

“Perverse Incentives” in Expanding Open Access in the Humanities

Charles W atkinson

Director, University of Michigan Press

Associate University Librarian, Publishing, University of Michigan Library

President (2022-2023), Association of University Presses

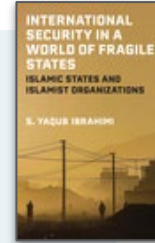
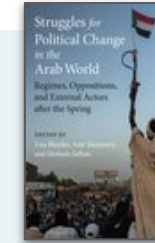
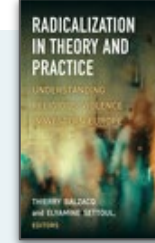
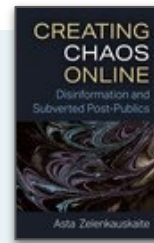
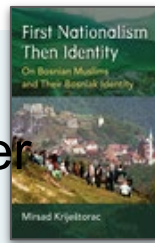
<https://bit.ly/fiesole23>



OA for humanities books is sustainable

- Director of University of Michigan Press
 - Fund to Mission initiative has made 75% of UMP monographs OA in 2023
 - Costs split between: 100+ library supporters, U-M Provost, title subventions, revenue
- Associate University Librarian, Publishing, University of Michigan
 - Lever Press is funded by a consortium of 50+ liberal arts colleges and universities
 - MPS supports both OA (e.g., [Amherst](#)) and restricted access (e.g., [BAR](#)) publishers
- President, Association of University Presses
 - The Association represents ca. 160 non-profit institutional publishers, mostly small
 - The Path to Open partnership with JSTOR explores delayed access open for books

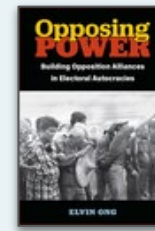
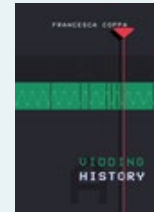
University of Michigan Press Transitioning “legacy” publisher Hybrid “S2Qtype” model



2023-2025

Maintain the transition to 75% OA

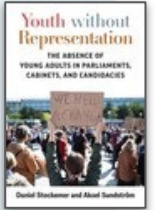
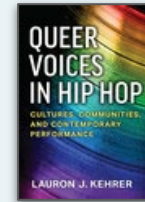
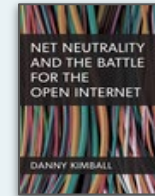
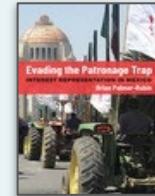
- Reach 150 library sustainers
- Extend UM support
- Increase per title funding



2024-2023

Make the transition to 75% OA

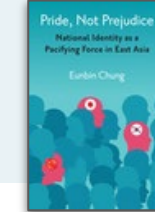
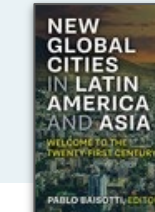
- 2023 = 75% (60 books a year)
- 2022 = 50%
- 2021 = 15%



2020

Start the transition to 75% OA

- Free to read COVID experiment
- Development of business model
- Support from UM leadership



<https://ebc.press.umich.edu/invest>



Lever Press

Born OA, “scaling small”, member-driven

The screenshot shows the Lever Press website with a navigation bar at the top containing 'About', 'Books', 'Series', 'Publish With Us', 'Join Us', 'Impact', 'News', and 'Events'. The main content area features several book listings:

- Like a Captive Bird: Gender and Virtue in Plutarch** by Liane Warren. Description: Liane Warren analyzes Plutarch's ideas about women and gender in *Moralia* and *Lives*. The book examines the divergences between real and ideal, the aims and methods of moral philosophy and pedagogic practice as they relate to identity formation, and Plutarch's theoretical philosophy and metaphysics. Buttons: Read free online, Buy.
- Democratic Criticism: Poetics of Incitement and the Muslim Sacred** by Masoud Raja. Description: Raja encourages Western readers to develop a deeper understanding of the meaning-making processes of the Islamic world while at the same time encouraging the Muslim readers to read representations of the Islamic world with a more expansive understanding. Buttons: Read free online, Buy.
- Meaningful Technologies: How Digital Metaphors Change the Way We Think and Live** by Eric Chown and Fernando Nascimento. Description: Eric Chown and Fernando Nascimento unite approaches from philosophy and the cognitive and computer sciences, the authors focus on the feedback loop between digital metaphor and technology: its meaning, how it changes over time, and how it impacts learning and attention. Buttons: Read free online, Buy.
- La Princesse de Clèves by Lafayette: A New Translation and Bilingual Pedagogical Edition for the Digital Age**. Edited by Hélène E. Bills, Jean-Vincent Blanchard, David Harrison, and Hélène Vincent. Description: This new volume, enriched by translator's notes, provides a bilingual edition of Marie-Madeleine Pioche de La Vergne's original 1676 work to foreground French literary and linguistic context alongside a rich variety of pedagogical dossiers with a wide range of resources and approaches for teaching and exploring the text in twenty-first century courses. Button: Read free online.

At the bottom, there is a footer with the text: "We are a scholarly press supported by more than 50 liberal arts institutions. We publish peer-reviewed, born digital, open access monographs at no cost to our authors or their academic institutions." and a button "Explore our Catalog" next to a small book icon.

The screenshot displays a digital edition interface for the text "Troisième partie" (Part Three) of "La Princesse de Clèves".

- Header:** "Troisième partie" and "Part Three".
- Image:** A circular portrait of Cardinal de Guise, Charles de Guise, with the text "LE ROI EN PROUVANCE. CHARLES DE LORRAINE DUC DE GUISE PAIR DE FRANCE". Below the portrait is a handwritten note: "L'original triomphé de Marfelle captive aux Vieux de la dévotion et lors fourguier aux peuples le Deuarch il reboute Chius. Et pour ses loys eurent la palme et le banner.".
- Text:** The main text is in French, starting with "[249] – Cependant, quelque rempli et quelque occupé que je fusse de cette nouvelle liaison avec la Reine, je tenais à Madame de Thérmines par une inclination naturelle que je ne pouvais vaincre. Il me parut qu'elle cessait de m'aimer, et, au lieu que, si j'eusse été sage, je me fusse tenu du changement qui paraissait en elle pour aider à me guérir, mon amour en redoubla, et je me conduisis si mal, que la Reine eut quelque connaissance de cet attachement. La jalousie est naturelle aux personnes de sa nation, et peut-être que cette Princesse a pour moi des sentiments plus vifs qu'elle ne pense elle-même. Mais enfin le bruit que j'étais amoureux lui donna de si grandes inquiétudes et de si grands chagrins que je me crus cent fois perdu auprès d'elle. Je la rassurai enfin à force de soins, de soumissions et de faux serments; mais je n'aurais pu la tromper longtemps, si le changement de Madame de Thérmines ne m'avait détaché d'elle malgré moi. Elle me fit voir qu'elle ne m'aimait plus; et j'en fus si persuadé, que je fus contraint de ne la pas tourmenter davantage, et de la laisser en repos. Quelque temps après, elle m'écrivit cette Lettre que j'ai perdue. J'appris par là qu'elle avait su le commencement que j'avis eu avec cette autre femme dont je vous ai parlé, et que c'était la cause de son changement. Comme je n'aurais plus rien alors qui me partageât, la Reine était assez contente de moi; mais comme les sentiments que j'ai pour elle ne sont pas d'une nature à me rendre incapable de tout autre attachement, et que l'on n'est pas amoureux par sa volonté, je le suis devenu de Madame de Martignac, pour qui j'avis déjà eu beaucoup d'inclination pendant qu'elle étoit Villenontain, fille de la Reine Thérmines. Par là de ce que vous m'avez écrit, elle voit que..."
- Summary:** "Summary of paragraphs 249–258".
- Navigation:** A sidebar on the left shows a list of characters: "Chevalier de Guise, François de Guise" and "Prince de Condé, Louis de Bourbon".
- Footer:** "Version display" with checkboxes for "Français" and "English", and a progress bar showing "27% • Location 211 of 808".

La Princesse de Clèves by Lafayette: A New Translation and Bilingual Pedagogical Edition for the Digital Age <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.12629286>

<https://www.leverpress.org/>

Path to Open, operated by JSTOR, overseen by ACLS

Delayed OA and trusted partners support “bibliodiversity”

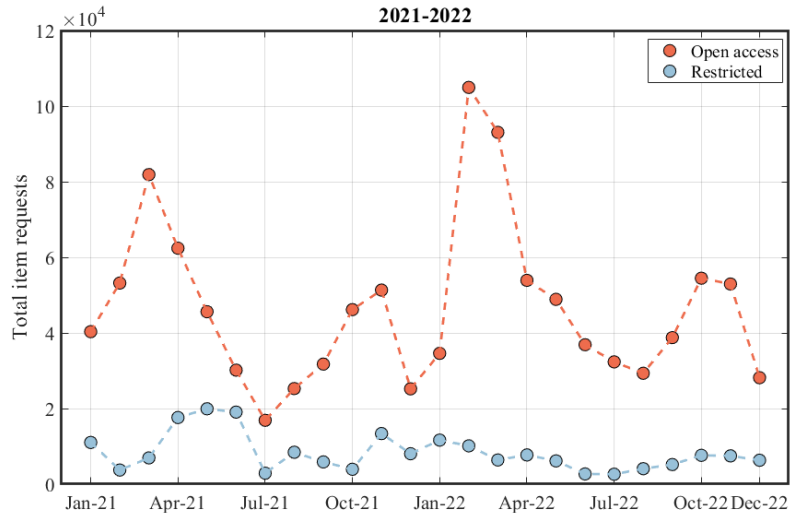


香港中文大學出版社
The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press

- Academic institutions pay an annual subscription fee to access a growing corpus of titles exclusively on JSTOR.
- 100 titles will be published in 2023, then 300+ titles annually over next few years.
- Only participating libraries will provide institutional access to the titles during the first three years after publication.
- At the start of the third year following the publication date, titles will be converted to open access.
- Publishers receive a guaranteed \$5,000 per title at start of year following selection.
- Publishers can make their books available in print and e-consumer versions.
- The initiative uses existing channels and relationships to make OA easy.

<https://about.jstor.org/path-to-open/> and <https://www.acls.org/acls-role-in-path-to-open/>

OA for humanities books is making an impact



Per title use for Michigan OA books is on average 10x higher than for similar restricted access books on our own platform (COUNTER 5 Total Item Requests on Fulcrum during 2022)

Readership for Michigan OA books is global, with many responses from previously disenfranchised readers (Map shows geolocation of respondents to survey)

Feedback from Users

“As a scholar from the global south where access to scholarly literature is limited, this is a welcome gift.”

“I really appreciate this as a reader who does not have access to university libraries.”

“As a person with visual impairment, I found the book contents accessible with my screen reading software.”

“I’m an independent scholar with a very small budget for academic texts. I’m grateful that I can access this one so easily.”

“OA improves the quality of my life as a retiree who likes to read academic books.”

“I’m much more likely to buy a hardcopy book if I can read some or all of it first.”



Three “Perverse Incentives” for humanities scholarship

“A perverse incentive has an unintended and undesirable result that is contrary to the intentions of its designers.”

1. Funder focus constrains what book formats “matter”

“Scholarly publications may include peer-reviewed book chapters, editorials, and peer-reviewed conference proceedings”, OSTP memo, August 25, 2022

“A variety of publishing models already exist to help cover the cost of publishing open access. However, many publishers have already introduced the Chapter Processing Charge (CPC) as their preferred publishing model.” [Jisc Research for UKRI, January 10, 2023](#)

Book chapters fit into the workflows of journal publishers more seamlessly than books. Including read and publish agreements.

They are easier to obtain and deposit for institutional repository managers.

Books presented as a collection of parts appear to show higher COUNTER usage.

BUT . . .

Peer reviews of edited collections focus on connections between chapters; these scholars think at the level of the book not chapter.

The systems of smaller book publishers are generally not set up to parcel content at chapter level, e.g., abstracts, chapterlevel DOIs.

2. Publishing labor that scholars need is devalued

Average Cost by Department



■ Acquisitions ■ Manuscript Editorial ■ Marketing ■ Design ■ Production

An average UMP monograph costs \$20,000 (staffing and direct costs)

- Acquisitions = \$7,800
- Manuscript Editorial = \$3,600
- Marketing = \$4,800
- Design = \$2,600
- Production = \$1,200

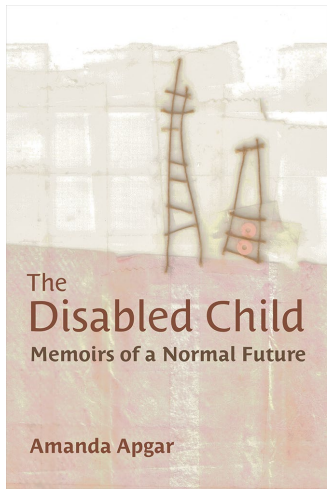
Cut out acquisitions and marketing, the average cost is \$7,400 (£5,800, € 6,700) - but at what price to scholarship?

"Of the 57 books in the study, the average total cost was \$19,954" July 13, 2022

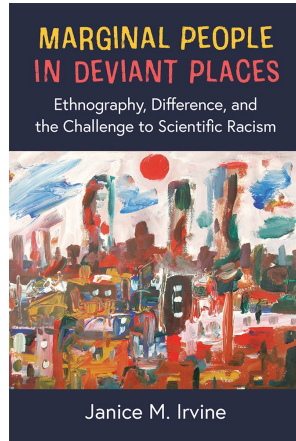
<https://aupresses.org/news/report-the-cost-to-publish-tome-monographs/>



Acquisitions editors at work at a disciplinary conference this case, the Society for American Archaeology meeting.



Apgar: *The Disabled Child* "I am so grateful to my editor who in addition to providing me brilliant insight on developing the manuscript, has been so encouraging and wonderful to work with."



Irvine: *Marginal People in Deviant Places* "I am grateful for [the acquiring editor's] unwavering faith in this book and my writing process, for her incisive comments on multiple drafts, and for generally putting up with me."



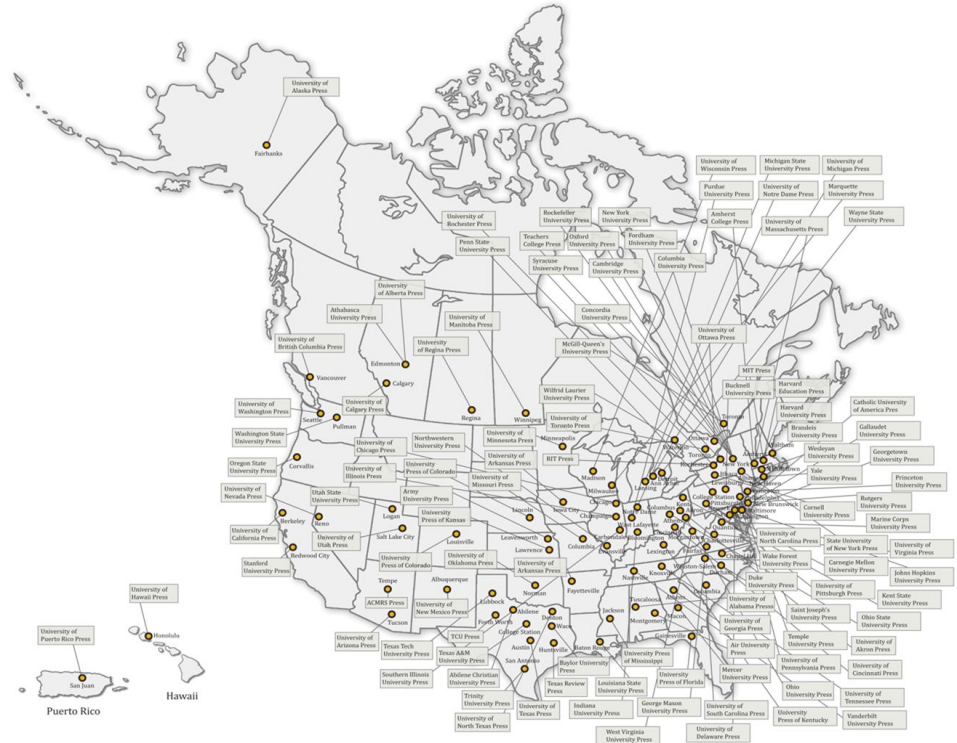
Scott and Affuso: *Sartorial Fandom* "We could not have asked for a better editor or advocate. She has championed this project from its inception, and has been a guiding light throughout the process."

3. Compliance burdens threaten biodiversity

Additional considerations for OA books

- Chapter level files and metadata
- DOIs, ORCIDs, RORs
- Reporting author affiliation
- Explaining and applying CC licenses
- Aggregating, analyzing, sharing usage
- Associated accessibility requirements
- Delivery to OA specific platforms
- Including funder and other data in ONIX
- Navigating different funder rules

Over 50% of Association of University Press members have revenue under \$1.5 million per year and fewer than six staff members.



Thank you

watkin@umich.edu
@charleswatkinso