowledgement of the fact that—particularly within the Anglosphere in which Australian culture circulates—Australia is a secondary or tertiary cultural market, which still does not compete on equal terms with the US or the UK. Indeed, the links between this self-perception—which is articulated in relation to non-economic values—and Australia's subordinate economic and military position in relation to the US and UK, suggests that the world literary space may not always be as autonomous from political and economic realities as Casanova suggests.

Interestingly, one recent, popular reflection on the persistence of the cringe explicitly examines it in reference to Casanova. In his *Los Angeles Review of Books* essay 'Letter from Australia', Sam Twyford-Moore, who is both a former director of the Emerging Writers Festival and a co-editor of the short-lived journal *Cutwater*, argues that Casanova's *World Republic of Letters* constitutes a European attempt to 'decentre America in the literary world' (2012). But Twyford-Moore

suggests that, while European nations may have the residual symbolic capital to resist the lure of American cultural institutions, 'countries such as Australia are not in the same position to make such a radical move' (2012). The implication is that, while the long history of European countries as cultural centres imbues them with a certain symbolic capital that can resist US institutions, Australia still lacks an immanent belief in its own culture, which makes it far more susceptible to run a deficit in cultural exchanges. This belief is often reinforced by overseas depictions of Australian culture; in a recent examination of Australian art and culture in *The New York Times*, for example, Damien Cave described Australia as 'a country where the demand for culture is greater than the supply' (2017). It's interesting to note that Cave's language here explicitly draws on the vocabulary of international trade and posits Australia as a net importer of overseas culture.

Twyford-Moore's essay presents an account of the way that the cultural cringe affects contemporary writers, while also arguing that its key reference is no longer the UK, as it was for Phillips's generation, but rather the US. In a pointedly confessional moment, he states:

> Like do you guys get how hard we are trying to impress you? I am sorry to break out of essay-voice and address this so directly, but I need you to understand how much this means and how it can be thrown back in our faces. I was aware, for instance, of the way that Australians look to Americans for cultural confirmation from a very early age. (2012)

Twyford-Moore then discusses a variety of prominent Australian artists, including the novelists Geraldine Brooks and Peter Carey, and the actor Geoffrey Rush, who have established themselves in the US. Much of his point seems to be that, once established in the US, such artists are automatically lionised in Australia, and are seen as having surpassed those who attain merely local success. There is, of course, good reason to view these claims with some suspicion:

Carey's literary reputation, for example, surely derives as much from the local reception of his early work as it does from his later overseas accolades. But, despite such hyperbole, I would argue that Twyford-Moore does make an important observation.

Twyford-Moore notes an imbalance in local and overseas symbolic capital, and implies that this unequal valuation constitutes a new form of the cultural cringe. Not only are Phillips's 'needless comparisons' between Australia and overseas evoked, but also, he argues, a hierarchy of value is established: success in the US is more significant than local success—and Australians view Australian institutions as possessing less symbolic capital than US institutions. This symbolic deficit produces material effects, since 'It becomes necessary for writers to travel to these other centres to pursue greater opportunities' (2012). At the same time, Twyford-Moore's version of the cringe differs from its earlier manifestations; rather than being a psychological internalisation of colonial realities, the current form of the cringe stems from an explicit awareness of the uneven exchange of symbolic capital between Australia and larger anglophone nations like the US and the UK.

I suggest that contemporary Australian literary magazines operate with an awareness of this uneven exchange of symbolic capital, and it affects the way they engage with successful overseas institutions and artists. These journals are often unhappy with this state of affairs, but I will argue that their internationalist gestures often indirectly reinforce Australia's perceived inferiority in cultural exchanges. There is, however, an added complication that must be noted in regards to literary journals. Because of what Phillip Edmonds has described as their uncertain status as commodities continually struggling against the odds (2015, 1), literary magazines are typically beholden to their stakeholder groups in specific ways; as Edmonds points out, these stakeholders form a local community of some form or another, being either a coterie of like-minded writers, a specific geographic region,

or a group of politically like-minded Australian readers. Australian literary journals are also overwhelmingly—indeed, almost entirely—purchased by Australian readers, and they thus often exhibit nationalist tendencies in some form or another, while also incorporating work from overseas authors that will be more readily marketable to a local audience. In this sense, the market that contemporary journals operate in is not so different from the colonial market that Gelder and Weaver describe (2014); the desire for local culture and overseas culture must be carefully balanced to draw readers' interests.

But there is also a key difference between the colonial period and now, since the nationalism of the contemporary Australian reading class now manifests within a cosmopolitan sphere, albeit one that contains internal contradictions. Many of Australia's current literary journals are explicitly transnational in their outlook, but this transnationalism is balanced with an understanding of the fact that, for Australian cultural producers, internationalism is always a fraught enterprise that threatens to re-establish hierarchies of value in line with cringe-thinking. I would argue that this double-bind constitutes what might be called the 'postcolonial cringe': contemporary artists and institutions recognise the imbalance of local and overseas symbolic capital and desire to resist it, but, at the same time, must also harness the aura or symbolic value of overseas institutions and connections to further their own symbolic capital in the literary field. This is done in a self-aware manner that utilises these connections while still maintaining an essentially nationalist belief in the value and importance of local literature and local literary culture. But the attempt to hold these positions in tension produces a series of interesting contradictions. I will now examine two instances in which the contradictory logic of the postcolonial cringe becomes explicit in contemporary literary journals.

The internationalist outlook of the Melbourne-via-Brisbane publication *The Lifted Brow* is already evident in its self-description as a

'quarterly attack-journal from Australia and the world.' The phrasing here is instructive, since it displays a cosmopolitanism that is refracted through nationalism (since Australia literally comes first). While it positions itself as an explicitly Australian journal, its cosmopolitan temperament and overseas content recalls the *Melbourne Journal*'s claim to present 'the best Australian, English, and American Novels'. This balance has been borne out in that *The Lifted Brow* has published a significant amount of fiction by comparatively high-profile overseas authors (such as Tao Lin), and also attached itself to high-profile overseas institutions. For example, *The Lifted Brow* publisher, Sam Cooney, undertook an extended consultation with US journal *McSweeneys* in 2014 in order to help develop plans for the Australian magazine. Cooney has also appeared at the Ubud Writers Festival. But *The Lifted Brow*'s fraught relationship with overseas institutions was highlighted in late 2015 when two of the magazine's regular contributors (one of whom later served as an editor of the journal) had articles published in *The New Yorker*, resulting in the following *The Lifted Brow* Facebook post on October 3, 2015:

> Sure, one could say that *The New Yorker* is just another magazine and that we shouldn't put it up on some kind of pedestal, especially when we already spend enough time in Australia craning our necks looking from overseas at *The New Yorker* and other establishment publications as though they and they alone represent the real test for a writer, when in fact in Australia we have several publications that could and do stand toe-to-toe with *The New Yorker* and any other magazine or journal in terms of quality. But in reality only writers who are among the most talented and hard-working in the entire world are published by *The New Yorker*, simply because the publication is itself a self-fulfilling prophecy (because every writer out there would and does try to jump at the chance at

> seeing their byline in that distinct Adobe Caslon Pro font), and so it is excellent to see recognition of two Australian writers whose brilliance and seriousness and indefatigability we have known about for many years. (2015)

This post presents a contradictory and hedged set of claims that I would suggest can be seen as representative of the simultaneously nationalist and cosmopolitan tendencies that *The Lifted Brow* tries to balance. On the one hand, it asserts a nationalist position that resonates with Phillips's own views on overseas cultural products: despite its aura, *The New Yorker* is simply another publication and one whose 'quality'—however such a term might be measured—is no greater than many Australian publications. *The Lifted Brow* makes this point by arguing that *The New Yorker* should not be put 'up on some kind of pedestal' given both Australians' tendencies to place undue value on overseas publications (an acknowledgement of the continuing cringe) and the existence of local journals that could stand 'toe-to-toe with *The New Yorker* … in terms of quality' (2015).

But this nationalist assertion is trumped or overmastered by material facts borne of the awareness of Australia's inferior symbolic capital; *The Lifted Brow* argues that it is an achievement to be published in such a magazine because 'every writer out there would and does try to jump at the chance at seeing their byline in that distinct Adobe Carlson Pro font' that is famously associated with *The New Yorker*. While *The New Yorker* is thus not inherently better, its status as a destination publication for writers around the globe makes it a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' whose quality is assured by the fact that—as *The Brow*'s post claims—all writers are desperate to publish in it (2015). Given this status, then, it is appropriate to celebrate the appearance of two Australians in a publication that has global visibility, even if such a celebration participates in the logic of the cringe.

What's interesting about this is how *The Lifted Brow* simultaneously attempts to celebrate the publications of its own writers in a

prominent US magazine (thereby appropriating some of its aura) while also seeking to refute the sort of cringe-thinking that presumes *The New Yorker* is automatically a superior publication in terms of quality. The gesture is unsuccessful insofar as the claim of equal local quality is effectively undermined by more material exigencies: because *The New Yorker* is universally viewed as being a superior magazine, the result is that it *is* a superior magazine, and the fact that Australians are published within its pages thus constitutes a newsworthy event. Here, the editors of *The Brow* seem to take a position similar to that articulated by Twyford-Moore: while Australia may contain writers of the highest quality, Australia's inferior position in cultural exchanges means that its institutions are simply not able to compete with high-status institutions overseas. While this position may be true, it still contains a fatalism, or negativity, that reflects the postlapsarian tendencies Gunew noted as constitutive of the colonial nature of cringe-thinking (1990).

My suggestion is that the postcolonial cultural cringe takes this form: while local publications are not seen as inferior, cultural producers still make needless comparisons between overseas and local publications. The comparisons always have a negative character, since the inevitable conclusion is that Australian journals cannot compete with institutions attached to major cultural centres overseas. Even if the notion of Australia's inherent inferiority has been dispatched, the hierarchical geography of margin and centre persists, and the effective inequality of Australian culture is maintained. While this particular Facebook post does not and cannot capture the totality of *The Lifted Brow*'s practices of cultural mediation, I would nonetheless argue that it is exemplary in indicating both the persistence and the contradictory form of contemporary anxieties about Australia's global cultural position.

At the same time, it is hard to imagine *The Brow* being as excited about an author's publication in a well-regarded, smaller journal,

such as *Praire Schooner*. Rather, the postcolonial cringe only appears in relation to overseas institutions with large stores of symbolic capital and a high profile (or what, in Bourdieusian terms, would be called social capital, which is to say the capacity to motivate or influence a large number of agents in the field). So publication in *The New Yorker* remains particularly significant for *The Lifted Brow* contributors, and has been so for other authors as well; elsewhere, I have examined the role that publication in *The New Yorker* has had on the career of Australian author Cate Kennedy, for example (2013, 95).

Another journal that has navigated the terrain of the cosmopolitan cringe in an interesting way is *Island* magazine. After the Tasmanian government pulled its funding for *Island* in 2012, the magazine was revitalised by a series of editors (Dale Campisi (2012), Matthew Lamb (2013–15), and Vern Field and Geordie Williamson (2016–present)), who sought to market the magazine to a broader audience and intervene more actively in national cultural disputes. The magazine has approached this intervention in a variety of ways. Matthew Lamb, for example, took a strong position on the idea that writers needed to support local literary journals, and instituted a policy whereby writers who were not already subscribers would receive part of their remuneration in the form of a subscription. In 2015, the journal—which had been encouraged by the Tasmanian State Government in 2011 to move wholly online—decided to cease all forms of digital publication, and double its printrun. Both decisions—though perhaps seemingly insignificant to those unfamiliar with literary journals—constituted a significant break with standard practices. Alongside these changes, the magazine's design was also updated, and its covers since 2013 have largely comprised photographs of single individuals—a point that I will return to in a moment.

Island's case is also made more complex because of its location in Hobart, Tasmania—quite a distance from the major urban centres

of Melbourne and Sydney, where Australian publishers and other literary institutions are typically located. In other words, *Island* not only needs to balance the competing logics of transnationalism and a (cosmopolitan) literary nationalism, but must also maintain a regional focus that plays to local readerships and separates it from the Melbourne and Sydney literary scenes. The magazine has confronted these issues in a variety of ways under the direction of its editors. Its recent partnership with the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) is appropriate, in this sense, since both entities seek to navigate a similar and difficult terrain—simultaneously foregrounding their Australian-ness, their Tasmanian locality, and the internationally 'elite' nature of their contents.

Island demonstrates its adherence to a Tasmanian locality through a variety of means. For one, almost every issue since 2012 has contained articles on Tasmanian literature, history, culture, or social issues, which signal the journal's regional placement. More recently, its editors produced a special collection of essays formatted just like the magazine, with a cover featuring a photo of the 2017 Tasmanian Australian of the Year, Rosie Martin; the collection also served as the culmination of a two-year partnership with Martin's charitable organisation, Chatter Matters, which helps 'to raise awareness of the lived-experiences of those who have not been able to learn to read easily' (Chatter Matters 2016).

Island has also signalled its investments in national literary culture in a number of ways: the magazine shifted into book publishing in 2015 (something that *The Lifted Brow* also did in 2016) to publish 350 copies of David Ireland's *The World Repair Video Game*. The publication constituted Ireland's first novel since 1997 and served to help rehabilitate the reputation of an Australian author who had won three Miles Franklin Awards in the 1970s, but who had lapsed into obscurity. The initiative was successful: *The World Repair Video Game* was shortlisted for the 2016 Prime Minister's Literary Awards,

despite its small printrun. This comprised a significant intervention in Australian literature for *Island* on top of its normal publication of fiction and poetry by Australian writers, as well as various forms of criticism on Australian writing.

But these interventions at the local and national level have also been accompanied by *Island*'s clear attempts to position itself as an international magazine. *Island* has done this through its publication of high-profile international writers such as Teju Cole, but its international positioning is perhaps most explicit and notable in what may be the journal's most significant paratext: its cover. Over the last several years, *Island* has chosen to put photographs of a variety of comparatively well-known international artists on its covers, including overseas authors, artists and musicians, such as Neil Gaiman, Marina Abramovic and PJ Harvey. This is an extremely unusual gesture for an Australian literary journal, and it clearly serves a variety of purposes: on the one hand, such figures potentially attract readers beyond *Island*'s traditional audience; on the other hand, much like *The Lifted Brow*'s self-reflexive acknowledgement of the cringe, these covers present an intentional framing of Australian content among better-known international artists. Indeed, the consciousness of these choices is made clear by the fact that *Island* also chooses to present covers of lesser-known local personages (such as Rosie Martin, or the writer Fiona Wright) and well-known Australian artists (such as Nick Cave and DBC Pierre).

In other words, like the *The Lifted Brow*, *Island* is aware that Australian culture—even today—does not compete on even terms with overseas culture. The magazine, therefore, leverages the popularity of overseas artists, writers, and musicians to increase sales and help consecrate its local content, at the same time pursuing a cosmopolitanised, nationalist agenda that promotes local writing in a variety of ways. That the magazine must do this is indicative of Australia's unusual position in the Anglosphere, since similar journals in the US

or the UK would not need to promote their connections with overseas artists in the same way. Both *Island* and *The Lifted Brow* are self-aware literary journals that understand the still-pervasive logic of the cultural cringe in its current fatalistic, postcolonial, cosmopolitan form. But while they seek to resist the cringe in their various programs to support and elevate national culture, they also inevitably use the cringe to their own material advantage by foregrounding international content and connections in ways that grow both readerships and the symbolic capital of the journals. Transposed into Bourdieusian terms, one could argue that these journals' self-reflexive understanding of the cultural cringe's continued relevance in shaping the field of Australian literature and culture enables them to play the game more effectively, thereby increasing these journals' influence through symbolic and social capital. They thus engage in contradictory practices that simultaneously resist and re-inscribe Australia's position of inferiority within anglophone cultural exchanges: these contradictory practices constitute a new manifestation of what I have termed a postcolonial cultural cringe.

Works Cited

Bourdieu, P 1993, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. R Johnson, Columbia University Press, New York.

Bryant, N 2012, 'The Cultural Creep: Australian Arts on the March', *Griffith Review*, vol. 36, Winter, pp. 94–104.

Casanova, P 2001, *The World Republic of Letters*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Chatter Matters, *Project: Island Magazine*, Viewed March 3 2017, https://chattermatters.com.au/2017/01/15/island-magazine-literacy-stories/

Cave, D 2017, 'The Fall and Rise of Australian Culture', *The New York Times*, June 14, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/14/world/australia/nytaustralia14-art-sydney-melbourne-victoria-market-fall-and-rise-of-australian-culture.html

Edmonds, P 2015, *Tilting at Windmills: The Literary Magazine in Australia, 1968–2012*, University of Adelaide Press, Adelaide.

Gelder, K & Salzman, P 2009, *After the Celebration: Australian Fiction 1989– 2007*, University of Melbourne Press, Melbourne.

Gelder, K & Weaver, R 2014, *The Colonial Journals: And the Emergence of Australian Literary Culture*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, Western Australia.

Gunew, S 1990, 'Denaturalizing Cultural Nationalisms: Multicultural Readings of "Australia"', in HK Bhabha (ed), *Nation and Narration*, Routledge, London, pp. 99–120.

Hesketh, R 2013, 'A.A. Phillips and the "Cultural Cringe": Creating an "Australian Tradition", *Meanjin*, vol.72, no. 3, Viewed February 10 2017, https://meanjin.com.au/essays/a-a-phillips-and-the-icultural-cringei-creating-an-iaustralian-traditioni/

Huggan, G 2007, *Australian Literature: Postcolonialism, Racism, Transnationalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Johnson, S 2010, 'Measuring the Cultural Cringe', *The Age*, January 22, www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/measuring-the-cultural-cringe- 20100122-mpvs.html.

Kapferer, B & Kapferer, J 1997, 'Monumentalizing Identity: The Discursive Practices of Hegemony in Australia', in D Palumbo-Liu & HU Gumbrecht (eds), *Streams of Cultural Capital: Transnational Cultural Studies*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, pp. 79–96.

The Lifted Brow, Facebook page, March 1 2017, viewed March 1 2017, https://www.facebook.com/theliftedbrow/

Phillips, AA 2012, 'The Cultural Cringe', in R Manne & C Feik (eds), *The Words That Made Australia*, Black Inc. Agenda, Collingwood.

Stinson, E 2013, 'In the Same Boat: Transnationalism, Australian Short Fiction, and the New Cultural Cringe', in E Stinson (ed), *By the Book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, Victoria.

Twyford-Moore, S 2012, 'Letter From Australia', *Los Angeles Review of Books*, June 25, Viewed February 12, https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/letter-from-australia/

Chapter Seven

Who Are the New Gatekeepers?

Literary Mediation and Post-Digital Publishing

Mark Davis

Introduction

What are the valorising pathways and practices of literary reception today? A decade or so ago this was a relatively easy question to answer: agents, publishers and editors, broadsheet-newspaper literary sections, the academy, broadcast media, literary journals, literary prizes, and festivals and events, all played a part in the critical mediation and reception of works. These were Pierre Bourdieu's famous 'cultural intermediaries' (1984, 359), a 'petit bourgeoisie' corps of cultural capital dealers who provide guidance in the consumption of symbolic goods and services. Today this question is much more difficult to answer. Agents, publishers and editors still play a crucial mediating role, albeit under mounting commercial pressures (Thompson 2012). Newspaper literary sections have lost audiences and prestige at a time of declining circulation, standardisation and increased copysharing (Nolan and Ricketson 2013). A thundering review from an established critic no longer has the power it once did and many newspaper literary sections have shrunk or disappeared altogether. The academy no longer functions as a valorising, canon-making institution in the way that it once did and literary departments, along with the humanities more generally, are feeling the managerial pressures visited on 'non-counting' disciplines (English 2010) that privilege qualititative over quantitative research. Broadcast media—mostly radio and television arts shows—remains an important medium for authors, but

appearances are mostly restricted to state-supported and community broadcasters. Literary journals survive, and smart ones even prosper, reliant on cultural communities and significant volunteer labour and grants. Prizes, festivals and events are, more than ever, an important consecratory tool, but are no longer so concerned with protecting the boundaries of the literary from the popular (Driscoll 2014).

Other channels, meanwhile, have proliferated. The literary field has expanded to include social media forums such as Goodreads, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Reddit, Tumblr, LibraryThing and Pinterest, among others. Driven by popular 'power users' who have a significant profile, or by sheer numbers, or when leveraged off festivals and events, social media now plays a role in championing and popularising literary texts. Publisher websites, author blogs, online bookstore reviews, self-publishing portals, collective editing sites, podcasts, bookblogs and literary portals, bookstore e-newsletters, online bookstore customer reviews and recommendation algorithms, have further multiplied pathways to reception.

Already a paradox is apparent. Pathways to reception have increased but none are authoritative. A small number of large gates have given way to a proliferation of openings, even breaches. A related issue is that traditional agents of literary reception served to valorise the status of literature itself; in traditional literary gatekeeping culture, even negative commentary mediated and maintained the status of the field. Reviewers on Amazon and Goodreads, readers engaged in book talk on Twitter, Facebook or bookblogs, or self-publishers, appear to show little commitment to contextualising any given literary work within the broader cultural practices and dispositions of the literary, or in maintaining or acknowledging what John Frow (1982) has called the 'literary frame'.

I want to begin to enumerate, here, how this new literary gatekeeping dynamic works, with reference to recent literature on digital literary cultures and gatekeeping more generally. My aim is to make

a contribution to understanding literary digital economy, and to think about changing media ecologies and cultural structures, and the politics of these changes.

The Post-Digital Literary Field

Above all, this new apparatus is 'post-digital'—against narratives of technological supersession, digital media and analog forms such as print media coexist, interact and intermingle (Andersen, Cox, and Papadopolous 2014; Andersen and Pold 2014; Cox 2014; Ludovico 2013):

> Post-digital, once understood as a critical reflection of 'digital' aesthetic immaterialism, now describes the messy and paradoxical condition of art and media after digital technology revolutions. 'Post-digital' neither recognizes the distinction between 'old' and 'new' media, nor ideological affirmation of the one or the other. It merges 'old' and 'new', often applying network cultural experimentation to analog technologies which it re-investigates and re-uses. (Andersen, Cox, and Papadopolous 2014)

This is a space of 'remediation', where traditional forms of media re-fashion themselves to meet the challenges of digital media and where digital media draws on and reproduces traditional media forms (Bolter and Grusin 1999; Deuze 2006). As Alessandro Ludovico says: 'There is no one-way street from analogue to digital; rather, there are transitions between the two, in both directions' (Ludovico 2013, 153).

Setting aside narratives of technological supersession allows for an understanding of the post-digital as a space of social interaction and contestation. As Michael Stevenson has argued, following Lisa Gitelman (2008) and Benjamin Peters (2009), 'technology-centric narratives of the "essential difference" of the new fall short of explaining a medium's development, as these are ultimately sites of negotiation

where neither technical nor social protocols are fixed' (2016, 1089). To capture the sociality of the internet's development Stevenson deploys Bourdieu's notion of the 'literary field', understood as a more-or-less self-contained 'universe of belief' (Bourdieu 1993, 82), where different agents compete for prestige and the ability to mediate what counts as quality and legitimacy. Bourdieu's notion of the 'literary field' also provides a potentially useful way to understand post-digital literary culture. Simone Murray, for example, proposes the concept of a 'digital literary sphere' as a 'unifying term that could give focus and coherence to a currently scattered body of work' that encompasses such things as 'the broad array of book-themed websites and other digital content whose focus is contemporary literature and its production, circulation, and consumption, however blurry that tripartite distinction has been rendered in an era of Web 2.0 and social media' (2015, 313).

As Murray says, Bourdieusian 'field' theory 'provides a capacious device to conceptualise the digital literary sphere in its totality', not least since it 'appears especially applicable to the online environment, given the Internet's rapidly fluctuating constellation of agents and institutions, as well as its demarcation as a "universe of belief" by all participants' self-identification as "literary" adherents' (2015, 330).

However, Bourdieusian field theory famously has limitations, especially in light of recent developments in the publishing industry. As David Carter has said:

> This model made one kind of sense in a literary field (as in France) where publishing was largely a matter of independent houses that behaved like self-governing individuals, more or less consciously taking a position within a self-contained field, and where homologies existed across authors, editors, publishers, booksellers and critics … the fit is much less obvious in the contemporary Anglophone book trade given its dramatic restructuring since the 1980s by the emergence of multinational publishing conglomerates and global booksellers. (2016, 4)

Digital literary production stretches the model still further. Murray says 'the advent of the Internet throws many of Bourdieu's pronouncements into sharp relief, casting doubt upon the alleged universality of his structuralist-inflected 'rules' of cultural functioning by highlighting their French (and especially Parisian) specificity' (2015, 330).

While I am in close sympathy with Murray's project, here I argue that the post-digital publishing environment with its panoply of mediators stretches Bourdieu's model perhaps beyond its limits. This proliferation of arbiters suggests not only a transformation in scale, but also in kind. Works of literature, now, are enmeshed in a multiplicity of digital paratexts many of which demonstrate little reverence for the literary field, its 'universe of belief' or its systems of valorisation and consecration. The relative autonomy of the publishing field is challenged by the integration of book publishing into a wider digital media sphere and by the challenges posed by disintermediation and convergence at every level of production and consumption, from individual users to powerful digital corporations such as Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Google, with their command over a post-convergence media environment in which book publishers must compete.

New Agents

This new multiplicity of literary paratexts is made possible by the accessibility of online media as a medium for publishing. But what effect does this have on the literary field? A series of struggles is arguably taking place over the place and meaning of the digital in literary culture. The struggles for position within the literary field described by Bourdieu have become a struggle for the shape and role of the literary field itself. In this respect digital literary initiatives can support as well as contest traditional literary cultures. For example, among the new agents are online literary reviews such

as the *Sydney Review of Books*. According to the site's 'about' page, 'Concerns about the reduced space for serious cultural criticism in the mainstream media prompted the establishment of the *Sydney Review of Books*'. The site thus seeks to establish itself as a bastion of self-conscious literary *seriousness* in the digital networked space. There is an irony in this given that online media has been responsible for the budget shortfalls that have resulted in the decline of 'serious' literary review space in newspapers and elsewhere. The site is at the same time resolutely redolent of print literary culture. Text based, without multimedia, populated mostly by known literary figures, it is notable for its sober tone and its seriousness. A comment in the *Review*'s 'Critic Watch' column makes the stakes clear by self-consciously framing the journal's approach against the 'cloud' of online commentary:

> The entire field of literary criticism is shifting, and the delineation of the cloud becomes increasingly important for monitoring criticism's career in the broad public sphere. The great challenge at present is for the established domains of disinterested judgement to retain their integrity as transformations take place in format, revenue structure and reading habits. (Etherington 2013)

The *Sydney Review of Books*, in fact, represents a form of the anti-digital within the digital—an act of literary rescue from behind enemy lines. It reminds of Mark Deuze's comment that 'Remediation can be countered by tradition, where tradition can be seen as the perceived safety or sense of security in sameness, similarity, routines, and deeply entrenched patterns of organization' (2006, 69).

Another new set of paratext producers can be found on sites such as Goodreads.com. A striking characteristic of Goodreads reviews for a work such as Helen Garner's *This House of Grief* (2014), chosen here because it is the highest-profile Australian literary non-fiction

work published in recent years, is the extent to which many seek to replicate the form of the traditional book review. At the same time, such reviews aspire to middlebrow rather than highbrow literary culture; they emphasise personal reactions to the book rather than focus on trying to position it within the literary field (Driscoll 2014). As one reviewer put it: 'Fuckyeah this book'. Among the notable features of Goodreads, which it shares with sites such as Amazon.com, is its use of a star-based ranking system mimicking the ranking systems of movies and hotels and a note of the *popular*. Goodreads, as such, functions at one level as a form of post-digital remediation via which a traditional form is taken out of 'expert' hands and put into the hands of the non-expert 'participatory user', who expects to have their opinion heard and to accrue cultural capital for transformation, perhaps, into personal symbolic capital. At the same time, such reviews operate as a form of disintermediation through which the traditional form of book reviewing is bypassed. As Deuze says:

> Digital culture consists of the practices and beliefs of the bricoleur—whose activities should not be confused with boundless freedom and endless creativity … we can also observe how bricolage simultaneously consists of repurposing and refashioning the old while using and making the new. Again, bricolage as an emerging practice can be considered to be a principal component of digital culture, as well as an accelerating agent of it. (Deuze 2006, 71)

Bookblogs play a similar role in the remediation, and at the same time disintermediation, of traditional reviewing forms. For example, Richard Flanagan's novel *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (2014) (*Narrow Road*), which by dint of its Man Booker Prize win is the highest-profile Australian literary fiction work published in recent years, was widely reviewed in international media in publications such as the *London Review of Books* to the *New York Times*, the *Indian*

Express, *The Scotsman*, the *Hong Kong Review of Books* and the *Japan Times*. It also received considerable attention on bookblogs. A notable characteristic of bookblogs is the way they often offer a commentary on, and contrast themselves against, the book's reception in 'official' literary culture, as well as commenting on the work. Valorie Grace Hallinan, in her review of *Narrow Road* in her bookblog *Books Can Change a Life*, captures this ambivalence:

> I don't consider my blog posts to be book reviews or literary criticism. My intention is to write about how a book affects me, personally, or how I think it might affect you, the reader, or why it may be especially significant in some way. (VG Hallinan 2015)

At the same time, such reviews often offer commentary on mainstream reviews or a book's worthiness as a prize-winner. Hallinan, for example, provides direct commentary on the book's reception, taking the *New York Times* reviewer to task for her mixed critique of the book: 'she describes Flanagan's writing about the love affair as "treacly prose," whereas I found many of these passages beautiful. I disagree with her assessment here.' The famously negative review of the book published in the *London Review of Books*, comes in for still harsher treatment:

> Have you ever thoroughly loved a book or movie only to encounter a respected critic who points out how seriously deficient or flawed is the thing you absolutely love? At this link [hyperlink provided in original] is an especially vicious review in the *London Review of Books*. Flanagan must have poured his heart and soul into writing about a terrible time that his father survived, and he spent years working on the novel. This negative review is not reasoned literary criticism that I value or trust, and I wonder what motivates the critic. (VG Hallinan 2015)

Other reviews assess the book's worthiness as a prize-winner:

> Let's get this out of the way—*The Narrow Road to the Deep North* is a BRILLIANT book! It deserves the Man Booker and more! I loved, loved, loved it! It moved me, it angered me and it made me think. (Pooja T 2014)

The emphasis, here and across the three dozen or so bookblog reviews of *Narrow Road* that I was able to discover, is on human affective response rather than the literary:

> I cannot recall the last time a novel left me stunned and nearly breathless, but that was my state when I let the covers close on *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*. (stanprager 2015)

Many such bloggers also use reading as a form of emotional support. Timothy Aubry has argued, 'many readers in the United States today, treat novels less as a source or aesthetic satisfaction than as a practical dispenser of advice of a form of therapy' (2011, 1). For example, *Books Can Change a Life* explicitly uses books as a form of therapy: 'I grew up in a family affected by mental illness. For me, books were a lifeline' (VG Hallinan 2015). Bookblogs, in this way, function as a form of disintermediation in so far as they self-consciously position themselves outside the literary field and offer an alternative commentary aimed at peer readers. Their emphasis on affective responses to texts and identification with their authors positions them as instances of the 'new literary middlebrow', which Beth Driscoll (2014) argues has become a dominant force in literary taste-making. Yet they function, too, as a type of remediation that re-uses the traditional form of the book review by shortening, personalising, and substituting identification with characters, plot and the author's background and experience writing the work, for 'critical distance'.

These same patterns of disintermediation and remediation that test the boundaries of the literary field can be found across the spectrum

of bookish online media. Online book clubs, for example, make public the private, face-to-face, non-consecratory practices of group reading, giving them what tech people call 'scale'. Such practices can be amplified via social media and mass reading events such as the One Book, One Twitter book club (#1b1t), later titled '1book140' (after the number of characters available on Twitter). As Anatoliy Gruzd and DeNel Rehberg Sedo have said:

> The online book discussion group is very different from a group of readers gathering together in one member's living room or in a local library, which is often the case for Western f2f groups. Readers who participate in #1b1t hail from disparate parts of the globe and really never meet in one space at the same time. (2012)

Mass reading events such as 'One City One Book' reading events, according to Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo (2013), have become a form of cultural occasion that combines print-based culture with online media to create enthusiastic reading communities and 'serve various ideological, social, and commercial purposes for a range of agencies' (2013, 6), which reach well beyond aesthetic understandings of literary culture. They have also been described as a form of 'dumbing down' and 'middle-browing'. As Fuller and Rehberg Sedo say: anxieties about mass reading events have something to do with anxieties about the making public of reading and echo a 'much older debate about the polluting effects of commerce on culture, and even an anxiety about "the masses" themselves' (2013, 7). Digital media, in such debates, becomes a site of struggle over who can be designated as legitimate agents in the field, and the terms in which literature should be discussed. Mass reading events, like the televised book clubs (Oprah's Book Club, and, in the UK, Richard and Judy's Book Club), which have helped spark a renewed interest in mass reading, make visible a non-elite reader who reads literary

texts for reasons that have little to do with what Bourdieu would call their artistic 'autonomy'. As Fuller and Rehberg Sedo say of such critics: 'Their role as cultural arbiters of literary taste is not of much account for many nonprofessional readers who have developed their own methods for determining which books to buy, borrow, read and share' (2013, 7).

Other forms of social media play an important role in these developments. As Beth Driscoll has argued, Twitter can also be understood as a field. Outlining how publishers use Twitter, she says:

> Twitter's format makes these ties observable: users can see who follows a publisher, who retweets (forwards) their comments, and who replies to them. Such connections, explicit and traceable, produce a visible expression of community. In this, Twitter is an embodiment of Bourdieu's field theory. (2013, 104)

Driscoll argues that Twitter usage (and no doubt other forms of social media) by attendees at literary festivals and other writerly events (to discuss the awarding of prizes and so on) enables them to transform the symbolic capital associated with the event (her research focuses on literary prize-givings) into social capital. It also, arguably, constructs participants as belonging to an active audience able to exert media power on the literary field, to critique and intervene in processes of discrimination and judgement. The same can be said of other bookish social media forums such as podcasts, Tumblrs, subreddits and video blogs ('Vlogs').

Fanfiction sites such as fanfiction.net, Kindle Worlds and Archive of Our Own, also play a role in literary remediaton. As Aarthi Vadde has said: 'This is a genre in which the erotic bonds created by an artwork are paramount. Broadly speaking, fan fiction rewards fantasy over critique and attachment over detachment as modes of reader engagement' (2017, 34). Yet while fanfiction eschews traditional literary values, its focus is often literary texts. The works of Charles

Dickens, J.D. Salinger, Emily Bronte, William Gibson, and many others, all form a rich seam for fanfiction, with dozens of works derived from each appearing on these sites.

Nick Levey has developed the term 'post-press literature' to describe how self-published writers and their works can enter and at the same time problematise the literary field. He cites Andy Weir's *The Martian* (2011), initially self-published, as an example of writing 'created outside the established circles of book production' that illustrates that the 'publication, dissemination, and securing of symbolic and market capital enable a new analysis of current "struggles" in the literary field as well as a fresh understanding of the value of writing and reading in the twenty-first century' (2016). As he says: 'publishers have been forced to tacitly admit that they no longer necessarily introduce the "next big thing," so much as hunt it down after the fact and rope it in before its success worries them even further' (2016).

These post-digital practices of remediation are exemplary of 'bottom up' media convergence, which involves a mixing of forms by users (Jenkins 2006). But perhaps the most profound forms of convergence, at least where post-digital literary culture is concerned, involve top-down corporate strategies focused on finding 'synergy' across multiple holdings, the multiplication of platforms, and forms of 'technological hybridity', which fold the 'uses of separate media into one another' (Hay and Couldry 2011, 473). Google Books, for example, destabilises literary production processes through its industrial-scale duplication and, in effect, republication of titles in ways that challenge traditional copyright provisions. The long-running case with the American Authors Guild, which the Guild lost, demonstrates its perceived impact on literary culture ('Authors Guild v. Google' n.d.). Apple's iBooks and Amazon's Kindle effect a similar form of remediation and convergence, but whereas Google Books literally copies and renders digital the codex, iBooks and Kindle merely imitate and pay homage to its construction with book-form

pagination, animated page turns, book-style typesetting, folios and so on. Yet these homages also develop the format, through the availability of social reading via highlights, the provision of instantly accessible virtual bookstores (themselves remediated libraries) and so on.

Amazon, of course, leverages its ebook operations off a much bigger operation. There is irony in the fact that one of the big four digital media companies started off as a book retailer precisely because books were considered a non-fungible product, unlike, say, fungible bits and bytes. Amazon's reach into publishing has expanded to the point where Mark McGurl has asked: 'Should Amazon.com now be considered the driving force of American literary history? Is it occasioning a convergence of the state of the art of fiction writing with the state of the art of capitalism?' (McGurl 2016, 447) As McGurl points out, Amazon dominates in the areas of print book retailing, ebook sales, and self-publishing, through its Kindle Direct program. As he reminds us, it is not only readers who have gravitated to genre fiction on ebooks. Noting 'the recent mass migration of otherwise "literary" writers into the space of genre', he says, 'one might go as far as to say that fiction in the Age of Amazon is genre fiction, a highly gendered and age-differentiated genre system complexly structured by the poles of epic and romance and their characteristic modes of wish fulfillment' (2016, 460). He continues:

> In this system the novel per se—the genre described by literary historians as "the rise of the novel" and brought to a highpoint of achievement in the realist tradition of Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Henry James—is not particularly important except as a unit of discourse in the formation of a trilogy or a longer series … In this system success, and even a highly qualified version of originality, is the result of effective variation and permutation within established generic structures. (2016, 460)

Such novels, of course, form part of an interconnected data matrix that links ebook sales, ebook reader behaviour, customer web-browsing habits, and their Amazon purchases, into a web of mediation.

Also in the picture, here, are non-human actors such as the algorithms that drive Amazon's recommendation engines and Facebook feeds, and which are part of an 'algorithmic culture', which Ted Striphas defines as the 'enfolding of human thought, conduct, organization and expression into the logic of big data and large-scale computation, a move that alters how the category *culture* has long been practiced, experienced and understood' (2015, 398). Algorithms, as Striphas says, now make cultural judgements. As he and Blake Hallinan ask in a paper on Netflix's recommendation engine:

> What is the difference, if any, between a human being's determining 'the best which has been thought and said,' to recall Matthew Arnold's … contentious definition of *culture*, and a computer system's selecting movies tailored to an individual's taste preferences? (2016, 118–19)

An Expanded Dynamics of Mediation

These new agents demand to be understood as literary mediators and therefore as agents in an expanded and reworked post-digital literary field. As Jennifer Smith Maguire and Julian Matthews argue (following Bourdieu), cultural intermediaries perform three types of work: First, cultural intermediaries 'construct value, by framing how others—end consumers, as well as other market actors including other cultural intermediaries—engage with goods, affecting and effecting others' orientations towards those goods as legitimate—with 'goods' understood to include material products as well as services, ideas and behaviours' (2012, 552).

Second, cultural intermediaries are 'involved in the framing of goods (products, services, ideas, behaviours) as legitimate and worthy

points of attachment for intended receivers' (2012, 554). Third, the work of cultural intermediaries has 'impact'. That is, 'All cultural intermediaries are implicated in the construction of legitimacy, although the primacy of that intended impact will vary between different cases' (2012, 557).

Most of the new agents mentioned above perform these functions; that is, older forms of gatekeeping and mediation are, to a significant extent, being superseded by new forms of reintermediation. As such they generate their own symbolic and cultural capital and perform cultural work that adds value to texts.

The work of cultural intermediaries, according to Smith Maguire and Matthews, 'is not common to all because of its expert orientation'. As they argue: 'In the struggle to influence others' perceptions and attachments, cultural intermediaries are differentiated by their explicit claims to professional expertise in taste and value within specific cultural fields' (2012, 552). There is no necessary reason, however, why non-professionals cannot do this work. First, literary mediation has never been solely the business of those with professional expertise since the literary field is inhabited by many quasi- and para-experts, whose credentials are not necessarily acknowledged by, and that are often contested by, others within the field. Developments affecting the literary field have further challenged its boundaries such that, as Clayton Childress has argued: 'within the modern literary field, however, this gatekeeping function has transformed into a key site of contestation' (2011, 118). Second, particular literary bloggers, tweeters, and other participants are able to amass considerable cultural, symbolic and social capital through their activities allowing them influence akin to that of acknowledged experts. Third, digital media is able to give scale to individual sentiment such that significant trends towards approval or disapproval of a given text on social media can gain consecratory weight. That digital media privileges amateur labour is, in many

cases, precisely what leads it to be championed as transformative, as seen in discussions about crowdsourcing and networked models of content production (Bruns 2008a, 2008b).

This expanded model of mediation doesn't only overflow existing models of participation; it also tests geographical boundaries. Benedict Anderson's argument (1991) that storytelling through print media provides a basis for practices of imagined national belonging, is tested by social reading practices including online social reading. Social reading via book clubs, reading events, and so on, works to build imagined and real communities through person-to-person exchanges that can involve exclusion as much as inclusion (Rehberg Sedo 2011). Online social reading potentially takes discussion of literature beyond its traditional national frames. Books, prizes and literary events are now subject to transnational literary conversations, often conducted in real time, which test the local specificity of literary production and reception. Nor do participants necessarily have much of an ear for, or commitment to, a work's local contexts. What, then, is the fate of national storytelling and the delineation of national canons that have traditionally been a mainstay of literary framing and consecration?

Looking at how conversations unfold around particular books shows that the transnationalisation of literary participation has contradictory effects. Reviewer locations from a random sample of 100 of the 318 Goodreads reviews of Garner's *This House of Grief*, posted at the time of writing, demonstrate that commentary is for the most part local in origin. Seventy-two per cent of reviews are written by readers within Australia, 15 per cent listed their location as the UK and 4 per cent in the US. Other reviews are from Germany (3 per cent), Canada (2 per cent), and New Zealand, Brazil, India and Vietnam (1 per cent each). By contrast, a random sample of reviewer locations from 100 of the 4735 Goodreads reviews for *Narrow Road*, posted at the time of writing, is heavily international, which is unsurprising

given the international attention the book gained after it was shortlisted for, then won, the Man Booker Prize. Thirty-three per cent of Flanagan's commenters are in the US, 23 per cent in Australia, 13 per cent in the UK, 5 per cent in Canada, 4 per cent in both India and Greece, 2 per cent each in Germany, Spain and Saudi Arabia, and 1 per cent each in New Zealand, Brazil, Portugal, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Russia. Yet the commentary on Flanagan's book is often mediated through local specificities, in particular the location of the book's story in Asia and Australia, and through Flanagan's status as a Tasmanian. The national, here, too, is perhaps remediated, reworked for a global stage. Every author and book in the world of online literary reception has to be from *somewhere*. But somewhere, now, is more often mediated through *elsewhere*.

Post-Digital Literary Mediation and Publicity

While it is tempting to think of these new developments as simply an expansion of the literary field, it also seems clear that the very epistemology of the literary field is deeply contested by such developments. To briefly return to Murray's discussion of the digital literary sphere, my concern, here, is that this organic metaphor proposes a 'big tent', and is too inclusive of practices that cut across and not only expand the literary field, but burst it open. As Murray argues, 'literary discourse and its characteristic dispositions continue to shape the nature and norms of online book talk, rendering it distinct from online discussion of other cultural forms' (Murray 2015, 314). While this is to some extent true, there are now senses in which actors with little commitment to the literary or its dispositions mediate literary texts.

What, then, is a more appropriate metaphor? 'Network' carries connotations of flatness, neutrality, and is tied up in the language of

what Jodi Dean has called 'communicative capitalism' (Dean 2005). A better metaphor might be to think of the literary sphere as a once more-or-less self-contained field where the gates have been broken and the fences are down. This is not to suggest no gatekeeping is attempted or even succeeds. But the real struggle, now, is not over who belongs where in the field, but over the field itself. Ours is a borderless literary culture in which sites such as the *Sydney Review of Books* function not so much as centres of power as outposts in the badlands of the formerly literary. The presiding greeting in this fractured, deterritorialised, post-literary space is not 'how are you one of us?' so much as 'who goes there?'

This destabilisation extends far beyond the literary and is to do with changes in publicity itself, in particular the question of what is private and therefore publicly invisible. Remediation and convergence in almost every case serve to make the private visible and publicly consequential. This is consistent with Zizi Papacharissi's observation that convergent digital media further blurs and redefines already fuzzy lines between public and private and 'among audiences of different media, audiences and publics, citizens and consumers, consumers and producers' (2010, 52), since it facilitates a reconfiguration of social practices that goes beyond technology. Under such circumstances the very conditions of literariness are altered. As Murray says: 'In a manner perhaps discomforting to traditional literary-studies self-conceptions, "literature" to a large extent becomes that which the digital literary sphere *deems to be* literature' (2015, 332–3 original italics).

These new forms of post-digital literary mediation are not without social or political consequence. In the language of 'Web 2.0' they speak to 'democratisation' and 'participation'. Recent critique focused on the political economy of digital media and draws links between its cultures of 'participation' and neoliberalism (Andrejevic 2007; Barbrook and Cameron 1996; Dean 2005; Hassan 2008; Mejias 2013; Mosco 2005; Morozov 2012, 2012). Post-digital literary culture

conclusively moves reading, literary publishing, criticism, bookselling, and so on, into the realm of the quantitative. While it is important to remember that digital literary culture simply remediates the commercial imperatives that have underpinned literary publishing since the emergence of the novel as a popular form, ebooks and other forms of e-reading render practices once held paradigmatically private into commodity form, tracked by page turn, book completion and so on (Davis 2015). Highlighting, 'likes' and so on in ebooks, as Lisa Nakamura (2013) has argued, is a form of unpaid work, consistent with critiques of the wider patterns of exploitation that underpin large corporations' use of unpaid user labour to build their online portals (Banks and Deuze 2009; Terranova 2000). At the very moment that the borders of literary culture are being breached by new digital mediators, literary culture is also being subject to what Mark Andrejevic (2007) has described as new forms of digital 'enclosure'. Literature, a form that in many cases seeks to offer refuge from and critique the logics of the market, is ever more deeply enfolded within those logics.

Works Cited

Andersen, CU, Cox, G & Papadopolous, G 2014, "Post-Digital Research – Editorial", *A Peer-Reviewed Journal About Post- Digital Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, http://www.aprja.net/?page_id=1327

Andersen, CU & Pold, SB 2014, *Post-Digital Books and Disruptive Literary Machines*. Formules.

Anderson, B 1991, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso Books, London and New York.

Andrejevic, M 2007, *ISpy: Surveillance and Power in the Interactive Era*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.

Aubry, T 2011, *Reading as Therapy: What Contemporary Fiction Does for Middle-Class Americans*, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City.

Authors Guild, Inc. v. Google, Inc. (2015) https://www.authorsguild.org/where-we-stand/authors-guild-v-google/

Banks, J & Deuze, M 2009, 'Co-Creative Labour', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 2, no. 5, pp. 419–431.

Barbrook, R & Cameron, A 1996 'The Californian Ideology', *Science as Culture*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 44–72.

Bolter, JD & Grusin, R 1999, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, MIT Press, Cambridge and London.

Bourdieu, P 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R Nice, Routledge Kegan & Paul, Milton Park and New York.

——— 1993, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. R Johnson, Columbia University Press, New York.

Bruns, A 2008a, 'Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage', *Digital Formations*, vol. 45, Peter Lang, New York.

——— 2008b, 'Life Beyond the Public Sphere: Towards a Networked Model for Political Deliberation', *Information Polity*, vol. 13, no. 1–2, pp. 71–85.

Carter, D 2016, 'The Literary Field and Contemporary Trade-Book Publishing in Australia: Literary and Genre Fiction', *Media International Australia*, vol. 158, no. 1, pp. 1–10.

Childress, CC 2011, 'Evolutions in the Literary Field: The Co-Constitutive Forces of Institutions, Cognitions, and Networks', *Historical Social Research/ Historische Sozialforschung*, vol. 36, no. 3 (137), pp: 115–135.

Cox, G 2014, 'Prehistories of the Post-Digital: Or, Some Old Problems with Post-Anything', *A Peer-Reviewed Journal About*, http://www.aprja.net/?p=1314.

Davis, M 2015, 'E-Books in the Global Information Economy', *European Journal of Cultural Studies,* vol. 18, no. 4–5, pp. 514–529.

Dean, J 2005, 'Communicative Capitalism: Circulation and the Foreclosure of Politics', *Cultural Politics*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 51–74.

Deuze, M 2006, 'Participation, Remediation, Bricolage: Considering Principal Components of a Digital Culture', *The Information Society*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 63–75.

Driscoll, B 2013, 'Twitter, Literary Prizes and the Circulation of Capital', in E Stinson (ed), *By the Book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, Victoria, pp. 103–119.

——— 2014, *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

English, JF 2010, 'Everywhere and Nowhere: The Sociology of Literature After the "Sociology of Literature"', *New Literary History*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. v–xxiii.

Etherington, B 2013, 'The Real Deal', *Sydney Review of Books*, November 8, http://sydneyreviewofbooks.com/the-real-deal/.

Frow, J 1982, 'The Literary Frame', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 25–30.

Fuller, D & Rehberg Sedo, DN 2013, *Reading Beyond the Book: The Social Practices of Contemporary Literary Culture*, Routledge, New York and London.

Gitelman, L 2008, *Always Already New: Media, History and the Data of Culture*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

Gruzd, A & Rehberg Sedo, DN 2012, '# 1b1t: Investigating Reading Practices at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century', *Mémoires Du Livre/Studies in Book Culture*, vol. 3, no. 2.

Hallinan, B & Striphas, T 2016, 'Recommended for You: The Netflix Prize and the Production of Algorithmic Culture', *New Media & Society*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 117–137.

Hallinan, VG 2015, 'The Narrow Road to the Deep North', *Books Can Save A Life*, January 28, https://bookscansavealife.com/2015/01/28/ narrow-road-to-the-deep-north/.

Hassan, R 2008, *The Information Society: Cyber Dreams and Digital Nightmares*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hay, J & Couldry, N 2011, 'Rethinking Convergence/Culture: An Introduction', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 25, no. 4–5, pp. 473–486.

Jenkins, H 2006, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York University Press, New York.

——— 2014, 'Rethinking "Rethinking Convergence/Culture"', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 267–297.

Levey, N 2016, 'Post-Press Literature: Self-Published Authors in the Literary Field', *Post45*, February 3, http://post45.research.yale.edu/2016/02/ post-press-literature-self-published-authors-in-the-literary- eld-3/.

Ludovico, A 2013, *Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing Since 1894*, Onomatopee 77, Lecturis, Eindhoven.

McGurl, M 2016, 'Everything and Less Fiction in the Age of Amazon', *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 3, pp. 447–471.

Mejias, U 2013, *Off the Network*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Morozov, E 2012, *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*, Public Affairs, New York.

Mosco, V 2005, *The Digital Sublime: Myth, Power, and Cyberspace*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

Murray, S 2015, 'Charting the Digital Literary Sphere', *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 311–339.

Nakamura, L 2013, '"Words with Friends": Socially Networked Reading on Goodreads', *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, pp. 238–43., doi:10.1632/ pmla.2013.128.1.238.

Nolan, S & Ricketson, M 2013, 'Unintended Consequences: The Impact of Structural Reform in the Newspaper Industry on the Marketing of Books', in E Stinson (ed), *By the Book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, Victoria, pp. 29–39.

Papacharissi, Z 2010, *A Private Sphere: Democracy in a Digital Age*, Polity Press, Cambridge UK and Malden MA.

Peters, B 2009, 'And Lead Us Not Into Thinking the New Is New: A Bibliographic Case for New Media History', *New Media & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1–2, pp. 13–30.

Rehberg Sedo, DN 2011, *Reading Communities from Salons to Cyberspace*, Palgrave Macmillan, London and New York.

Smith Maguire, J and Matthews, J 2012, 'Are We All Cultural Intermediaries Now? An Introduction to Cultural Intermediaries in Context', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 15, no. 5, pp. 551–562.

stanprager 2015, 'Review of: The Narrow Road to the Deep North, by Richard Flanagan', blog post, February 2, *Regarp Book Blog*, https://regarp.com/2015/02/02/ review-of-the-narrow-road-to-the-deep-north-by-richard-flanagan/.

Stevenson, M 2016, 'The Cybercultural Moment and the New Media Field', *New Media & Society*, vol. 18, no. 7, pp. 1088–1102.

Striphas, T 2015, 'Algorithmic Culture', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 18, no. 4–5, pp. 395–412.

Pooja, T 2014, 'Review: The Narrow Road to the Deep North by Richard Flanagan {2014 Man Booker Winner}', *The Whimsy Bookworm*, October 21, http://thewhimsybookworm.blogspot.com.au/2014/10/review-narrow-road-to- deep-north-by.html.

Terranova, T 2000, 'Free Labor: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy', *Social Text*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 33–58.

Thompson, JB 2012, *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century*, Plume, USA.

Vadde, A 2017, 'Amateur Creativity: Contemporary Literature and the Digital Publishing Scene', *New Literary History*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 27–51.

Chapter Eight

Australian Stories

Books and Reading in the Nation

David Carter and Michelle Kelly

Introduction

More than a third of adult Australians have heard of David Malouf, more than half have heard of Tim Winton, and over 80 per cent have heard of Bryce Courtenay. It is difficult to decide whether the fact that a third of Australians have heard of Malouf is remarkably high or disappointingly low—and the recognition might be for a single well-known novel such as *Johnno*—but perhaps it is encouraging that the number for Malouf (34 per cent) is not too far behind that for bestselling thriller author Matthew Reilly (41 per cent). It appears that only about half those who've heard of Malouf have actually read him, but the vast majority who have done so liked his work.

Just over a third of Australians also read books by or about Indigenous Australians for their own interest or pleasure. If this can be seen as an encouraging figure, it's also the case that in a list of twelve different kinds of books the Indigenous category ranked third last, above only sports books and romance fiction. Then again, books by or about Indigenous Australians would be much less visible to ordinary readers than these and many other kinds of books.

These results are derived from the Australian Cultural Fields (ACF) project, an ongoing study of Australians' cultural tastes and participation, and in particular from a large-scale social survey

conducted in 2015.[1] The ACF project can be linked to two earlier studies, the Australian Everyday Cultures Project and its publication *Accounting for Tastes* (Bennett, Frow and Emmison) from 1999 and the UK Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion project, which resulted in *Culture, Class, Distinction* (Bennett et al.) in 2009. All three can trace their origins to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, especially *Distinction*, his major work on class, education and taste.

The earlier Australian and UK studies both surveyed reading habits across books, newspapers and magazines, but our focus, here, is more on the nature and extent of people's engagement in 'book culture' within either the domestic or public sphere. Thus we asked questions about knowledge of selected authors, preferences among a range of fictional and non-fiction genres, ways of obtaining books, print and ebooks owned, and participation in a variety of activities such as reading book reviews, attending literary festivals, and being a member of a reading group. These measures of cultural knowledge, taste and participation are being mapped against a range of social and economic factors such as gender, education, age, place of residence, and occupational class. In this essay we investigate what the data tells us about national practices and tastes for books, and for Australian authors and writing in particular.

---

1 The Australian Cultural Fields project is focused on the fields of literature (books and reading), visual arts, heritage, sport, media (especially television), and music, with 'cross-field' studies of Indigenous and ethnic minority cultures/participation. The ACF survey was administered by the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of Queensland using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) between May and October 2015. The main sample comprised 1202 individuals. Additional to this, individuals were separately recruited from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Indian, Italian, Lebanese and Chinese communities. In this paper, overall totals are calculated with reference to the main sample only, and weighted for age, gender and state of residence, to ensure the sample is as representative of the Australian population as possible. Data relating to individual communities is flagged as such, and is unweighted.

Unpopular Reading?

The chapter on reading in *Culture, Class, Distinction* begins with the startling claim that 'reading books is a relatively unpopular activity' (94). Our own survey shows that regular book reading is very uneven across social classes, an effect reinforced by levels and kinds of education, and by gender, age, and other sociodemographic variables. While the three best-known authors listed (Stephen King, Jane Austen and Bryce Courtenay) were each read by more than half of the Australians surveyed, only a third of the 20 authors named had been read by more than 20 per cent of respondents. Regular participation in book-related activities is also 'relatively unpopular'. While almost 40 per cent of respondents are regular bookstore browsers or book review readers, less than ten per cent attend literary festivals or are members of reading groups or book clubs.

As these points suggest, books and reading have a double aspect: on one hand, everyday, accessible and utterly familiar (our data indicates over 80 per cent of Australians have more than 50 books in the home); on the other, endowed with a range of meanings relating to value, virtue and prestige, and very unevenly distributed across different sectors of society. The ACF analyses indicate that a significant number of Australians have very little interest in books and book culture.[2] Nevertheless, 95 per cent of respondents indicated they had read at least one of the twelve types of books surveyed.[3] The depth of people's engagement with books may be variable, but books have traction across the population.

As indicated, in this essay we examine the ACF survey results with a particular interest in what they tell us about engagement with Australian books and authors in the context of the broader literary field. The ACF survey was not designed to be a study of Australian literature

2 These findings are explored in a forthcoming paper by David Carter, Modesto Gayo and Michelle Kelly

3 4% of the sample indicated that they read none of the twelve book types surveyed.

per se, so using it to gauge levels of interest in Australian books and authors is not without its limitations. We are not able to report on whether people feel that Australian books are important to them, for example, as we did not gather attitudinal data.[4] But these limitations also engender certain advantages. Respondents were asked whether they had heard of and read a range of Australian and non-Australian authors, which generates comparative data without belabouring the question of nationality. Moreover, at a time when some of the most successful Australian writing is mainstream commercial and/or genre fiction (Liane Moriarty, for example, or the rural romance genre), our data allows us to speak to Australian content beyond a narrow configuration of Australian literature. We asked respondents directly about the number of Australian books they had read in the past year, and we will draw on this data below, but questions of cultural identity and national provenance also emerged in more complicated ways in the responses to questions about preferences for different kinds of books.

Recognition and Reading Preferences: The National Picture

The proportion of the population that read one to three Australian books in the year preceding the survey (35.3 per cent) is on a par with the proportion of the population that read no Australian books (34.8 per cent). The remaining third read more than three, at rates of varying intensity.[5] The finding that two thirds of people encounter at least one Australian book annually does not point towards a population entirely disengaged from the local book sector, even if the contact might, more often than not, be incidental rather than committed.

---

4 Non-statistical data relating to Australian books and reading will emerge from the qualitative component of the Australian Cultural Fields project: a series of in-depth interviews with respondents examining their cultural activities and preferences.

5 14% read four to six Australian books over the last year, 7% read seven to ten, 4% read 11 to 20, 2% read 21 to 30 and 3% read more than 30.

The survey asked respondents about a list of mostly fiction authors, ten from Australia and ten from elsewhere: whether the respondents had heard of the named author, and, if they had, whether they had read and liked that author (see table 8.1). Predictably enough, the best-known and most widely read author was Stephen King—almost 90 per cent of respondents had heard of him and 55 per cent had read him—although he was not the most liked. That honour goes to Bryce Courtenay, followed closely by Jane Austen. Among Australian authors, Courtenay was the best-known, most widely read, and the most liked. Second on all counts was Tim Winton, followed by Matthew Reilly.[6] Other Australian authors appear consistently in the mid-range—David Malouf, Kate Grenville and Sally Morgan—while Kim Scott, Belinda Alexandra and Elizabeth Harrower were much less-known and read. Alexandra's low ranking suggests that success in a specific genre market is not necessarily a means to being widely known, at least for an Australian author; Sara Douglass also ranked down the list, just below Morgan.

As table 8.1 indicates, the best-known authors across the whole list were King, Austen, Courtenay, and Virginia Woolf, then a gap to Winton and Reilly. Woolf might be the only surprise in that list, but she has been a point of reference in women's writing and her name circulates widely via educational settings and other media (such as the film *The Hours* starring our own Nicole Kidman). Least familiar were Scott, Dave Eggers, Harrower, and Don DeLillo. In terms of authors *read*, the order changes only in minor ways, and again for read and *liked*. With all these rankings we can note the significant

6 The sequence of Courtenay, Winton and Reilly matches the results of an Australia Council survey in which respondents were asked to name 'at least one Australian author whose books they enjoy or would like to read in 2012': 42% of respondents were able to name an author, with Courtney (9%) the top response, then Winton (5%) and Reilly (4%). They were followed by Colleen McCullough (2%), John Marsden (2%) and Di Morrissey (2%) (Australia Council 2013).

Table 8.1: Author recognition, reading, likes[7]

Author*	Heard of % (rank 1–20)		Read % (rank 1–12)		Read & liked % (rank 1–12)		Likes as % of read (rank 1–20)	
Stephen King	89.5	(1)	55.2	(1)	40.0	(3)	72.6	(20)
Jane Austen	86.6	(2)	51.9	(3)	43.6	(2)	84.1	(11)
Bryce Courtenay	82.3	(3)	53.8	(2)	46.1	(1)	85.7	(10)
Virginia Woolf	77.8	(4)	27.5	(5)	20.1	(5)	73.0	(19)
Tim Winton	54.6	(5)	33.4	(4)	28.1	(4)	84.0	(12)
Matthew Reilly	41.1	(6)	20.5	(6)	18.1	(6)	88.6	(9)
Jodi Picoult	34.4	(7)	20.2	(7)	16.3	(7)	80.1	(17)
David Malouf	34.1	(8)	15.0	(8)	12.5	(8)	83.2	(14)
Ian Rankin	29.8	(9)	13.8	(9)	11.5	(10)	83.6	(13)
Margaret Atwood	29.8	(10)	12.8	(11)	11.4	(11)	88.9	(8)
Kate Grenville	27.5	(11)	11.2	(12)	10.2	(12)	91.0	(5)
Sally Morgan	22.6	(12)	12.9	(10)	12.1	(9)	94.1	(2)
Amy Tan	17.9	(13)	9.8		9.1		93.2	(3)
Sara Douglass	17.4	(14)	6.3		5.6		89.3	(7)
Haruki Murakami	9.1	(15)	4.1		3.8		91.8	(4)
Kim Scott	8.7	(16)	3.1		3.0		97.3	(1)
Dave Eggers	8.5	(17)	3.4		2.8		82.9	(15)
Belinda Alexandra	8.1	(18)	3.5		3.2		90.5	(6)
Elizabeth Harrower	7.7	(19)	2.3		1.9		82.1	(16)
Don DeLillo	7.2	(20)	2.2		1.7		76.9	(18)

*ranked according to percentage of total 'heard of' responses

7 Six respondents in the main sample (0.5%) did not respond to questions relating to named authors, number of Australian books read, number of books in the home and ebooks owned, and questions about book related activities. One respondent did not answer questions about kinds of books read. In general, we have disregarded these respondents when making overall observations and calculations..

differences in scores between the top three or four named authors and the rest, and also between those in the middle range and those near the bottom.[8] Although some of the names nearer the bottom are well-known in genre circles or the literary press, they appear from this data as cult or niche tastes.

The figures for likes do change radically when we limit the sample to those who have read a particular author, thus asking, in effect, how many of those who've read an author enjoyed or valued the experience (table 8.1, far right column). The high scores here reflect the self-selecting nature of much reading—we choose to read what we expect to enjoy. Nonetheless the results are intriguing; on this scale the most liked among all those named are the Indigenous authors Scott and Morgan, followed by Amy Tan—three authors for whom heritage and personal identity feature strongly as themes. These authors are followed by less-recognised figures, Haruki Murakami and Grenville, and genre authors Alexandra and Douglass. By contrast, some of the best-known authors are among the least liked: King, Woolf, and Picoult.

From the point of view of knowledge of and engagement with Australian authors, perhaps the most interesting aspect of these results is the *absence* of a distinctive profile. Australian authors are distributed right across the scale, taking their place among the international authors with high, middle and low levels of visibility and readership. Although we note a slight preference for liking Australian writers when they *are* read—seven of the top ten names on this scale are Australian—table 8.1 suggests that genre and market presence are more significant than national provenance. Australian authors in quite different sectors of the fiction marketplace appear to be holding

8 Table 8.1 shows that less than five per cent of the main sample had read Murakami, Scott, Eggers, Alexandra, Harrower and DeLillo. Consequently readers are asked to remember that further subdivisions relating to these writers may be underpinned by small sample sizes, and hence results can be less meaningful in statistical terms.

their own in this very competitive field—at least those with more or less established reputations.

The survey also invited respondents to indicate the *kinds of books* they read for their own interest or pleasure from a list of twelve fiction and non-fiction 'genres' (see table 8.2). The top four genres were Thriller/Adventure, Crime/Mystery, Biographies of historical figures, and Australian history—an interesting mix of popular fiction and non-fiction forms. Least read were Books by or about Indigenous Australians, Books about sport or sporting personalities, and, last of all, Romance. The genres we might take to be more literary in appeal—although we deliberately left that interpretation to respondents—fell in the mid-range: Modern novels, Literary classics, and Contemporary Australian novels just below. There is consistency between these results and some of the headline findings of the 2001 Books Alive data about Australians' reading preferences (A.C. Neilsen 70–71): the popularity of Crime/Mystery (preferred by 51 per cent of the population, the highest result) and of Biographies, and History (first and second for non-fiction with 48 per cent and 28 per cent respectively).[9]

Only three of the named genres carry an explicit Australian reference, although we might imagine an Australian 'bias' in some others (Books about sport, perhaps, or Biographies). Australian history ranks highly, while Books by or about Indigenous Australians rank towards the bottom; but, as noted above, the figure for the latter is surprisingly high in some ways given that such books would be much

9 There is a reasonable level of consistency but notable divergences also with the results in Throsby, Zwar and Morgan (2017, 12): among a list of 10 fiction and 10 non-fiction 'most frequently nominated genres for reading for enjoyment', 'Crime/Mystery/thriller' came first for fiction (48.5%), 'Contemporary/general fiction' third (33.4%), 'Sci-fi/Fantasy (32.2%), 'Classics' (31.3%), 'Romance' (17.3%), 'Literary' (15.3%). 'Autobiography/biography/memoir' came first for non-fiction and second overall at 45.0%, with 'History-general' eighth overall at 28.2%.

Table 8.2: Kinds of books read for interest/pleasure (percentage of total)

Genre*	Total %
Thriller/Adventure	58.6
Crime/Mystery	57.2
Biographies of historical figures	56.2
Australian history	55.8
Modern novels	46.5
Literary classics	45.4
Sci-fi/Fantasy	42.0
Self-help/Lifestyle	40.0
Contemporary Australian novels	40.0
Books by or about Indigenous Australians	34.2
Books about sport or sporting personalities	27.7
Romance	24.6

*ranked according to % of total respondents recording a positive response

less visible than almost all the others named (the partial exceptions would be books such as Morgan's *My Place*, which is widely used in educational settings, and those of a prize-winning author such as Scott).[10] The high ranking of Australian history might be explained in part by the fact the term covers a range of popular and scholarly forms. Contemporary Australian novels ranks only ninth, somewhat lower than the comparable Modern novels, but still with 40 per cent of respondents indicating a positive response. In the analyses below we examine in more detail the degree to which a liking for these categories of books, and other books and reading indicators, are shared or divided among different groups of readers.

10 It should be noted that *My Place* 'has drawn some criticism, from white and Aboriginal voices, raising questions of authenticity and the construction of Aboriginality' (AustLit). See for example the debate surrounding Atwood (1992) in *Australian Historical Studies* 100 (1993).

Gender

As the earlier Australian and UK studies discovered, the field of books and reading is strikingly uneven in terms of gender.[11] Women are more involved in book culture, scoring more highly than men on every measure we investigated, not least as *regular* participants. Women had higher rates of bookstore browsing, participating in a book club or reading group, attending literary festivals or local book-related events, reading book reviews, participating in online or social media discussion of books, and following TV or radio book shows; men had a higher rate of *no* participation in all these activities.[12]

Further, women have a greater positive engagement with a wider range of books. More than 50 per cent of women respondents answered positively for six of the genres surveyed, while for men only three genres registered above the 50 per cent mark (although with Crime/Mystery at 49.9 per cent). Turning this around, women had only three genres below 40 per cent, while male respondents had seven. Women scored more highly than men for *every genre* with the exception of two that were valued equally and two where men registered stronger liking. The closely-related non-fiction genres of Biographies and Australian history were strongly liked by both genders, registering near-identical scores, while men had higher positive responses for Sci-fi/Fantasy and Books about sport (table 8.3). As indicated, Books about sport was the second-lowest category overall, suggesting perhaps how far this sector of the book market depends upon gift-buying. The *lowest* percentage of all was recorded for Romance, and together these two genres were the most polarising

11 See also Atkinson (2016), Wright (2006), and Throsby, Zwar and Morgan (2017, 7).

12 Men score slightly higher for *occasional* bookstore browsing, but the difference is marginal (43.3% v. 42.4%). Ebooks are the one area where men consistently outpaced women. Although again margins are minimal, men are more likely to purchase and download free ebooks, and own a greater number of ebooks, than women.

Table 8.3: Kinds of books read for interest/pleasure (percentage of male respondents and female respondents)

Genre*	Men %	(rank)	Women %	(rank)	Difference
Thriller/Adventure	56.3	(1)	60.9	(2)	4.6
Crime/Mystery	49.9	(4)	64.3	(1)	14.4
Biographies of historical figures	56.0	(2)	56.5	(4)	0.5
Australian history	55.8	(3)	55.8	(5)	0.0
Modern novels	36.1	(8)	56.6	(3)	20.5
Literary classics	38.1	(7)	52.5	(6)	14.4
Sci-fi/Fantasy	45.7	(5)	38.4	(10)	-7.3
Self-help/Lifestyle	32.6	(9)	47.3	(8)	14.7
Contemporary Australian novels	31.0	(10)	48.8	(7)	17.8
Books by or about Indigenous Australians	30.7	(11)	37.6	(11)	6.9
Books about sport or sporting personalities	39.2	(6)	16.6	(12)	-22.6
Romance	6.9	(12)	41.9	(9)	35.0

*ranked according to % of *total* respondents recording a positive response

in gender terms, with women leading Romance by a margin of 35 points, and men ahead by 23 points for Sport books. The low ranking of Romance, together with the fact that it is the domain where women's reading outranks men's to the greatest degree, suggests that the long-standing denigration of romance *as* a feminine sphere remains firmly in place. No other form of popular genre fiction shows the same pattern. The variation for Sci-fi/Fantasy, by comparison, is much smaller.

At the same time the numbers force us to resist crude gender typologies, for neither the Sport or Romance genres rank highly for *either* gender: books about sport rank only sixth in men's preferences, while Romance ranks ninth for women. In other words, for both groups (but especially for women) books other than romance and sporting stories are read much more widely for pleasure or interest. As *Accounting for Tastes* puts it, 'if women's association with romance

fiction—the most frequently disparaged and despised of genres within conventional literary hierarchies—is a strong one, so also is their association with the most valued genres in those hierarchies' (Bennett, Frow and Emmison, 147). Similarly in the ACF data, women have a greater affiliation with the survey items which specify a literary format, if not its content or genre (Modern novels, Literary classics, and Contemporary Australian novels). These make up half of the six book types for which women led men with a margin greater than ten percentage points.

Women also signalled a higher rate of engagement when asked to specify how many Australian books they had read in the year preceding the survey. Men were more likely than women to have read no books by Australian authors (42 per cent v. 28 per cent), and while levels of reading one to three Australian books were equivalent at 35 per cent, women generally led in the higher levels of reading: 30 per cent of women compared to 19 per cent of men indicated they read four to twenty Australian books the previous year. While this does suggest that women read Australian books more frequently than men, it is difficult to judge whether women's taste for Australian books and writing is distinct from their deeper engagement with books and reading generally.

Women read Books by or about Indigenous Australians at somewhat elevated rates compared to men (38 per cent to 31 per cent), but this degree of difference is more pronounced for many other genres—from Romance to Literary classics to Self-help/Lifestyle. It is however in keeping with data from other sections of the survey which indicates that women register stronger preferences than men for Aboriginal art and Aboriginal heritage to a comparable degree.[13]

13 28% of women indicated Aboriginal art was one of the types of art they liked most compared to 24% of men. For Aboriginal heritage, the equivalent figures were 20% for women and 16% for men. These margins suggest the effect is slightly more pronounced for books.

Australian history is a more popular type of book for men: while men and women read the category at equivalent rates, it ranks third for men compared to fifth for women; but this is not exceptional in light of patterns of non-fiction in men's reading generally.[14] In sum, while the gendering of book/reading culture is striking, national provenance or Australian content do not appear in themselves to have a major impact on these results, instead reflecting wider gender trends for books and reading. In particular, women's higher levels of positive responses in some nationally inflected categories are in line with their overall predominance in the field of tastes and participation in book culture.

Women also registered higher levels of recognition for every one of the 20 authors listed (see table 8.4). While the biggest differences appeared for authors who might be considered writing specifically for women or who've become identified with women's writing—Picoult, Atwood, Tan and Woolf—they are followed by very different cases: Reilly and Rankin. For eleven of the authors named, the difference is above ten percentage points.

In terms of having *read* the named writers, women again lead the pack and are more likely to have read all twenty except for one: DeLillo, who has the smallest difference in numbers with less than 1 per cent, and the smallest number of readers overall. The biggest differences are for Austen, Picoult, Courtenay, Woolf, Winton, Atwood, Grenville and Tan, an inclusive mix of male and female, literary and popular, Australian and non-Australian authors. If we limit the sample to those who have *heard of* an author (rather than of all respondents), the order of differences changes slightly and men

14 Australian history mirrors the result of another non-fiction category, Biographies of historical figures, which rises from fourth in women's rankings to second among men; sport books climb in the men's table even more dramatically. Self-help/Lifestyle predictably bucks this trend, though not dramatically, rising one position for women to men's ranking.

Table 8.4: Gender differentiation for recognition and reading

Author*	Heard of %			Read as % of total respondents			Read as % of 'heard of'		
	M.	W.	Diff.	M.	W.	Diff.	M.	W.	Diff.
King	87.1	92.0	4.9	52.8	57.5	4.7	60.6	62.5	1.9
Austen	80.2	92.8	12.6	33.1	70.0	36.9	41.3	75.5	34.2
Courtenay	76.7	87.7	11.0	41.9	65.1	23.2	54.6	74.3	19.7
Woolf	70.5	84.9	14.4	18.2	36.6	18.4	25.9	43.1	17.2
Winton	48.6	60.4	11.8	25.9	40.7	14.8	53.3	67.4	14.1
Reilly	34.2	47.8	13.6	19.3	21.7	2.4	56.5	45.2	-11.3
Picoult	17.9	50.3	32.4	6.6	33.6	27.0	37.2	66.6	29.4
Malouf	29.3	38.7	9.4	12.4	17.4	5.0	42.7	44.9	2.2
Rankin	23.3	36.1	12.8	10.4	17.1	6.7	44.8	47.3	2.5
Atwood	21.0	38.3	17.3	6.5	18.9	12.4	30.9	49.2	18.3
Grenville	22.1	32.7	10.6	6.0	16.3	10.3	26.9	49.7	22.8
Morgan	16.2	28.9	12.7	8.5	17.2	8.7	52.1	60.3	8.2
Tan	10.4	25.1	14.7	4.6	14.8	10.2	44.2	58.8	14.6
Douglass	15.7	19.0	3.3	5.5	7.2	1.7	34.8	37.9	3.1
Murakami	7.3	10.8	3.5	3.6	4.6	1.0	48.9	42.4	-6.5
Scott	7.5	9.9	2.4	2.0	4.1	2.1	27.3	41.7	14.4
Eggers	6.0	11.0	5.0	2.0	4.6	2.6	34.3	42.4	8.1
Alexandra	3.9	12.2	8.3	1.0	5.9	4.9	27.2	48.0	20.8
Harrower	6.6	8.9	2.3	2.4	2.5	0.1	35.9	27.8	-8.1
DeLillo	7.0	7.5	0.5	2.4	2.0	-0.4	34.1	26.0	-8.1

M. = men; W. = women; Diff. = difference.

*ranked according to percentage of total 'heard of' responses

jump ahead for Reilly by eleven percentage points and, on small numbers, for Murakami, DeLillo and Harrower.[15] Still, the figures

15 A certain inscrutability attaches to Harrower results across many variables, which we take to be primarily an artefact of the small number of respondents who knew or had read her. Here the somewhat anomalous result may be related to the fact fewer men than women have heard of her, which inflates the relative proportion of men who have read her.

indicate that many women read not only 'women's writing' more avidly than their male counterparts, but almost every other kind of fiction as well. Indeed, the higher level of reading demonstrated by women across the surveyed authors might lend itself to an argument that 'women's writing' is something of a misnomer, and the exceptionalism such a phrase connotes would be more aptly applied in respect of genres associated with a male readership.

Major differences emerge again in the answers to the question of having *read and liked* particular authors (table 8.5). Overall, women readers have a much greater range of (stronger) likes than men, with six authors appealing to over a quarter of women, compared to only two for men. The most liked author for women was Austen: 63 per cent of all women had read and liked her books compared to 24 per cent of men; and of the men who had heard of Austen, 59 per cent had *not* read her compared to only 25 per cent of women. These figures again represent the biggest differences in tastes and engagement for any author. The second-biggest difference was recorded for Picoult, with only 4 per cent of men having read and liked her. Courtenay came in second as most-read and liked author for both women and men, with a smaller but still significant gap (19 percentage points). Across all male respondents, King was the author with the highest percentage of likes at 43 per cent, just above the female score of 38 per cent. With fellow American DeLillo, King was the only author where the percentage of male 'likes' exceeded that of women.

The gendering of the field of books and reading might also be suggested by the fact that eight of the top ten positions in table 8.5 are occupied by female authors; and this gender effect, where readers appreciate writing by authors of the same sex (Flood 2014), is even more pronounced when liking is expressed as a proportion of those who have *read* the particular author rather than as a proportion of all respondents. On this measure, Alexandra, Picoult, Morgan, Douglass, Austen, Harrower (and Murakami) rise by four or more

Table 8.5: Gender differentiation for having read and liked

Author*	Liked as % of total respondents				
	Men	(rank)	Women	(rank)	Difference
Austen	23.7	(3)	62.8	(1)	39.1
Picoult	4.4	(12)	27.9	(5)	23.5
Courtenay	36.3	(2)	55.4	(2)	19.1
Woolf	12.9	(6)	27.1	(6)	14.2
Winton	22.1	(4)	33.8	(4)	11.7
Atwood	5.8	(10)	16.7	(8)	10.9
Tan	4.4	(13)	13.6	(12)	9.2
Grenville	5.6	(11)	14.6	(10)	9.0
Morgan	7.8	(9)	16.2	(9)	8.4
Alexandra	0.9	(20)	5.4	(15)	4.5
Malouf	10.4	(7)	14.4	(11)	4.0
Rankin	9.7	(8)	13.3	(13)	3.6
Douglass	4.4	(14)	6.7	(14)	2.3
Reilly	17.2	(5)	19.1	(7)	1.9
Scott	2.0	(17)	3.9	(17)	1.9
Eggers	1.9	(18)	3.6	(18)	1.7
Murakami	3.2	(15)	4.3	(16)	1.1
Harrower	1.9	(19)	2.1	(19)	0.2
DeLillo	2.4	(16)	1.0	(20)	-1.4
King	42.6	(1)	37.6	(3)	-5.0

*ranked according to *difference* in percentage points (liked as % of total)

positions for female readers, while DeLillo, Rankin and Eggers fall by four or more places. Albeit based on small numbers in real terms, it is impossible not to notice the cache of Australian women writers who climb through the rankings in the estimation (or enjoyment) of Australian women readers.

Class/Occupational Status

The survey collected information that enables results to be distributed according to various class schema. For purposes of analysis, here, we adopt the most detailed breakdown in terms of eight occupational classes: large owners/high management, high professionals, lower management/professionals, intermediate occupations (clerical, sales and service occupations that do not involve planning or supervisory responsibilities), small employers/on own account, low supervisory/technical, semi-routine, and routine occupations.[16] The data reveals clear distinctions in cultural tastes and participation, strongest for levels of recognition and liking for named authors and for participation in book-related activities more broadly. To borrow the term from American sociologist Wendy Griswold, if there is a 'reading class' in Australia, 'restricted in size but disproportionate in influence' (Griswold, McDonnell and Wright, 127), it is very much concentrated in the band of three occupational classes extending from high professional through lower management/professional to intermediate occupations.

Over a third of most class groups read between one to three books by an Australian author annually. Only two groups fall below this figure, and they do not fall short by much—large owners/high management with 27 per cent and routine occupations with 30 per cent—suggesting that reading one to three Australian books annually constitutes something of a baseline. Large owners/high

16 The eight-part breakdown enables the most detailed analyses and is important in enabling the top two categories, for example, to be distinguished, but it has the disadvantage of producing very small numbers in certain cases so that statistical differences become insignificant and/or potentially misleading. It should also be noted that two per cent of the main sample had no class position assigned, and a further 1.8 per cent had never worked. Since writing this paper, five respondents who were previously unassigned were classified in occupational terms. These changes are not reflected in this analysis, but the new classifications do not appear to affect any result by more than half a percentage point.

management join high professionals and lower management/professionals as the class groups where a further third read four or more Australian books a year. By contrast, nearly half of routine occupation workers indicated they read no Australian books in the previous year, alongside 45 per cent of semi-routine and 43 per cent of low supervisory/technical workers.

For most occupational groups the same four genres—Thriller/Adventure, Crime/Mystery, Biographies, and Australian history—appear at the top of the rankings. But some genres do change places in noteworthy ways: Literary classics rank highly in the professional-intermediate range but low among all other groups.[17] Sci-fi/Fantasy does something like the reverse, ranked in the bottom half for those in the professional-intermediate range but in the top half elsewhere, its highest ranking (fourth) coming among those in routine occupations. Romance is near the bottom for every group, although its highest ranking (tenth) is registered among those in intermediate occupations.

More revealing are the relative percentages attached to these genres in terms of reading for interest or pleasure (table 8.6). High professionals, for example, are above the average for every genre except Romance, where they're the lowest; lower management/professionals register above average for all but Sci-fi/Fantasy and Sport (where they're the lowest); intermediate occupations are above average for all except books by/about Indigenous Australians and Australian history (although the figures are still substantial). The clustering of tastes and preferences in this professional-intermediate band can be seen clearly in the concentration of shaded (above average) areas in table 8.6.[18] By comparison, moving across to the

17 'Professional-intermediate' refers here and subsequently to the three occupational groups high professional, lower management/professional, and intermediate taken together.

18 *Below* average for None also shaded.

Table 8.6: Kinds of books read for interest/pleasure (percentage of occupational class group)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Avg.
Thriller/ Adventure	56.9	65.0	60.9	64.9	51.1	56.2	57.2	54.5	58.7
Crime/ Mystery	50.0	62.5	62.6	66.7	43.0	59.6	51.9	51.7	57.2
Biographies	57.7	67.8	60.7	60.5	51.5	57.8	48.4	41.6	56.2
Aust. history	56.9	60.1	59.9	48.7	58.5	60.7	48.1	55.1	55.9
Modern novels	45.1	57.3	51.3	50.0	41.5	36.7	42.1	28.1	46.5
Literary classics	32.7	58.0	54.3	50.9	34.1	33.7	38.8	21.6	45.4
Sci-fi/Fantasy	46.2	48.3	37.4	45.6	30.4	38.9	47.5	46.1	42.0
Self-help/ Lifestyle	37.3	41.3	44.7	42.1	35.6	28.9	43.8	32.6	40.0
Contemporary Aust. novels	39.2	48.3	46.0	40.4	44.9	28.9	28.7	27.0	39.9
Indigenous	29.4	35.0	37.7	33.3	37.5	34.8	30.8	27.0	34.1
Sport	29.4	32.9	23.8	28.1	35.3	38.2	24.4	28.1	27.7
Romance	19.2	15.4	26.2	38.6	22.8	27.8	23.9	20.2	24.7
None	7.7	1.4	2.9	0.9	5.9	4.5	5.6	10.2	4.3

1 = large owners/high management; 2 = high professional;
3 = lower management/professional; 4 = intermediate occupation;
5 = small employer/own account; 6 = low supervisory/technical;
7 = semi-routine; 8 = routine.

*Avg. (average) = overall result for each genre across the main sample.
Shaded = above average (reversed for 'None', ie shaded = below average).

next band of occupational categories sees a sudden shift of weight, with small employers *below* average in eight of the twelve categories, low supervisory/technical in six, and semi-routine and routine occupations in ten. The latter two groups are above average only for Sci-fi/Fantasy (both groups), Self-help/Lifestyle (semi-routine) and Sport (routine).

No less revealing, however, are the scores for the large owners/high management group, for its profile matches closely those at the other end of the scale. It too is below average for eight of the twelve genres, and above only for Sci-fi/Fantasy, Sport, Australian history, and Biographies.[19] The professional-intermediate band thus stands apart from large owners/high management on one side and the small employer-routine occupation groups on the other. Modern novels and Literary classics register above average scores only in this tripartite professional-intermediate band, as do Contemporary Australian novels with the addition of the small employers/self-employed group. The *highest* percentage scores for these 'literary' genres all fall within the high professional category, while those for the popular genre fiction categories all appear within the professional-intermediate range: Thriller/Adventure and Sci-fi/Fantasy (high professionals), Crime/Mystery (the three class categories of the high professional-intermediate band have the top three scores), and even Romance (intermediate). Indeed *all* the highest scores come within this band except those for Sport and Australian history, although the professional groups score highly for these, too, in second or third position.

Literary classics shows the largest gap in reading preferences with a margin of 36 points between high professionals and routine workers,

19 Although not factored into other comparisons we make between occupational groups in this paper, the results for the 'Never worked' group are worth briefly noting, as this group in fact has the highest scores for Sci-fi/Fantasy *and* Literary classics and is above average for Romance *and* Modern novels *and* for reading none of the listed genres. The category no doubt crosses class and educational boundaries; however the numbers are small, less than 25 respondents.

followed by Modern novels with a gap of 29 points between the same two cohorts. Australian history and Books by and about Indigenous Australians are the *least* differentiated by class on this measure, with the smallest range between highest and lowest levels of engagement.[20] While Australian history is a popular category, almost always in the top four for each class grouping, it is notable that it is the *most* read book type for three of the four class cohorts in the small employer-routine band.

Contemporary Australian novels sit in the mid-range. The margin of 21 points between high professionals and routine workers is sixth highest, and well below those just indicated. That said, lower supervisory/technical-routine workers have among the lowest reading rates for Contemporary Australian novels of any of the groups considered in this analysis; that is, across the cohorts defined by gender, class, education, age or ethnicity. Further, while routine workers' rate of reading Contemporary Australian novels is close to the group's reading of Modern novels, the latter category scores much more highly for lower supervisory/technical and semi-routine workers. In other words, while class does not seem to strongly influence levels of engagement with Australian history and Indigenous books, the Australian provenance of contemporary novels seems (at the very least) not to be a positive attraction at this end of the occupational class scale. Finally, we note the reading pattern of the small employers/on own account group, which seems particularly nationally inflected. As well as Sport, this group reads *only* Contemporary Australian novels, Australian history and Books by or about Indigenous Australians at above-average rates; for the latter reading category it has the second-highest rating of any class cohort.

---

20 There was a margin of 11 points for Books by and about Indigenous Australians (with lower management/professionals the highest at 38% and routine the lowest at 27%). The margin for Australian history was 13 points, between lower supervisory/technical workers at 61% and semi-routine workers at 48%.

The clear break between the professional-intermediate band and all other occupational groups is reproduced for recognition of authors (results not represented here in tabular form). High professionals are above average for fourteen of the twenty authors; lower management/professionals do even better, above average for all but one (Alexandra); and those in intermediate occupations score above average for twelve writers (as do large owners/high management). But then with small employers the number drops dramatically to only three of the twenty. Between lower management/professionals and the low supervisory/technical categories, groups we might otherwise imagine as overlapping in social and cultural profiles, there is an average difference of 17 percentage points in terms of recognition for the top dozen authors listed. The smallest differences are for popular genre writers King and Reilly; the biggest, all above twenty points, are for Austen, Winton, Picoult, and Morgan, with Malouf close behind. This suggests that cultural capital matters to the former group in ways it does not to the latter.

The strongest 'likes' are also clustered in the professional-intermediate band, with a few exceptions: Reilly and Winton score highest in the large owners/high management group, although the professional-intermediate groups are also above average before the numbers fall away.[21] King scores highest in the low supervisory/technical category; indeed in his case the three *lower* bands are all above average. In contrast, Douglass's appeal is spread across the mid-range, with very close results from the lower management/professionals group through to those in semi-routine occupations. While we did not identify any strong class patterns relating to nationality, we can note that for all the named Australian authors in the top dozen most-liked authors, the three or four highest scores are clustered at the 'top' end of the occupational class categories (from large owners/high management to intermediate). We might also

21 Likes as a percentage of total respondents in each occupational class category.

note that while Courtenay is the most liked author for three of the eight occupational class categories (lower managerial/professionals, intermediate, and small employer/own account), King led for lower supervisory, semi-routine and routine workers.[22] The gap between first and second most popular author for each cohort was in most cases slight, but it opened out to ten points or more for King's lead in each of the lower groups.[23] Combined with these groups' lower reading rates for contemporary Australian novels, this does perhaps suggest that these class groups are relatively disengaged from Contemporary Australian fiction, popular as well as literary.

Other Variables: Education, Age, Ethnicity

Reading the survey results against respondents' level of education (from some secondary or less, through secondary completed, vocational training, some tertiary, and tertiary completed, to postgraduate qualifications) produces a parallel image of a culturally divided field. The key line of division on almost all measures is between the secondary/vocational and tertiary groups, although there are further variations within those groupings. Postgraduate respondents recorded the highest rate of reading for half of the book types surveyed, while those with completed undergraduate or graduate qualifications registered levels of engagement at higher than average rates with ten of the twelve surveyed genres. A completed tertiary or postgraduate qualification is also associated with high levels of recognition across the range of authors, with these two groups showing the highest recognition levels for over three quarters of the authors listed and above average levels of recognition for all bar one (Harrower, where the result for the tertiary completed group sat just below the

22 An Australian literary author (Winton) was most liked for large owners/high management, and Austen led for high professionals.

23 Courtenay also had a significant lead on second ranked Austen in the small employer/own account group (49% v. 36%).

average). And those with tertiary qualifications are more likely than those without to have read books by Australian authors, to have more than 200 books in the home, to own ten or more ebooks, and to participate regularly in book-related activities. Occasional bookstore browsing is, by and large, undifferentiated by level of education. However, regular bookstore browsing rises with education level, while people with secondary/vocational training have higher rates of 'never' browsing in bookstores. Postgraduate and tertiary education (partial or completed) is generally associated with higher rates of attending events at local book stores and literary festivals, participating in book clubs or reading groups, following book/author discussions online and reading book reviews.[24]

While these results might indicate how formal education both generates and sustains cultural capital, simple oppositions are complicated by the 'volume' of reading the survey recorded for each group. More than half of every educational cohort indicated they read Crime/Mystery and Thriller/Adventure books for pleasure or interest, as did all groups for Australian history except 'some tertiary' (who fell just short with 46 per cent). More than half of those with vocational qualifications or higher read Biographies of historical figures. Where we start to see educational level make sharper differences is in the appreciation, progressively, of Modern novels, Literary classics and Contemporary Australian novels. Those with completed tertiary or postgraduate qualifications have the highest rates for all three categories, and for Modern novels and Literary classics there was a margin of at least ten percentage points between all tertiary and all secondary/vocational groups. The latter, by contrast, had the lowest levels of engagement for every book type except Australian history and Romance; and to illustrate the divide across the field, the secondary/vocational group had the highest level for the two kinds

24 One exception is that people with completed secondary education are more likely to participate in book clubs/reading groups than those with partial tertiary education.

of books—Sport and Romance—that were least popular overall. The scores for Literary classics and Contemporary Australian novels increase progressively through the three levels of tertiary education.

Rankings for the Contemporary Australian novels category evince a very clear pattern across the range of educational attainment: starting in tenth position for 'some secondary', climbing one place for the 'secondary completed' and vocational groups and another place for 'some tertiary', then reaching its highest ranking (seventh) for the completed tertiary and postgraduate groups.[25] Modern novels, by contrast, oscillate between fifth and seventh positions with no discernible pattern. Considered against Contemporary Australian novels' clear trajectory, this seems suggestive of a relationship between level of education and level of interest in Australian fiction. Australian history acts as something of a counter case. While popular across the board, it does fall consistently in rankings from first, second, and third position for secondary/vocational to third, fourth and seventh position for the tertiary cohorts—perhaps because it competes with a wider range of reading tastes. While no similar trajectory or pattern is visible for Books by or about Indigenous Australians ('some secondary' has one of the higher results), it is clear that education does play a role: the figure of 40 per cent for postgraduates is one of the higher results seen across all the groups in our analysis.[26] Overall, tertiary or postgraduate education is is an important indicator of the likelihood of reading Australian authors. Of the five authors the secondary/vocational cohorts read at above average rates, only two were Australian (7 per cent of 'some secondary' who read Douglass and the 4 per cent who read Harrower). In contrast,

25 For the 'some tertiary' group Contemporary Australian novels shared eighth place with Self-help/Lifestyle. It should be noted that those who studied Humanities and Social Sciences at a tertiary or postgraduate level read Contemporary Australian novels at the highest rate of any cohort considered in this analysis (53%).

26 Again the study of Humanities and Social Sciences is important here, with 41 per cent of this group reading Books by or about Indigenous Australians.

the tertiary educated and postgraduate groups were above average for every one.[27]

There are, however, several individual authors who buck these trends. For Courtenay and King, those in the partial secondary, secondary completed and vocational cohorts score strongly on recognition and liking, although the tertiary and postgraduate groups still often rank highest. For example, for Courtenay, those with partial secondary education or less record the second-highest rate of recognition (85 per cent), trailing the postgraduate group (90 per cent) but ahead of those with completed tertiary education (84 per cent); and vocational and 'secondary completed' both outrank 'some tertiary'. Postgraduate and completed tertiary have much higher rates of recognition for Rankin (41 per cent and 35 per cent respectively) but all other educational cohorts sit more or less equally with recognition rates at around 24 per cent, while recognition of Alexandra is led by the 'secondary completed' group at 10 per cent. Still, for both Rankin and Alexandra, the postgraduate groups and tertiary completed groups express the highest degrees of liking. From these results it appears that for authors with high visibility in mainstream commercial or niche genre markets there is no strong correlation between levels of recognition and level of education; or, to put it another way, there is no strict correlation between low levels of education and what some might regard as 'low' tastes.

Age is an important factor for engagement with certain genres and certain authors, and for engagement with Australian content. On most measures, such engagement increases as people progress through the life-cycle. In terms of genre, the two most influenced by age are Sci-fi/Fantasy and Australian history. The former is immensely popular with young people, being read by almost two thirds of 18–24 year olds, but this rate drops to roughly 45 per cent for people aged

27 With the exception of Harrower, where postgraduates have a lower than average rate of reading by 0.01% (and with very small numbers overall).

between 25 and 54, before trailing off for those aged 55 and above; it is the lowest ranked genre for those aged 65 or older.[28] Australian history has the opposite trajectory, rising across cohorts from one third for 18–24 year olds to over two thirds of those aged 65 years or older. For Australian history, the rates recorded for the 55–64 and 65+ groups (69 per cent and 71 per cent) are the highest single ratings for the genre for any of the gender, class, education and ethnicity groups recorded by the survey. Conversely, 18–24 year olds' reading of Australian history was the *lowest* of all the groups considered in this analysis.[29]

Each of the three explicitly Australian genres surveyed show generally uninterrupted growth from age group to age group. Indeed, of all the book types surveyed, these are the genres that show the most distinct patterns of growth from the younger to the older groups. For each the rate of engagement for the oldest group is in the order of 50 per cent higher than that recorded for the youngest. In the case of Australian history, the rate is doubled. The importance of age for these genres is underscored when we look across the variables: 18–24 and 25–34 year olds recorded some of the lowest levels of engagement with Books by or about Indigenous Australians.[30] Further, although their rate of engagement with Contemporary Australian novels is not the lowest compared to other groups, it is much lower than their

28 Results are organised according to six age brackets: 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64 and 65+. Ages were not recorded for just over 1% of the main sample. Data from these respondents has been disregarded for the purposes of this analysis.

29 25–34 year olds' reading of history (44%) is also very low compared to the other groups.

30 25–34 year olds' rate of 21% is only just above the lowest rate recorded, 18% recorded by Chinese respondents, and 18–24 year olds' rate of 28% is in the region of rates recorded by routine workers (27%), and Indian (29%) respondents. In line with the ACF findings, Throsby, Zwar and Morgan (2017, 24) conclude that 'older age groups are more likely to like Australian-authored books than younger ones, while younger age groups are more likely to indicate that the nationality of the author doesn't matter to them.

identification with the broader category of Modern novels: 18–24 year olds' 50 per cent for Modern novels is almost double their score for Contemporary Australian novels, which is 28 per cent. In contrast, the numbers are virtually equivalent for those aged 55 and above.

Overall, younger people read Australian books at lower rates than older people: 18–24 year olds have the highest rate of any age group for reading between one and three Australian books (42 per cent) and 25–34 year olds have the highest rate of reading *no* Australian books in the past year, in keeping with their lower rates of reading generally (this age group, for instance, registers the lowest result for seven of the twelve genres). By contrast, the older groups lead higher volume reading: either the 55–64 or 65+ year old group leads each range for reading four or more Australian books in a year.

The significance of a book's provenance is less clear when it comes to named authors. Here again it is visibility (or rather its inverse, niche tastes and 'invisibility' or cachet), rather than the nationality of the writer, which seems to differentiate more consistently between age groups. Respondents aged under 45 had some of the highest rates of recognition and reading for some of the authors who were the *least* visible overall: 18–24 year olds had the highest rate of recognition for Scott (12 per cent) and Harrower (15 per cent), the highest rate of reading Murakami (6 per cent), and the highest for recognition and reading of Reilly (48 per cent and 28 per cent respectively), reinforcing the appeal of Thriller/Adventure for this group (over two thirds of 18–24 year olds read this genre). Twenty-five to thirty-four year olds had the highest recognition rate for Alexandra (14 per cent) and Eggers (12 per cent).

Perhaps, surprisingly, book clubs and reading groups are slightly more popular among the younger groups: more than 10 per cent of each age group below 44 years participates in book clubs, occasionally or regularly, while the figures fall between 6 per cent and 8 per

cent for those aged 45 and above. Less surprisingly, younger people are more active in book discussions on social media: 40 per cent of 18–24 year olds are regular or occasional participants in such discussions, a result which dwindles to 12 per cent for the 65+ group. There is not much to distinguish overall rates of ebook ownership between the ages of 25 and 64, with around 40 per cent of each group owning ebooks. Ebook ownership is somewhat higher among 18–24 year olds (51 per cent), and dips dramatically in the 65+ group (24 per cent). Barring a slight drop for the 25–34 year olds, watching book shows on TV or radio rises steadily with age: 16 per cent of 18–24 year olds watch occasionally or regularly, increasing to 46 per cent for those 65+ years. Again, barring a drop for the 25–34 year olds, there is no age difference in overall rates of reading book reviews, although there is variation relating to frequency: older people are more regular book review readers than the younger groups.

Space does not permit anything like a comprehensive account of the cultural profiles of the survey's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents and ethnic minority (Chinese, Indian, Italian and Lebanese) populations. But for the purposes of this essay we can note some significant results in terms of engagement with Australian books and authors and with particular genres. At 70 per cent, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents had the highest rate of any group considered in this paper for reading Books by or about Indigenous Australians; but Lebanese engagement with Indigenous books (45 per cent) was the second-highest across the board. By contrast, the results for the Chinese, Indian and Italian groups were among the lowest. For Australian history, ethnicity is also significant (second only to age, perhaps) with the Lebanese and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups again well above the average at 67 per cent and 63 per cent respectively. While the other groups are below average, even the lowest score is above 40 per cent. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people read one to six books

by Australian authors at a slightly higher rate than the general population (55 per cent compared with 49 per cent). The Indian (65 per cent) and Lebanese (58 per cent) groups, by contrast, had among the highest rates of reading *no* books by Australian authors across the sociodemographic variables measured. Finally, the Indigenous Australian group is the only one amongst these five to register an above-average engagement with Contemporary Australian novels, although both the Italian and Lebanese groups do so for Modern novels, and the Italian and Chinese for Literary classics. Otherwise, the interests of the Chinese and Indian groups are strongly concentrated in genre fiction, with both groups above average for Crime/Mystery, Sci-fi/Fantasy and Romance (and the Chinese for Thriller/Adventure as well), perhaps reflecting the age and, for Romance, gender profile of the samples.[31]

Presenting the results according to ethnicity for recognition, reading and liking of authors also reveals significant variations from the main sample. Indicating the bias in our selection of named authors, only two of the top dozen best-known authors (according to the main sample) register an above-average rate of recognition: Malouf among the Lebanese group and Morgan among the Indigenous and Lebanese groups. Malouf is also read and liked by Lebanese Australians at an above average rate, as is the case for Morgan with Indigenous readers (Lebanese readers, too, have a higher degree of 'liking' for her). Some of the other well-known Australian authors are, however, less read and less liked across these groups in comparison with the main sample. Only the Italian respondents register

31 The Chinese sample had the highest concentration of 18–24 year olds of all samples, and the Indian sample had a reasonably high level of representation in this age category as well. Women constituted a higher proportion of each ethnic minority sample: 50.7% of the weighted main sample were women, compared to the Chinese (53.2%), Indian (55.6%), Indigenous Australian (56.8%), Italian (58.4%) and Lebanese (61.8%) samples.

above average for reading or liking Courtenay and Grenville, while no group is above average for reading or liking Reilly or Winton.

Ethnicity, then, registers some key differences in relation to Australian books and authors, although it is perhaps only with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents that we see this factor outweighing other variables. Popular authors and genres remain well-liked, although the best-known Australian authors fare less well outside the main sample.[32]

Conclusion

Nearly all adult Australians have some level of interaction with books and book culture. Over 80 per cent of the population has heard of Stephen King, Jane Austen and Bryce Courtenay, have more than 50 books in their home, and visit a bookstore for browsing once a year or more frequently. At this level, books and book culture might be considered general and undifferentiating, or perhaps, more usefully, *public*. By a further set of measures Australians are, more often than not, readers: over 50 per cent of people have read King, Austen and Courtenay, and read thrillers, crime, biographies or Australian history for their own interest or pleasure; moreover, over half the adult population takes an extended interest in books in that they read print or online book reviews at least a few times a year.

There is, of course, another way to look at this picture. Ninety per cent of respondents had not attended a literary festival or participated in a book club in the year preceding the survey. Over 60 per cent own no ebooks. More than half the writers named in the survey were recognised by less than a third of the population, and three quarters of

32 Results for participation do not reveal clear patterns with most results reasonably close to those of the main sample. Chinese respondents have relatively high levels of participation in organised book activities such as book clubs and festivals. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents are above average for regular bookstore browsing, and occasional festival and book club attendance.

the writers had been read by less than a quarter. There is, in short, a vast amount of literary activity that is invisible to most Australians or with which they do not engage. With this optic, reading books and participating in book culture indeed emerge as 'relatively unpopular' activities. It is at this point that degrees and kinds of involvement with books become highly variable, and sociodemographic factors intersect with practices and tastes in illuminating ways.

Gender is critical for reading practices as well as book culture. While margins are not always significant, women are in front of men on most measures. Women read many genres at distinguishably higher rates than men, as well as works by the vast preponderance of the writers we asked about. They are more familiar and engaged with the book scene, recognising every author surveyed at higher rates than men, and more often attending events and festivals, reading book reviews and consuming book media. There are some indications that Australian content or provenance matters in gender terms, with Australian history proving more popular in the male repertoire of taste, and women enjoying Contemporary Australian novels at a higher rate and registering a taste for Australian women writers when they are read. But these indicators are not particularly distinguishable from men's preference for non-fictional forms and women's higher level of engagement with books generally.

Age also emerges as a strong indicator of engagement with Australian books and authors, although in certain instances genre will outweigh this effect. It is likely that this result reveals as much about the sectoring of the book marketplace (and changes over the lifecycle) as it does about any profound generational shift in cultural orientation as a result of globalisation or a decline of interest or investment in a national culture—although these possibilities cannot be dismissed.[33]

33 Cf Bennett, Frow and Emmison 1999, pp. 201–25.

From the perspective of a Bourdieusian analysis and the relationship between economic and cultural capital, perhaps the most significant results of the survey are those confirming the concentration of 'literary capital' in the professional-intermediate classes (as defined above) and the tertiary educated. The figures do not suggest any simple dichotomy of 'high' literary tastes strongly attached to groups with relatively high occupational status and 'popular' tastes defining those lower down the status ladder. Many tastes are shared to a significant degree, although, as we've shown, there are some striking divergences. More important, the professional-intermediate groups—where cultural capital seems to matter most—tend to predominate across *all* types of books and authors, with a few telling exceptions where dislikes become as significant as likes (Romance; a taste for Stephen King), and also across all kinds of active participation in book culture, including an interest in Australian books and authors.

Australian books and authors are dispersed across the scales produced by the ACF survey of tastes and participation—holding their own, as suggested, within different sectors of the marketplace. An engagement with Australian books and book culture increases (or decreases) in line with the tendencies indicated by the other socio-demographic variables surveyed, with little evidence that national/Australian provenance has a strong determining role in its own right. What does emerge clearly is the uneven and unequal levels of participation in book culture across Australian society.

Acknowledgement

This chapter is a product of the 'Australian Cultural Fields' project supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council (DP140101970). The project was awarded to Tony Bennett (Project Director, Western Sydney University), to

Chief Investigators Greg Noble, David Rowe, Tim Rowse, Deborah Stevenson and Emma Waterton (Western Sydney University), David Carter and Graeme Turner (University of Queensland), and to Partner Investigators Modesto Gayo (Universidad Diego Portales) and Fred Myers (New York University). Michelle Kelly (Western Sydney University) was appointed as Senior Research Officer and Project Manager. The project has additionally benefited from inputs from Ien Ang, Ben Dibley, Liam Magee, Anna Pertierra and Megan Watkins (Western Sydney University).

Works Cited

AC Nielsen Company 2001, *A National Survey of Reading, Buying and Borrowing Books for Pleasure: Conducted for Books Alive*, AC Nielsen, Canberra.

Atkinson, W 2016, 'The Structure of Literary Taste: Class, Gender and Reading in the UK', *Cultural Sociology*, vol. 10, no. 2, SAGE, pp.247–266.

Attwood, B 1992, 'Portrait of an Aboriginal as an Artist: Sally Morgan and the Construction of Aboriginality', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 25, no. 99, Taylor & Francis, pp.302–318.

AustLit n.d. *Sally Morgan*, The University of Queensland, accessed June 5 2017, https://www.austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/A35035

Australia Council 2013, 'A Changing Story: Trends in Reading Among Australians', Australia Council, viewed May 1 2017, http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/readingtrendsfactsheet_white1-54325751b36c4.pdf

Bennett, T, Frow, J & Emmison, M 1999, *Accounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Cultures*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.

Bennett, T, Savage, M, Silva, E, Warde, A, Gayo-Cal, M & Wright, D 2009, *Culture, Class, Distinction*, Routledge, London.

Bourdieu, P 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R. Nice, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Flood, A 2014, 'Readers Prefer Authors of Their Own Sex, Survey Finds', *Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/nov/25/readers-prefer-authors-own-sex-goodreads-survey.

Griswold, W, McDonnell, T & Wright, N 2005, 'Reading and the Reading Class in the Twenty-First Century', *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 31, pp. 127–141.

Throsby, D, Zwar, J & Morgan, C 2017, *Australian Books Readers: Survey Methods and Results*, Department of Economics, Macquarie University.

Wright, D 2006, 'Cultural Capital and the Literary Field', *Cultural Trends*, vol. 15, no. 2–3, pp.123–139.

Chapter Nine

Discipline and Publish

Disciplinary Boundaries in Publishing Studies

Millicent Weber and Aaron Mannion

> … although it has not yet developed passwords or secret handshakes or its own population of Ph.D.'s, its adherents can recognize one another by the glint in their eyes. They belong to a common cause, one of the few sectors in the human sciences where there is a mood of expansion and a flurry of fresh ideas. (Robert Darnton, 'What Is the History of Books?' 1982, 65)

Writing in 1982 about the development of the fresh field of book history, Robert Darnton persuasively argued for the importance of establishing a model of the ways that books enter into and move through society as a counter to 'interdisciplinarity run riot' (67). This model, Darnton's communications circuit, radically reconfigured—and continues to influence—subsequent approaches to the study of the publishing industry, despite the largely historical focus of most of the critical work (including Darnton's own) done within the field in the 1980s and 1990s. Scholarly research into contemporary publishing grew more prominent alongside the growth in universities of largely vocational training programs for aspiring book industry professionals in the 1990s and 2000s (Murray 2007, 3). This chapter outlines how publishing studies, as a discipline, is configured. How do we recognise research as belonging to this discipline? Aside, of course, from the 'glint' in the eye of the researcher, hopefully not quite dimmed 35 years on. What are the discipline's restrictions, preoccupations, and affordances—its passwords and secret handshakes?

To what extent have expansive moods and flurries of ideas coalesced into research traditions and disciplinary conventions?

Publishing studies is an area of academic speciality that encompasses a wide variety of approaches, frameworks and methodologies. It is also an area that we demarcate broadly in this chapter: its boundaries with, in particular, book history, cultural sociology, and more traditional disciplines like literary studies and media studies are porous. We seek to include rather than downplay this disciplinary bleed. Work in this field addresses topics as disparate as diversity and social justice in the publishing industry, trends in book marketing, the book-design process, the impact of technology on the publishing sector, publishers' business management processes, or the communities of practice that support and shape publishing activities. The field can to a certain extent be defined by its focus on the activities of book and, to a lesser extent, journal and magazine publishing. But although publishing thus delimited might seem to provide a clear focus, new platforms and technologies are transforming all facets of the industry, from production through to dissemination and reception. There is a clear overlap with the activities of other digital media and news organisations, traditionally the domains of the media studies scholar. Publishing studies is consequently a field that is doubly indeterminate. Recognising existing academic work that discusses the emergence of publishing studies (Boswell 2017; Marsden 2017; Murray 2007), this chapter discusses the affordances and limitations of its dynamic construction, and identifies key areas of aspiration for future development.

Institutional History

Publishing studies has been shaped by both institutional and cultural frameworks. It emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s as universities began to add vocationally focused publishing programs

to their offerings—an institutional change formally consecrated by the creation of organisations such as the International Association for Publishing Education (IAPE), based in North America, in 1989, and the Association of Bookseller and Publisher Training Organisations in Europe (ABPTOE), in 1990 (Montagnes 2015, 103). In Australia, the first formal publishing program was a graduate diploma first offered by RMIT in 1988, although universities like Macquarie had already been offering some editing and publishing subjects (Michael Webster, via interview, 15 July 2017). Both programs were established to remedy skill shortages within the industry. Interestingly, the RMIT program was in part prompted by the inclusion of editing roles under the industrial awards system, a move which emphasises the importance of labour-market conditions and wider government policy to the formation of academic disciplines (Webster 2017). In many (if not all) cases, early publishing programs functioned separately from the established academic disciplines—in Australia, universities often first dipped their collective toes in the area through diploma programs, which operated largely outside the research frameworks of their host universities. Michael Webster (2017), who was instrumental in the establishment of the first publishing studies program at RMIT in 1988, notes that these programs were primarily staffed by: '[…] industry veterans with little or no academic experience beyond their own [Bachelors] degrees.' Initially, academics teaching in these new programs put little emphasis on research outputs, and these programs stood aside from universities' research culture.

Since the mid- to late-2000s, however, publishing programs have tended to become more thoroughly integrated into the universities that host them. Many programs are now based in either creative industries or media and communications departments that themselves find their home in larger arts and humanities faculties. Meanwhile, the importance of research funding and ranking to many universities has increased. As Diana Hicks (2012) notes:

> The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in the UK was launched in 1986, [and] since then many countries have followed suit and introduced performance-based research funding systems (PRFSs). At least fourteen such systems were found in 2010.

These research frameworks are leveraged to improve direct funding—usually through national governments—and competitive rankings, thereby increasing enrolments, particularly of foreign students (Hazelkorn 2015, 6). Though publishing programs have traditionally tended to operate primarily as postgraduate coursework programs (which earn their keep through fee-paying students), they are now increasingly expected to contribute to research outputs (a trend observed by Simone Murray in interview, 4 August 2017). As with many coursework Masters programs, this creates tension between the subject offerings, which are largely practical and vocationally orientated, and the academics who teach within them, who increasingly need to focus on research outcomes, including publishing high-impact research and securing grants. These are not diametrically opposed pursuits, but it is important to recognise that pursuing this research agenda—while staying engaged with industry, and industry developments, and while teaching in programs requiring labour-intensive pedagogical practices—does create pressures specific to vocational programs.

Disciplinary Trends

Publishing studies research is characterised by several key trends and approaches. These include an embrace of work that maps the field of contemporary publishing; that is highly sociological in nature; that is technologically attuned; that is commercially and politically aware; and that is highly responsive to the political and social climate in which it is produced. The spread of these characteristics—and of the

ways in which they are employed and combined by researchers—reflects both the youth of the discipline and the unstable nature of the contemporary publishing industry's technological and cultural underpinnings. These features have developed to enable work within the discipline to adapt to and intervene in shifts in regulatory frameworks, cultural pressures and technological changes.

Field Mapping

A particular characteristic of publishing studies research is its often exploratory nature. As a relatively young discipline, one of its remits is to establish the boundaries and the logics of its object of study. The first important example of this kind of work is Robert Darnton's article on book history, quoted above (1982). Darnton produced an enduring model of the relationship between author, publisher, printer, supplier, bookseller and reader, framing each within the often concurrent social, cultural, economic, political and legal contexts in which they operate. He modelled these as a communications circuit—a functional and highly structured entity. Darnton's formulation served to position studies of specific aspects of the industry in relation to one another, as well as to frame publishing for future scholars as something in a necessarily close and contingent relationship to other aspects of society. Subsequent scholars have built from and updated this model to reflect the radically different landscape in which book history and publishing itself operate in the twenty-first century—most notably Darnton himself with the (still-historical) "'What is the History of Books?" Revisited'[1] (2007) and, from a contemporary publishing studies perspective Padmini Ray Murray and Claire Squires, in 'The Digital Publishing Communications Circuit' (2013). Clayton Childress' *Under the Cover: The Creation, Production,*

1 A less serious remodelling of Darnton's work, described as "'What is the History of the Book? Revisited" Revisited', can be found in the form of Twitterbot @RobotDarnton (https://twitter.com/RobotDarnton), which provides randomised suggestions for left-of-field inclusions in the communications circuit.

and Reception of a Novel (2017) is an example of work that is in many ways cognate in its mapping of the processes and practices of contemporary publishing. It is notably distinct in that Childress tracks in detail a single case study—Cornelia Nixon's *Jarrettsville*—in order to knit together analyses of the diverse practices involved in the creation, publication and reception of a book.

Other key exploratory works include the growing body of research investigating publishing industries in specific national or regional contexts. These are more strictly locative in the 'mapping' that they do. They include studies of the dominant world of North American, British and Commonwealth publishing—such as hefty multi-volume scholarly series *A History of the Book in America*, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, and *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland*. There is also a growing and important body of works studying publishing in what Pascale Casanova (2004) terms 'peripheral' contexts. Notable recent works in this vein include Beth Le Roux's *A Social History of the University Presses in Apartheid South Africa: Between Complicity and Resistance* (2015)—a study which combines exploratory national history, sociological analysis, and political critique—and Edward Mack's strongly sociological volume on Japanese publishing of the 1920s and 1930s, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value* (2010). Casanova's work itself is another example of politically forceful locative research: *The World Republic of Letters* (2004) explores the structures of aesthetic, linguistic and political power that create patterns of dominance and marginalisation in literature worldwide.

The prevalence of research that connects publishing activities to the regions in which these activities occur might well be down to pragmatics: state boundaries are easy ones to draw around industrial activities defined by economic and legal jurisdictions, while research is often funded by government bodies interested in the social, cultural and economic realities of their own constituencies. But additional

important connections subsist between publishing and nationhood that cement this relationship. The publishing industry and the fixity and sense of regularity that this industry bestowed on language were central to the development of contemporary understandings of nationhood and citizenship. As Benedict Anderson (1991, 46) argues, 'the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation'.

Chapters such as this one, as charts of the research being published by the discipline, are themselves firmly established in this exploratory context. Other notable surveys, each of which informs the trajectory of this chapter, include Simone Murray's 2007 article 'Publishing Studies: Critically Mapping Research in Search of a Discipline', as well as more recent positioning pieces such as 'What We Write About When We Write About Publishing' (Boswell 2017) and 'Positioning Publishing Studies in the Cultural Economy' (Marsden 2017).

Sociological

A second characteristic of much research within publishing studies is its sociological bent: it is attuned to the ways in which print culture, and the creation, dissemination and reception of books, are socially constructed. Taking cues from cultural sociology, and particularly from the work of French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1996, 2006), much of this research builds on conceptions of a competitive literary field structured by the accrual and movement of economic and symbolic capital to interpret the relationships that subsist between the field's agents—publishers, writers, readers, and various intermediaries. James English's *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (2005) is a field-configuring work in publishing studies and, like Mack's (2010)

volume discussed above, its discussion of prizing literature is firmly rooted in Bourdieusian conceptions of field, capital and position-taking. English's work maps the ways that literary prizes, and people's behaviour in accepting, receiving and critiquing them, work to confer and reconcile symbolic and economic value.

The other key strand of sociological publishing studies research explores the reception of books, and the ways in which communities of writers and readers develop. Innovative work on readers and reading practices began to be conducted by scholars in literary studies and book history in the latter half of the twentieth century. This research, looking at the ways that readers construct meaning from texts, based on their personal pre-existing knowledge, values, beliefs, and social and historical situations (cf. Chartier 1992; Fish 1976; Iser 1972; Rose 2002), strongly influenced publishing studies' sociological and conceptual development. To quote book historian Roger Chartier (1992, 53), another French scholar whose work shaped the trajectory of publishing studies research, reading 'is not only an abstract operation of the intellect: it puts the body into play and is inscribed within a particular space, in a relation to the self or to others'. Taking this approach, it is doubly important to frame publishing in sociological terms: it is social both in its conceptual construct as a form of communication between individuals, and in its physical construct as the movement of tactile materials and the creation of haptic experience. Crucial and more contemporary-focused contributions to the discipline's understandings of social, material and often highly affective reading processes include Janice Radway's *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-class Desire* (1997); Elizabeth Long's *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life* (2003); Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo's *Reading Beyond the Book: The Social Practices of Contemporary Literary Culture* (2013); and Beth Driscoll's *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First*

Century (2014). Driscoll's work on the middlebrow is an example of research that studies literary formations as both social and value-laden—understandings that are crucial to interpreting the dominant influence of the middlebrow on contemporary publishing. These are the kinds of understandings, too, that one of the authors of this chapter, Millicent Weber, has employed in interpreting contemporary literary festival audiences (2015).

Technological

Publishing studies research has been shaped by preoccupations with the 'death of the book' (Murray 2007, 4). Fears, predominating in the 1990s and 2000s, around the replacement of the codex object with digital media forms—an exemplar of which is Sven Birkerts' *The Gutenberg Elegies* (1994)—led both to concerns about publishing studies' own viability, and to a large body of research that sought to identify the effects of digital media on print, or that focused exclusively on understanding digital forms of publishing.

It has of course become increasingly apparent that the uptake of digital technology in our societies does not eradicate print media as a key format for the dissemination of information—an argument persuasively put by Miha Kovac in *Never Mind the Web: Here Comes the Book* (2008). Publishing studies work of the last decade—as outlined in Kirschenbaum & Werner's survey of digital research in the field (2014)—is still largely concerned with the ways that technology is fundamentally reshaping understandings of publishing, but approaches this from a different mindset. Typified by works like Lisa Gitelman's *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (2014), research in this vein acknowledges the complex interrelation between digital and print media, rather than fixating on the usurpation of tradition by innovation.

Contemporary publishing studies work understands digital media as an object of study, and also uses new technology as a tool to help

explore the ways in which publishing operates. This turn towards digital methods in the humanities is one of the key factors working to eradicate the '… lingering dichotomy that says work on the (distant) past book world can be scholarly, but work on the contemporary book world is at best vocational' (Simone Murray in interview, 4 August 2017). Much of this work—such as the collection of essays *From Codex to Hypertext: Reading at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (Lang 2012), and Marianne Martens' *Publishers, Readers, and Digital Engagement* (2016)—overlaps closely with sociological investigations of the industry. This is unsurprising: one of the key affordances of digital media is that, as a direct mediation of communication, it retains traces, often textual (and consequently easily computer readable) of those communicative interactions. It offers an archive of social engagement and personal reflections. It consequently promotes studies of social structures, as well as encouraging innovative approaches to the study of existing practices—such as Beth Driscoll's (2015) use of sentiment analysis, a technique that originated from market research, to understand people's engagement with literary festivals, or Gruzd & Rehberg Sedo's (2012) use of web scraping and text-mining to explore the range of responses to *American Gods* on Twitter.

Commercially and Practically Aware

Publishing studies is deeply attuned to the commercial and pragmatic considerations that govern industry participation. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it converged as a discipline following the introduction of tertiary programs designed to produce future industry employees. The practical bent of these programs, defined in opposition to the aesthetic purism of literary studies, meant that much early publishing studies research tended to over-emphasise commercial features of the industry (Murray 2007, 6). As the discipline has matured, these tendencies have been tempered by research that explores the economic logics of publishing in conjunction with

its cultural and social constitution. These contextual undertakings include Simone Murray's own *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation* (2012), which introduces understandings of real-world industry logics into the previously text-focused study of literary adaptation. Murray's work also offers another example of the productive influence of Bourdieu's conceptions of field and capital.

Studies of the phenomenon of the literary celebrity—a phenomenon bolstered by, or perhaps bolstering, the huge growth of literary festivals since the 1980s (Weber 2015)—also offer prominent examples of the kinds of contextual understandings of commercial and cultural logics that characterise contemporary publishing studies research. Influential work in this area includes Joe Moran's *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America* (2000), Loren Glass' *Authors Inc: Literary Celebrity in the Modern United States, 1880–1980* (2004), and Lorraine York's *Literary Celebrity in Canada* (2007) and *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity* (2013). The rise of the literary celebrity, and research into the ways that celebrity authors are promoted, intersects directly with research exploring the marketing of literary works—key exemplars of which include Claire Squires' *Marketing Literature* (2007) and the edited collection *Judging a Book by its Cover: Publishers, Designers and the Marketing of Fiction* (ed. Matthews & Moody 2007). As each of these volumes explores, the cultivation of both marketable books and marketable authors is contingent upon a number of social, cultural, and economic forces. Unpacking these forces' operation, and the reasons why particular texts and people are promoted while others are overlooked, offers serious insight into the power structures—and the industry logics—of publishing.

Politically and Ethically Aware

The final trend in publishing studies research that we want to discuss in this section of the chapter is its political and ethical edge. On the one hand, feminist, marxist and postcolonial critiques shaped much of twentieth century literary studies. It therefore comes as no surprise that work claimed by publishing studies, with roots in literary and cultural studies, often employs cognate political critiques (cf. Radway 1984, 1997; Murray 2004). On the other hand, there was an historic failure of more quantitative industry-focused research to take advantage of these critical tools (Murray 2007, 6), again due at least in part to the discipline's attempts to discern itself from other more traditional schools in the humanities.

In recent years, there has been a surge in publishing studies research with a critical, political edge. This is partly a result of the wide-scale adoption by the discipline of Bourdieu's model of the field, and the attendant critiques of class and structural power. But this surge also has important roots in the growing cross-disciplinary work concerned with the co-option of cultural industries by contemporary neoliberal interests. Scholars like Sarah Brouillette (*Literature and the Creative Economy*, 2014) and David Hesmondhalgh (*The Cultural Industries*, 2007) situate publishing within the contemporary creative economy. These studies explore the ramifications of cultural policy-making that justifies spending on book production and other forms of cultural production in primarily economic terms, building strong political economy critiques of the processes of inequality and exploitation that stem from these utilitarian approaches. As Marsden (2017) notes, however, despite contemporary publishing studies' willingness to engage with other studies of the cultural economy, it has generally not seen reciprocal traction within this space. There are parallels here with the dismissal by media and cultural studies of print as a media form (Murray 2007, 12). But issues such as the lack of diversity in contemporary publishing (cf. Squires 2017), the

increasing precarity of creative work (cf. Brouillette 2014), and the over-representation of women in these precarious freelance roles (cf. Bridges 2017) require critical intervention, underscoring the importance of increased cross-pollination between publishing studies and cultural economy studies.

Interdisciplinary Affordances

As this mapping demonstrates, publishing studies embraces a wide variety of methodologies and theoretical frameworks. This is not surprising as, in disciplinary terms, it is defined by its subject rather than its methods—mirroring an established discipline like classics, which is defined by its object of interest, rather than a discipline such as cultural studies, which has a relatively open object of interest, but is more tightly delimited by its approach and methodology. Indeed, one could characterise publishing studies, as Leslie Howsam has book history, as an interdiscipline: 'an intellectual space where scholars practicing different disciplinary approaches and methodologies address the same capacious conceptual category' (Howsam 2016). However, publishing studies is not simply characterised by a pluralist approach to methodology and theory. Much work in the field is truly interdisciplinary, integrating methodologies and perspectives that have historically tended to stand apart. In Australia, researchers such as Emmett Stinson (2016) and Ben Etherington (2015) have brought quantitative methods into dialogue with literary criticism in a way that reveals the dynamics and pressures at play in the cultural field of book reviewing. In interview on 15 July 2017, Emmett Stinson eloquently summarised his understanding of the nature of the discipline:

> Publishing studies is inherently interdisciplinary, potentially involving economics, business studies, digital humanities, sociology, media studies, and literary studies. Its reason to

> exist is not a method but an object: the publishing of books and the industry that surrounds this. This unifying purpose is not necessarily different from fields in traditional literary studies in many respects: scholars of Romanticism study a topic and/or period through a variety of different methods many of which are as much historical as they are interpretive or 'critical', for example. The main difference is that publishing studies inherently requires at least some knowledge of larger aspects of business and economics and absolutely requires an understanding of how the publishing industry functions in both economic and sociological terms. I also think that publishing studies lends itself to quantitative analyses; in this sense, if it has a core methodology, it would be the imbrication of various quantitative or social-science approaches within a topic of study (books) that have usually been analysed qualitatively or historically.

Stinson's acknowledgement that interdisciplinarity is at the heart of publishing studies supports our contention that publishing studies is a discipline that embraces its inherent hybridity. His emphasis on the importance of quantitative and economic analyses to the discipline is noteworthy given publishing studies' inheritance of methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and indeed practitioners from literary studies and cultural studies. However, as Stinson's own work on book reviewing attests, these methods are able to provide a fresh perspective on reception history, a central preoccupation of literary studies. This kind of work also complicates questions raised by cultural studies regarding the bestowal of cultural capital and the dynamics of cultural fields by closely attending to particular mechanics of reviewing—the sourcing of reviewers, and the politics of literary communities—and by closely analysing the substance of the reviews themselves, using a hybrid of literary analysis and quantitative methods.

Toward Normativity?

Publishing studies is both hybrid and heterogeneous, characteristics that stem from the discipline's youth and its complex situation at the meeting point of other disciplinary interests. However, there has, arguably, been movement towards greater uniformity, and the methodologies and theories deployed are trending toward a disciplinary approach which recognises '… that books are both vectors for cultural change, and themselves compelling sites for analysing cultural forces' (Murray 2007, 17). This program, contextualising publishing studies with reference to both book historical and cultural studies approaches, has largely been accepted. The researchers we have spoken to have had different views on the proximity of publishing studies to book history, but it is notable that most major publishing studies researchers attend SHARP events and conferences.

Though the disciplines have natural and obvious affinities, their close relationship was not necessarily a foregone conclusion. As Michael Webster observed, publishing programs were staffed in the beginning almost exclusively by publishing industry veterans, without well-defined backgrounds in a specific research culture. Exploring how other practice-led subject areas approached the problem of developing a research culture that answered the needs of both their discipline and the institutional requirements for research outputs reveals alternative possibilities. Creative writing and literary studies, for example, stand in a similar relation to each other as publishing studies and book history did initially: one is practice-led; the other research-led. Creative writing and publishing studies both began with departments staffed primarily by practitioners, who often lacked a research background. Literary studies and book history programs, in contrast, were staffed by trained and established researchers. The focus in creative writing remains primarily on practice-led research, which, while it shares many theorists with literary studies, uses a methodology that is quite different—research often taking the form

of ficto-critical essays, auto-ethnographic research, critical reflection on practice, or addressing pedagogical concerns reflectively or ethnographically. Creative writers can also, in some institutions, submit creative work as research outputs—an option not open to publishing studies scholars.

Practice-led research does exist in publishing studies. Zoe Sadokierski, for example, has brought a practice-based design research approach to publishing studies with fascinating results in articles such as 'From Paratext to Primary Text: New opportunities for designers with print-on-demand publishing' (2016). However, such work is more often the exception than the rule. As Murray foresaw, the trend has been for publishing studies to operate in the intersection of cultural studies and book history, despite doubts from one discipline about the book's viability as a media format, and from the other of the contemporary book's viability as a research object.

Mark Davis (via interview on 15 July 2017) makes the case that the histories of disciplines involved are more dynamic than prior formulations may suggest:

> Since I've been teaching and researching within publishing studies [since 2003], there have been major changes in the discipline. Book history was, when I began, primarily historical. People like Robert Darnton, John Thompson and Ted Striphas fundamentally changed the practice taking publishing studies and book history from historically focused disciplines and moving them into the realm of media studies and cultural studies. For example, Ted Striphas's work out of cultural studies is really important. It's a shift that has been furthered, particularly in an Australian context, by people like Simone Murray, Beth Driscoll, and, overseas, by people like Danielle Fuller and Claire Squires. This shift has redefined the boundaries of the discipline, opening it up to

> media studies in particular, and lately, obviously, digital media studies, in very productive ways.

Davis charts a dynamic series of encounters, in which book history and publishing studies are influenced by both cultural studies and by media studies. We can take this a step further and suggest that, arguably, the influence of media studies on book history comes via the upstart publishing studies and the participation of its researchers in the SHARP community.

Stinson too sees publishing studies as coalescing into a more coherent discipline, though he sees the discipline as differentiating itself from book history. In interview (2017), he noted that

> In the seven years that I have been employed as an academic, I would say that the main change has been that the field has begun to codify. What was previously sort of a weird subset of either media studies or history of the book has become its own field and attracted both emerging scholars and established scholars from other areas (particularly the sociology of literature and those looking at digital media and literature).

This perception that publishing studies is coalescing into an identifiable discipline with some degree of shared vocabulary and approaches has been confirmed by our discussions, both formal and informal, with key researchers. A key element of the 'codification' of publishing studies is the emergence of shared theoretical frameworks and vocabulary. The field draws heavily on theorists of cultural value such as Pierre Bourdieu and on theories of cultural materialism as articulated by people like Raymond Williams, and is influenced more generally, in its vocabulary and outlook, by both cultural studies and new historicism. Cultural and literary studies are themselves products of a revolution in English departments that happened in the 1970s and 1980s. This shared genealogy is felt in publishing studies not simply because of an overlap in the object of study—books and

publishing—but also in the prevalence of researchers trained in literary studies and cultural studies in our discipline.

The emergence of disciplinary cohesion reflects another development—one arguably only apparent in the last five years. Publishing programs historically enrolled very few doctoral students within their largely vocationally focused cohorts, but this is changing: there are 'a new guard of scholars and academics who have not necessarily worked in the industry' (Davis 2017). New research students will, quite sensibly, be inducted into the dominant theoretical and methodological frameworks in the discipline. While earlier researchers developed their research skills in another discipline or built their skills and knowledge working in the industry, more and more researchers are first and foremost publishing studies specialists. They are grounded in the status quo, both formally and informally. In choosing their approach, such researchers will, absent other influences, build on the framework inherited, producing an intensification loop, which, left alone, will lead to greater homogeneity within the discipline. This has led to the emergence of a discipline which is both distinct and open to other disciplinary influences: it has 'resulted in a very productive and sophisticated range of practices that, while heterogeneous, are nevertheless recognisably publishing studies' (Davis 2017).

The Next Moves

Publishing studies is forging new research methodologies fusing quantitative and qualitative, digital and traditional approaches, and is employing these to develop exciting new knowledge of the industry's social, cultural, political and commercial truths. The discipline's flexibility stems both from its comparative youth, its history of reacting to industry changes and concerns, and its position at the intersection of book history, cultural studies and media studies, which allows the

discipline to participate in those wider conversations—and often to publish across the journals that cater to such work.

The strengthened sense of disciplinarity we have described offers advantages by demarcating the boundaries of both subject and approach. It enables scholars to build communal knowledge of shared methodological techniques and conceptual models. As Louise Wetherbee Phelps and John M. Ackerman (2010) write:

> To be recognized as a discipline is a powerful measure of whether we have earned the respect of others. As Steven Mailloux points out, 'Placing oneself in a specialized field when one speaks, writes, publishes, teaches, hires and engages in other rhetorical [and, we would add, writing] practices … constitutes perhaps the most powerful condition of academic work' (125). A disciplinary identity is necessary for such work to be taken seriously within the meritocracies of higher education and to help sustain the working identities of practitioners, scholars, teachers, and administrators across the United States.

Phelps and Ackerman assert this in the context of the 'Visibility Project', a coordinated attempt to get writing and rhetoric studies recognised as a distinct discipline. The project set out to defend writing from being classified as an 'applied field', amidst concerns that this designation would overshadow research outputs or lead to undue influence on that research from practical and vocational concerns (2010, 188). Publishing studies' embrace of its relationship to book history and cultural studies allows it to avoid the potential pitfalls of being an 'applied' field. But despite these concerns, it is of strategic and pragmatic importance that publishing studies research remains relevant to industry. Developed nations actively pursue research agendas aimed at helping key industries succeed both nationally and globally. As a multi-billion dollar industry, publishing can justly claim that it has a right to research aimed toward supporting its

development.[2] And publishing programs' continued vocational offerings demands the synthesis of practical knowledge and experience with theoretical perspectives.

Publishing is at the heart of how information circulates in our societies. It determines who speaks and who listens: which voices and perspectives are heard and valued. Critical scholarship is crucial to understanding the implications of publishing's operations, identifying points of intervention in the industry, and informing those interventions. To restrict publishing studies to practice-led research is therefore a disservice to both our students and our communities. A focus solely on the research that aids the bottom line of industry would inevitably risk the abdication of the role as critical commentator on these points. Work grounded in both industry analysis and cultural politics, such as that of Melinda Harvey and Julieanne Lamond (2017) on the Stella Count, may or may not improve publishers' bottom lines, but it contributes significantly toward the improvement of our cultural commons. And the value that the critical component that cultural studies brings to the disciplinary arsenal can be seen in work like Beth Driscoll's investigation of how 'middlebrow' functions as, among other things, a highly gendered and class-bound concept.

Casting forward for publishing studies, there is a clear need for this kind of research: at once highly industrially aware, critical, and incorporating both ethical and practical considerations in its critique. In these interstices we see emerging the discipline's most innovative affordances. This work combines an understanding of the symbolic and functional significance of cultural products with investigation of the practical and political ramifications of the real-world context in

2 In the US, revenue from publishing for the financial year 2014–2015 was USD 27.8 billion; in Europe over the same term it was USD 24.6 billion. A detailed breakdown is available in the International Publishers' Association annual report for 2016: https://www.internationalpublishers.org/images/reports/Annual_Report_2016/IPA_Annual_Report_2015–2016_interactive.pdf

which these products are produced. As an intervention into contemporary publishing's structural logics, this kind of research needs to be cultivated to ensure the long-term health of our cultural practices. Publishing studies is, as a discipline, most productive where such cultural critique exists in close proximity to both industry-centric and practice-led research. When these different strands of publishing's research culture remain in dialogue, the conversation they inspire is one that includes publishers, teachers, students and researchers. Thus conceived, publishing studies is not simply a discipline that speaks about the publishing industry; rather, it is a discipline that speaks with and to and about, and even for the industry.

Works Cited

Anderson, B 1991, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd edn, Verso, London.

Birkerts, S 1994, *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age*, Faber and Faber, Boston and London.

Boswell, D 2017, 'What We Write About When We Write About Publishing: A Journal for Students of Publishing', *Interscript*. Available from: https://www.interscriptjournal.com/online-magazine/what-wewriteaboutwhenwe-write-about-publishing

Bourdieu, P 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Harvard University Press, trans. R. Nice, Cambridge, MA.

——— 1996, *The Rules of Art*, trans. S. Emanuel, Polity Press, Cambridge.

——— 2006, 'The Field of Cultural Production' in Finkelstein, D & McCleery, A, (eds), *The Book History Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 99–120.

Bridges, L E 2017, 'Flexible as Freedom? The Dynamics of Creative Industry Work and the Case Study of the Editor in Publishing', *New Media & Society*, pp. 1–17. Available from: http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1461444816688920?journalCode=nmsa

Brouillette, S 2014, *Literature and the Creative Economy*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Casanova, P 2004, *The World Republic of Letters*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Chartier, R 1992, 'Laborers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader', *Diacritics*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 49–61.

Childress, C 2017, *Under the Cover: The Creation, Production, and Reception of a Novel*, Princeton University Press.

Darnton, R 1982, 'What Is the History of Books?' *Daedalus*, vol. 111, no. 3, pp. 65–83.

——— 2007 'What Is the History of Books? Revisited' *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 495–508.

Driscoll, B 2014, *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

——— 2015, 'Sentiment Analysis and the Literary Festival Audience', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, vol. 29, no. 6, pp. 861–873.

English, J 2005, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Etherington, E 2015, 'The Poet Tasters', *Sydney Review of Books*. Available from: http://sydneyreviewofbooks.com/australian-poetry-reviewing.

Fish, S E 1976, 'Interpreting the Variorum', *Critical Enquiry*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 465–485.

Fuller, D & Rehberg Sedo, D 2013, *Reading Beyond the Book: The Social Practices of Contemporary Literary Culture*, Routledge, London.

Gitelman L 2014, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Glass, L 2004, *Authors Inc: Literary Celebrity in the Modern United States, 1880–1980*, NYU Press, New York.

Gruzd, A & Rehberg Sedo, D 2012, '#1b1t: Investigating Reading Practices at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century', *Mémoires du livre / Studies in Book Culture*. Available from: http://www.erudit.org/revue/memoires/2012/v3/n2/1009347ar.html. [8 August 2017]

Harvey, M & Lamond, J 2017, '2016 Stella Count', *The Stella Prize*. Available from: http://thestellaprize.com.au/the-count/2016-stella-count

Hazelkorn, E 2015, *Rankings and the Reshaping of Higher Education: The Battle for World-Class Excellence*, 2nd edn, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Hesmondhalgh, D 2007, *The Cultural Industries*, 2nd edn, Sage Publications, London.

Hicks, D 2012, 'Performance-Based University Research Funding Systems', *Research Policy*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 251-261. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048733311001752

Howsam, L 2016, 'Thinking Through the History of the Book', *Studies in Book Culture/Mémoires du livre*, vol. 7, no. 2. Available from: https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/memoires/2016-v7-n2memoires02575/1036851ar. [8Aug 2017]

Iser, W 2011, 'The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach' in S Towheed, R Crone & K Halsey, (eds), *The History of Reading*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 80–92.

Kirschenbaum M & Werner S 2014, 'Digital Scholarship & Digital Studies: The State of the Discipline', *Book History*, vol. 17, pp. 406–458.

Kovac, M 2008, *Never Mind the Web: Here Comes the Book*, Chandos, Oxford.

Lang, A (ed), 2012, *From Codex to Hypertext: Reading at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst.

Le Roux, E 2015, *A Social History of the University Presses in Apartheid South Africa*, Leiden, Brill.

Long, E 2003, *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Mack, E 2010, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value*, Duke University Press, Durham & London.

Marsden, S 2017, 'Positioning Publishing Studies in the Cultural Economy', *Interscript*. Available from: https://www.interscriptjournal.com/online-magazine/positioning-publishing-studies-in-the-cultural-economy.

Martens, M 2016, *Publishers, Readers, and Digital Engagement*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Matthews, N & Moody, N (eds) 2007, *Judging a Book by Its Cover: Publishers, Designers, and the Marketing of Fiction*, Aldershot, Ashgate.

Montagnes, I 2015, 'Education for Publishing' in P G Altbach & E S Hoshino, (eds), *International Book Publishing: An Encyclopedia*, 3rd edn, Routledge, Abingdon & New York.

Moran, J 2000, *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America*, Pluto Press, London.

Murray, S 2004, *Mixed Media: Feminist Presses and Publishing Politics*, Pluto Press, London.

Murray, S 2007, 'Publishing Studies: Critically Mapping Research in Search of a Discipline', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol 22.4, pp. 3–25.

——— 2012, *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation*, Routledge, London.

——— & M. Weber 2017, 'Live and Local?: The Significance of Digital Media for Writers' Festivals', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 61–78.

Radway, J 1984, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

——— 1997, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Ray Murray, P & Squires, C 2013, 'The Digital Publishing Communications Circuit', *Book 2.0*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 3–23.

Rose, J 2002, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

Sadokierski, Z 2016, 'From Paratext to Primary Text: New Opportunities for Designers with Print-On-Demand Publishing', *Logos*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 22–30.

Squires, C 2007, *Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

——— 2017, 'Publishing's Diversity Deficit', *Cameo Cuts*, Cameo Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies, Leicester. Available from: http://www2.le.ac.uk/institutes/cameo/cameo-cuts-2.

Stinson, E 2016, 'How Nice Is Too Nice? Australian Book Reviews and the "Compliment Sandwich"', *Australian Humanities Review* 60. Available from: http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2016/11/30/how-nice-is-too-nice-australian-book-reviews-and-the-compliment-sandwich.

Weber, M A 2015, 'Conceptualizing Audience Experience at the Literary Festival', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 84–96.

Wetherbee, P L & Ackerman, J M 2010, 'Making the Case for Disciplinarity in Rhetoric, Composition, and Writing Studies: The Visibility Project', *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 62, no. 1, pp. 180–215.

York, L 2007, *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

——— 2013, *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Author Biographies

Susanne Bartscher-Finzer

Susanne Bartscher-Finzer was a Visiting Academic at the School of Business of the University of the Sunshine Coast in 2012 and 2016. During this time, she undertook research in the publishing industry. In Germany, she is a Professor of Human Resource Management at the University of Applied Sciences in Kaiserslautern. Her research interests and publications focus primarily on Human Resource Strategies in different industries.

David Carter

David Carter is Professor of Australian Literature and Cultural History at the University of Queensland. His new book, *Australian Books and Authors in the American Marketplace, 1840s–1940s*, co-authored with Roger Osborne, will be released by Sydney University Press later in 2017.

Mark Davis

Mark Davis researches and teaches in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne.

Katherine Day

Katherine Day has been working in the publishing industry for over fifteen years. She was an editor at Penguin Group Australia for eight years before freelancing for Penguin Random House, Allen and Unwin, University of Queensland Press, Rockpool Publishing, and Thames and Hudson. She is currently a sessional course coordinator and lecturer in the School of Culture and Communications at the

University of Melbourne. Her areas of interest are the business of publishing and the impact of copyright law on the author–publisher relationship.

Michelle Kelly

Dr Michelle Kelly is the Senior Research Officer and Project Manager of 'Australian Cultural Fields: National and Transnational Dynamics', a Discovery Project funded by the Australian Research Council (DP140101970). Her research interests include reading practices; libraries; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literature; contemporary fiction; Australian literature; and publishing. She is co-editor of 'Transforming cultures? From *Creative Nation* to *Creative Australia*, a special section of *Media International Australia* (2016), and the volume *The Politics and Aesthetics of Refusal* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007). She has published in *Australian Literary Studies*, *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge*, *M/C Journal*, and several edited collections. She is based at the Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University, Australia.

Aaron Mannion

Aaron Mannion is associate publisher at Vignette Press. He is deputy chair of the Small Press Network and co-convener of the Independent Publishing Conference's academic day. His work has been published in *Wet Ink*, *The Sleepers Almanac*, *Island* and elsewhere.

Sophie Masson

French-Australian writer Sophie Masson is the award-winning and internationally-published author of over sixty books for children, young adults and adults. Sophie is also a founding partner and co-director of Christmas Press, a boutique publishing house founded in

2013. Sophie has a Master's degree in French and English literature from the University of New England, and she is currently undertaking a PhD in Creative Practice at the same university.

Alexandra Payne

Alexandra Payne is the Non-fiction Publisher at UQP, one of Australia's most respected independent publishing houses. She has worked in book publishing since 1995. At UQP, Alexandra focuses on publishing books that will inform, move and challenge readers. She is also undertaking a doctorate at QUT, investigating the future of the publisher.

Emmett Stinson

Emmett Stinson is a Lecturer in English and Writing at the University of Newcastle, Australia. He is the author of *Satirizing Modernism* (2017).

David Throsby

David Throsby is Distinguished Professor of Economics at Macquarie University. His current research interests include the economic circumstances of creative artists, culture in sustainable economic development, heritage economics, the creative industries, and the relationships between economic and cultural policy. His recent books include *Economics and Culture* (2001), which has been translated into eight languages, and *The Economics of Cultural Policy* (2010), both published by Cambridge University Press.

Millicent Weber

Millicent Weber is a researcher in the School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne, where she is part of the

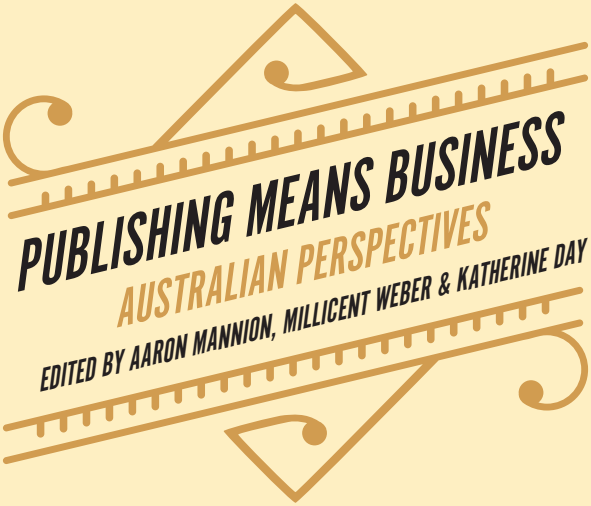
Publishing and Communication program and the Research Unit in Public Cultures. She completed her PhD, a sociology of literary festivals, at Monash University in 2016. Her book, *Literary Festivals and Contemporary Book Culture*, will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018.

Jan Zwar

From 2014 to 2016, Dr Jan Zwar was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow on research funded by the Australian Research Council and Macquarie University, 'The Australian Book Industry: Authors, Publishers and Readers in a Time of Change'. The project was headed by Professor David Throsby, Department of Economics. In 2013 she assisted the Book Industry Collaborative Council with their final report on the future of Australia's book industry.

Editors' Acknowledgements

This book grew out of the 2016 Independent Publishing Conference run by the Small Press Network. We are grateful to the work of the board and staff in making this event such a success. Thanks are due also to Jude Ellison, Violet Hamence-Davies and Melissa Lane, who helped with the proofing of the text. Most importantly, we would also like to thank everyone at Monash University Publishing for their patience and assistance in the production of this book, particularly Laura McNicol Smith, Joanne Mullins, Sarah Cannon and Nathan Hollier.



The Australian publishing industry has transformed itself from a colonial outpost of British publishing to a central node in a truly global publishing industry. Despite challenges, including reduced government support for home-grown authors and the arts, small presses thrive and Australian consumers have access to an unprecedented range of foreign and domestic titles. Social media, big data, print on demand, subscription and new compensation models are subtly reshaping an industry that now also relies on more freelance labour than ever before.

Publishing Means Business examines the current state of this exciting and unpredictable industry, while also asking questions about the broader role of publishing within our culture.

MONASH University Publishing

ISBN: 9781925523249 (pb)
ISBN: 9781925523256 (PDF)
ISBN: 9781925523263 (ePub)
ISBN: 9781925523409 (Mobi)

www.publishing.monash.edu