Knowledge Production Beyond The Book? Performing the Scholarly Monograph in Contemporary Digital Culture

Adema, J.

Knowledge Production Beyond The Book?

Performing the Scholarly Monograph in Contemporary Digital Culture

By

Janneke Adema
2015

Coventry
University

Knowledge Production Beyond The Book?

Performing the Scholarly Monograph in Contemporary Digital Culture

By

Janneke Adema
2015

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the University's requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Contents

SECTION 1. AUTHORSHIP

CHAPTER 3. THE PERSEVERANCE OF PRINT-BASED AUTHORSHIP WITHIN HUMANITIES SCHOLARSHIP

SECTION 2. THE SCHOLARLY SYSTEM OF MATERIAL PRODUCTION AND THE BOOK AS COMMODITY

CHAPTER 4. NARRATIVES OF BOOK FORMATION

CHAPTER 5. NEW MODELS OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION. OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING & EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH PRACTICES

SECTION 3. FIXITY

CHAPTER 6. ON LIQUID BOOKS AND FLUID HUMANITIES

Earlier versions of some of the material in this thesis have been previously published as 'On Open Books and Fluid Humanities,' *Scholarly and Research Communication*, 3(3) (2012); 'Practice what you Preach: Engaging in Humanities Research through Critical Praxis,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 16(5) (2013); 'Open Access', in: *Critical Keywords for the Digital Humanities* (Leuphana: The Centre for Digital Cultures, 2014); and 'Cutting scholarship together/apart. Rethinking the political- economy of scholarly book publishing,' in *The Routledge Companion to Remix Studies*, eds. Eduardo Navas, Owen Gallagher and xtine Burrough (New York: Routledge, 2015).

All of the material in this thesis has been previously published in some form at openreflections.wordpress.com

Abstract

This thesis explores the potential futures of the scholarly monograph in an increasingly digital environment. By positioning the medium of the book as a major site of struggle over the future of scholarly knowledge production within the humanities, this thesis argues for the importance of experimenting with alternative ways of thinking and performing the academic monograph. In particular, it argues for the importance of experiments that go beyond simply iteratively reproducing established print practices of knowledge production, dissemination and consumption. This is especially important when the present print-based arrangements tend to sustain the interest of established stakeholders, inhibiting wider access to scholarly research and experimentation with new forms of scholarship and scholarly communication.

This thesis will examine some of the forms a politics of the book based on openness, remix and liquidity might take. It will draw on some recent experiments in scholarly book publishing—from liquid and living books to anonymous authorship and radical open access—that try to challenge and rethink the book as a fixed and stable commercial object, as well as the political economy and scholarly practices surrounding it. These experiments do so by cutting the book together and apart differently and by exploring experimentation as a specific discourse and practice of critique.

In order to re-envision the future of the scholarly monograph, this thesis will argue that it is essential that we rethink historically constructed concepts such as scholarly (book) authorship, the commodification of the book as object, and the perceived material stability and fixity inherent to the book, as this thesis has set out to do. This will involve an ongoing critical investigation of our academic communication practices, our systems of knowledge production, as well as the debates that surround both scholarly publishing and the past and future of the academic monograph. This thesis will therefore claim that in order to say things about the book's future, we need to explore the material-discursive development of the book, where the book should be seen as a process of mutual becoming: a form of intra-action between different agents and constituencies (human and non-human). The performative materialist vision on the past and future of the book put forward in this thesis, is very different to how the book has traditionally been perceived and historicised within book history, based predominantly on representationalist and dualist (technicist and culturalist) perceptions of media.

This thesis itself can also be seen as an experiment in developing a digital, open research practice through the exploration of the possibilities of remix, liquidity and openness in the thesis's production and format. Starting with the long-form argument that is the thesis itself, it has aimed to actively critique, in form, practice and content, the established print-based notions, politics, and practices within the field of the humanities, in a performative way. This thesis thus imagines the book itself as a space of experimentation, to intervene in the fabric of our scholarship, and to question the hegemonies in scholarly book publishing with the intent to perform scholarship differently.

Acknowledgements

There is no singular point in time that marks the beginning of this book, nor is there an "I" who saw the project through from beginning to end, nor is writing a process that any individual "I" or even group of "I's" can claim credit for. In an important sense, it is not so much that I have written this book, as that it has written me. Or rather, "we" have "intra-actively" written each other ("intra-actively" rather than the usual "interactively" since writing is not a unidirectional practice of creation that flows from author to page, but rather the practice of writing is an iterative and mutually constitutive working out, and reworking, of "book" and "author"). Which is not to deny my own agency (as it were) but to call into question the nature of agency and its presumed localization within individuals (whether human or nonhuman). (Barad 2007: ix–x)

I foremost want to thank Gary Hall and Sarah Kember, who have been ardent collaborators on this project. In their critical and detailed engagement with the various versions of this thesis they were not only the best supervisors one could hope for, but also the envy of many of my doctoral colleagues. The present work wouldn't be here, nor in this form and shape, without their unfailing advice and support.

Similarly I am indebted to Coventry University, not only for providing me with the necessary funds to conduct this project, but also for offering much needed and ongoing managerial, administrative and IT support. I furthermore would like to thank my past and present colleagues at the Media department—which include the members of the *Open Media Group* and my co-workers at the *Centre for Disruptive Media*—as well as academics in other departments, for their support and encouragement, including Elly Clarke, Adrienne Evans, Matthew Hawkins, Stefan Herbrechter, Shaun Hides, Matt Johnston, Sadie Kerr, JongMi Kim, Karen Newman, Jonathan Shaw, Mafalda Stasi, Ross Varney, Pete Woodbridge and Jonathan Worth.

Critical engagement and inspiration came from fellow doctoral candidates, including my dance colleagues Paula Kramer, Gina Giotaki and Gill Williams, whose practical experiences and theoretical insights provided me with a different perspective on my work. Cheng Han, Ye Jin, and Xiaodan Liu supplied a welcoming environment on my arrival in Coventry, and brought moral support while they persevered on their own projects alongside me. During my time at Coventry new PhD students arrived, including Francien Broekhuizen, Danae Mikelli, and Poppy Wilde, and their excitement and enthusiasm to start their thesis work encouraged me to persist during my own final stages.

Support also came from a handful of dear friends who decided to embark on a doctoral project around the same time as I did, albeit in different fields and in different countries. Nonetheless my exchanges with them have been invaluable—as has been, by proxy, the support of their university libraries in acquiring admission to texts I had no ready access to. Therefore my gratitude goes out to Dirk Bakker, Marije Hristova-Dijkstra, and Jeroen Nieuwland.

My enthusiasm for wanting to analyse and reform the field of academic publishing mainly came about through my involvement in the pioneering *Open Access Publishing in European Networks* project. My [OAPEN](#) colleagues, most importantly Eelco Ferwerda, Jean-Claude Guédon, Paul Rutten and Ronald Snijder, have been great mentors and ardent open access advocates. Through my work with OAPEN, I have also discovered a large variety of

Introduction

In this thesis I will explore and experiment with the future of the scholarly book. In doing so, I will raise a number of important questions for our common, print-based, conceptions of the book, and for the monograph in particular, as a specific material and conceptual instantiation of the book.[1] Instead of seeing the monograph as a fixed object, I will present it as an elaborate set of scholarly practices, structures of knowledge production, and discursive formations, which together enact the dynamic and emergent materiality of this medium. At the same time, in a complex interplay of relations, the scholarly book helps to shape the various forms, debates and actants that are involved in the processes of knowledge creation. This double aspect of the book, as both *enacted* and *enacting*, means that the scholarly monograph occupies an important nodal point in this meshwork of relations, and thus plays a vital role in determining what kinds of knowledge are possible. It is therefore extremely important to take account of the ongoing changing materiality of the scholarly book, if we are to understand its potential to enact new institutional forms and to embody and perform different scholarly practices.

Indeed the need to experiment with alternatives is all the more felt in a situation in which our current (heavily print-based) forms and practices of scholarly communication are increasingly becoming problematic—especially in the humanities. Here, a situation has emerged where, as I will set out in detail in this thesis, the present arrangements tend to sustain the interest of established stakeholders, inhibiting wider access to scholarly research and experimentation with new forms of scholarship and scholarly communication. These arrangements are predisposed to be iterative and conservative instead of being open to alterity. In this sense they continue to reproduce what can be seen as essentialising aspects of the book, which include a fetishisation of both the author and the book-object.

Instead I want to imagine more experimental, ethical, and critical futures for the scholarly book in this thesis; futures in which we as scholars take greater responsibility for

---

[1] A monograph is most commonly defined as a self-contained, one-volume, long-form publication, consisting of original research and aimed mainly at an academic audience. Predominantly published by scholarly publishers and acquired by libraries, it remains the preferred means of scholarly research dissemination in the humanities and a prerequisite for career development and tenure in these fields. An extended format is preferred, as it allows scholars to develop multiple intricate arguments and narratives, or a prolonged set of thoughts, meeting the demand for the complex and sometimes idiosyncratic, multifaceted nature of reasoning (Williams et al. 2009: 75). In addition to the monograph's accomplished and complex nature, Thompson argues that it appeals to humanities scholars because it offers more of a space for extensive analysis of large sets of (primary) sources, whereas journal articles serve more as a means to develop critical dialogues (2002).

our continued engagement with the book's becoming. As such, this is something that requires a critical investigation of our academic communication practices, our systems of knowledge production, as well as the debates that surround both scholarly publishing and the past and future of the academic monograph. This thesis can be seen as an example of such an investigation. Additionally, it seeks to encourage other academics to rigorously explore their own relationship and entanglement with the book—and with scholarly communication in general too. Academics should do so in order to both determine what they want the book to be and to examine new ways of being for themselves as critical and engaged scholars.

Why is it important to explore alternative futures for the scholarly book at this time specifically? First of all because it can be argued that the scholarly book and its further development in the humanities is at risk. In saying this I am not referring to a dystopian future in which the printed book is replaced by its digital nemesis—the much-heralded 'death of the book'. I am merely endeavouring to draw attention to the way it is increasingly hard today for specialised and experimental work in the humanities to obtain a formal publishing outlet, whether it be in print or digital format. The reasons for this situation are diverse: ranging from library budget cuts to the ongoing commercialisation of the scholarly publishing industry. Nonetheless, their consequences are wide-reaching. In particular, this state of affairs influences the job prospects of early-career researchers, who are finding it increasingly difficult to get their thesis or first book published. It also affects the quality of scholarly research, in that it is now extremely hard to publish academic monographs that are highly specialised, difficult or radical. Instead, whether a book can find a publisher or not is tending to be determined more and more by its marketability, not by its value or quality as a piece of scholarship.

The mechanisms behind this so-called monograph crisis have by now been well-discussed (Thompson, J. 2005, Willinsky 2005, Greco et al. 2006, Hall 2008, Adema and Ferwerda 2009, Fitzpatrick 2011b, Adema and Hall 2013) and are, as I will set out in this thesis, ultimately connected to the overall neoliberalisation of the university. However, although strongly invested in developing a critique of the political economy of scholarly publishing, I do not intend to put forward a 'crisis' narrative regarding the academic book, scholarly publishing or the humanities in general (Drucker 2014b). I don't want to do so for the simple reason that it can be argued that the humanities have always been in crisis and that humanities book publishing has never been financially self-sustainable (Cooper and Marx 2014, Kember 2014). I am thus not intending to overcome this condition via the

route of technological utopianism or the search for new sustainable business models; or by defending an idealised past system of values associated with the (printed) book and the humanities. I am more interested in embracing this 'crisis' or messiness to some extent, in order to explore the potentialities or so-called 'lines of flight' that seep out of these ongoing and indeterminate contingencies, both for the book and for the humanities. I will therefore critically examine some of the affirmative projects, ideas and concepts that are currently trying to explore alternative potential futures for the book—the difficulties mentioned above notwithstanding.

In addition to the potential offered by the scholarly book to critique and provide alternatives to the current political economy of publishing, as described above, there are further reasons why it is important to explore the scholarly book as it is presently unfolding. The book's changing materiality also offers us the opportunity to critique the iterative print-based habits in scholarly communication. Even though shorter forms—from articles to mid-length monographs—along with collaboration and team-work, are becoming increasingly common, and indeed could be said to have always been an essential aspect of humanities scholarship, the authority of the printed long-form argument and all that it entails (e.g. fixity, stability, the single author, originality, copyright), continues to dominate the humanities. As part of this, the monograph, as a specific media technology, is being continuously shaped and reproduced in certain ways: by academic professional and disciplinary structures, where the printed monograph serves as the dominant vehicle for promotion and tenure; and by the publishing industry, where the bound book format remains its main commodity form for the humanities. This partly explains why the digital, with its perceived affordances of openness, fluidity and disintermediation, is seen by many as posing such a disruptive threat to both the traditional values of the humanities and to the business models of academic publishing. In this respect the dichotomous nature of many of the debates over the future of the book (i.e. print vs. digital) can be traced back to a much larger struggle related to power structures and to who controls (new) knowledge and communication systems within academia.

That said, it is perhaps worth emphasising that in my critique of this print-based legacy that continues to structure academia, it is not my intention to position the printed book *in opposition to* the digital book.[2] However, I am interested in how this often highly

---

[2] I will rather look towards breaking down the binary relationship between print and digital that is repeatedly put forward in narratives related to the future of the book—based on supposedly essential differences between the two. Phil Pochoda's work serves as a clear example of this practice when he talks about the distinction between what he calls an 'analogue' publishing system ('bounded, stable, identifiable, well ordered,

agonistic battle over the future of the book (which also tends to draw on the 'crisis' rhetoric mentioned previously, i.e. 'the death of the book') leads to a situation in which essentialised mythical affordances such as individual authorship, fixity, authority, originality and trust have come to be connected to a specific format, i.e. print. This is the case even though book historian Adrian Johns has argued extensively that the elements of trust invested in print publications were in large part the result of social structures and systems that were negotiated and put in place (Johns 1998)—and so were not natural or essential to print at all. This defensive stance on the future of the book, based on an idealised print past, is something I want to investigate and critique in this study. I want to do so first and foremost in order to emphasise the non self-identical condition of texts: print is not fixed and stable—not in its production, its dissemination, or in its reception—and it has also never been stable (Drucker 2009). Witness our need for bibliographical studies and critical editing to try to recover the presumed original state of a work (from Shakespeare to the Bible), for example. Furthermore, my critique also aims to expose the power struggles, the politics, and the value systems that lie behind our hegemonic print-based habits and debates, and aims to explore whether, through our practices and actions, we can offer alternatives to perform the book differently, in potentially more ethical ways. This is all the more important where it can be argued that the current print-based system is maintained— not least via elaborate reputation and reward systems—to protect the vested interests of those in power: from publishers to universities and governments. All are stakeholders in a system, which, one could argue, is no longer facilitating the universal sharing and exchange of research to a public that pays for its production.

This critique of our print-based systems and practices notwithstanding, the ebook is similarly encapsulated in formative processes and structures. As a result, essentialising attributes or properties, such as openness and fluidity, are also accorded to the digital format. Nonetheless, I want to argue that, on the whole, both sides in this debate (print and digital) still very much cling to concepts connected to the bound and printed book. Even when it comes to experiments with the book that are proposed by those working in an online context, most of the time digital substitutes are being sought for stability, authority and quality. This can be seen as an attempt to structure the digital according to the academic arrangements and value systems that, as scholars, we have grown accustomed to with print. To provide some examples of the kind I will be coming back to during this

---

and well policed'), and a 'digital' publishing system ('relatively unbounded and stochastic, composed of units that are inherently amorphous and shape shifting, and marked by contested authorization of diverse content') in terms of an 'epistemic shift' (2012).

thesis: wikis, seen by some as *the* exemplary fluid and collaborative technology of the digital environment, are set up in such a way that any edits that are made to them, as well as information concerning who made these edits, are easily retrievable; Creative Commons licenses, designed to make the sharing and reuse of materials easier, are still based on underlying liberal notions of authorship and ownership, and instead of offering an alternative to copyright only really reform it (Cramer 2013, Hall 2014); and finally, the remixer, curator or collector, often positioned as offering a radical critique of the individual and original author, has merely succeeded in adopting the latter's position and authority. In other words, instead of experimenting with the new medium, and fundamentally critiquing the systems and values on which the book is based (including notions of authorship, ownership and originality), many experiments with digital monographs are simply aiming to emulate print. The fact that digital books are finding it difficult to move beyond these kinds of print-based aspects, is further fuelled by a discourse and a system of power relations that has invested heavily in the print-based system. For instance, think of the (initial) reluctance among publishers to experiment with open access, and their continued use of digital rights management (DRM) on ebooks to mimic print-based copyright mechanisms. What I am therefore interested in with this thesis is experiments that explore the book, its debates, and its practices and systems affirmatively—no matter in what kind of format, whether it be manuscript, print, digital, hybrid or post-digital print format. Experiments, in other words, that imagine the book itself as a space of experimentation, as a space to intervene in the fabric of our scholarship, and as a space to question the hegemonies in scholarly book publishing with the aim to perform scholarship differently.

Who then is currently experimenting with the book in these ways, and why? Think, for example, of scholars who want to change the way quality is established through experiments with new forms of (open) peer review; or of academics who want to critique the myth of single individual authorship by exploring forms of collaborative and even anonymous authorship; or of those who want to question the commodification of the book by exploring both gift economies and the opening up of the book through forms of open access; or related, to that, who want to explore the fixity of the book through experiments with reuse and the remixing of material; or who want to critique the objectification and bound nature of the book by working with processual works, with liquidity and versionings. Yet most of all I am interested in scholars who see the book as lying at the basis of our system of knowledge production in the humanities, and for whom changing, rethinking and reimagining the book is seen as an important and perhaps even

essential (first) step towards reimagining a different, more ethical humanities, albeit a humanities that is messy and processual, contingent, unbound and unfinished.

By focusing on the future of the book specifically, I do not want to neglect the book's past or present condition, since both stages are fundamentally wrapped up in the book's further becoming. I am interested in the book's ongoing development—the book to come, in Blanchot's words—which is always unfolding in an enveloping move with its past and future (2003). Past, present and future are here seen as relative concepts where a different reading of the past reconfigures the book's future, and vice versa.[3] I will therefore focus equally on the history of the book and on its discursive formation in this study, taking into account how a specific reading and (re)reading of that history shapes the book's present and future.

The importance of the book's history (i.e. the influence of the book's past materiality and systems of material production) on the medium's present and future condition has always been acknowledged within book studies. However, as I will argue in chapter 2 of this thesis, not enough attention has been given in past and current models of book history to how book history *writing* has shaped the book's becoming. I therefore want to analyse the specific manner in which book history has been written and I want to explore the vision of the book that has been brought forward by the prevailing discourse on book history.[4] For example, as I will set out in more detail in chapter 2, the discourse on book history is highly dichotomous, based on various sets of oppositions related to the description of the book (e.g. book/society). Furthermore, the book itself is mostly described in an 'objective' way—disconnected from us as scholars and unrelated to our communication practices—as an object that either has agency or that has agency inflicted upon it. There is also an object-centred approach that lies at the heart of book history— which has been criticised by among others Johanna Drucker (2014a)—an approach which envisions the book as an object instead of as an interconnected and relational process or event. Finally, one of book history's major themes has always been the causal relation between the book on the one hand and culture or society on the other hand.

---

[3] As Karen Barad eloquently argues: 'Which is not to say that emergence happens once and for all, as an event or as a process that takes place according to some external measure of space and of time, but rather that time and space, like matter and meaning, come into existence, are iteratively reconfigured through each intra-action, thereby making it impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future' (2007: ix).

[4] When I talk about discourse in this thesis, I use it as simultaneously a single and plural concept, where a discourse always already encapsulates several debates, and can refer to a single debate on a given topic as well as to a plurality of interconnected debates.

Contrary to this, in the second part of chapter 2, I want to emphasise that the book and society cannot be disconnected so easily in this kind of oppositional thinking, as both are always already entangled. In this respect, I will argue that book historians and media theorists need to give due recognition to the inherent connectedness of the various elements and agencies involved in the becoming of the book. This includes our own discursive as well as material entanglement with the book as scholars, where our book histories are inherently performative, meaning that our specific depiction of the book's history is incremental in shaping its future to come. This becomes even more pertinent if we take into consideration the way we as academics are not only influencing the becoming of the book through our *discursive* actions (i.e. through our descriptions of the book's past, our reflections on its current condition, and our speculation on its potential future); we simultaneously shape the book through our *material* scholarly practices (i.e. in our usage of the book as a specific medium to publish and communicate our findings about its being and development). I therefore aim to intervene in this discourse—which up to now has mainly adhered to forms of representationalism and binary thinking—by focusing on its inherent performativity and by paying extra attention to how studies of the book in their description of the book object, its history and becoming, have influenced its present and future incarnations.[5] In this thesis I will thus be exploring the genealogy of the book and the assumptions that lie behind our scholarly historical descriptions of the book medium.

A specific focus on a genealogy of the book, focusing on its historicity and temporality, needs to simultaneously consider the book's emergent materiality, which encompasses both the systems of material production that have surrounded the book in its ongoing development (including our scholarly practices), as well as the specific material formats of the book (i.e. manuscript, digital), with all their potentials and limitations. I am particularly interested here in the way the material agency of the book influences how we think and act as scholars and how we communicate our findings. This also includes a recognition of how the materiality of the codex book is actively structuring the digital becoming of the book, for example. On the other hand the specific affordances of the digital book simultaneously create conditions for new forms of knowledge and new

---

[5] I am drawing on the work of Judith Butler and her notion of performativity as both iteration and transformation here. Performativity as a practice of repetition can then be seen as a (collective, social) re-enactment of already socially established and constructed meanings. However, performativity is also anti-essentialist and productive, an iterative doing which produces both signification and material effects. We can thus repeat our (scholarly) practices differently, making performativity into an emancipatory concept through which we can change and intervene (through) our practices, even within restraining socio-cultural formations (Butler 2006: 178). Barad reformulates Butler's theory of performativity towards a theory of posthumanist performativity, emphasising the materiality and material dimensions of bodies, and discursive practices (2007).

scholarly practices (or at least they have the potential to do so). The book is thus an embodied entity, materially established through its specific affordances in relationship to its production, dissemination, and reception, i.e. the specific materiality of the digital book is partly an outcome of these ongoing processes. As Katherine Hayles has aptly stated:

> In this view of materiality, it is not merely an inert collection of physical properties but a dynamic quality that emerges from the interplay between the text as a physical artifact, its conceptual content, and the interpretive activities of readers and writers. Materiality thus cannot be specified in advance; rather, it occupies a borderland— or better, performs as connective tissue—joining the physical and mental, the artifact and the user. (2004: 72)

I will therefore conceptualise the material development of the book as being inseparable from its discursive becoming, where I want to emphasise that discourse is always already material, and material always already discursive. Instead of positioning the two in opposition to each other, or exploring in which way the one influences the other—which has been the dominant tendency in the discourse on book history—I will, following Barad, explore these discursive and material elements in an entanglement. These elements cannot be ontologically separated, only temporarily 'cut' when we distinguish between a book object and an author subject, for example (Barad 2007). I will therefore claim that in order to say things about the book's future, we need to explore the material-discursive development of the book, where the book, as stated before, should be seen as a process of mutual becoming: a form of interaction between different agents and constituencies (human and non-human). My aim with this thesis is to explore a different, alternative future for the book, through a rereading of its past and future and a further reimagining, both in theory and practice, of its material evolvement. In this respect this thesis is performative: it is actively involved in and takes responsibility for the becoming of the scholarly book and wants to explore how it can enable different cuts in its development, cuts that might promote a more ethical involvement (by us as scholars) with the book as it unfolds.

After chapter 2, I will explore critically the material changes the monograph has experienced through three interconnected examples of material-discursive book-formations, which have been important in promoting and advancing the book's print-based features. I will discuss these book-formations in three separate sections, which will together constitute the main body of the thesis. Firstly, in section 1 (chapter 3), I will

explore *academic authorship* as a specific scholarly practice that is intrinsically connected to the scholarly book, and which binds it together, through the notion of the work. In this section I will examine authorship from a historical, theoretical and practical perspective. I will then analyse several recent practical experiments with both authorship critique (hypertext, remix, collaboration) and anti-authorship critique (plagiarism, anonymous authorship). This will lead to an exploration of the potential for a posthumanist critique of authorship and, as an extension of this, possible forms of posthumanist authorship. Secondly, in section 2 (chapter 4 and 5), I will examine an example of a material formation, i.e. scholarly publishing, and the *commodification of the book object*, which takes place through the formal publication of scholarly materials. In chapter 4, I will explore the narratives that have surrounded the material production and commodification of the book-object in publishing and academia, and, in chapter 5, I will look at potential opportunities for intervention in the current cultures of knowledge production—with a particular focus upon book publishing projects that have explored radical open access and experimentation as forms of intervention and critique. Finally, in section 3 (chapter 6), I will take an in-depth look at what is perceived to be one of the codex format's specific material attributes, namely *fixity*, and the forces of binding created and imposed upon the codex format. Alongside this, I will examine a number of current digital experiments focused on more processual forms of scholarly research, most notably in the form of fluid, remixed, and modular books. I will then explore these issues of stability and process in more depth, by looking at the concept of the cut as theorised in new materialism, continental philosophy and remix studies.

These three material-discursive practices and formations will be read transversally through a reframed discourse on book history, which will introduce each section, exploring the respective formation from a historical perspective. Parallel to these examples of book-formation—which have been fundamental to the way print-based features and practices were commodified and essentialised—I will discuss various forces of *unbinding* that are being examined in digital environments at the moment. I will analyse three practices and/or concepts of unbinding in particular—where both these triads of book formation and unbinding represent the 'essentialising aspects' of the print and digital medium—, namely: *openness, liquidity* and *remix. Openness* can be understood as a disruptive force with respect to existing business and publishing models in academic publishing, whereby open forms of book publishing enable the universal sharing of scholarly research, which can be seen as a threat to the commodification of scholarship. *Liquidity* can be seen to put the

supposed fixity and stability of scholarly communication at risk, through experiments with the linking, updating and versioning of scholarly publications. Finally, *remix* can be regarded as a critique of originality and individual authorship, simultaneously exploring the interconnectedness and networked relationships of scholarly texts. I will critically analyse the potential and shortcomings of the various experiments that are currently being conducted with or along the lines of these three practices and concepts. Furthermore, with the aid of these practices and concepts I will try to rethink and re-perform the three examples of binding described above—which function as the three themes framing this thesis on the future of the book, i.e. scholarly (book) authorship, the commodification of the book as object, and the perceived material stability and fixity inherent to the book. I will do so by exploring how they have the potential to offer different ways of doing authorship, conceive what an 'open' scholarly system might entail, and conceptualise an alternative to the binary between the book as product and process.

I will begin this thesis however with an overview of the theoretical and methodological frameworks that will serve to ground my argument. In chapter 1, I will establish connections with the main thinkers and theories this thesis builds upon, which include the material-discursive genealogies of Foucault and the agential realism of Barad, contemporary (materialist) media theories of (re-)mediation and media archaeology, and theories of feminist new materialism. I will use these theories to help develop the specific performative materialist approach towards the scholarly monograph that I will be adopting in this thesis, in which I aim to position the monograph within a wider meshwork of processual relations.

Integral to the theoretical framework that accompanies this thesis, is the practical methodology that will be developed as a form of *critical praxis*. Engaging in a *critical praxis* can prevent us as scholars from simply repeating established practices without analysing critically the assumptions on which they are based. Critical praxis then refers to the awareness of and the reflection on, how our ideas become embodied in our practices, making it possible to transform them. To illustrate what a critical praxis might look like, and how it can envision and create an alternative system, this thesis can be seen as an experiment in developing a digital, open research practice. By exploring (while at the same time remaining critical of) the possibilities of remix, liquidity and openness in this research's conduct and format—among others through the use of a weblog, various open archiving media and a multimodal or hypermedia platform—the way this dissertation is

produced, distributed and consumed becomes an integral part of its critical, interventionist and performative stance.

The approach adopted here has a specific political-economic dimension in the sense that it aims to question and disturb the existing scholarly publishing model—which is still focused on only publishing the final outcomes of research—by making the research for this thesis available for reuse online as it develops in the form of blog posts, papers, tweets, presentations, draft chapters, remixes, etc. This raises all kinds of interesting questions. For instance, when and why do we declare a work done? When do we declare ourselves authors? And how do we establish our connections with others in this respect? These are intrinsically ethical questions too, where ethics is not external, but always already present in our practices and institutions and performed through them (Levinas 1979, Derrida 1999). This thesis is therefore also an ethical intervention in the sense that it wants to focus on the potentials and boundaries of our scholarly practices, and on our entanglements with the book, and the cuts we make in and through it. How can we make ethical, critical cuts in our scholarship whilst at the same time promoting a politics of the book that is open and responsible to change, difference and that which is excluded? Experimenting critically with the materiality of the scholarly book and the way our system of scholarly communication currently operates will, as I will argue in this thesis, be a meaningful step towards such a continuous ethical engagement.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

1.1 Theoretical Framework

1.1.1 Excavating the Histories of the Book

Over the centuries the printed book has left its mark on culture and society and on the ways in which we perceive the world and structure our thoughts. However the book is also a very *historical* format in the sense that, as a material form of textual transmission, it has been produced and consumed in specific ways over the course of its existence. The printed book had a specific birth and rise with the invention of the printing press in the 1440s, for example. Meanwhile, the 'death of the (printed) book', as a meme, has occurred several times during its more than 500 years existence, mostly in reaction to the development of new media (i.e. newspapers, radio, television, CD-ROMs) that were perceived as being bound to replace the book.[6] Nowadays, with the growing popularity of ebooks, the debate is rife yet again over whether printed books will start to see a future point of decline—or will perhaps disappear entirely—or whether their stronghold on culture and society is so powerful that they will be able to weather yet another storm.[7]

The printed book format has from its early beginnings been of the utmost importance as a specific material form of scholarly communication, especially for the scholarly monograph as a particular physical embodiment of the concept of the book. Since the rise of modern science and scholarship the scholarly monograph, in common with the academic journal, has for the most part been produced, distributed and consumed in printed and bound codex formats. For the majority of scholars the printed book format produced in an academic setting (i.e. published and distributed by an academic publisher) has thus become synonymous with formal scholarly communication. With the development of digital forms of communication, this analogous relationship between print

---

[6] For one overview of 'the death of the book' through the ages, see Leah Price's article 'Dead Again' (2012). See also the first chapter of Alessandro Ludovico's book *Post-Digital-Print*, titled 'The Death of Paper (which never happened)', which looks at the history of threats to the printed medium (2012).

[7] Whether media ever die or continue to live on as residue or in the subconscious archives of our society (from where they get historicised and/or re-appropriated) is the question Garnet Hertz and Jussi Parikka approach through their concept of zombie media: 'Zombie media is concerned with media that is not only out of use, but resurrected to new uses, contexts and adaptations' (2012: 429),

and formal scholarly communication has become increasingly uncertain and the future of the scholarly book is (once again) heavily debated.[8] Whether the monograph of the future will exist in print, digital, hybrid or post-digital print forms, is something that is currently being struggled over by the various constituencies that surround the production, distribution, and consumption of academic books. If we want to explore the potential future(s) of the scholarly monograph in an increasingly digital environment however, it is essential to examine the histories of the book in relationship to the practices and institutions that have accompanied the monograph. We need to analyse the specific contexts out of which the book as a technology co-emerged, simultaneously shaped by and shaping the environments that enabled its becoming.[9] This allows us to take a closer look at how the book form has developed from writing systems such as wax tablets and scrolls, to codices and ebooks—to cite a few of the most obvious examples.[10] It also provides us with an opportunity to explore how the scholarly monograph, as a specific material form of scholarly communication, came to be what it is today. How did it continue to evolve along certain historically structured paths, influencing and shaping scholarly communication at the same time? Even more importantly, and as I will demonstrate in more detail in chapter 2, it allows us to gain an overview of the various discourses that have surrounded the history of the book and how they have developed over the last decades as specific co-existing material configurations of the book. This will help us to reconstruct various different (or conflicting) genealogies of the scholarly book, in order to explore how it came

---

[8] Technological change and the development of new media (i.e. the coming of photography, film, digital media) have over the history of the book triggered debates about the book's future, and about the possible demise of its printed form. With respect to the scholarly book and scholarly communication, the situation has not been significantly different. The development of ebooks has triggered many possible futures for the scholarly book—from pyramidical structures (Darnton 1999) to universal libraries (Kelly 2006)—but at the same time it has also shown cultural, economic, political and practical constraints to these utopian visions due to, among others, the interests surrounding the economics of printing and distribution and the constructive power of print-based scholarly practices (Borgman 2007: 160).

[9] The scholarly book was an important component of the manuscript tradition. Nonetheless, the history of the scholarly book in its modern form (i.e. as it is related to forms of modern science and scholarship) for the most part overlaps with the rise and history of print publishing. Even so, the manuscript book continued to play an important role in early-modern scholarly communication—let alone in forms of oral communication (McKitterick 2000: 25–26).

[10] For most people the book as material form and concept coincides with the codex format (i.e. sheets of paper bound or fastened together at one side). As book historian Roger Chartier writes regarding the importance of the codex format as a metaphor for our understanding of the world:

> At the same time, the end of the *codex* will signify the loss of acts and representations indissolubly linked to the book as we now know it. In the form that it has acquired in Western Europe since the beginning of the Christian era, the book has been one of the most powerful metaphors used for conceiving of the cosmos, nature, history, and the human body. If the object that has furnished the matrix of this repertory of images (poetic, philosophical, scientific) should disappear, the references and the procedures that organize the 'readability' of the physical world, equated with a book in *codex* form, would be profoundly upset as well. (1994: 90–91)

to be the institution that it is today. How did the scholarly book attain the material form we are now so familiar with and in what way did this entail changes in its production systems? How were the cultural perceptions and practices the monograph carries with it and enables, established? Reconstructing the genealogies of the scholarly book in this way, will allow us to investigate how our historical discourses and practices will in the future continue to shape the material becoming of the book—both as object and concept—simultaneously affecting the larger scholarly communication system of which it is a part.

1.1.2 Remediation and Genealogy

Excavating the histories of the book is also important in order to illustrate how 'new media' (ebooks, printed books) have historically remediated 'old media' (printed books, manuscripts) and to explore the influence of other new media, such as film, television, and digital media, on the development of the printed book as well as the ebook. Remediation, as understood by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, is one of the theoretical frameworks that have been developed to conceptualise some of the continuities between media, and to explain the continuous resurfacing of the old in the new (and vice versa, the adaptation of the old to the new).[11] As media theorists Sarah Kember and Joanna Zylinska point out, remediation does not emphasise a separation between the past and the present and between new and old media in the form of technological convergence. Rather, Bolter and Grusin critique visions of history as linear and teleological, and favour the idea of history as a contingent genealogy: nonlinear and cyclical (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 8). To expand on this, it is important to stress the political, cultural and economic forces that (re)mediate media and to emphasise—with respect to the constructive power of scholarly practices, for instance—the performative power of our own daily practices in reproducing and remediating the printed monograph in the digital domain. As Bolter and Grusin state: 'No medium today, and certainly no single media event, seems to do its cultural work in isolation from other media, any more than it works in isolation from other social and economic forces. What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media' (1999: 14–15).

Katherine N. Hayles is an important theorist to have argued for the importance of a more 'robust notion of materiality' in media studies, especially in the realm of print and

---

[11] More recently Grusin has focused on processes of premediation, where the future is increasingly already pre-mediated and constructed through (online, social) media, which remediate future media practices and technologies (2010).

hypertext. Hayles' campaign for 'media specific analysis' (MSA) is very valuable in this context too, where she argues that the meaning of a text is integrally entwined with its materiality or 'physicality'. Texts are thus embodied entities, and materiality an emergent property, 'existing in a complex dynamic interplay with content' (and additionally contingent through the user's interactions with the work) (Hayles 2004: 67). For Hayles, MSA is then 'a mode of critical interrogation alert to the ways in which the medium constructs the work and the work constructs the medium' (2002: 6). She is sensitive to the influence of what D. F. McKenzie calls the 'social text' (1999) on the materiality of the book, in this sense extending her notion of materiality towards 'the social, cultural, and technological practices that brought it into being' and the practices it enacts (Hayles 2003: 275–276). Hayles focuses less, however, on the historical discourses and narratives that she herself and her scholarly colleagues have constructed on the meaning, definition, and the future and past of the book, and on the continued performative influence of these discourses on the evolving materiality of the book (and vice versa). As stated above, this reflexive act of being aware of and critical of one's own practices and contributions to the larger discourse, whilst rethinking and re-performing them, is what I intend to focus on in this thesis, extending from the tradition of feminist re-readings and rewritings of (masculine) discourses (Butler 1993, Grosz 1993, Threadgold 1997).

Foucault's concepts of archaeology and genealogy are of the utmost importance to this study and provide key reasons as to the relevance of analysing the history of the (scholarly) book. Foucault's historiographical methodology allows us to explore and understand the emergence and development of book (historical) discourses from within certain contexts and practices, whilst simultaneously highlighting the critical and performative possibilities of (re-)reading these discourses differently. Foucault uses his archaeological method to investigate how a certain object or discourse has originated and sustained itself; how its conditions of existence have been shaped by discourses and institutions and the rise of certain cultural practices; and how this exploration of the past of a certain object or discourse, aides us in understanding its present condition better and enables us to rethink the new in the light of the old. Foucault emphasises the way in which our historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge and thus how our foundational concepts can be seen as the effects and the outcomes of specific formations of power (1969: 5). In his later genealogical strategy, Foucault critiques readings of origin in his search for minor knowledges arising from local discursivities, drawing attention to neglected, alternative and counter histories that have developed in the

subconscious of a discourse's development. As Dreyfus and Rabinow argue, in his archaeological practice, Foucault initially focused more on how a discourse organises itself and the practices and institutions it is directed at, while neglecting the way a discourse is itself embedded in and affected by these practices and institutions. In his genealogical approach, this original focus on an autonomous discourse is subjected to a thorough critique (Dreyfus et al. 1983: xii). Origins are then seen as embedded in political stakes where genealogy investigates the institutions, practices and discourses that come to determine a hegemonic origin against multiple and diffuse points of origin. Foucault's interest here lies in how truth-claims emerge and how we can read them differently. With his critique of established historical readings or discourses—which thus function as systems of authority and constraint—Foucault wants to focus on the heterogeneity of histories, to emancipate historical knowledges from subjection and to enable them to struggle against a hegemonic unitary discourse (1980a: 83).

This shift in Foucault's approach from archaeology to genealogy has been characterised as a move in his work from an emphasis on structuralism to poststructuralism (a characterisation Foucault would not use himself, he denied ever having been a structuralist) (Dreyfus et al. 1983: xi–xii). On the other hand it has been emphasised that the narrative of a shift from archaeology to genealogy and structuralism to poststructuralism in Foucault's thought is too simplistic, and can even be seen as structuralist (and teleological) itself, arguing that the two strategies cannot be so easily contrasted and opposed. Green states, for instance, that the shift from archaeology to genealogy did not really constitute a reversal in Foucault's basic stance. Elements of post-structuralism and genealogy are already identifiable in Foucault's supposedly 'structuralist', and 'archaeological' works (Green 2004). As Foucault once said in an interview: 'My archaeology owes more to Nietzschean genealogy than to structuralism properly called' (1996: 31). Green refers to the works of Davidson (1986), who sees the supposed shift not as a replacement but as an integration of the archaeology in a wider genealogical framework, and Mahon (1992), who sees the relationship between archaeology and genealogy as one of a method and its goal.

The overview of the histories of the book I am providing in this thesis will thus present archaeology and genealogy as related and in many ways complementary concepts and strategies.[12] In this respect this study is archaeologically informed as it is interested in

---

[12] In 'Two Lectures', Foucault gives a definition of both the archaeological and the genealogical method, which emphasises their integration and complementarities: 'If we were to characterise it in two terms, then 'archaeology' would be the appropriate methodology of this analysis of local discursivities, and 'genealogy'

the origins and development of both: the current dominant discourse surrounding the printed book (and more specifically the scholarly monograph) in its transition to the digital environment; and of the book format under the influence of this discourse (and vice versa). It will however be genealogical, too, in the sense that it will pay specific attention to the formations of power that influence and determine both this discourse and the dominant descriptions and analyses of this discourse, and with that the book as object as it has developed and continues to develop in an increasingly digital environment. In this thesis I will thus pay attention to the emergence of scholarly practices and institutions in the Western academic world that influenced the development of specific discourses surrounding the book and the book's material manifestations. Furthermore, I will also pay close attention to alternative readings of the history of the book and its institutions. How did they emerge and for what reasons? How can we already find these alternative readings 'within' the dominant discourses, instead of presenting them as dialectically opposed?[13] In this study I will search for ruptures and discontinuity from within through a transversal discursive reading, emphasising the heterogeneous character of the discourse on the history of the book and how it has been constructed. As part of this 're-framing of the discourse', I will propose a diffractive reading to capture the book's historical debate as it evolves.[14] This will involve a re-framing of the history of the book and the material formations and practices that have accompanied it (from authorship to openness): by diffractionally reading the oppositional discourses through each other, to emphasise their entanglement and to push them to their limits by juxtaposing them; by laying more emphasis on the humanist tendencies in this discourse, their ongoing influence and the performative attempts to critique them; and finally, by drawing more attention to the performativitity of these material-discursive formations, and our own entanglements as scholars in their becoming.

This will highlight the multiple, mutually entangled, aspects of the discourse in its becoming, as well as leaving space for heterogeneous discursivities within this framework. In chapter 2 of this thesis, on historical book discourses and discursive practices, I will attempt to outline the basic contours of such an alternative vision of the book historical past. In the remainder of this thesis I will then focus my efforts on re-framing the

---

would be the tactics whereby, on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledges which were thus released would be brought into play' (1980b: 85).

[13] See, for instance, the alternative genealogy of openness discussed in chapter 5, which aims to break down binaries between open and closed and open and secret, as well as the perception that the discourse on openness is not heterogeneous and critical enough.

[14] A more in depth discussion of this diffractive reading will be provided at the end of chapter 2.

contemporary history of the scholarly book—by rethinking historically constructed humanist concepts such as scholarly (book) authorship (chapter 3), the commodification of the book as object (chapter 4 and 5), and the perceived material stability and fixity inherent to the book (chapter 6).

1.1.3 Performativity and Entanglement

This re-framing of the history of the book will acknowledge and take responsibility for its performativity in bringing about and arguing for both an alternative past and future for the book and scholarly communication. This alternative historiography, which will be developed further in chapter 2, is very different to how the book has traditionally been perceived and historicised. I will show how, traditionally, the book has been understood mostly as a passive object or an active agent, with not enough acknowledgement being given to the entangled nature of agencies and our own involvement as scholars, book historians and media theorists in these entanglements. Within the discourse on book history, oppositional thinking (i.e. in the form of technological determinism vs. cultural constructionism, evolution vs. revolution, localism vs. globalism, bookservatism vs. technofuturism) continues to structure the debate, based as we will see predominantly on representationalist and dualist (technicist and culturalist) perceptions of media. What I want to emphasise instead is media discursive practices *as performances*. Based on a reading of the later work of Foucault, and its understanding of power and discourse as productive and affirmative (performative), and its insistence on the entangled nature of matter/bodies and discursive structures (*dispositif*), an attempt will be made at thinking beyond these dualisms. As an extension of this attempt, I will engage with the works of a variety of feminist materialist theorists, most prominently with those of Karen Barad and Donna Haraway. New (feminist) materialism can be seen as having an antipathy against oppositional, dialectical thinking and instead emphasises emergent, productive, generative and creative forms of contingent material being/becoming.[15] Important in this respect is that it sees

---

[15] In the recent anthologies on *New Materialisms* (Alaimo and Hekman 2008) and *Material Feminisms* (Coole and Frost 2010), the emphasis is on seeing new materialism as a distancing, and even a denouncing of the linguistic turn in postmodern philosophy and the lack of attention to the material in social constructivist theories. Here new materialism is presented as a material turn, as a returned attention to matter and bodies, in an almost linear, causal way (this is also the basis of the critique of new materialism put forward by Sarah Ahmed (2008) and Dennis Bruining (2013)). I want to make clear that I do not agree with this positioning of new materialism in opposition to linguistic or postmodern movements (creating a new form of oppositional thinking). Instead, I would like to emphasise the diversity of postmodern thought in combination with a continuous tradition of attention to the material (Foucault, Haraway). Hence, I tend to side with the more nuanced reading Dolphijn and Van der Tuin give as part of their description of new materialism as a form of diffractive re-reading of these linguistic and materialist traditions, without abandoning them straight away. In

embodied humans or theorists as immersed in processes of materialisation (Coole and Frost 2010: 7–8). These insights will be used to underscore the need to understand the book as a process of becoming, as an entanglement of plural agencies (both human and non-human). The separations—or 'cuts' as Barad calls them—that are created out of these entanglements have created inclusions and exclusions, book objects and author subjects, readers and writers.

In this thesis I therefore want to acknowledge the entangled agentic nature of books, scholars, and readers, and of the discursive practices as well as the systems and institutions of material production that surround them. As I will argue more extensively in the next chapter as well as in chapter 6, during the course of their history scholarly books (and we as scholars are involved in this too, through our scholarly book publishing practices) have functioned as specific discursive practices, as 'apparatuses' that cut into the real and make distinctions between, for example, objects of study and the subjects that research them (scholars or authors).[16] At the same time these practices produce these subject and object positions—in the way that, for example, the PhD student as a discoursing subject is being (re)produced by the PhD thesis and by the dominant discourses and practices that accompany it.[17] Books are thus performative, they are reality-shaping, not just a mirroring of objective knowledge.

As I will argue in this thesis, not enough responsibility is taken for the cuts that are enacted with and through the book as a specific material-discursive practice. In this sense a re-assessment is needed with respect to the writing of book history or the historiography of the book, where there is a lack of acknowledgement of our own roles as scholars in shaping the object of our study, and vice versa. We are not only shaping the past (i.e. as a form of historical narrativism), but simultaneously the future material becoming of the book and scholarship, not the least because as book scholars we are ourselves book authors and readers. At the same time our historical, approved, and dominant scholarly practices (which include the printed book) are affecting us as scholars and the way we act in and describe the world and our object of study. In this respect not only the book, as described above, but also our discursive practices, can be seen as performative. They have the potential to structure both the material form of the book and its uses—and this relates

---

this respect new materialism is not 'new' but a continuity of thought, a re-evaluation of these traditions where it 'allows for the study of the two dimensions in their entanglement' (Van der Tuin 2011, 2008, Dolphijn and Van der Tuin 2012: 91).

[16] Here I am referring to apparatus in the Foucauldian sense (*dispositif*) as well as to apparatuses/cuts in the Baradian/Bohrian sense.

[17] See the next section on methodology.

to the printed book as well as its digital counterpart. As such, they will be of substantial importance in determining what the future of the book will be. Let me again be clear, however, that this is not a one-way process, where the material form of the book and the material practices that surround it are simultaneously—one can even say indiscernibly—influencing the shape and the struggles of the debates they have invoked.

Based on this idea of the performativity of both the book and our discursive practices, I will propose to move beyond the dichotomies that have structured the debate on the history of the book in the past, by focusing on the entanglement of material-discursive (Barad) or material-semiotic (Haraway) practices that shape the form of the scholarly book, as well as the institutions accompanying it.[18] Applying Foucault's work on discursive formations, practices and power struggles, I want to draw more attention to how our own discursive practices—specifically with respect to the scholarly book—materially produce, rather than merely describe, both the subjects and objects of knowledge practices, and thus partly determine the dynamic and complex nature of the history and becoming of scholarly practices. We need to be aware of how discourse organises social practices and institutions, while our discursive practices are at the same time affected by the practices and institutions in which they, and we, are embedded. Drawing inspiration from—as well as showing the inconsistencies in—among others, the work of Roger Chartier, Adrian Johns, Robert Darnton and Paul Duguid (book theorists who have all tried to de-emphasise in more or less successful ways the oppositional nature of the book-historical debate), and diffractively reading them with Barad's theories of posthumanist performativity and agential realism, I will view these material-discursive practices as *entanglements* (2008).

1.2 Methodology: Theoretical

To explore my own entanglement as a scholar in the material-discursive becoming of the book, I will follow a methodology of 'critical praxis' in this thesis, which is integral to its theoretical framework and an important part of the performative and interventionist approach that this study is arguing for. Part of the specific situatedness of this particular project resides with the fact that it is (a reflection on and performance of) a PhD thesis. Exactly why this is important with respect to the concept of critical praxis, as well as to the

---

[18] Here matter and discourse/semiosis are no longer seen as oppositional and dualistic but as monistic productive entities. Haraway for one insists on the join between materiality and semiosis, were she states that 'both are discourses of productivities and efficiencies' (1988: 137).

overarching topic of the potential futures of the book that this project wants to address, will be explained below. However, the fact that this chapter describes the theoretical and practical aspects of a methodology of 'critical praxis' under two different headings does not mean that I see the theoretical and practical aspects of this thesis as separate or even as separable. They are entangled from the start and I am only making a cut between the two here for the sake of clarity.

1.2.1 Scholarly Conformism

One of the narratives that comes to the fore quite often with a thesis, is that it is advisable to follow the safe route outlined by the rules and regulations of the thesis—relating to its format, content and appearance—and to only explore more experimental forms of research and publication *after* the degree has been awarded. Media theorist Kathleen Fitzpatrick promotes a different approach. In 2011 she wrote an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled 'Do "the Risky Thing" in Digital Humanities'. In this piece Fitzpatrick writes about advice given to a graduate student wanting to do a digital project for her final thesis. Instead of doing the safe thing and writing a traditional thesis, Fitzpatrick advised her to 'do the risky thing' instead, and to experiment and present her argument in an innovative way. At the same time, however, Fitzpatrick was careful to emphasise to the student the importance of making sure they had someone to cover their back. Fitzpatrick thus used her article in the *Chronicle* to make a strong plea for mentors and thesis supervisors to support experimental digital work (2011a).

My thesis can in many ways be seen as an expansion of Fitzpatrick's argument. However, although I applaud her insistence on the importance of acquiring supervisory support when doing digital research, I will draw more attention to the responsibility and agency of PhD students themselves to, in Fitzpatrick's words, 'defend their experimental work', and their 'deviation from the road ordinarily travelled'. I will do so by looking at the reasoning that lies at the basis of critical scholarly work that embraces the digital, and I will apply this to formulate both a theoretical and practical methodology for my own digital doctoral project. I will outline below a theoretical argumentation as to how the choices we make during the course of our PhDs and the way we conduct our research, says a lot about the scholarly communication system we want and envision, and is incremental in shaping it. Drawing on Foucault and insights from cultural studies and critical literacy theory—both fields that actively incorporate elements of praxis and political action—I will argue that during the course of our PhDs, and in the process of creating a thesis, we are very much

structured to produce a certain kind of knowledge and with that a certain kind of social identity. Developing critical and digital literacy through developing what I will call a 'critical praxis' can prevent us from simply repeating established practices, without critically analysing the assumptions upon which they are based. To enable us to remain critical of power structures and relations that shape knowledge, I will argue for the importance of PhD students to experiment with different forms of knowledge production as part of their research process. The practices we develop and embrace whilst doing work on our thesis have the capacity to transform the way we conduct scholarly communication. Through them, I will argue, we can struggle for and enable the kind of politics and ethics we feel our systems should embody and we can start to produce knowledge differently.

1.2.2 Developing a Critical Praxis

Producing a thesis in an experimental form—from using multimedia to enhance the text's argument, to more advanced forms such as hypertextual or multi-format theses—or even using blogs and social media to develop further the argument of a print-on-paper thesis online, can be an important aspect of acquiring digital and critical literacy. For example, reflecting on studying for a PhD, historian Tanya Roth writes: 'As digital tools and processes continue to offer larger benefits for [such] projects, it is increasingly important to make sure grad students understand what's out there and how these resources and ideas can help them with their own research' (2010). As Roth makes clear, this is not an either-or-situation where what are perceived as traditional skills, such as how to write a research paper, also need to be part of the curriculum.

One of the reasons it is important when studying for a PhD to develop digital and critical literacy—which, I will argue, can be seen as a simultaneous process—is that it helps to develop and perhaps expand one's research skills. More importantly, it presents an opportunity to rethink and analyse critically certain traditional skills and research practices that have become normalised or have become the dominant standard, both within humanities research and within the process of writing and conducting a humanities thesis. One could argue that the coming of a new medium offers us a gap, a moment within which—through our explorations of the new medium—dominant structures and practices become visible and we become aware of them more clearly. The discourse, institutions and practices that have come to surround our printed forms of communication and that we have grown accustomed to, have not only fortified certain politics and ethics that we need

to be critical about, these politics and ethics are also being transported into the digital where our practices and institutions are being reproduced online.[19]

From that perspective, by using these new critical skills and tools we have the possibility to start performing our practices differently. By actively and critically trying out new (digital) tools and methodologies to see how they might fit the specific research project and/or argument that is being pursued, by performing the thesis in an experimental or alternative way and, as part of this, taking the digital as our object of research, graduate students may be able to develop what I call a *critical praxis*. *Praxis* here relates to the process of bringing ideas, ideologies or theories into practice. It refers to how theory is embodied in our practices. *Critical* praxis, then, refers to the awareness of, and critical reflection on, the way our ideas come to be embodied in our practices, making it possible to transform them. Being similar as a theoretical method to Foucault's genealogy, critical praxis can be seen as a practical application of the same critical procedure and investigation. It refers to the institutional embeddedness of PhD students and the transformational agency of their practices. Praxis in this sense forces a link between practice and the political, where through self-critique we are able to reconstitute and reproduce ourselves and our social systems and relationships.

My exposition of the process of developing a critical praxis during the course of one's PhD, draws on theories of critical, digital, and media literacy. The insights of critical pedagogue Henry Giroux are essential here. Following Giroux, cultural processes and power relations are seen as integrally connected in the shaping of our (educational) institutions. This takes place through the production of social identities, where certain values and knowledge systems help construct the production, reception and transformation of a particular kind of identity. For instance, structures and practices underlying knowledge production in a field enable a specific value system to emerge that (re)produces a specific kind of social identity, namely that of the PhD student and ultimately of the academic scholar. Importantly, however, for Giroux, a cultural politics and critical pedagogy 'can be appropriated in order to teach students to be critical of dominant forms of authority, both within and outside of schools, that sanction what counts as theory, legitimate knowledge, put particular subject positions in place, and make specific claims on public memory'

---

[19] As Christine Borgman argues, although digital publications have fewer material constraints, their form remains relatively stable or continuous to the printed book. In Borgman's vision this is not a rejection of technology but a reflection of the constructive power of scholarly practices. Even though, as she states, the existing forms might not necessarily serve scholars well or best, new genres that take advantage of the fluid and mobile nature of the medium are only slow to emerge. Hence today's online books look identical to print books in many respects (Borgman 2007: 160).

(2000). Developing a literacy that expands 'beyond the culture of the book' is in this respect essential, Giroux claims. Not just to learn new skills and knowledge, but to be able to use these to both critically examine and analyse various (multimedia) texts and to produce these texts and technologies differently. Giroux thus sees literacy foremost as a critical discourse, as a precondition for agency and self-representation. Educators McLeod and Vasinda draw further on this when they argue that a critical literacy involving multiple media demands of us to expand the concept of text, where text can also include socio-cultural conditions and relationships (2008: 272). Hence developing *critical praxis* can be seen as a method to critically analyse the socio-cultural conditions and relationships that constitute academia and, on that basis, produce the PhD thesis (and by extension the PhD student), and ultimately the scholarly field and system in which it functions, differently.

That said, I do not envision that any critical praxis, including the particular kinds outlined here, can be used as a 'normative method' or a route map towards conducting a PhD in the digital age. The 'reflection on the self' as a social identity (as embedded within and entangled with the various material-discursive formations that co-constitute it) that my understanding of critical praxis envisions is in this respect highly situated and contextual. For this I draw on cultural studies scholar Handel Wright and the form of auto-ethnography he applies in his article 'Cultural Studies as Practice'. For Wright, 'doing cultural studies' means most importantly an 'intervention in institutional, socio-political and cultural arrangements, events and directions.' He sees cultural studies as a form of 'social justice praxis', one that warns against theoreticism and that blurs the boundaries between the academy and the community. In his description of what 'social justice praxis' means or what it should do he chooses not to use a model-based, more prescriptive method, but follows a more modest approach, one in which he adopts Gregory Jay's (2005) strategy of 'taking multiculturalism personally' to 'taking cultural studies personally', in order to advocate and explicate cultural studies praxis (Wright 2003: 809).

The examples of critical praxis that I mention here should thus not be seen as authoritative models of what a critical praxis should be, but only as illustrations and descriptions of what it *could be* within the context of a Humanities thesis. In this specific case the university, the process of studying for the PhD itself, and the thesis become the subject on which the critical praxis focuses. This is very much consistent with the stress Wright places on the importance of addressing one's own practices and institutions as sites of critical praxis: 'In addition, I want to reiterate that the university itself must not be overlooked as a site of praxis, a site where issues of difference, representation and social

justice, and even what constitutes legitimate academic work are being contested' (2003: 808).

1.2.3 The (Re)Production of the PhD Student

As stated above, critical praxis offers us an opportunity to actively rethink traditional skills and established research practices, and with that what is still perceived as the conventional or natural process of *doing a PhD* in the Humanities: creating a single-authored, static, print-based argument in long-form, which should ideally be of publishable standard. This perceived natural process of doing a PhD—which of course is anything but—can be seen as a product of certain dominant discourses that function to shape how a graduate student is to author a dissertation. As such, this established convention provides a road map to becoming a scholar in which the thesis serves as a model as to how to conduct research, and ultimately how to produce a scholarly monograph. Game Studies scholar Anastasia Salter reflects on this state of affairs, remarking that 'the traditional dissertation as product reflects the dominance of the book: it creates a monograph that sits in a database. The processes of the Humanities are to some extent self-perpetuating: write essays as an undergraduate, conference papers as a graduate student, a dissertation as a doctoral student, and books and journal articles as a professor' (2010).

The importance of being aware of and critiquing such dominant discourses, however, lies not only in exploring the tension between how the PhD and the PhD thesis reproduce 'traditional scholars', while they are at the same time supposed to be 'the foundations of 'new scholarship', and as such are integral to the production of new thought and new scholars', as political theorist Angelique Bletsas argues (2011: 9). It is important to be aware that these discourses relating to knowledge production during the PhD process also have, as Bletsas puts it, certain 'subjectification effects'. She shows how the thesis is not only about finishing a static text but also about finishing as a person: as she puts it, the accepted thesis completes the student as a discoursing 'subject'. In other words, the PhD student as a discoursing subject is being (re)produced in and by these dominant discourses; and with that, a certain kind of scholar, and a certain kind of scholarly communication system are also reproduced.

Alan O'Shea argued as far back as 1998 for the importance of cultural studies theorists to pay attention to their own institutional practices and pedagogies and the way knowledge is produced and disseminated therein, something he felt had been lacking up to then. O'Shea warns against the 'tendencies towards self-reproduction' in higher education,

effects which are not pre-given but outcomes of specific struggles. As O'Shea points out, similar to Bletsas argument, 'the practices in which we engage constitute us as particular kinds of subjects and exclude other kinds. The more routinised our practices, the more powerfully this closure works' (1998: 515). O'Shea however warns not to overemphasize the extent of this closure, focusing on the many-sided complexity of the regimes of value underlying our educational institutions, where different regimes co-exist and overlap and people move between them. He conceptualises these regimes as 'a field of contestations', where we are always already positioned *within* certain institutions and practices: 'The cultural critic is always-already positioned *within* institutions. To speak publicly at all you do not have to belong to a *state* institution, but you do have to operate within one set or another of 'institutionalized' codes and practices, with historically determinate modes of production, distribution and consumption' (O'Shea 1998: 518).

1.2.4 Critical Praxis as Self-Assertion

Drawing further on O'Shea and Bletsas, I will argue in this thesis that to change our institutions from within we should start by critically examining our own position and practices and how these are reproduced. At a time when digital projects are still perceived within the humanities as 'risky', developing a form of digital or multimedia literacy (including the related skills) in experimenting with these kind of digital projects or practices, can be positioned as a process that goes hand in hand with developing critical literacy in general. It provides graduate students with a means and an opportunity to critically rethink, through critical praxis, some of the dominant discourses and established notions—including their connected ethics and politics—concerning how to conduct a thesis, and with that, ultimately, how to write a scholarly monograph.

Let me emphasise I am not claiming that critical praxis can *only* be achieved or learned through experimenting with digital projects, methods and tools. Rather, I am arguing that at this specific moment these tools and methods can be employed to trigger critique and rethink some of our established notions concerning scholarship and scholarly communication—including authorship, peer review, copyright, and the political economy surrounding scholarly publishing. What is more, this critical praxis should be applied just as much to digital methods and to how research is being carried out within the digital humanities, especially insofar as digital projects reproduce notions and values from the dominant, established discourses. Not all digital projects are inherently and necessary critical, experimental or even 'risky'; they just have the potential to be so. Furthermore, I

argue that acquiring digital literacy means acquiring various kinds of literacies, including 'traditional' print literacy. Media theorists Kellner and Share highlight the importance of developing forms of 'multiple literacies' as a response to dominant forms of literacy as they are socially constructed in educational and cultural practices and discourses. Multiple literacies, in the sense of media literacy, computer literacy, multimedia literacy and digital literacy, also include books, reading, and print literacy (Kellner and Share 2005: 370).

As Bletsas points out, drawing on Foucault, there is 'no standpoint in the field of knowledge production which is 'innocent' or outside of power relations' (2011: 10). Bletsas describes the tension that you need to be formed by and comply with a certain discourse, before you can critique this discourse. Just as knowledge is inherently political, so I would claim that doing a PhD or writing a thesis is also a political act. The process of resisting being formed in a certain way is, for me, something that already starts during the period of studying for a PhD, this being a time when we begin to evaluate critically which of the values that get reproduced in scholarly communication we should cherish. The PhD can therefore be seen as an intervention in the production of knowledge, in which one adopts a position concerning the future of scholarly communication and tries to perform it differently.

In order to maintain this position of the 'interventionist potential' of the PhD process, I will not theorise the closure of the dominant discourses within academia and the subjectification effects they have on social identities in an 'overemphasized way', as O'Shea puts it. Rather, I draw on Foucault's later work in which he advances that the subject has to develop agency within subordinating systems. In Foucault's words 'individuals are the vehicles of power', they reproduce power in a positive, productive way. However, they also have the ability to reproduce power in a different, creative way. Foucault scholar Eric Paras sums up these changes in Foucault's work as follows: 'The individual, no longer seen as the pure product of mechanisms of domination, appears as the complex result of an interaction between outside coercion and techniques of the self' (2006: 94–95). Drawing upon the later Foucault, performing the PhD and one's social identity as a student and scholar can be seen as no longer being a matter of self-defence but rather of self-assertion. As Paras states, becoming a subject is in Foucault's later thought less 'an affirmation of an identity than a propagation of a creative force' (2006: 132). It is a creative effort rather than a defensive one. In this sense, Paras emphasises the potential in the later Foucault for the subject to reflect upon its own practices and to choose among and modify them following

techniques of the self, those specific practices that enable subjects to constitute themselves both within and through systems of power.

If we envision critical praxis as both a critical project and a creative, transforming and transformative one, part of this creative impulse lies in the potential to, as cultural studies scholar Ted Striphas calls it, 'perform scholarly communication differently—that is, without simply succumbing, in Judith Butler's words, to "the compulsion to repeat"' (Striphas 2011). He argues that the norms of scholarly communication that we perform today through a 'routine set of practices' were forged under historically specific circumstances—circumstances that might not apply in their entirety today. This triggers us to ask new questions about these practices and to start performing them differently, much more creatively and expansively (expanding our repertoire), Striphas adds, than we currently do, with the ultimate goal to 'enhance the quality of our research and our ability to share it' (2011).

Applying this to the course of a PhD means that, instead of envisioning doctoral students as being completely produced by the practices they reproduce and the knowledge systems that enforce them, we can see these practices and institutions not as constituting, but as shaping these students. However, this is not to underestimate the power these shaping practices and systems have. As we saw O'Shea argue above, the more repetitive they become, the more thorough and self-perpetuating this shaping-process also becomes (1998). Nonetheless, as students, and as academics, we have the potential to act creatively within these frameworks, to struggle for a more ethical and progressive knowledge system, performing scholarly communication differently. That being said, we should remember O'Shea's critique of the idea of these (dominant) systems being monolithical. There is a complex power struggle taking place within academia for certain kinds of knowledges and knowledge systems. This struggle can be seen to revolve around having or obtaining the power to create the possibilities to transform the structures that will enable specific values to be produced. The digital, for instance, has the potential to promote a more progressive knowledge system based on values of sharing, openness to otherness, and collaboration; a system that struggles against institutional inertia and conservatism, and the perseverance of neoliberal market values in education. The kind of knowledge that can emerge from a more progressive system of this kind, I will argue, might be hard to realise if we keep reproducing our humanist and essentialist print-based practices within a digital environment, as these practices might not be able to promote these values to the fullest in

an online setting. It is this struggle over the future of our scholarly communication system that I want to focus on in this thesis.

1.2.5 Re-envisioning our Research Practices

The natural PhD process together with the traditional PhD thesis, follows many of the elements of a paper-based and humanist view of scholarly communication, increasingly inhibiting potentially progressive practices and knowledges—such as I will outline in this thesis—to come to the fore. Consequently, what I am arguing for is a critical praxis that explores—and at the same time remains critical of—alternative practices and structures that promote values based on a politics of sharing, collaboration, (radical) openness and experimentation.

In order to establish where the importance of experimental digital work for humanities scholarship lies, we need to explore how we can use digital tools and technologies in a critical way to potentially enhance and improve our scholarship and our communication systems. Through the digital we have the opportunity to critically investigate the value of our established institutions and practices and, vice versa, critique gives us the potential means to analyse and transform the digital to make it adhere to a more progressive and open ethics and value system, one that remains critical of itself. In this respect, experimenting with open and online theses can be seen as the beginning of an exploration of what digital scholarship could look like. It is important to stress however, as cultural and media theorist Gary Hall has argued extensively, that in our experiments with the digital our ethics and politics should not be fixed from the start (2008). We need to leave room to explore our ethics and politics *as part of* our experiments or as part of the process of conducting a thesis.

Let me reiterate here that print-based communication is evenly capable of promoting more experimental and ethical forms of scholarly communication. Print is not the problem here, nor is digital the solution. What I am referring to when I write about 'print-based forms of communication', is the way print has been commodified and essentialised: through a *discourse* that prefers to see print as linear, bound and fixed (a work with an author); and through a system of material production within publishing and academia—which includes our institutions and practices of scholarly communication—that today certainly prefers quantifiable objects as auditable performance indicators. Even more, it is this 'print-complex', with its power structures and stakeholders, that is being increasingly supplanted in a digital environment while the book is being rethought as an

object and commercial product within digital publishing. I also do not want to claim that the potential of the digital for collaboration and open forms of publishing will be a guaranteed outcome of 'digital innovation'. Experimenting with new forms of communication is hard work, involving more than only the overcoming of technological barriers, where it entails a critical redesign of scholarship.

I therefore want to break down digital promises and utopias in this thesis while at the same time examining those aspects that might actually be exciting, experimental and perhaps more ethical in digital scholarship. I thus want to analyse digital publishing projects that explore what a new digital ethics and politics might entail, in an ongoing manner. In this respect I concur with Johanna Drucker, when she argues that: 'we can't rely on a purely technological salvation, building houses on the shifting sands of innovative digital platforms, with all the attendant myths and misconceptions. Which aspects of digital publishing are actually promising, useful, and/or usefully innovative for the near and long term?' (2014b).

A critical praxis can trigger us to rethink institutions and practices that are at the moment still very much part of, and reproducing, an economics and politics based on a power structure that has been inherited from a print-based situation. Striphas similarly states that we need to move beyond the blind copying of print writing practices into digital environments, arguing instead for experimentation with the form, content and process of scholarly publication. There is no compelling reason, he claims, why we need to conform to paper-centric conventions in the online world when we can also explore and make better use of the interactive features the web offers to rethink the paper-based distribution and assessment methods we are repeating in the digital realm (Striphas 2010). However, a critical praxis not only serves to critique established notions of how to write a thesis within the humanities, to provide just one example. As an affirmative practice it also has the potential to develop new (digital) research practices and to experiment with new forms of politics and ethics as part of that—including, in this specific case, practices that experiment with sharing, openness, liquidity, and remix, as well as internally critiquing these as part of the research's continuous development. Let me make clear however that with my emphasis on affirmative politics and practices throughout this thesis, I want to focus on the potential of power as a form of empowerment (potentia), where negative, reactionary politics can be operationalized into *affirmative* alternative practices. As Rosi Braidotti has argued, this does not mean a distancing from critique nor I would argue should it be perceived as an opposition between critique and praxis (2010).

Thinking back to the beginning of this section, and Fitzpatrick's comment that doing a digital project in the humanities is still seen as a risky thing, we can say that this specific research project will encounter both tension and paradox. The paradox lies in the fact that to become an academic within the present system, we in many ways still have to adhere to the present structures, resulting in the tension described by Bletsas: how to conform to the rules, regulations and practices that one at the same time tries to critique and transform? However, following O'Shea and Striphas, as well as the later Foucault, I maintain that we are able to transform these practices from within our established structures. Nonetheless, as in any struggle focused on changing a system from within, compromises have to be made to deal with the tension between outside coercion and techniques of the self. That being said, I hope that the example of this thesis will show that by developing a critical praxis during the process of conducting a PhD, early career scholars can then continue to develop this further as their careers progress. As part of this process we will have the potential to actively and affirmatively produce and promote alternative communicative norms, politics and practices, which will aid us in the struggle to critique and transform the established academic power systems. It is worth emphasising once again, however, that the examples I have mentioned here—including my own thesis—should not be seen as normative models. Nonetheless, I hope they might inspire other students and scholars to develop their own form(s) of critical praxis to aid them to produce themselves and their institutional practices differently.

1.3 Methodology: Practical

1.3.1 A Digital, Open, and Collaborative Research Practice

To perform the critical praxis described above, I will endeavour to engage with some of the key concepts and practices that constitute its conceptual framework: these include (radical) openness, remix and liquidity, with an overarching focus on experimentation. In the remainder of this thesis these key terms will be explored in order to critique and examine the main forms of humanist and print-based binding that, I argue, have worked to turn the book into a fixed and stable object of scholarly communication. These forms of binding include practices of authorship, which have been incremental in gathering a work together; specific material formations, such as publishing and scholarly communication systems, set up to promote the commercial object formation of the book; and the specific (print)

materiality of the book, with what is presumed to be its inherently bound nature. The concepts of openness, remix and liquidity, together with some of their current implementations will also be heavily scrutinised as part of this thesis. Nonetheless, for all this, I still want to emphasise their potential as forms and practices of critique and resistance to the object formation of the book, as part of the specific performance of this thesis.

Within humanities' fields, scholars are increasingly experimenting with ways of conducting their research in a more open way, following the idea of open research or open notebook science. This involves publishing one's research as it evolves (including in some cases as drafts and raw data) on blogs, personal websites and wikis, or on platforms such as *Academia.edu* or *Researchgate*—to name just a few examples—instead of only publishing the research *results* formally in scholarly journals, edited collections and monographs. Examples of scholars who are experimenting with open, online publishing, for instance, and who can be seen as developing or practicing forms of critical praxis, are Ted Striphas, who posts his working papers online on his *Differences and Repetitions* wiki, and Gary Hall, who is making the research for his new book *Media Gifts* freely available online on his website as it evolves. Meanwhile, Kathleen Fitzpatrick put the draft version of her book *Planned Obsolescence* online for open review using the *CommentPress* Wordpress plugin, which allows readers to comment on paragraphs of the text in the margins. Examples of (ex-)PhD students involved in open research are librarian Heather Morrison, who posted the chapters of her thesis as they evolved online, and the English scholar Alex Gil, who has put his work for his thesis online on elotroalex.com, also using the *CommentPress* plugin.[20]

The focus in the above examples on openness, open research and open access—as in the conduct of my own thesis—not only functions as a means of experimenting with new practices of producing and distributing knowledge; it can also be seen as acting as a direct critique of the material conditions under which humanities research is currently being produced. Striphas, who perceives cultural studies as a set of writing practices, has scrutinised the way these practices are currently set up and function by exploring the politics and economics of academic publishing. As I pointed out above, the choices we as scholars make, or, as Striphas emphasises, the choices that are made for us when we publish our research results, are very important. Striphas underlines both the systemic power relations at play as well as our own responsibilities in repeating these practices or,

---

[20] See: http://wiki.diffandrep.org/; http://www.garyhall.info/open-book/; http://mcpress.media-commons.org/plannedobsolescence; http://pages.cmns.sfu.ca/heather-morrison/open-thesis-draft-introduction-march-2011/; and http://www.elotroalex.com/atelier/

alternatively, choosing different options. We need to have better access to the 'instruments of the production of cultural studies', i.e. the publishing system, and to the content that gets produced, by exploring and taking control of 'the conditions under which scholarship in cultural studies can—and increasingly cannot—circulate' (Striphas 2010). Striphas thus emphasises our roles as scholars *within* this publishing system, which serves as a good example of critical praxis in action, and how we can, in his words, 'perform our writing practices differently, to appropriate and reengineer the publishing system so as to better suit our needs' (2010).

In this respect, this PhD thesis can be seen as an experiment in developing a digital, open research practice through the exploration of the possibilities of remix, liquidity and openness in the thesis's production and format. By positioning the medium of the book as a major site of struggle over the future of scholarly knowledge production within the humanities, I argue for the importance of experimenting with alternative ways of thinking and performing the academic monograph. In particular, I argue for the importance of experiments that go beyond simply 'iteratively reproducing' established practices of knowledge production, dissemination and consumption. Starting with the long-form argument that is the PhD thesis itself, I aim to actively critique, in form, practice and content, the established print-based notions, politics, and practices within the field of the humanities, in a performative way.

Following the examples mentioned above, then, the research for my thesis—which includes notes, drafts, whole chapters etc., and all in different forms and shapes—has been made available online, as it has progressed, via multiple digital platforms and social media outlets. This idea of providing different versions of the text which will be available on various platforms, and then remixing and gathering them together again in several other forms and outputs—of which this PhD thesis is one—raises questions about the bound and objectified nature of the PhD thesis, the book and of scholarly research. Will such a dispersed, versioned, multimodal and collaborative project still be perceived as a thesis, or only certain instantiations of it? Can it be a finished thesis-object if it continues to develop even after this particular thesis instantiation has been submitted? For instance, versions of this thesis have appeared previously as blog posts, conference presentations, lectures, tweets, published articles in peer-reviewed journals, and as experimental digital works. In this respect my practice—and this kind of practice is not uncommon now in humanities scholarship—relates to the production of what Marjorie Perloff has called *differential texts*, which she defines as 'texts that exist in different material forms, with no single version

being the definitive one' (2006). In this specific case my differential practice is also designed to draw attention to the processual and collaborative nature of research in its various settings and through its multiple institutions of informal and formal communication, from social media and conferences, to mailing lists and journals. Instead of having just a single linear long-form argument, this project has been designed in such a way that the majority of the multiple distributed versions of the text can be traversed, read, re-written and re-performed in multiple ways. The idea of versioning is also an attempt on my part to critique the idea of individual authorship, as many of these texts have been co-authored, commented upon, reviewed and/or annotated in various settings by different (groups of) people and are thus necessarily the results of (reworkings of) inherently collaborative work. This is of particular importance when we take into account that a thesis is supposed to consist of all original work written by the thesis's author. Nonetheless, it could of course be argued that I am still the one gathering this de-assembled work together again, citing the work of other authors to ensure credit is given where it is due, and rewriting these versions and structuring them anew for this specific instantiation, the submitted PhD thesis: thus making it a new and 'original' piece of work.

Re-assembling the different versions in this PhD thesis provides me with the means to challenge the reliance on the long-form linear argument that much work in the humanities adheres to. It serves as a way to make clear, as part of the performance of my argument, that the specific way and order in which the argument (or, better, the multiple arguments) has unfolded in this thesis is not the only manner in which it can be narrated. The different shapes that the previous versions of this thesis and its reasoning have taken on, framed and embedded as they are within other debates, shows the modularity and remixability of the different strands of the argument in different contexts.

1.3.2 A Differential Thesis

What, then, are the main versions in which this thesis has up to now been made available? Furthermore, how will it be appearing in future instantiations, and for what reasons? First of all, various social media outlets have been used to reach out to a wider readership and to connect with a peer community of sharing and collaboration. This includes an academic blog, Open Reflections (www.openreflections.wordpress.com), where first drafts and short pieces related to the thesis have been posted in the form of blogposts. This blog also functions as a personal website where talks, papers, and online preprint and postprint versions of some of the articles that have been presented and published in the course of

this ongoing research have been collated and made openly available. Open Reflections builds upon an existing readership (I have been blogging since 2008), and aims to connect with a community of scholars and otherwise interested people, by making extended connections via *Twitter* (a micro-blogging community) and *Zotero* (an online open source reference system enabling people to collect and share references and resources), two outlets heavily used by scholars and a wider public interested in the digital. These tools have been used not only to share my ongoing research in a more direct way with others, but also as a means for me to evade and critique the formal publication system, which at the moment is not offering enough opportunities to showcase work-in-progress or to support the further development and improvement of scholarly writing. (Its function seems instead to be based more on selection and branding than on an ethics of care and further development.) A blog also offers the opportunity for research to be shared for free, open access, not behind a pay-wall or otherwise restricted by DRM or a strict copyright regime (my blog has been licensed CC-BY).[21] As a specific publishing platform, blogs offer the potential to explore work in progress and to perform theory in a multimodal way, making easy use of, and incorporating, images, videos, podcasts and hyperlinks—simple mechanisms of networked scholarship that are however still not universally incorporated in many forms of formal publishing. At the same time, it offers possibilities for debate, and is set up to receive feedback and responses to one's shared and ongoing research—via its commenting, hyperlinking and trackback features—in a more direct way than the majority of formal scholarly communication currently does.

The blog thus serves as a platform to publish various iterations of my in-progress thesis in networked and multimodal ways in a (relatively) collaborative and interactive setting. However, the blog format remains rather restricted when it comes to direct collaboration with, and reuse of, the research for my thesis. For this reason, as soon as the thesis reaches a stage in which it is ready to be formally submitted (i.e. when there is a certain volume of text and a coherent narrative, none of which would entail that the text is actually 'finished', 'stable' or 'fixed'), a variety of other platforms and tools will be used to explore these more interactive functions. First of all, I will be making use of the *CommentPress Wordpress* plugin mentioned earlier, which was developed by the *Institute for the Future of the Book*. This plugin enables users to leave comments alongside the text, next to

---

[21] This license lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. This is the most accommodating of Creative Commons licenses offered besides the CC-0 public domain waiver license (see: http://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/). CC-BY is recommended for maximum dissemination and use of licensed materials. See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/

each paragraph, and has previously been used by McKenzie Wark for his book *Gamer Theory* (2007), and by Fitzpatrick for the open review of her book *Planned Obsolescence* (2011b). By placing the comments alongside the text (instead of at the bottom of the text which is more common in regular blogs and websites) an attempt is made to subvert the implied hierarchy of 'text first, comments second'. As the *CommentPress* 'About' page states:

> In the course of our tinkering, we achieved one small but important innovation. Placing the comments next to rather than below the text turned out to be a powerful subversion of the discussion hierarchy of blogs, transforming the page into a visual representation of dialog, and re-imagining the book itself as a conversation. Several readers remarked that it was no longer solely the author speaking, but the book as a whole (author and reader, in concert).[22]

This *CommentPress* version of the thesis will also be hyperlinked and will include images and (where possible) multimedia. The *CommentPress* plugin will be used to experiment with peer feedback and open review in a slightly different setting than a normal blog, one that is designed more directly for commentary and collaboration, emphasising the collaborative nature of the research once more.

However, even when using this plugin the hierarchy between the main text and the comments, between the author and the commenters, still remains intact—although perhaps in a less emphasised way. To explore the potential of providing direct read/write access to the text, wiki software will be used to publish yet another instantiation of the thesis. The wiki, which functions via a logic of open editing, will then serve as a space where the authorial 'moderating function' still at work in the blog and *CommentPress* plugin will be further decentred. Wikis provide readers with an opportunity to become writers too, following the idea of open writing and editing upon which wiki software is based. Wikis thus enable the possibility to both write, edit, comment upon, update, remix, categorise, tag, reuse, translate, data-mine, annotate, copy and paste the material, in a collaborative manner. This means that the possibilities offered by this environment, in combination with the way it can be interacted with, might provide another opportunity to challenge and critique the authority of the text's initial author (or set of authors). My intention is to use the wiki to explore what it means to no longer fully rely on authorship as the main form of authority. I say this, because it can be argued that in a wiki environment the author can no longer be (solely) held responsible for the text or the research, given that the text will have no final 'authorial approved' version in a wiki; that it can (in principle) be further

---

[22] See: http://futureofthebook.org/commentpress/about-commentpress/

commented upon, and can be updated, remixed and re-used indefinitely by the public at large. There is a specific problem related to publishing books in wikis, however (which I will discuss in more depth in both chapter 3 and chapter 6). This is that the authority of the book form tends to overshadow the multi-authorial nature of wiki software. The more 'definite' or 'final' a text seems (which can be due to language, length, format, style of writing, genre, design, etc.), the harder it becomes for people to engage with it. This lack of interaction with 'book-like' wikis is one of the main challenges this aspect of my project aims to explore and will have to encounter.

The wiki and the *CommentPress* plugin will not offer enough flexibility and functionality to explore more multimodal and non-linear forms of publishing however. Therefore, yet another version of the thesis will be published using a 'hypermedia' platform or software (enabling non-linear publishing) such as *Sophie* or *Scalar*. *Sophie* has again been developed by the *Institute for the Future of the Book*, as a kind of extension of the *CommentPress* plugin: 'While there is still much work to be done, the ultimate goal of the *Sophie* project is to make a tool that handles all the social network interactions (and more) that *CommentPress* does but within a far more fluid and easy-to-use composition/reading space where media can mix freely'.[23] On the *Sophie 2.0* website this open source software, which can be used to create a kind of expanded and annotated collaborative book, is described as follows: '*Sophie* is software for writing and reading rich media documents in a networked environment. The program emerged from the desire to create an easy-to-use application that would allow users to combine text, images, video, and sound not only quickly and simply but with precision and sophistication.' In this respect, '*Sophie's* goal is to open up the world of multimedia authoring to a wide range of people, institutions, and publishers. In so doing, *Sophie* redefines the notion of a "book" or academic paper to include both rich media and mechanisms for reader feedback and real time conversation'.[24] *Sophie 2.1*, built in Java, was released in 2011, but since then no further releases have been issued. It seems further development of the project has stalled. However, it remains a viable hypermedia-publishing platform for this thesis.

The open source authoring and publishing platform *Scalar*, released in beta in 2013, offers another option. Tara McPherson, one of the people behind *Scalar* and the *Alliance for Networking Visual Culture*, the group of people and institutions who have set up the *Scalar* project, describes it as follows: '*Scalar* allows scholars to create with relative ease long-form,

---

[23] Ibidem
[24] See: http://www.sophieproject.org/

multimedia projects that incorporate a variety of digital materials while also connecting to digital archives, utilizing built-in visualizations, exploring nonlinearity, supporting customization, and more' (2014: 183). Software and platforms such as *Sophie* or *Scalar* thus offer more possibilities for users to explore the content and argument of the thesis in a different way, i.e. one that is not necessarily print and/or text based, as they have been specifically set up as experimental publishing structures, as networked and collaborative reading and writing spaces. As McPherson emphasises, Scalar has been devised to investigate new publication practices and wants to be an experimental space for publishing (2010). Furthermore, the specific design decisions behind *Scalar* are important in this context too, as they resonate strongly with the thinking that accompanies this thesis. Especially since Scalar has been designed to understand publishing technology and its 'entanglement with culture' as well as with ourselves as scholars, better:

> Thus, it [Scalar] mediates a whole set of binaries: between close and distant reading, user and author, interface and backend, micro and macro, theory and practice, archive and interpretation, text and image, database and narrative, and human and machine. Scalar takes seriously feminist methodologies ranging from the cut to theories of alliance, intersectionality, and articulation not only in support of scholars undertaking individual projects but also in our very design principles. As authors work with the platform, they enter into a flow of becoming through the creation of a database on the fly and through an engagement with the otherness of the machine. Scalar respects machinic agency but does not cede everything to it. (McPherson 2014: 185)

Scalar might thus be another potential platform on which to publish this thesis in one of its multiple versions and to explore the possibility to create, edit, and read in a collaborative setting and to make mashups and remixes including text, video, sound, illustrations, images and spoken word, for example. These remixes will be based on the text, argument and narrative as it exists in that specific version of the thesis. However, as an extension of the wiki, and using the same read/write possibilities, the aim is to actively attract collaborators to work directly in and with the text (as one does in a collaborative writing environment), instead of making a remix that is actually a copy of the text.[25] Every remix will thus be a further instantiation of the text of the thesis and will be a further remix of the previous remixes, where the participants will be remixing each others work. Although the work of the contributing remixers will be acknowledged and credited, in this specific setting it will

---

[25] This is what Mark Amerika's *remixthebook* project—about which more in chapter 6—has for example endeavored, as the remixes made as part of this project are new, separate versions of the source text, they are not remixing the source text itself directly. See: http://www.remixthebook.com/

be hard to obtain who did what exactly. This situation is however not inherently different from the way a scholarly monograph reaches its readers, where it is not always that easy to find out who were exactly involved in the creation of a publication, and what it was they contributed exactly: from the peer reviewers to the typesetters to the company who printed the print-on-demand version. These can all be seen as collaborators on a publication; however, not everyone is always acknowledged; nor is it always clear what the specific collaborators contributed to the final publication.

By emphasising once again that this remixed version of my thesis is a collaborative work, as all scholarly work inherently is (not the least because it builds on the work of others), the aim is to challenge some of the preconceptions that we continue to validate in our publishing practices. With the hypermedia version I aim to complicate (single) authorship, attribution, and the authority of both the author and the work. It questions the linearity of the work, as well as its fixity and stability. I will also explore the possibility of traversing fields, by inviting interdisciplinary artists, scholars and practitioners to provide a remix, in this way practically examining how we can diminish the distinctions still made between art and research, theory and practice, and text and multimedia, while experimenting with different visions on the materiality and future of the book. Will people be able to 'read' this material in another way? What does this mean for knowledge communication? Finally, this multimedia version also asks questions about the agency of software and platforms and about the different ways in which the various multimodal remixed iterations of the thesis will be received: this is where the concept of versioning plays an important role.

1.3.3 Versioning

Versioning, as it has come to be used within academic research and publishing, refers to the frequent updating, rewriting or modification of academic material that has been published in a formal or informal way. As a practice it has been adopted from software development, where it is used to distinguish the various instalments of a piece of software. The difference is of course that these are not separate editions of the software, but involve a constant rewriting of the same piece of code. Versioning is a common feature of many web-based publication forms, from blogs to wikis, based on the potential to quickly revise and save a piece of written material. With versioning comes version management and control, which can be seen as an important (inbuilt) aspect of versioning, where the various platforms and pieces of software that allow for updating most of the time also enable the

tracking and archiving of the various modifications that are made to a work. This can be important in collaborative settings such as wikis, as it makes it easier to establish who is responsible for a specific edit and provides the possibility of comparing various versions with one another.

Although adopted from software development, versioning has been around for a long time and can even be seen as an essential aspect of scholarly communication. Discussions on mailing lists, working papers, conference presentations, preprints and postprints, online first versions, versions of record, corrected or updated versions, revised editions: all of these can be regarded as different renditions of an academic publication in progress; but there are many more. Media theorist Lev Manovich, for instance, published different iterations of his monograph *Software Takes Command* (2013) online on his website as the book developed. As he argues with respect to this practice: 'One of the advantages of online distribution which I can control is that I don't have to permanently fix the book's contents. Like contemporary software and web services, the book can change as often as I like, with new "features" and "big fixes" added periodically. I plan to take advantage of these possibilities. From time to time, I will be adding new material and making changes and corrections to the text' (Manovich 2008). Bringing out different versions of our research as it emerges also enables us to make material available for others to share much sooner, without the associated time-lags formal publishing brings with it, not to mention the pay-walls and copyright restrictions. However, although within the humanities it is fairly common for certain versions (i.e. the blog post, the conference presentation) to be clearly presented, communicated and published as such during different points in a research work's development, only the so-perceived final version as published by a press or publisher is held to be the version of record, authored by a specific author or set of authors as an original piece of work (even though versions often emerge in and out of highly collaborative settings). Instead of primarily emphasising the end result as part of such an object-centered approach, could a focus on the various renditions of an academic work also involve a shift in our attention towards the collaborative and more *processual* nature of research? And might this lead us to start paying more attention to the performativity of our practices: that it matters *where* we bring out our various versions (what platforms we use, or which publishers), *how* we do so (open or closed, and with which license), and the different formats our versions appear in (print, html, video, PDF, podcast, epub). Will it help us to look more closely, for instance, at how different platforms and formats influence the way we produce a specific version and how it is further used and intra-acted with? Could

versioning also involve more recognition being given to the various groups of people that are involved in research creation and dissemination, as well as to the various materialities, technologies and media that we use to represent and perform our research, from paper to software? Would a focus on the continuous evolving nature of research make us more aware of the various cuts we can and do (and need!) to make in our work, and for what reasons? And might this involve us making more informed and meaningful decisions about which cuts we want to make, what kind of version we would like to bring out and with what intention (to communicate, collaborate, share, gift, attribute, credit, improve, brand, etc.)?

We can thus see how versionings might better mirror the scholarly workflow research goes through. However, experimenting with different versions (including using different formats, platforms and media) also offers us an opportunity to reflect critically on the way this workflow is currently (teleologically and hierarchically) set up, institutionalised, and commercialised, and how we might generate and communicate our work differently. It encourages us to ask questions about the role of publishers and about what the publishing function exactly entails, as well as about the authority of a text and who does (and does not) get to have a role in establishing this authority. What currently counts as a formal version and for what reason? Collectively, as researchers, we have tried to organise our research and writing around fixed and authorative texts, consistent and stable from copy to copy, based on the technology of the printing press. Could we arrange our research differently around the processes of writing in a digital environment? As Fitzpatrick suggests: 'What if we were freed—by a necessary change in the ways that we "credit" ongoing and in-process work—to shift our attention away from publication as the moment of singularity in which a text transforms from nothing into something, and instead focus on the many important stages in our work's coming-into-being?' (2011b: 70).

Rethinking this organisation will also have to involve taking a critical look at the way versioning is currently set up on web-based platforms and services (and is also increasingly being conceived in academic publishing). This involves an investigation of version management and control (including the archiving of previous versions and author edits), which can be seen as an essential aspect of versioning. In other words, not only will we need to think about what constitutes a version, at what point and for what reason, we also need to think about the way in which we deal with these versions and conceptualise versioning. For example, versioning mainly seems to refer to the continuous updating of one single text, post, page, or topic (i.e. it assumes an original and a final version). What

happens, though, if the updates and changes are ongoing and content is brought in from elsewhere? Perhaps remix might be a more interesting trope to explore here. The question is, if these updates are ongoing and collaborative, is it really necessary to keep all the different versions, and for how long? What is the use of versioning (or better said version control) in highly collaborative environments and wikis? The way we keep insisting on version control might be perceived as another sign of our fear of letting go of stability and fixity. Furthermore, it could be argued that we are again reinstalling print-based and humanist mechanisms here, where each version becomes a clearly recognizable fixed and stable unit with a single author and clear authority. This might entail that versioning becomes a new way of objectifying scholarship as part of its processual becoming, similar to current publishing business models based on selling various book formats, from hardcover to paperback and epub. It might similarly provide an opportunity to market, brand and sell research in a continuous way, like we do with new editions of books. Can we in some way balance our need for both fixity and process? As I will argue in this thesis, doing so will involve us in an in-depth exploration of when, and at what points, fixity is needed and for what reasons. In this respect it is important that we are 'thinking about how ideas move and develop from one form of writing to the next, and about the ways that those stages are represented, connected, preserved, and "counted" within new digital modes of publishing', as Fitzpatrick has argued (2011b: 70–71).

One of the versions of this thesis will be the version that will be submitted to fulfil the requirement towards the PhD: a single-authored written piece of original work in long-format. In other words, it will take the form of a traditional argument bound and made available in both a print and digital (PDF) format. This will most likely be regarded as 'the final or original version'. However, as I want to point out by versioning my work in the ways I have outlined above, this 'bound' version is not necessarily the most important, interesting or valuable version of the thesis, nor is it in any way the final version. Not only are the different versions of the thesis connected to each other, they are also connected to the other works they reference. The intention of this research project is to create different versions and instantiations of the thesis argument, which will exist on different platforms. These then come to function as nodes in a multi-format, interlinked network of texts, notes, draft, references and remixes, where no part is necessarily more or less important than the other parts, nor will one text form the end-point or final version of the dissertation project. The reason I am focusing on a variety of versions as part of this thesis (the blog, the conference paper, the hypermedia version, the wiki version, the remixed

version), all types of publishing which are currently being experimented with in scholarly communication, is to emphasise that different cuts are possible in the publishing process; cuts that perform various functions for the scholar, the research, and for the platforms that carry them. These different ways of versioning, re-cutting and remixing the material, thus provide us with an opportunity to examine different software and technologies and to shape them at the same time; to develop a form of critical praxis and to explore what other kinds of publishing are possible. However, they also enable us to extend our notions of the book, and of the way we can gather our research together and re-envision it in different ways.

My choices for the specific versions outlined above are based on exploring those platforms, technologies and pieces of software that favour interaction, experimentation, multimodality, openness and interdisciplinarity, as these are the features of scholarly communication that I would like to highlight and promote. I wish to do so because these features have the potential to help us to reimagine the bound nature of the monograph and to explore versionings as a spatial and temporal critique of the book as a bound object; to examine various different incisions that can be made in our scholarship as part of the informal and formal publishing and communication of our research that goes beyond the final research commodity. The practical part of the dissertation will thus constitute an experiment with collaboration, remix, versioning and the mixing of media, and with non-linear ways of writing and reading. It is designed to explore what the differences are between these various material incarnations of the thesis. These differences are shaped by the specific affordances of the software and platforms in intra-action with our scholarly practices. However, the discourses surrounding these technologies have similarly influenced the design, use and consumption of these technologies, as well as the shaping of us as scholars. What does all this mean for the way the research will be communicated, written and read? How will the different versions of this project be received and what possibilities and limitations does this offer to think and act beyond the printed book? How will this thesis eventually be published as a book, as a monograph, as an additional version of this thesis? (Or will the thesis become a version of the monograph?) If this monograph is formally published, how will it relate to the other nodes and versions, and will this lead to copyright problems and branding issues, for instance? Most probably the monograph will then become 'the version of record', the final object, as this is still the customary and approved cut in scholarly communication, having to do with matters of reputation and reward. The question remains, however, whether the thesis-project as a whole will be

acknowledged as a 'scholarly monograph', within an institutional context. Will it be a book, or something else? (An archive?) As I will argue in this thesis, it is our responsibility as scholars, as part of our critical praxis, to engage with these questions and to make responsible decisions as to how, where, when, and in what form we publish our research.

Chapter 2. Framing the Debate. The Struggle for the Past and Future of the Book

2.1 Book History: The Communication Circuit

The history of the book only came to be regarded as a separate subject or discipline of study during the 1950s and 1960s[26]—a period which, interestingly, also saw the first experiments with the electronic book and with digital textual transmission.[27] Although it is only a relatively young discipline, the rise of book historical titles over the last few decades has been considerable, and can be connected to the increasingly interdisciplinary character of book studies. Initially an amalgam of history, bibliography and literary studies, book history today draws its inspiration from a wide range of disciplines and methods, including media and communication studies and even newer fields such as the digital humanities.[28] However, its wide and ever-expanding scope notwithstanding, I would like to focus on a

---

[26] The 19th century saw the rise of the study of books as a material object as part of the development of the study of analytical bibliography, but book history as a discipline involving the study of 'print culture', draws heavily on the methodology of the French Annales school, established in the 1960s. For an overview of the development of book history and its different strands see: Darnton, R. (1982) 'What Is the History of Books?'. *Daedalus,* 111 (3), 65–83, and the introductions to Hall, D.D. (1996) *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book.* University of Massachusetts Press; Finkelstein, D. (2006) *The Book History Reader.* New York: Routledge; Howsam, L. (2006) *Old Books And New Histories: An Orientation to Studies in Book And Print Culture.* University of Toronto Press; Baron, S.A., Lindquist, E.N., and Shevlin, E.F. (2007) *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies After Elizabeth L. Eisenstein.* University of Massachusetts Press.

[27] Michael Hart, the founder of *Project Gutenberg* (an online ebook database), is often credited for 'inventing' the ebook in 1971. See: http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Michael_S._Hart. However, experiments with ebooks and hypertexts were already taking place in the 1960s (with Alan Kay's *Dynabook*, for instance), and some even place its invention in the 1930s or 40s. For more information on the history of the ebook, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-book

[28] Although book historians or theorists increasingly draw on media theory and history, the relationship up to now has not exactly been mutual. Whitney Trettien argues that this might be due to the continuing digital divide between English and Literary Studies on the one hand and Media and Communication studies on the other. She states that, although 'the two disciplines operate along parallel axes, studying similar phenomena but rarely intersecting', much can be gained by integrating the disciplines' methodologies and theories, by drawing on their similarities (Trettien 2009). Hayles can be seen as a theorist who has actively investigated textual media from a 'media standpoint', most recently in the edition she co-edited with Jessica Pressman, entitled *Comparative textual media. Transforming the humanities in the postprint era* (2013).

few of the most characteristic features that have structured the discourse surrounding the history of the book.[29] Additionally, I would like to highlight some of the important oppositions that, as I will show, continue to dominate the often highly agonistic debate. The guiding questions that will be used to analyse this debate on book history will be: under what circumstances did the discourse emerge? What has it focused on? What have been its topics of contestation? And which oppositions does it (continue to) embody?

In my description of the often agonistic discourse surrounding the book and structuring the way it is perceived and how its history is narrated, I will focus on those histories that describe the transition from manuscript to print (and to a lesser extent from orality to literacy), and, in doing so, follow the printed book's further development until the end of the 19th century. Having this 'cut-off' is not only a way to bracket this introductory chapter with its historical overview from the remaining chapters of my thesis, where the latter focus more directly on the present shift from print to digital and on the more recent history and development of the scholarly book. This cut-off point is also meant to emphasise the importance of this specific cluster of print-culture-focused historical studies and discourses—and of the specific theorists and historians it incorporates—for the history of the book as a whole. Furthermore, it is intended to emphasise the continuing influence of these studies on the structure of the discourse that surrounds the future of the book as well as the recent histories of ebooks and digital textual transmission.

To begin, although the book historical field has been described as 'scattered in approach' (Finkelstein and McCleery 2005: 3), and 'so crowded with ancillary disciplines that one can no longer see its general contours' (Darnton 1982), there are a few major focal points within the debate on book history that can be discerned. Although it is by now quite dated (especially with respect to the practicalities of digital scholarly communication and book production), Robert Darnton's highly influential publishing communication chain remains a useful model for capturing the various aspects of the book's production, dissemination and consumption that the book historical discourse has focused on.[30] First presented in an article for *Daedalus* in 1982, Darnton's communication circuit proposes a general model for analysing the way books come into being and spread through society. At the same time, Darnton uses this circuit or chain to make sense of and disentangle the sprawling field of studies in book history. Despite the fact that various attempts at

---

[29] Therefore, necessarily, I will not discuss the discourse in its entire diversity, but I will be focusing on some of its key characteristics and some of its leading participants, as it can be argued that these have been most influential in shaping the book historical field, and with that the future of the book.

[30] Darnton's model was based on the specificities of an 18th Century European printing and publishing system.

improved versions to Darnton's circuit have surfaced in the decennia after it was first designed, and even though this model is based on the lifecycle of the *printed* book, one can argue that it still forms an important element in the discourse on the history of the book as it stretches into the digital domain, if only as a system with which to compare and contrast. Take, for example, those theorists who foreground the disintermediation of functions in the digital production cycle of the book. Often a reference is made to Darnton's communication circuit—or a more abstracted version of the 'publishing value chain'—to emphasise which of the traditional publishing or communication functions are now beginning to become obsolete, or have been taken over by one and the same person, company or institution in 'the digital age'.[31]
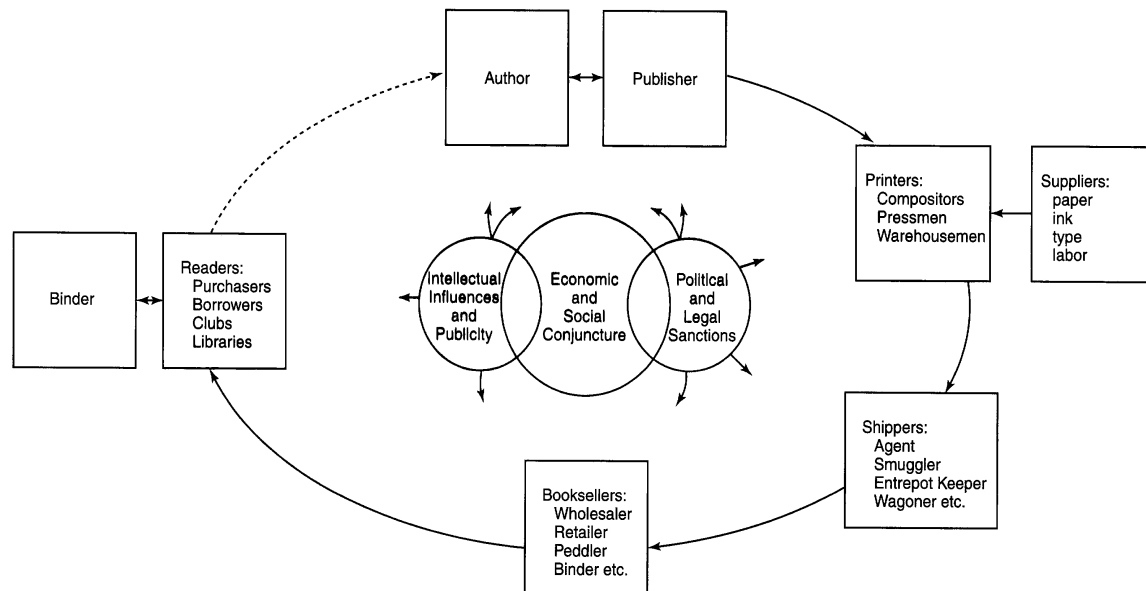
Figure 1: Robert Darnton's Communication Circuit

The communication chain focuses on the roles played by authors, publishers, printers, distributors, booksellers and readers in the production of the printed book. Readers become authors themselves again—hence the circle—something that is even more apparent within scholarly communication. In addition, the communication chain emphasises the social, political and economic influences on these agents within the process

---

[31] See, for instance: Thompson 2005: 309–310, Esposito 2011, Purcell 2011.

of value production. Book historians mostly focus on one part of this system, but for Darnton it is essential that 'the parts do not take on their full significance unless they are related to the whole'. Or, as he puts it more clearly: 'Book history concerns each phase of this process and the process as a whole, in all its variations over space and time and in all its relations with other systems, economic, social, political, and cultural, in the surrounding environment' (Darnton 1982: 11). One important omission in Darnton's circuit, which will be focused on in the present study, however, is of course the book itself, an exclusion already remarked upon by Adams and Barker in their revised communication circuit (2001). As they point out, Darnton's model focuses too much on a social history of communication. The book itself in its material manifestations and its influence on the discourse on the history of the book and hence on society and culture (instead of only the other way around), is not admitted as a form of agency, nor as an agential relation in this model. The importance of including the book as a form of agency within a network of agents is emphasised by book historian Paul Duguid, who argues: 'Books are part of a social system that includes authors, readers, publishers, booksellers, libraries, and so forth. Books produce and are reciprocally produced by the system as a whole. They are not, then, simply "dead things" carrying pre-formed information from authors to readers. They are crucial agents in the cycle of production, distribution, and consumption' (1996: 79).

2.1.1 Book History: Topics and Dichotomies

Applying these criticisms and expansions to the model in consideration, we can use this updated communication chain to identify the following book historical topics or subfields.[32] First of all, we can distinguish studies that focus on the book as an individual, material object. Here the focus lies predominantly on the technical analysis of the materiality of the book; on the importance or influence of format (i.e. bibliography or studies on paratexts); or on the kind of uses a specific text or artefact triggers or demands. New Bibliographical studies that aim to establish authoritative texts and correct textual meaning would fall into this category (Bowers 1949, Gregg 1966, McKerrow 2002), as would studies that take the book in a more abstracted form as their starting point by focusing on the agency of the book—and of print and print culture—and its influence on

---

[32] Although the book as a material object is added to this model to make it more inclusive, it is still only a construction that aides us in getting a clearer overview of the debate. Much valuable research is excluded from this model—something already remarked upon by Darnton himself in a revision of his communication circuit in 2007, where he emphasises the omission of some crucial agents and functions from the communication chain, from literary agents to piracy—and hence it does not aim to cover the debate in its entirety, but tries to focus on some of its main focal points.

culture and society (McLuhan 1962, Eisenstein 1979, Ong 1982). Secondly, we can distinguish research that focuses on the production of the book and the political economy surrounding the book value chain, which includes publishing, distribution, and sales. This subfield covers studies that analyse the whole system (as Darnton proposed) of material book production and culture and the various agents that play a role in it (i.e. Darnton 1982, Thompson 2005); more materialist traditions such as the Annales school or what has come to be known as the French 'histoire du livre' (Chartier 1994, Febvre and Martin 1997); and finally D. F. McKenzie's extension and reorientation of bibliography to include the 'sociology of texts' by looking at the specific conditions under which books were produced (2002). Thirdly, we can discern research that focuses on authorship by, for instance: researching authorial intention in an attempt to come closer to the 'true' meaning of a text, or by concentrating on the changing role of the author in the value chain—including the changing author function; or on the development of (authorial) ownership or copyright of texts (Barthes 1967, Foucault 1977, Hesse 1992, Rose 1993, Woodmansee and Jaszi 1993). Finally, we can identify research that focuses on readership, including the history of reading and the role of the reader, and on the historical uses and reception of books (i.e. reception history).[33]

Alongside these general topics that can be seen to frame the debate on book history (and let me emphasise that this is not an all-inclusive list), we can detect a variety of dichotomies or binary oppositions that have come to structure it. As already stated above, it is important to analyse and explore these divisions in depth as they continue to influence and structure the discourse on book history in the present, as will be shown in the following chapters.[34] A few of the most characteristic oppositions have been put forward by book historians Elisabeth Eisenstein and Adrian Johns as part of their debate in the *American Historical Review*, which provides a useful introduction to the often highly agonistic nature of this debate. We will explore this debate between Eisenstein and Johns in more depth shortly.

The first opposition or discursive struggle that deserves to be highlighted is related to the intrinsic properties of print. Where Eisenstein (along with Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan) focuses on the establishment of fixity and standardisation as effects of print

---

[33] In *Book Was There* (2012: 159), Andrew Piper gives a good overview of book historical studies that focus on readership, to which I would like to add Adrian Johns' *The Nature of the Book* (1998) and Rolf Engelsing's work on the 19th century 'reading revolution' (1973).

[34] Kember and Zylinska offer a valuable reading on how these dichotomies or 'binary oppositions' that structure debates on new media are actually 'false divisions'. Although often identified as false, new media debates tend to perpetuate these divisions anyway, for a number of reasons, as we will show in what follows (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 2–3).

technology, Johns states that they are the outcome of social constructions and practices. Johns points out that fixity is not an inherent property or quality of print but that it is *transitive*, acted upon and recognized by people, where Eisenstein argues that the circumstances that determined print culture can be attributed to print. For Johns, a book is the material embodiment of a consensus or of a collective consent, and thus he argues that the development of a print culture was not as direct and straightforward as Eisenstein would have it, but was marked by uncertainty and a shaky integration (Eisenstein 1979, Johns 1998).

This illustrates a larger division that is visible in the literature between technological determinism and cultural constructionism, or between gradations of both forms. Here the focus is on the attribution of historical agency (Johns 2002: 116). Does agency lie with impersonal processes (triggered by innovations in communication technology, i.e. media or book agency), or with personal agents and collective practices (i.e. human agency)? In other words, is print a result or a cause of culture?[35] Thirdly, we can identify an opposition relating to the perceived speed of the transition from manuscript to print. Should we talk about a print evolution or revolution? Should we stress the continuity of the manuscript book and written textual transmission, or the discontinuous revolutionary character of the introduction of print?[36] Fourthly, a distinction can be made between what is called cultural pessimism or dystopian thinking and technological utopianism or futurology concerning the book and the rise of new technologies. This is clearly apparent in the current debate surrounding ebooks, which has been classified by some theorists as a debate between bookservatists and technofuturists.[37] However, it illustrates a cultural feeling and a

---

[35] Evgeny Morozov is someone who, following Adrian Johns and Mark Warner, argues that Eisenstein privileges print over culture: 'Eisenstein's account holds only if one accepts a sharp separation between technology on the one hand and society and culture on the other—and then assumes that the former shapes the latter, never the other way around' (2013).

[36] Theorists who emphasise the continuation of the manuscript tradition after the invention of print are detailed in Finkelstein's *Book History Reader* (2006: 18) and include Harold Love and David McKitterick. The discussion on the speed and nature of media change comes to the fore again in the debate on printed books and ebooks, culminating in continuing forecasts of 'the ebook revolution' and 'the death of the printed book in the digital age'.

[37] Bookfuturism is a term invented by science and technology writer Joanne McNeill for a Twitter list (https://twitter.com/jomc/lists/bookfuturism) following book aficionados. The term also shows similarities with the blog *Bookfutures*, written by Chris Meade, director of *if:book London*, a think tank for the future of the book. The term bookfuturism was given theoretical grounding by Tim Carmody, self-proclaimed bookfuturist, and writer on book technology and digital media. Carmody started a group blog called Bookfuturism (www.bookfuturism.com), and wrote "A Bookfuturist Manifesto" for *The Atlantic*. As he explains, bookfuturism plays with two dialectical oppositions: bookservatism and technofuturism:

> Now, even bookservatives acknowledge that things are changing. But they fear that these changes will result in catastrophe, for some part or whole of the culture they love. Because of that, they would prefer that book tech and book culture stop, slow down, or go back. … On the other side of the aisle are technofuturists. They're winning most of the arguments these days when it comes to

depiction of historical change that can already be discerned in the transition from manuscript to print, and even in the introduction of writing.[38] Fifth, we can recognise different viewpoints related to what Eisenstein calls the 'geography of the book' (2002: 90), where some theorists concentrate mostly on the effects and practices surrounding technology as a local affair, versus research that focuses upon their supposed international—though in most cases highly Western-centric—reach. The most obvious example is that of the localist methodology followed in Johns' *The Nature of the Book*, which focuses on England, where Eisenstein's work follows a more European-centred perspective. Finally, we can distinguish both teleological and anti-teleological strands in the discourse that surrounds the book. Topics here focus on whether technology (and with it human society as a whole) progresses, or whether there is such a thing as technological advancement or a driving force or prime agent behind it. Teleological strands can also be found in book historical debates that focus on the new (i.e. ebooks or print books) and the old (i.e. print books or manuscripts), and that make a clear division or cut between the present and the past and emphasise a progressive linear development, as opposed to describing histories as plural genealogies, non-linear and cyclical.

2.1.2 Debating the Book

When sketching this general framework in an attempt to capture the debate as it has progressed and is still progressing, we need to acknowledge that it takes place on three levels simultaneously and transversally. The discourse occurs on the level of 'historical reality' (primary sources), on that of history writing (secondary sources), and on a third, meta-historical level of 'writing about history-writing' (what is book history?). Thus, when we analyse the book historical debate, we need to try to take all three levels of description into account, focusing specifically on the reasoning, the politics and power struggles, as well as the value systems, that lie behind the choices made for a particular perspective. It is also important to remember, as part of this analysis, that a rethinking of our book historical

---

ebooks, so their rhetoric isn't as wild. Technofuturists are technological triumphalists, or at least quasi-utopian optimists. These are the folks who believe that technology can solve our political, educational, and cultural problems. At an extreme, they don't care about books at all: they're just relics of a happily closing age of paper, and we should embrace the future in the form of multimedia and the networked web. (Carmody, 2010)

Bookfuturists, in Carmody's vision, refuse both viewpoints. He sees it as a way of thinking about the book that is critical to either position.

[38] Famously Plato had Socrates argue in the *Phaedrus* (2005) that writing is unresponsive, and it is bad for one's memory, as it will make one forgetful. Similarly, in Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* (1978) a scholar states, 'The printed book will destroy the building', where the cathedral as a physical, pictorial embodiment of the 'fortress of the mind' is seen as becoming obsolete with the coming of the printed book.

past has a direct influence on—and is a reflection of how we envision—the future of the book, and perhaps more importantly, of how we want to structure, influence and change this future. In other words, the way the past of the book is perceived by a specific thinker or group of thinkers, not only casts a light on how they perceive what the present and future of the book could or should be (as well as which issues will be most important in determining the future of the book); it also influences directly and materially both the object of the book and the discursive practices accompanying it (and with that, it will directly influence scholarly communication in the case of the monograph). For example, if we stress that fixity is an inherent property of the (printed) book, and thus something that has partly come to define and stand at the basis of modern science and scholarship, this can have the effect of positioning this property as essential for the future of the book and (digital) scholarship. This state of affairs comes to the fore in efforts directed toward recreating the fixity and stability associated with the print text within the digital book format (i.e. the continued search to stabilise the book and keep its integrity intact online via DOIs, persistent identifiers, DRM and copyright, author IDs etc.).[39]

As I proceed to analyse the debate on book history in what follows, it is important to keep the above in mind. I will now take a brief look at two of the debate's key players, Elizabeth Eisenstein and Adrian Johns, and the reasons they have brought forward for their specific position-taking within the debate on book history.[40] Both in their separate works, and in their highly agonistic discussion in the *American Historical Review*, Eisenstein and Johns illustrate very well the main topics discussed within the debate on book history, as well as—and more importantly as far as this study is concerned—the main oppositions that continue to structure it. After my exploration of this debate I will go on to propose in the next section an alternative vision of the history of the book: one that endeavours to go beyond some of the oppositions that structure the debate on the book's history and that can be seen to function as 'false divisions' (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 2). I will instead focus on the entanglement of plural agencies (i.e. technological and cultural, human and non-human, discursive and material) as part of the processual becoming of the book. As I will explain, these entanglements get cut-up as part of the discursive position-taking that

---

[39] See also Borgman's remarks on the stabilisation of the book on page 23.

[40] The importance of Eisenstein's thought for the book historical discourse and scholarly inquiry more in general has been called 'undeniably enormous', and her seminal work *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, has been seen as 'more than any other work … responsible for the rise of … print culture studies' (Baron et al. 2007: 1). Although the various discourses on the history of the book overlapped and interacted, Eisenstein's work can be seen as representing the materialist inspired Anglo-American stream of book studies, whereas Johns work draws heavily on the history of the European continental tradition of social-economic and cultural historical research in the wake of the Annales school.

surrounds the history of the book. I will focus on how these oppositions can be seen as forms of ethical position-taking, as struggles to try to define (the identity of) the book and with that the future shape of academia. For as I mentioned above, the discourse on the book's history—and this is especially the case with respect to the scholarly monograph—not only encompasses a fierce debate about how to represent and historicise the past of the (scholarly) book, it can also be seen as a struggle to determine its future.

As outlined previously, in the next four chapters I will then focus on some of the highly contentious issues and concepts that have arisen out of the debate on book history, in an effort to reframe them. These are: the role of the *author*; the idea of the book as an *object*, part of a system of *commodification;* and notions of *fixity* and *binding,* seen as an integral part of the book's materiality. How have these issues and concepts been envisioned within and developed throughout the debate on book history as part of a struggle to define both the past and future of the scholarly book? I want to explore in what sense these notions are part of, as well as a continuation of, the representationalist and humanist tendencies in the debate (about which I will say more in what follows). These three contested issues and concepts—authorship, the book as commodity, and the fixed and bound book—will play an important structuring role in the remainder of this study, and will be used as signposts to follow the discourse and the future development of the scholarly book. At the same time they will also serve as starting points to reimagine and perform this future differently.

2.1.3 The Debate between Johns and Eisenstein

Book historian Elizabeth Eisenstein is well-known for her seminal work *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979). She was influenced by, while also critical of, the vision put forward by communication theorist Marshall McLuhan. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), McLuhan offered an interpretation that sees the technology of the printed book as having a direct influence on our consciousness and with that on society. Eisenstein argues for the importance of re-evaluating what she calls the 'unacknowledged revolution' that took place after the invention of print. She does so by exploring the consequences of the fifteenth-century shift in communications, focusing on how printing altered written communications within the Commonwealth of Learning. In this respect she doesn't look at book history specifically, but at the effects of *print culture* on modern society. In other words, she studied how changes affecting the transmission of records—altering the way data was collected, stored and retrieved, and how it restructured scholarly communication networks throughout Europe—might have influenced historical consciousness over an extended

period of time. In *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Eisenstein is interested predominantly in the scholarly exploration of the socio-cultural impact of both print and publishing on the advancement of science, and on the evolution of the thought of humanists and reformation thinkers.

According to Eisenstein—writing in the 1970s—up to then 'almost no studies were devoted to the consequences that ensued once printers had begun to ply their new trades throughout Europe. Explicit theories as to what these consequences were had not yet been proposed, let alone tested or contested' (1979: 4). Her moderate form of technological determinism can thus be seen as a revisionist strategy, where she argues that a neglect of the shift in communications, and a continued focus on the prevailing schemes of multivariable explanations, will only have skewed perspectives further in the future, where the issue should be to explore why 'many variables, long present, began to interact in new ways' (Eisenstein 1979: xvi). Although accusations of technological determinism were indeed put forward by her critics and successors, Eisenstein refutes any 'monocausal, reductionist and technological determinist reading' of her work, emphasising that print was only one factor that was influential in bringing about change (1979: xv). Acknowledging the importance of the human element, she believes impersonal transmission and communication processes must also be given due attention, as that is where print did have special effects. Although it did not cause the developments she described (it was merely *an* agent of change, not *the* agent of change), Eisenstein states that they were definitely re-orientated by the communications shift (1979: xvi).

Eisenstein further points out that the shift from script to print involved a European-wide transition, one that occurred in a relatively short time-span. The adoption of print was not a slow revolution but a remarkably rapid and widespread development (Eisenstein 2005: 318). However, she does not so much emphasise a revolutionary view as envision the transition as a line that was both continuous and broken, simultaneously consisting of continuity and radical change. Nonetheless, Eisenstein's emphasis within this transition is on aspects of change, rather than on continuity. We shouldn't underestimate the large cluster of changes that took place, she claims, and the essential role print played in these:

> One cannot treat printing as just one among many elements in a complex causal nexus for the communications shift transformed the nature of the causal nexus itself. It is of special historical significance because it produced fundamental alterations in prevailing patterns of continuity and change. On this point one must take strong exception to the views expressed by humanists who carry their hostility

> to technology so far as to deprecate the very tool, which is most indispensable to the practice of their own crafts. (Eisenstein 1979: 703)

Eisenstein is not interested in a simple 'impact model' as she calls it; changes brought about by printing are not easy to grasp, and characterise more a change of phase, where the character of the links and relationships—the cluster itself—underwent change. It is about finding the balance, she states, between saying that print changed everything and that it changed nothing (Eisenstein 1979: 32).

In contrast to Eisenstein, historian Adrian Johns—who has proved to be one of her biggest opponents—stresses that it was human, not medial factors, that were at the basis of the changes that led towards increased standardisation and stability in the early modern period. As Johns states, what are often seen or regarded as essential elements and features of print are in fact more contingent, transitory entities. The self-evident environment created by print culture encourages us to ascribe certain characteristics to print and to a technological order of reality. However, the most common conviction, that of print being fixed, stable, identical and reliable, is false, Johns argues, and stands in the way of a truly historical understanding of print. In *The Nature of the Book* (1998), Johns clearly illustrates the constructivist nature of the book, how the very identity of print has been created and how print culture has been shaped historically (1998: 2). According to Johns, it is not printing that possesses certain characteristics, but printing *put to use* in particular ways. He emphasises that fixity (according to many of us a common sense assumption of print) is not an inherent quality but a transitive one: 'we may adopt the principle that fixity exists only inasmuch as it is recognized and acted upon by people—and not otherwise' (Johns 1998: 19–20). Johns is interested in studying the genealogy of print culture: to analyse how the bond to enforce fidelity, reliability and truth in early modern printing was forged; to reappraise where our own concept of print culture has come from; to explore how print differed from place to place, and how it changed over time when it took hold; and to investigate how books came to be made and used.

In a debate in the *American Historical Review*, Johns and Eisenstein detailed their respective book historical visions (Eisenstein 2002, Johns 2002). Eisenstein provided a comprehensive overview of their main theoretical differences; differences that, as I argued above, can be seen a good example of some of the main theoretical oppositions that structure the debate on book history as a whole. According to Eisenstein, Johns denies that technology or the press has any intrinsic powers or agency, whereas for her the press affected significant historical developments. Johns downplays the difference between script

and print, whereas she sees a big difference and a transition taking place between the two. Divergences in their viewpoints are also apparent with respect to the geography of the book: Johns' position is local, restricted to England, where Eisenstein's is cosmopolitan in character. Eisenstein believes the establishment of printing shops inaugurated the communications revolution, whereas Johns—according to Eisenstein, at least—believes the 'printing revolution' was a retrospective discursive construct that emerged in the 18th or 19th century (Eisenstein 2002: 90). However, in his reply, Johns stresses that he does not see his view as being opposed to that of Eisenstein. He regards his position as a supplement in terms of approach, where he basically wants to acknowledge the importance of print in a different way: 'the deepest difference between us lies in the questions we ask. Where Eisenstein asks what print culture itself is, I ask how printing's historic role came to be shaped. Where she ascribes power to a culture, I assign it to communities of people. Most generally, where she is interested in qualities, I want to know about processes' (Johns 2002: 109–110). In other words, Johns does not want to focus on a history of print culture but on a cultural history of print. As he points out, a cultural history of print should be broadly constructivist about its subject, where he sees this as an essentially empiricist undertaking, arguing for the 'inseparability of social reality and cultural understanding' (Johns 2002: 123). Johns is thus not saying that print determines history, but that print is conditioned by history as well as conditioning it. As he stresses, the effects or implications of technology are not monolithic or homogenic. They are both appropriated by users as well as imposed on them. The book is therefore the product of one complex set of social and technological processes and also the starting point for another. For Johns, addressing the dichotomy directly, *The Nature of the Book* is not simply the negative component of a dialectic. It is not solely a critique of print culture and Eisenstein. Rather, it questions claims about print and examines how they came into being, and why it is that we find them so appealing and plausible (Johns 1998: 628).

As Johns makes clear, the cultural and the social should be at the centre of our attention. In this sense, the French historian Roger Chartier and the Annales school have been very important in the development of his argument. Chartier recognises ways of reading as social and cultural practices with an historical character. An authoritative text, however fixed, cannot compel uniformity in the cultures of its reception. Accordingly, Johns argues that both print and science are thus not universal and absolute but constructions that need to be maintained. He claims that Eisenstein sets printing outside of history in her definition of print culture: in her account it becomes placeless and timeless

and does not pay sufficient attention to how these essential properties of print and print culture as a whole emerged. *The Nature of the Book*, by contrast, is concerned with the relation between print and knowledge, and its focus is on the history of science. By exploring the history of the book and print in the making we get a better understanding of the conditions of knowledge, Johns claims, and of the ways in which knowledge has been made and utilised. *The Nature of the Book* is therefore concerned with how early modern Europeans put printing to use to create and maintain knowledge about the natural world. Print culture is, as Johns states, the result of manifold representations, practices and conflicts; it is thus not a cause in itself. In that respect there existed a variety of different (local) print cultures (Johns 1998: 19–20).

John's interest lies with the people and the places that make print possible: the agents of the book trade. As he argues, it is the appearance of print that has veiled real conflict in history. The principles that seem to us most essential to print have in fact been heavily disputed for centuries. Part of the importance of *The Nature of the Book* lies in Johns' reconstruction of how, in the 17th and 18th centuries, what print was and ought to be was decided and constructed by looking at its historical origins or by a reconstruction (in the way of a struggle) of the historical origins of the press.[41] What is important here is that print culture is based on practices and conventions, where Johns is interested in how practices came to be shared. Print culture knows specific sites of cultural production, distinct cultural settings or domains. These dynamic localities were constituted by representations, practices and skills. Johns shows that the uniformity exhibited by printed materials was as much a project of social actions and struggles as it was of the inherent properties of the press:

> In knowledge of the past they sought understanding of their present and future. The result was not a consensus. Such writers produced radically different accounts of the history and impact of printing, using different conventions of evidence to arrive at radically opposed conclusions. From those divergent verdicts they went on to generate violently conflicting recommendations for action. So intense was their disagreement that their work was forced to address the most profound historiographical problems. Most of all, it raised questions about the very credibility

---

[41] This struggle to control the past will be discussed in more depth in the next section. Johns' account of this struggle can be seen as an historical example of something I described earlier: namely, how a reinterpretation of the past directly influences the way we perceive the present and the future, and with that how we shape and structure that future. The representations of print's history were founded on the differing accounts of contemporaries of what printing was and should be. Debate, dispute and struggle thus constructed and constituted print culture. As Johns puts it, 'Societies therefore structure and legitimate themselves through knowledge of the past, creating present and future order out of an ordered representation of history' (1998: 325).

of textual evidence. An issue fundamental to the status of historical knowledge now confronted early modern writers, arising from a debate over the very craft that, one might suppose, negated the importance of the topic by rendering records trustworthy. (1998: 324)

2.1.3.1 Representationalist Discourse

If we look at the debate between Johns and Eisenstein in more detail, we can see that, although I have outlined and emphasised the main differences between the two thinkers, both are anxious not to be accused of any form of technicist or culturalist determinism or oppositional thinking. Eisenstein, for instance, is very careful to argue that print was only *an* agent of change, not *the* agent of change, and that the transition to print was not a revolutionary one, but a rapid, widespread development, both continuous and broken. Nonetheless, Eisenstein's emphasis is clearly on the 'unacknowledged *revolution*', on change rather than on continuity, and on how print was incremental in bringing about this change. And as stated previously, Johns emphasises that his view is not opposed to that of Eisenstein, but that he just asks different questions.[42] *The Nature of the Book* is not simply the negative component of a dialectic, he states: he is not opposed to print agency but wants to acknowledge print in a different way, where 'print is conditioning history as well as conditioning it' (Johns 2002: 124). Nonetheless, Johns does clearly emphasise the constructivist nature of the book, and that it doesn't have inherent qualities but only transitive ones. To this end, Johns argues that the cultural and the social should be 'at the centre of our attention' (1998: 20).

If we take the debate between Johns and Eisenstein and the various positions they adopt as representative of the larger discourse on the history of the book, we can make the claim that this discourse for the most part adheres to forms of *representationalism* in its depiction of the medium of the book. This becomes clear from, among other things, the technicist (Eisenstein, McLuhan etc.) and culturalist (Darnton, Johns etc.) assumptions that continue to underlie the debate. Representationalism, as Karen Barad defines it, is 'the belief in the ontological distinction between representations and that which they purport to represent; in particular, that which is represented is held to be independent of all practices of representing' (2007: 28). In representationalism separations (between words and things, discourse and matter) are thus foundational. On the level of history writing or historiography, both Johns and Eisenstein, for example, do not take into account how their own representations might be (materially) influencing the things they represent (i.e. how

---

[42] Although his book has been classified by some—unfairly in my opinion—as a 'book length attack on Eisenstein' (Van der Weel 2012: 81).

their descriptions of the past of the book both shape that past as well as the current and future material becoming of the book). More importantly, they fail to acknowledge their own entangled becoming *with* the book through their discursive practices and the exclusions they create by cutting these apart in a certain way. In this respect Eisenstein's technicist-inclined account is based on the presumption that books are real objects in the world—separate from ourselves, society, and culture—that can have certain effects on the world. As Kember and Zylinska make clear, however, from a *performative* viewpoint, 'media cannot have effects on society if they are considered to be always already social' (2012: 31). Similarly, Bolter argues that 'writing is always a part of culture'. For him, 'technologies do not determine the course of culture or society, because they are not separate agents that can act on culture from the outside' (Bolter 2001: 19). Johns, on the other hand, argues from a more constructivist-inclined view that the book has been constructed or represented by the 'agents of the book trade', showing a view in which culture is inscribed on the book, making it into a more or less passive entity, limiting the possibilities for the material agency of the book. Where Eisenstein and Johns *do* give credit to cultural and machinic agency respectively (as a form of limited constructivism or weak determinism), it is important to emphasise that they see both as complementary, as part of a 'set' of influences (in which one set is always emphasised as being more influential). As a result they maintain the ontological (and ethical) difference between discursive and media agency, instead of seeing them as co-constitutive and entangled relational and agentic phenomena, as I want to do.

In a non-representationalist performative view there is no simple causality between media on the one hand and culture/society on the other, as these are already entangled from the start. As Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin explicate in their book, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*, in a dichotomy the opposition is already implied in its negation, which implies that both sides of a dialectic are in a relation, where they are part of the same 'intimate' framework of thought (2012: 97–98). If we want to reframe the debate we should thus focus on their relationship and co-constitution. Along with bringing forward this performative view of book history, what I want to do here is examine how the representations that are presented by both Johns and Eisenstein and the larger debate on the history of the book, have come to emerge (from what context etc.), and what kind of cuts or dividing discursive practices they have come to promote or exclude through their materialising representations. Cuts or representations, following Barad, have to be made, but it is in the acknowledgement of our own responsibility and contextual entanglements

herein that we can make a start in cutting differently, and perhaps more ethically. As Donna Haraway has argued, 'worlds are built' from our articulations and from the distinctions we make as part of our entanglements (2004: 127). Here it is our responsibility to enable transformative instead of merely iterative effects to come out of our performative processes. We have to insist on a 'better account of the world' (Haraway 1988: 579).

It must be granted that Johns does acknowledge that a re-appraisal of a social history of print culture in the making is consequential and can contribute to our historical understanding of the present conditions of knowledge.[43] However, Johns does not seem to acknowledge *his own* involvement in print culture in the making in this respect—the specific cuts that he makes, for instance, by abiding to the publication practices of scholarly publishing by presenting his ideas in a fixed, objectified, printed scholarly monograph, although he is from a 'historical' viewpoint very attuned towards the construction of these specific forms of fixity. It was McLuhan who was actually more attentive to this issue, as he actively experimented with the form of his own representations, taking into account the entangled nature of his words and the medium in which they were represented.[44]

Both Eisenstein and Johns, as part of their representationalist accounts, are thus not able to evade oppositional thinking, and can in fact even been seen to enforce it. Kember and Zylinska provide further detail on this continued use of binary oppositions in media studies. They argue that 'even where these false divisions have been identified as such—and of course many writers are aware of their limited currency—it has been difficult to avoid them.' This is partly due to the 'residual effects of disciplinarity' and its embracing of sets of essential key concepts, but also to the predominance in media studies of social sciences perspectives, bringing along with them what could be classified as an inherently positivist and humanist outlook (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 2). To explore what might be behind the continued emphasis in the debate on the book's history on (different forms of) oppositional binary thinking, it is important to take a closer look at its disciplinary history, and the specific developments literary studies and historiography went through during the rise of book history as a specific disciplinary niche.

---

[43] For more on Johns' sensitivity and perceptiveness towards this point, see his article 'Gutenberg and the Samurai: or, the information Revolution is History' (2012).

[44] See, for instance, *The Medium is the Message*, the book McLuhan co-wrote with graphic designer Quentin Fiore (1967).

2.1.4 New Historicism and Feminist Critique

As I mentioned earlier, book history has its roots in bibliographic and literary studies and in the study of history. In the 1970s and 1980s there was an eagerness in these disciplines to get beyond earlier historiographic and literary traditions. What is important is that these traditions (history and literary studies) started to merge increasingly during this period, a period that also saw the rise of book studies as initially an amalgam of the two. What we see in the development of book studies, for instance, is clear traces of new historicist thought, which emerged in the 1980s as a literary theory mostly reacting to the formalism of structuralism and certain strands of poststructuralism (mainly the forms of deconstructionism developed within the Yale school of literary criticism) as well as older forms of historicism (Colebrook 1997: 139, Pieters 2000: 21, Mark Nixon 2004: 6, Newton 2013: 153). New historicists can be seen to argue that the latter theories focus mainly on the textual object for meaning extraction, whereas they state that we need to understand a text or work through its historical context too. In the famous words of Louis Montrose, new historicism's concern is with 'the historicity of texts and the textuality of history' (1989: 23). Especially in literary criticism, new historicism is therefore seen as a theory that focuses on the relationship between a text and its context (Lai 2006: 9). New historicism critiques the text/context divide that it claims has been upheld until then, as well as the focus on dominant readings of classical works. By contrast they argue for a renewed emphasis on neglected readings and dissonant voices and for the study of a variety of historical documents, not just the canon.

In the 1970s and 1980s new movements also emerged in historiography or the philosophy of history. These movements were mostly placed under the heading of 'new cultural history' (Hunt 1989) or 'new historiography' (Ankersmit 1994). They include new forms of cultural studies, such as the *histoire des mentalités*, and the *nouvelle histoire* of the third generation of Annales scholars in France (i.e. Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Nora). These 'new cultural histories' distinguished themselves from the earlier analytical philosophy of history by means of their focus on narrative, subjectivity and a plurality of interpretations rather than on historical objectivity and facts. This meant doing away with positivist perspectives of objectivity and the possibility of truthfully representing the past, in favour of poststructuralist theories of representation (De Certeau, Foucault), and the focus of historians on their own historicity (i.e. the way historians cannot exclude themselves from their investigation: instead, the present subject is seen as directly influencing the representation of the past) (Pieters 2000: 21). Related to this, Attridge et al. have argued

that poststructuralism can be seen as an attempt to reintroduce history into structuralism, but this naturally also poses questions to the concept of history as such. Under the influence of poststructuralism, and most importantly Derridean deconstruction, history became *différance*, whereby the assumptions of 'a history', a single objectified, final and absolute reading of history, came under attack (Attridge et al. 1989: 2).

It is interesting to note that there are a lot of similarities and overlap between the literary forms of new historicism and these new cultural histories, where the former can be seen as wanting to put history back into literary studies and the latter as wanting to put literary studies into history.[45] It has even been argued that new historicism can 'be taken to be the literary-critical variant of what Frank Ankersmit has termed the 'new historiography' (Pieters 2000: 21).

We can clearly detect the influence of new historicism and new cultural histories on the rise of book history and the book historical debate, where book history can be seen as an example of a new cultural history, especially in how it developed from within the Annales tradition. Furthermore, book history has been at the fore when it comes to arguing that it wants to collapse the text/context distinction, as well as the literary studies/history distinction. However, as I will argue below, although new historicism and new cultural histories embraced poststructuralist perspectives, both with respect to doing literary studies and history, and related to their object(s) of study, they haven't been able to embrace 'difference' (in so far as it is possible to embrace difference), nor to get beyond thinking in binary oppositions. As I will show in what follows, this is especially the case with new historicism, and its neutral position taking in the text/context (as well as object/human agency) debate as well as in its inability, especially within book historical studies, to fully take into account its own historical position.

Literary theorist Chung-Hsiung Lai argues that new historicism does not get beyond the binary text and context, where she states that it is faced with an 'insoluble predicament': how to deal with the perceived poststructuralist focus on textuality and the historicist focus on contextuality. This double claim (on both textuality and contextuality) and its claim of neutrality between the two, becomes impossible, resulting in a situation where it ultimately remains focused more on textuality and in its intended neutrality remains more closely allied with formalism (Lai 2006: 17–18, Liu 1989: 754–755). As Judith

---

[45] It is interesting to note, as Mark Nixon has done, that new historicism is an (almost) uniquely Anglo-American phenomenon, where in Europe this break with history was never that strongly felt. Through the emphasis on deconstruction and cultural materialism, and the Annales school tradition, they never abandoned but always sought out a broad concept of culture in European literary traditions (Mark Nixon 2004).

Newton puts it from the standpoint of feminist critique, new historicism thus 'produces readings of literature and history that are as marked by difference as by sameness' (1988: 87). This focus on neutrality leads to, as Lai calls it, new historicism taking in an apolitical posture. This partly has to do with new historicism's focus on a theory of power based on the early work of Foucault, as both Lai and other feminist critics of new historicism, such as Newton, claim. Here power is seen as over-dominant, and there is no way to perform it differently (i.e. constructionist thinking). In this respect new historicism created a universalisation of power and is lacking any politics of resistance and/or subversion. Thinkers such as Newton and Lai have tried to write feminist scholarship and theory into the history of new historicism. Lai suggests that in order to get beyond its textual focus, new historicism should focus more on plural socio-historical dimensions, and on dynamic forms of power that enable forms of subversive resistance. This includes a different reading of Foucault. As Newton puts it, 'while feminists have drawn upon Foucault, they have also been insistent, for the most part, upon identifying those who have power and asserting the agency of those who have less' (1988: 102). Lai uses an exploration of feminist genealogy to reconcile new historicism and feminism and to lift new historicism out of its textual formalism and early Foucauldian power theory. Both Lai and Newton point out that new historicism needs to give up its apolitical condition and take material conditions seriously, to provide channels for the voices of the oppressed in order to really go beyond history as usual. The focus should be on plurality, diversity, and difference, so that new historicism can become otherness-driven (Lai 2006: 22, Newton 2013: 166).

Following a vision similar to feminist critics of new historicism such as Lai and Newton, I will propose a strategy that might lift the *debate on book history* beyond an overtly simplified binary thinking, by reading it with, alongside and through the discursive-materialist and performative practices of the materialist feminist Karen Barad. And, like Lai, I will be focusing on the later work of Foucault and its emphasis on resistance and interventionism. As stated previously, I will argue that we need to see discursive and media agency as entangled agential processes instead of a property that an entity (be it a machinic or human one) has. On the level of history writing, I want to emphasise that book historical studies (as well as new historicist ones) need to take their own historicity, as a form of performativity, into account more. For example, although Johns narrates the way 17th century publishers struggled over the construction of the origin of the book—and through that struggle partly came to define the future of the book—there is not enough acknowledgment, both within *The Nature of The Book*, and in Johns' debate with Eisenstein,

of how his own history writing and his position taking within the debate can be seen to influence and shape both the past and future of the book. For instance, as Bolter has pointed out, we should see the utopian and dystopian discourses on the past and future of the book as belonging to and shaping the materiality of our writing technologies:

> The technology of modern writing includes not only the techniques of printing, but also the practices of modern science and bureaucracy and the economic and social consequences of print literacy. If personal computers and palmtops, browsers and word processors, are part of our contemporary technology of writing, so are the uses to which we put this hardware and software. So too is the rhetoric of revolution or disaster that enthusiasts and critics weave around the digital hardware and software. (2001: 19)

Book historians, I will argue, need to be more aware of their own discursive agency. In this respect they currently do not focus enough on how they produce the object of their study and, with that, structure its future. Furthermore, they should pay closer attention to how this object, the book, both in its materiality and as a metaphor, is and has been influencing their discursive practices. What the debate on book history is missing is a clear focus on its own publishing and scholarly communication practices as structuring entities, as well as a more feminist-oriented perspective that tries to go beyond simple binary thinking. To what degree are book historians taking responsibility for their own choices and focal points in this respect? [46] As with new historicism, although the discourse on book history is in many ways critical of and aware of the dichotomies sketched above, it can be argued to still uphold them. Furthermore, it runs the risk of, as Lai describes, taking an apolitical position, when its main focus is on describing and analysing instead of critiquing, changing or intervening in society. Book historians should therefore be more aware of the parts they play in the struggle for the future of the book. So what can be the 'beyond' of book studies in this respect? How can we get beyond this kind of oppositional thinking that, as I argue, still structures the debate?

---

[46] Historian Leslie Howsam has been a proponent of a more feminist-oriented book studies, one that doesn't simply focus on writing women into book history, but also draws on our responsibility as historians to gender both the book and book history: 'I would like to see book historians focus on the gender identity of the book itself, both as physical object and as cultural product. We have seen the implications of a feminist analysis–in terms of patriarchy, power, discipline, possession, and other dimensions–on literary studies and on social history, as well as on the other humanities disciplines and on the social and physical sciences. Why should book history be immune?' (1998: 1).

2.2 The Discursive Materiality of the Book

One of the more interesting media theories that has come to the fore recently, media archaeology, offers some valuable insights for book history and any attempt to move beyond it. Media archaeological approaches challenge 'the rejection of history by modern media culture and theory alike by pointing out hitherto unnoticed continuities and ruptures' (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011: 3). Media archaeologists construct, in the spirit of Foucault and Kittler, alternative histories to the present medial condition: counter histories of the suppressed and neglected, to challenge dominant teleological narratives (Parikka 2012: 12–14). Media archaeology should not be seen as being distinct from the genealogical method, however, in the sense that some thinkers emphasise the contrast between archaeology and genealogy as being a clear distinction in Foucault's thought, for example. Media theorist Wolfgang Ernst argues as follows: 'with regard to media theory, let us put it this way: media archaeology is not a separate method of analysis from genealogy, but complementary with it' (2003). Ernst does see a difference between media archaeology and a genealogy of media, but he points out that they are not separate methods of analysis: 'genealogy offers us a processual perspective on the web of discourse, in contrast to an archaeological approach which provides us with a snapshot, a slice through the discursive nexus' (2003). Media archaeology can therefore be seen as an incorporation of both archaeological and genealogical methods. New historicism and new forms of cultural history also influenced media archaeology, where it further draws connections with the Annales school. This was the context in which media archaeology formed its own niche in 1990s media studies, bringing more of a historical perspective to new and digital media studies (Hertz and Parikka 2012). As Jussi Parikka has emphasised, archaeology also refers to the actual excavation of media objects, of 'going under the hood' or exploring the inside of media to examine the interior of media machines and circuits by forms of hardware hacking and circuit bending (2012: 83).[47]

What is interesting with respect to the approaches adopted by media archaeologists,

---

[47] The *Media Archaeology Lab* (MAL) founded in 2009 by Lori Emerson, is a prime example of this practice, where she describes MAL as 'a place for cross-disciplinary experimental research and teaching using obsolete tools, hardware, software and platforms, from the past'. Similarly the *Media Archaeological Fundus* (MAF), directed by Wolfgang Ernst, is described by Ernst as a going 'beyond bare historiography': 'The Media Archaeological Fundus (MAF) is a collection of various electromechanical and mechanical artefacts as they developed throughout time. Its aim is to provide a perspective that may inspire modern thinking about technology and media within its epistemological implications beyond bare historiography'. See: http://loriemerson.net/media-archaeology-lab/ and http://www.medienwissenschaft.hu-berlin.de/medientheorien/fundus/media-archaeological-fundus

is that media archaeology is seen as a different way to theorise, to 'think media archaeologically'. It investigates new media cultures by analysing and drawing insights from forgotten or neglected past media, and their specific practices and interventions (Parikka 2012: 2). In this respect media archaeology is much more of a practice, a doing, an intervention than 'regular' media histories, and as part of that, the book historical debate. It is disruptive rather than representationalist (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011: 325). Therefore, media archaeological approaches could potentially be a valuable companion to book historical studies, where they stress the multi-layered entanglement of the present and the past and emphasise 'dynamic, complex history cultures of media' (Parikka 2012: 12). Although we can identify a lot of similarities and overlap between media archaeological and book historical approaches,[48] within the current heightened attention surrounding media archaeology, a focus on books and book history is curiously lacking.[49]

However, as with new historicism, the question can be asked, to what extent, in its focus on histories of suppressed and neglected media, is media archaeology repeating and again emphasising these exclusions? In its creation of an 'entanglement of alternative and neglected media histories' how does it take responsibility for its own decisions and cuts? In what ways does media archaeology really 'perform history differently' through its (scholarly) practices, and in what sense is it really a 'doing'? Especially since most media archaeological research is heavily theory-based and communicated mostly in a conventional text-based manner? It is here that a reading of the work of Karen Barad can be particularly valuable, to emphasise this focus on the ethical and on taking responsibility for our choices, or cuts as she calls them, into media archaeological, new historicist and book historical studies. In other words, how can we write a book history that will perform a different vision of the book, that is open and responsible to change, difference and exclusions and that accounts for our own ethical entanglements in the becoming of the book?

I would like to argue for a vision that seeks to move beyond binary thinking with respect to both the book as an object and the discourse surrounding the history and future

---

[48] Especially in the case of historians like Adrian Johns and Roger Chartier, who have tried to emphasise different readings of book history—readings going against the grain of the dominant book historical visions of among others Elisabeth Eisenstein—based on the importance of the construction of fixity by historically situated persons and institutions, and on the active role of the reader in constructing meaning through their multiple readings.

[49] For example, although there is an emphasis on archives and on writing systems and their cognitive-psychological influences, books and book history get no significant attention in two of the recent media archaeological overviews, neither in Parikka's *What is Media Archaeology?*, nor in the collection *Media Archaeology:* Approaches, Applications, and Implications, edited by Huhtamo and Parikka. Lisa Gitelman's work is an obvious exception to this, especially *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (2014).

of the book. In a social constructionist or constructivist vision of media, technology is seen as embedded, and understood predominantly by looking at the social context from which it emerges. Power structures—who controls, defines, owns the media etc.—are essential here. Technological determinism tends to stress that technology is an autonomous force, outside of forms of social control and context, and is seen as the prime agent in social change—except technology is always shaped and constructed, and is always political and gendered. The problem with constructionist theories, however, is that they tend to ignore material bodies as agential entities. Material bodies are not passive entities, just as technology is inseparable from politics: they are sites of bodily and material production.

Barad, in her theory of 'agential realism', focuses on the complex relationships that exist between the social and the non-social, moving beyond the distinction between reality and representation and replacing representationalism by a theory of posthumanist performativity. Barad's work triggers a variety of questions: how are non-human relationships related to the material, the bodily, the affective, the emotional and the biological? How are discursive practices, representations, ideas, and discourses, materially embodied? How are they socio-politically and techno-scientifically structured and in what ways do they shape power relations including the materiality of bodies and material objects? Bringing this back to a book historical context I am interested in the following: how is the book situated through and within material and discursive practices? As Barad states, discursive practices are fully implicated in the constitution and construction of matter. In her vision materiality *is* discursive, just as discursive practices are always already material (i.e., they are ongoing material (re)configurings of the world). As she argues:

> Discursive practices and material phenomena do not stand in a relationship of externality to one another; rather the material and the discursive are mutually implicated in the dynamics of intra-activity. But nor are they reducible to one another. The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither is articulated/articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated. Neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior. Neither can be explained in terms of the other. Neither has privileged status in determining the other. (Barad 2008: 822)

The last two sentences in this passage are very important in the context of the study of the book: there is no prime mover or most essential element, neither social, discursive nor material practices, nor the technology or object itself is solely of itself responsible for change, and they are each neither cause nor effect. Barad speaks of matter as matter-in-the-

process-of-becoming. The same can be said of media or media formats such as books, which can be seen as dynamic, performative entities. By focusing on the nature of the relationship between discursive practices and material phenomena, by accounting for 'nonhuman' as well as 'human' forms of agency, Barad extends and reformulates[50] the discursive elements of, for instance, Foucault's theory with non- or post-human object materiality.[51] Following Barad, agency becomes more than something reconfigured by human agents and looks at how media practices affect the human body, society and power relations. Both the object and the human are constructed or emerge out of material-discursive intra-actions (which Barad calls phenomena), a vision that actively challenges the dichotomy presently upheld to a greater or lesser extent in most book historical studies.

Following this approach, scholarly communication can be seen as a set of performative material and discursive practices. The scholarly monograph can then be analysed as one of these practices and at the same time as a process, as a relationship between these practices and how they are constituted or embodied. Scholarly and scientific practices—such as publishing—cannot be reduced to material forms but necessarily also include discursive dimensions. Practices do not only include the doings of actors but are constituted by, or encompass, the whole material configuration of the world (including objects and relationships). As Barad claims, following Butler, practices are temporal and performative; they constitute our life-world as they are constituted by it. Agency is constituted in relationships and is similarly performative, and as a relationship and not something that someone has, it is a doing (Barad 2007: 214).

Katherine Hayles argues along similar lines that materiality is an emergent property, it cannot be specified in advance, it is not a pre-given entity (and thus has no inherent or salient properties).[52] Materiality is and remains open to debate and interpretation. As she points out in relationship to texts as embodied entities:

> In this view of materiality, it is not merely an inert collection of physical properties but a dynamic quality that *emerges* from the interplay between the text as a physical artifact, its conceptual content, and the interpretive activities of readers and writers. Materiality thus cannot be specified in advance; rather, it occupies a borderland— or better, performs as connective tissue—joining the physical and mental, the artifact and the user. (2004: 72)

---

[50] In her posthumanist performative reformulation of the notions of discursive practices and materiality, she also extends and reformulates Judith Butler's theory of performativity.

[51] One might argue, however, that a concern for non- or post-human object materiality is already apparent in Foucault's thought (most obviously in *The Order of Things*) (1966).

[52] The same is argued by Elisabeth Grosz when she states 'Nature or materiality have no identity in the sense that they are continually changing, continually emerging as new' (Kontturi and Tiainen 2007: 248).

A variety of material agencies entwine to produce our media constructions. The natural and the cultural, the technological and the discursive are all entangled. This perspective offers us a way to rewrite these modernist oppositions. It is not so much that we can speak of assemblages of human and non-human, but that these assemblages are the condition of possibility of humans and non-humans in their materiality. What is important is that specific practices of 'mattering', in Barad's words, have specific ethical consequences. Things are entangled but the separations that people create signify that they create inclusions and exclusions through their specific focus. This 'agential cut', as Barad calls it, enacts determinate boundaries, properties, and meanings. Where in reality differences are entangled, agential cuts cleave things together and apart, creating subjects and objects. We need to take responsibility and be accountable for the entanglements of self and other that we weave, as well as for the cuts and separations, and the exclusions that we create and enact. As Barad phrases it, we are responsible for 'the lively relationalities of becoming of which we are a part' (2007: 393).

By envisioning the book either as a form of agency, cut loose from its context, relations, and historicity, or as a passive materiality on which forms of political and social agency enact, we make specific ethical choices or cuts which we can be held accountable for. My interest lies in exploring why these incisions are made within the book historical discourse: what are the reasons, the politics and struggles, the value systems that lie behind these choices? At the same time I want to rethink the book, and with it scholarly communication, as a material-discursive practice, as a process that gets cut into. I aim to think through what this alternative vision of the book could signify for scholarship and academia. What does it mean, for instance, to enact a different vision of the book through our practices and actions?[53] How can we perform the book—and with it ourselves as subjects—in such a way that we enable a more ethical system, one that encourages difference and otherness, fluidity and change, but also responsibility and accountability for our choices and exclusions?

In this respect Barad's vision is similar to that of Levinas, as in both ethics are already part of our entanglements from the start. As she states, 'science and justice, matter and meaning are not separate elements that intersect now and again. They are inextricably fused together' (Barad 2010: 242). For Levinas, ethics is inevitable and foundational (it precedes ontology), where we are always already confronted by 'the infinite alterity of the

---

[53] There is no external position in this vision, we enact and create the book though our discursive practices and vice versa.

other' (1979). The other makes me responsible and accountable, s/he needs to be responded to (Zylinska 2005: 13). The self and other therefore do not stand in a relationship of externality to one another either. As Derrida puts it, 'could it not be argued that, without exonerating myself in the least, decision and responsibility are always of the other? They always come back or come down to the other, from the other, even if it is the other in me?' (1999: 23). Ethics is thus not outside or external, it is always already present in our practices and institutions and cannot be imposed from the exterior, as it is performed through these practices and institutions (Zylinska 2005: 3). This is why making cuts in 'the fabric of the real' is an ethical decision, one that needs to be taken responsibly, following an ethics that is not predefined beforehand but always open, and that is capable of responding to specific situations and singular events.

2.2.1 Print-Based Essentialisms

As part of my own intervention in the book historical debate, I will argue that debates on all three of the historical-discursive levels mentioned above (on the level of the sources, of history writing and of historiography), determine our vision of the book as a medium on a material level, and the book as a material entity in turn influences and structures these debates. Matter and discourse are both emerging from this continuous process. The book as a medium is thus never 'done' and gets reconstituted and reimagined constantly: by technological developments; by the ongoing debate over its meaning, function, and value; by historical developments (i.e. reactions to other 'newer' media via remediation, appropriation or remix); by the political-economies and social institutions with their accompanying practices, in which the book functions; and by new uses, which include new material practices and the changing context of the production and consumption of books.[54]

---

[54] Here I argue against thinkers who follow a McLuhanite tradition, for instance, focusing on the salient features of a medium. For example, book historian Adriaan Van der Weel, writing in this tradition, argues that the interface of the book, in comparison to a digital interface, is finished. He also states the book's interface is hierarchical, orderly and linear throughout (Van der Weel, 2012: 189, 198). Instead, I will argue here that the book keeps reinventing itself, both with respect to its materiality and to the discourse accompanying it, which continually (re)determines its meaning and identity. It becomes clear more practically, from for example the history of artists' books and the various experiments with the book's materiality, that the (printed) book's interface is not finished. As Johanna Drucker has argued:

> A book is an interface, for instance, though its reified condition is equally pernicious, persistent and difficult to dislodge. We are aware that digital interface seems more mutable and flexible than that of a book, but is this really true? The interface is not an object. Interface is a space of affordances and possibilities structured into organization for use. An interface is a set of conditions, structured relations, that allow certain behaviors, actions, readings, events to occur. This generalized theory of interface applies to any technological device created with certain assumptions about the body, hand, eye, coordination, and other capabilities. (2013)

Nonetheless, a few salient features, which remain very much debatable and in many cases, have become central topics in the debate on book history, are increasingly seen as essential parts of the book in the common imagination, mostly in a reaction to the rise of digital media and the Internet, to which the book is often compared and is similarly contrasted to in various ways.[55] These salient features include notions of stability and fixity, the integrity of a work (bound with a cover), as well as that of a clearly defined author with distinct author functions (responsibility, credibility, authority, ownership), and the selection and branding by a reputable press, which additionally vouches for a book's authority and quality. It is these features, however contested they might be, that have become the most well known aspects used to define a book in popular discourse. Furthermore, as I will argue, these perceptions are reproduced and fixed through our common daily practices, where they eventually become the basis of our institutions. As a result of this the salient features that have come to define the printed book look highly similar to the scholarly communication system that gets promoted within academia: one that is qualitative, stabile and trustworthy.

The problem with applying properties to media is that the process of doing so often relies on a historiographic fallacy: what historically came to be the characteristics of printing has been projected backward as its natural essential logic. However, it took a long time for these features to be established and perceived in the way they are now. They are the outcome of material processes of practice and dispute, and as concepts and practices they are changing constantly. What we perceive as fixity, standardisation and authorship changes over time, their functions change and the way these features and practices get produced and reproduced changes. For instance, now that we have started to experiment with preserving our collective heritage within sequences of DNA, the book might start to

---

The literary market also keeps reinventing the book in response to changing (reading) practices. See the introduction of new formats such as the *dwarsligger* (a book form, where the layout of a page from a conventional book is printed sideways on two pages of eight to twelve inches-pocket size), which has become highly popular in the Netherlands (see: http://www.dwarsligger.com/). Besides that, we will increasingly see hybrids of print and ebooks, such as augmented books. Another interesting example of a hybrid book was created as part of the *Elektrolibrary* project, where a paper book was connected to a computer, so that the book becomes a printed interface to the digital world. See also see Visnjic (2012) and http://vimeo.com/47656204. In this respect I will follow Johanna Drucker's critique of (too much) media specificity from the context of performative materiality. As she states, 'When attention to media specificity slips into a literal approach to the interpretation of materiality it falls short of providing an adequate basis for critical analysis of the ways materiality works'. Instead of a literal approach, she follows a performative approach towards analysis, in which a work is no longer seen as static but as processual. Here media are seen as being produced out of an intra-action or an affectual relationship between the medium's affordances and its uses as part of interpretative processes (Drucker 2013).

[55] Although one could argue that the web has a (hyper)textual basis and that its design was clearly influenced by the book, for instance in its use of book metaphors, i.e. web pages, browsing, bookmarking, scrolling etc.

look like an incredibly unsteady and temporary storage medium.[56] It is interesting to see how these ideas connected to the printed book will now be reconfigured, reimagined and challenged again by digital media, which serve as an added catalyst for the discussion on the future of the book. For example, as Kember and Zylinska point out, under the influence of the debate on new media, a distinction is upheld between new media, which are seen as interactive and converged, and old media, such as the book, which are seen as stable and fixed. However, arguably, if we take into consideration the work of Johns or the history of artists' books, books can be seen to be just as 'hypertextual, immersive, and interactive as any computerized media' (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 4). As Kember and Zylinska emphasise, 'the inherent instability of the book never disappeared, it just became obfuscated' (2012: 4).

There are additional reasons why it is important to keep on questioning, critiquing and reconfiguring what are seen as essential print-based features. Print has come to shape and serve certain functions for scholarship. By continuously emphasising and fixing what are in essence fluid and contestable features, we run the risk of making both print and the book, and with them eventually the scholarly communication system, into a conservative and conservationist entity. As Barad has argued, this can lead to an essentialising approach, where a media's essences become fixed and differences are erased. Such an approach will limit our understanding of the book and its heterogeneous, multiple interactions (Barad 2000: 222). However, when we start to recognise and emphasise that these so-called salient features are contested concepts that are reconfigured constantly when the book's materiality changes, readers change, the production methods change, and the discourse changes, we can begin to acknowledge that the book as a medium, concept, and material object, keeps on changing too in relation to new contexts. As Kember and Zylinska make clear, 'media are always hybrids' (2012: 4). Books are among beings and among agencies, entangled and implicated in them. We are involved in the processes of becoming of the book, in our analysis and histories as well as in our uses and performances of the book. In this sense, we have a responsibility when it comes to the creation of conditions for the emergence of media, where we emerge with these media; we "do" media, just as media are performative through their specific affordances. When we start to acknowledge agential distribution, we can begin to look at the book as a processual, contextualised entity, where the book becomes a means to critique our established practices and institutions, both

---

[56] Scientists are currently experimenting with storing data in DNA molecules. See, among others Heaven, 2012; Jones, 2012.

through its forms—and the cuts we make to create these forms—its discourses, and through the practices that accompany it.

A further aspect of my critique of the perceived salient features of printed books focuses on the underlying humanist assumptions they perpetuate. We can see this in the way authorship is conceptualised and continuously reasserted following a liberal humanist notion of the author as an autonomous subject or agent. This anthropocentrism, affirming the primacy of man in the creation of knowledge, remains strongly embedded in our publishing practices, instead of emphasising the multiple entangled agencies (human and non-human, technological and medial) that are involved in the production of research, for instance, from the printing press to desktop publishing software. Here, as Barad argues, a humanist notion of agency as a property of individual entities is maintained. These kinds of essentialisms are further upheld when the book is talked about as an original piece of work, and as a fixed and bound object or commodity, which can have certain material effects.

These humanist visions pertaining to the book, or to the scholarly monograph more specifically, are repeated within digital or post-digital spheres, together with essentialising practices such as copyright and DRM, which are further objectifying the book as a commodity. This situation is then sustained by a discourse of the (history of the) scholarly book that does not fundamentally critique or aim to rethink these humanisms, including those maintained through the political economy that surrounds the monograph. It is foremost our scholarly publishing institutions that have invested in the cultivation of this print-based situation and humanist discourse, and these institutions are eager to maintain their position and to defend their established interests. Although book historians are aware of how this humanist focus on the book has been constructed out of various power struggles, I will argue that they do not concentrate enough on their own publishing practices, nor are they formulating potential alternative visions of the book—based on open-endedness, for example (Drucker 2004).

Related to what I explained earlier, in the remainder of this thesis, when I mention the print-based features or discourse of the book, I am thus referring to the essentialising and humanistic aspects that have been brought forward by this discourse and by the institutions and iterative practices surrounding the book that are similarly maintaining them. In the next three sections I will analyse three aspects in particular that can be seen as some of the most fixating, essentialist, humanistic, and print-based features of the book: *autonomous authorship*, the book as a *commodity*, and the *fixity* or *bound nature* of the book. Although each of the following sections discusses one of these topics separately, they

cannot be thought independently: as scholarly practices and institutions they overlap and reinforce each other. Nonetheless, chapters 3 to 6 will proceed by analysing the institutions, practices and discourses that have influenced and shaped these print-based features of the scholarly book in relationship to the history of the book. At the same time, I will discuss how these essentialising aspects are simultaneously maintained and critiqued in a digital context, where I will analyse various digital experiments with the book that have attempted to think beyond these fixtures, and that have tried to challenge the stability, authority, and commodification of the book. This includes projects that have experimented with concepts and practices such as remix, fluidity or liquidity, and openness. However, as critical as they may be, I will show how many of these digital book experiments continue to adhere to humanist mechanisms, practices and institutions.

Each of the next sections will commence with a diffractive (re-)reading of the discourse on book history, related to that specific part's theme. Haraway first introduced the practice and concept of reading diffractively. Her approach was extended by Barad, who argues that, as a methodology, diffraction 'provides a way of attending to entanglements in reading important insights and approaches through one another' (2007: 30). Van der Tuin defines it as a reading that 'breaks through the academic habit of criticism and works along affirmative lines' (2011a: 22). In this sense it is not based on a comparison between philosophies as closed, isolated entities, but on 'affirming links between (…) schools of thoughts' (Van der Tuin 2011a: 22). Where Haraway states that diffractive readings 'record the history of interaction, interference, reinforcement, difference' (1999: 101), Barad defines diffractive methodologies as follows: 'I call a diffractive methodology, a method of diffractively reading insights through one another, building new insights, and attentively and carefully reading for differences that matter in their fine details, together with the recognition that there intrinsic to this analysis is an ethics that is not predicated on externality but rather entanglement. Diffractive readings bring inventive provocations; they are good to think with. They are respectful, detailed, ethical engagements' (Dolphijn and Van der Tuin 2012: 50).

It is thus not my aim to dialectically read the various positions in the debate on book history in opposition to each other, as I have done at the beginning of this chapter to expose the binary tendencies in the discourse, and to illustrate the differences in position-taking between Johns and Eisenstein. Instead my aim is to read these book historical insights together diffractively to acquire an overview of the debate from multiple positions. At the same time I want to use this diffractive methodology to emphasise the genealogical

aspects of the debate, where, as Barad has stated, by reading insights through each other, we can explore where differences emerge and get constituted (Barad 2007: 30). To explore where these differences emerge, I will be reading the debate diffractively in relation to each specific theme that structures this thesis (authorship, the book as commodity, and the book as a fixed an stable object).

I am thus not installing what Van der Tuin has called 'a new master narrative' (2011a: 26), in the sense of putting forward a new performative or feminist new materialist reading of the book historical debate in opposition to earlier readings. Instead I will use a diffractive method to read established narratives through each other, in order to emphasise their entanglement. As van der Tuin has stated: 'the diffractive method allows us to affirm links between seemingly opposite schools of thought, thus breaking through a politics of negation' (2011a: 27). The aim of this diffractive reading is to explore where differences arise and to move beyond the binaries of the discourse in order to present a more entangled vision, showcasing both sides of the debate together. At the same time I want to extend the representationalist visions that continue to structure the discourse on book history, instead exploring its performative character. For example, my discussion of the debate serves to show the continued influence it has on the present and future material manifestations of the book. Finally, with this diffractive reading I want to draw attention to the lack of engagement many book historians have with the becoming of the book, and with the shortcomings of the discourse as far as promoting alternative scholarly book and publication forms is concerned, for example. My diffractive reading will thus be a re-framing on three fronts: I will read various discursive narratives through each other; I will then diffractively read these narratives through the lens of the three main print-based book features (authorship, the book as commodity and the book as a bound and fixed object); and, finally, I will read them in the context of the present and future of the book, de-emphasising linear visions of time and history, and instead affirming the performativity of our discourses.

Section 1. Authorship

> I think that, as our society changes, at the very moment when it is in the process of changing, the author function will disappear, and in such a manner that fiction and its polysemous texts will once again function according to another mode, but still with a system of constraint – one that will no longer be the author but will have to be determined or, perhaps, experienced [expérimenter]. (Foucault 1977)

Authorship within academia has reached a cult status. Scholars, in the humanities at least, are increasingly assessed according to the weight of their individual, single authorial output in the form of published articles or books, and less according to the quality of their teaching, to take just one possible instance. The evaluation of a scholar's authorial contributions to a field is considered essential for hiring purposes and for further career and tenure development, for funding and grant allocations, as well as for interim institutional assessments such as the *Research Excellence Framework* (REF) in the UK. Authorial productivity and, connected to this, the originality of one's work, increasingly determines a scholar's standing within academic value networks. This fetishisation of scholarly authorship is integral to an increasingly hegemonic academic discourse related to originality, authority and responsibility, and linked to a humanist and romantic notion of the individual author-genius. This specific discourse on authorship is directly connected to a certain essentialist idea of 'the human', which one could argue the humanities, and with it scholarship as a whole, is based upon (Weber 2000, Fisher 2013). This is the idea of the universal human, the sovereign human individual, and of the self as unity, which can be translated, as Hall has done, into the idea of 'the indivisible, individual, liberal human(ist) author' (2012). Although, as Hall also states, this idea of human essence, of a unified self and a integral individual, has been interrogated by critical theorists for over a century now, the way knowledge is produced, consumed and disseminated today remains very similar to the print-based authorship practices that were devised as part of the discourse on the humanist author. This discourse continues to shape our academic authorial practices, in conjunction with our publishing practices, even in an increasingly digital environment.

However, practices and discourses related to collaboration, networking and the greater academic conversation, have similarly fed into our notions of scholarship over the centuries, and for many scholars the Internet and digital communication seem the perfect opportunity to promote these capacities further. Developments in the sciences, where multi-authorship has become common practice, also increasingly challenge ideas of

individual scholarship in the humanities. Some even argue that networked science has the potential to fundamentally change the nature of scholarship and scientific discovery (Nielsen 2011).

In this section I will examine how we can explore and critique the role humanist authorship plays in academia (and more in specific in the humanities), by analysing the way authorship currently functions within scholarly networks, and how our authorial roles and practices are constructed and performed as part of these networks. I will examine authorship from a historical, theoretical and practical perspective, in an effort to break down the discourse on the cult of individual authorship while also being critical of the—in some instances almost utopian—hope invested in scholarly practices of networked collaboration. I will do so by analysing the history of authorship and the rise of humanist authorial discourse to show that single authorship is a very recent construct and that scholarship has in fact always been collaborative and distributed. At the same time I will explore the mostly theoretical critique of authorship provided by poststructuralist thinkers, as well as what can be seen as some of the recent practical embodiments of that critique. Although we have been proclaiming the death of the author for several decades now, authorship remains strongly embedded within our institutions and cultural practices. In what follows, I will analyse some recent practical experiments with authorship critique, including hypertext, which I contend can be seen to focus mainly on replacing the *authority* and *responsibility* of the author with that of the reader. I will also look at remix practices within academia, which can be seen to mainly target the *originality* of authorship. Furthermore, I will investigate current practices within the digital humanities, which can be seen to foreground collaborative notions of authorship, challenging its presumed *individualistic* nature. However, as I will show, although interesting and promising, many of these recent collaborative, networked, interactive, multimodal, hypertextual, and remixed forms of authorship that are proposed as an alternative to the above described humanist authorship discourse, nonetheless still resort to many of the same structures and practices.

I will end the next chapter by putting forward two examples of what can be seen as anti-authorship critique, namely plagiarism and anonymous authorship. This will lead to an exploration of the potential for a posthumanist critique of authorship and, as an extension of this, possible forms of posthumanist authorship. Here posthumanist authorship endeavours to continuously rethink, both in theory and practice, the way authorship functions within academia, and, in its critique of the humanist notions underlying authorship, it seeks to experiment with more distributed and posthumanist authorship

practices.

Chapter 3. The Perseverance of Print-Based Authorship within Humanities Scholarship

3.1 Authorship and the Book Historical Discourse

The relationship of book history and book historians with authorship, its historical development, and the author function, has been changeable and complex. As Chartier argues, book history was developed within currents of literary criticism such as structuralism, analytic bibliography and new criticism, which were especially dominant in Anglophone countries, which all saw the text, and thus books, as self-contained systems, without authors and readers. As Chartier claims, the history of the book was thus for a long time a history with neither readers nor authors (1994: 24–25). In the French school of the *histoire du livre*, the situation initially was not much better, although it focused at least on the sociology of readers (but not on reading practices). In France, just as in the Anglo-Saxon bibliographic school, the author was forgotten, even in the tradition of the social history and the material production of the book, as produced by Febvre and Martin, among others. In France, Chartier claims, books thus had readers but no authors (1994: 25–26). However, Chartier sees attention to the author return in Bourdieu's sociology of cultural production, McKenzie's sociology of texts, reception history within literary criticism, and new historicism. A constrained author, as Chartier calls it, as opposed to a romantic one, appears here, as in these theoretical systems the text and the book are reconnected with their author and her or his intentions. Chartier applauds this return of the author as a subject of investigation in book studies, especially and more precisely, of the author function and its practice and techniques.

One of the questions concerning authorship that plays an important role in the book historical discourse is whether it is print that established or enabled our modern notion of authorship, or whether authorship predates print? For instance, Chartier focuses on how, in its connection with censorship, property and ownership, authorship is fully inscribed

with (the culture of) print. Print extended the circulation of potentially transgressive books and it established a market system in which proper roles were established (author, publisher, bookseller etc.). At the same time, he argues that certain essential traits of authorship predate print. Already in the manuscript age, authors, such as Petrarch, tried to establish control over the way their texts looked and were distributed, especially with respect to corruption through continual copying by copyists. According to Chartier, this shows an early emergence of 'one of the major expressions of the author-function, the possibility of deciphering in the forms of a book the intention that lay behind the creation of the text' (1994: 55).

Ong also locates the beginning of authorship before print, namely with the coming of written discourse. Where orality is performative and produces community, written discourse, he states, is detached from the performer. Writing starts to become an autonomous thing turning the writer into a subject distinct from the group. As Ong puts it, 'with writing, resentment at plagiarism begins to develop' (1982: 128). In manuscript culture, however, intertextuality continued to rule, where it was still connected to the commonplace tradition of the oral world, creating and adapting texts out of other texts. As McLuhan emphasises, written text was still authoritative only in an oral way (1962: 104). Both Ong and McLuhan thus argue that it was print that truly created the sense of the private ownership of words and that created a new feeling for authority, where print and its visual organisation encourages a different mind-set. A work becomes closed, cut off from other works, and thus unique. It was print culture that, according to Ong, finally enabled romantic notions such as originality and creativity to arise, and which encouraged the development of our modern notion of authorship (1982: 130–131). As McLuhan states in this respect, 'scribal culture had neither authors, nor readers' (1962: 130).

How did authorship develop in a print environment? When it comes to early publishing, Eisenstein explains that the modern division of labour was not yet very common. Printers were mostly printer-publishers and many academics, such as Johannes Kepler, were themselves publishers or were very much involved in the printing process (Eisenstein 1979: 18). As Eisenstein points out, early printers played an important role in forging definitions of property rights, shaping new concepts of authorship, and exploiting new markets (1979: 122). However, their labours would not have had much result in the manuscript age, as Eisenstein argues it was only with the coming of print, and with that of a fixed text, that individual innovations and discoveries could became more explicitly recognised, and that the distinction between copy and original could become clear

(1979: 119–120). After the advent of copyright especially, it became much easier for an author to make a profit by publicly releasing a text, as their invention rights were now firmly established in law and no longer only guaranteed by guild protection (in England by the *Stationers' Company*—consisting of printers, booksellers, and binders—for instance). Only with the coming of print, Eisenstein claims, could personal authorship really become established. People now wanted to see their work in print, fixed and unaltered. As she puts it, 'until it became possible to distinguish between composing a poem and reciting one, or writing a book and copying one; until books could be classified by something other than incipits; how could modern games of books and authors be played?' (Eisenstein 1979: 121). New forms of authorship and property rights thus started to undermine older forms of collective authority, which was exposed as error-prone. Where innovation came from was hard to determine before print, Eisenstein points out, as due to drifting texts and a lack of access to manuscripts, it was hard to establish what was already known and who was the first to know it. In other words, there was no systematic forward movement (Eisenstein 1979: 124). The term 'original' also started to change its meaning. Initially, it meant 'close or back to the sources'. The modern meaning, however, focuses on *breaking* with tradition. According to Eisenstein, it was print that started to change this meaning of original, as notions of recovery and discovery were reoriented after the coming of print technology (1979: 192).

Printer-publishers also started to construct the author as a marketing product. New publicity techniques were explored, by printers as well as by authors, including marketing forms such as blurbs to publicly promote authors and sell their works (Eisenstein 1979: 229). Yet again Eisenstein emphasises that this kind of marketing could only take place successfully and establish *new* forms of authorship after the coming of print. Scribal culture, she points out, 'could not sustain the patenting of inventions or the copyrighting of literary compositions. It worked against the concept of intellectual property rights' (Eisenstein 1979: 186).

Johns takes another approach with respect to the development of authorship, focusing mainly on the establishment of *credentiality*. How did readers ensure a work was authoritative? It is important to keep in mind that compositors, just like modern editors, played an important authorial role, he argues. A copy of a manuscript could never be exactly reproduced in print, due to space constraints, for instance. Copies were thus amended during the printing process. For example, typography was used to enhance authorial meaning and changes were made in anticipation of a certain readership. Johns

further remarks that original used to refer to a particular performance or reading of a work. This meant that written records were seen as a simple fallible transcription of a particular event. As Johns states, 'compositors could thus make the changes their cultural position demanded, not only because of the prized virtue of the master printer, but also because they held in their hands no sacrosanct text at risk of desecration' (1998: 105). According to Johns, copyright meant that a Stationer had a right to both the manuscript and the text. The Stationer thus protected his investment by turning this (fallible) transcription into a fully edited printed book (Johns 1998: 105). In this way Stationers and booksellers controlled every aspects of their books' production.

The establishment of authorship as we know it today was very difficult in these conditions. Hence both Johns and Chartier argue that we should speak of forms of *distributed authorship* at that time, where authorship was allocated to a number of individuals and groups. Chartier points to Foucault's focus on the penal background of authorship in this respect, when he states that ownership of a text has always been related to its penal appropriation. Books only really came to have authors, instead of mythical figures, when authors became subject to punishment, and they could be held responsible for the diffusion of texts that were seen as scandalous or as guilty of heterodoxy. Chartier focuses on how this responsibility was initially a *distributed* responsibility. As he puts it:

> In the repression of suspect books, however, the responsibility of the author of a censured book does not seem to have been considered any greater than that of the printer who published it, the bookseller or the pedlar who sold it, or the reader who possessed it. All could be led to the stake if they were convicted of having proffered or diffused heretical opinions. What is more, the acts of conviction often mix accusations concerning the printing and sale of censured books and accusations concerning the opinions—published or unpublished—of the perpetrator. (Chartier 1994: 50)

As part of the proprietary culture of that time, and based on their right to copy, Stationers for a long time held the position of authors, specifically with respect to establishing credentiality (Johns 1998: 138). In forms of collaborative book production, however, establishing credentiality was harder, as no one publisher was responsible for the entire book. Nonetheless, the Stationer was, for all intents and purposes, the proprietary author of the book, the one who was responsible for the content. Febvre and Martin explain that authors had no right to their work once it was bought and published, as then the copy was vested in the publisher (1997: 162.). As Johns makes clear: 'certainly, this was designed to give the state someone to prosecute: its aim was to create a person in whom responsibility

for the contents of the work could be said to reside. It was also hoped that the device would eliminate unauthorized printing—the practice increasingly called "piracy"' (1998: 159–160).

What kind of options did authors have in this situation? How could they control their authorship, when the publishers' market-based conventions were so dominant? Did publishers control printed knowledge in this respect? As Johns states: 'authorial civility was inextricably entangled with Stationers' civility. For the modern figure of the individualized author to be constructed, this had to change' (1998: 246). What is clear, Johns argues, is that the situation did change once authorship and copyright were embedded in law. With this the notion of authorship started to change too, where the Lockean idea of *invention* as the mark of property started to gain wider ground (Johns 1998: 247).

In opposition to Eisenstein, among others, Johns thus emphasises that authorship and authority are a matter of cultural practices and negotiation; they are conventions that could and can be challenged. We should see them as *attributions to* a book (by various groups and individuals such as publishers, readers etc.) instead of intrinsic *attributes of* a book (Johns 1998: 271). As Johns argues, then, in the battle surrounding how and to whom a book should be attributed credit or ownership, the author emerged. For scholars, forms of appropriation were a natural part of publishing their book. To protect their reputation they needed to negotiate potential hazards such as piracy, translations, abridgements, commercial sustainability etc., all matters that could deeply harm a scholar (Johns 1998: 445). The priority disputes in experimental philosophy—linked to publishing—got increasingly complicated and urgent, Johns points out, where both the existence of a record as well as the identity of its contents mattered. A new proprietary culture was therefore set up around authorship to deal with these problems, through which the profession of the author emerged (Febvre and Martin 1997: 66). Johns explains that fixity and authorship were thus set-up together, as the establishment of a problem: 'And as the recognition of authorship blossomed, so, in a mutually reinforcing process, arguments demonstrating a resolved identity for printing began to win the upper hand, and the credit of its products became more widespread. By the end of the nineteenth century, print and fixity were as firmly conjoined by culture as ever could have been achieved by machinery' (1998: 632). Chartier warns, however, against pinpointing specific historical moments of construction or determining causes for the rise of authorship and the author function. It is no good to focus on univocal solutions or oversimplified causes, he states. Book history can offer some insights in this problem, in all its variety, sketching out a possible path or focus

point—such as the juridical, repressive and material mechanisms Chartier focuses on—however, it does not offer an answer to what authorship was, is, and will be (Chartier 1994: 59).

What these discourses show is that authorship is integrally linked to developments in the commercial book trade, growing scholarly claims for priority and credit, and the expansion of ideas related to ownership, copyright and originality. As Mark Rose has argued, 'the distinguishing characteristic of the modern author (…) is proprietorship; the author is conceived as the originator and therefore the owner of a special kind of commodity, the work' (1993: 1). Although the debate on how authorship came about again focuses mainly on the medium vs. society binary, a further conclusion that can be reached is that authorship came to be entangled with the humanist characteristics now commonly attributed to the book. Fixed, essentialised, and bound as a book, romantic notions of authorship came to stand for a highly individualistic, authoritative and original writer, who was to be connected to a permanent body of works. The commercial and capitalist nature of the book trade with its focus on propriety and ownership instilled the idea of copyright and property into the relationship between an author and her or his text.

Although these humanist notions of authorship—including the connotations of reputation, individual creativity, ownership, authority, attribution, responsibility and originality they carry—seem to be an integral part of the scholarly method, despite the fact that they are often critiqued, they are very hard to overcome. Nonetheless, it is important to continue to challenge these traditional concepts, discourses, institutions and practices of authorship within academia. First of all because these essentialised notions of authorship do not do credit to the more collaborative and networked authorial practices as they exist currently and have existed in the past, in academia and beyond. As Johns emphasises, agency is more complex and distributed than the highly individualist narratives accompanying romantic notions of authorship argue for. In this respect there is a ongoing clash between what Robert Merton has identified as the values of originality and communism in scholarship (1973).

Another reason to challenge humanist concepts of authorship relates to the function currently fulfilled by authors in the academic political economy. In an effort to gain reputation and authority in a scholarly attention economy, academics are increasingly depicted as being in constant competition with each other (for positions, impact, funding etc.), where scholars are still rewarded mostly on the basis of their publication track record, and on their reputation as individual authors. Academic authors are on the one hand

turned into commodities, while on the other they increasingly need to act as entrepreneurs and marketeers of their own 'brand'. This objectification of authorship at a time when 'unoriginal' thought, depicted as plagiarism, is heavily combatted and frowned upon, goes against some of the more distributive and collaborative notions, practices and discourses of authorship described above. Yet the latter can be seen to not only be just as prevalent in contemporary academia, but in many ways a more realistic depiction of scholarly authorial practices.

Finally, the strength of the humanist discourse on authorship in academia can be seen to inhibit experimentation with different models and functions of authorship and forms of what can be called posthumanist authorship,[57] and the potential of digital media to help rethink what authorship is and can be. This does not mean, as we will see in what follows, that digital forms of authorship are always a critique of the humanist notions underlying more traditional and print-based forms of writing. However, I want to emphasise that, no matter how problematic they still might be, digital media do contain the *potential* to help us rethink and re-perform authorship and to envision more ethical and inclusive forms of authorship within academia.

In order to analyse some of the main theoretical and practical criticisms that have been brought forward with respect to romantic and humanist notions of authorship, the next section will explore some of the authorship critique expressed by poststructuralist thinkers in the 1960s and 70s. This will be followed by an analysis of three more recent assessments of authorship, which can all in their different ways be seen as a practical extension of the poststructuralists' critique. As I will argue, these practical or embodied expositions target different aspects of the discourse of the humanist author, namely the author's authority, individuality and originality. First of all I will analyse the position taken by theorists and practitioners of hypertext with respect to networked authorship, challenging the *authority* of the author by focusing on the power of the reader and on the author as a node in a distributed network of meaning production and consumption. Secondly, I will look at some of the authorial practices that have been developed in the sciences and increasingly in the digital humanities, such as the spread of hyperauthorship and collaborative research work. These are challenging the *individualistic* nature of authorship and promoting increasingly open-ended research practices and alternative

---

[57] A questioning of authorship's humanist legacy does not necessarily need to be a distancing of humanism. Authorship's humanist history already provides the seed for a radical self-critique, where an inherent *post-*humanist authorship has, as can be argued, always already been a part of its proclaimed 'otherness'. The question is then how we can aid in a practical posthumanist critique of authorship's humanist notions, if we see posthumanism as 'humanism's ongoing deconstruction' (Badmington 2000: 9–10, Herbrechter 2013).

(digital) views concerning creativity and invention. Finally, I will take a look at academic practices of remix, which are mainly critiquing the *originality* of authorship, where the trope of the remixer or curator seems to be increasingly prevailing in current scholarship on digital authorship, for instance (and the narrative of the former seems to be replacing the latter).

3.2 Critiquing Authorship in Theory

Fitzpatrick writes in her article 'The Digital Future of Authorship: Rethinking Originality', about her personal struggle with traditional notions of authorship, a struggle not uncommon to other academic authors. As remarked upon at the beginning of this thesis, Fitzpatrick states that although we try to criticise the way authorship functions in academia and society at large, 'our own authorship practices have remained subsumed within those institutional and ideological frameworks' (2011b: 3). Connected as it is with our scholarly and publishing practices, one of the biggest challenges with respect to changing our notions of authorship will be, as Fitzpatrick argues, that 'changing one aspect of the way we work of necessity implies change across the entirety of the way we work' (2011b: 4). As Derrida has pointed out in this respect, we 'cannot temper with it [the form of the book] without disturbing everything else' (1983: 3). For instance, if we want to move towards an authorship function that puts more emphasis on openness, sharing, experimentation and collaboration, this means that we need to reconsider where scholarly authority, originality and responsibility lie in a digital environment, and whether or not we really need them.

The by now classic insights of Barthes and Foucault on authorship remain valuable in this respect. Both analysed and critiqued romantic and humanist forms of authorship by examining the specific subject position and agency of the author, and the relationship of authorship to text, writing and the work. In his essay 'The Death of the Author' (1967) Barthes describes how authorship kills the text by stabilising it. It is authorship in this sense that tries to affix a definite meaning, and which has been used over the centuries as a strategy to read meaning into texts, Barthes argues. And this process reaches its culmination in capitalist society where work and author are united in a commercial product. However, in his anti-intentionalist critique of authorship, Barthes states that we cannot affix a stable meaning to a text via the authorship function, as it does not control it. He focuses instead on the multiplicity of meanings (heteroglossia) and threads that are

available in language, in the relationships between texts (intertextuality), and in the act of writing, and which are extracted through the person of the reader. In Barthes' vision, then, text, and its multiple meanings, comes into existence in the act of reading, not when the author is creating it. In this respect Barthes' critique has initiated a move away from the integral connection between an author and her or his work, focusing more on the performative character of text and language and the meaning attribution by readers instead (1967).

Foucault has drawn further on Barthes' critique in his seminal paper 'What is an author?' (1969). He writes that the notion of the author is directly related to a moment of individualisation in history, connected to ideas of attribution and authenticity. A move away from authorship such as that proposed by Barthes, will not be enough, Foucault claims, as this has to involve a similar departure from the idea of the single, stable and often bounded work that is still integrally connected to our notion of the author, even if we abandon authorial meaning attribution. In this respect Foucault argues that a critique of authorship necessarily implies a critique of the work and, in this specific context, of the scholarly book. Where does a work end when it becomes no more than a trace of writing, disconnected from a specific author? Both the notion of the work and of the author are thus problematic, and replacing the latter's authority with the former will not be very helpful, according to Foucault. He points out that we need to analyse the functions authorship fulfils in a society, such as the way it operates within a certain discursive setting to bind together a group of texts and establish a relationship amongst them. We need to critically reassess these functions as being the representation of certain discourses within a society, discourses focusing on ownership of research (appropriation) and related to (penal) responsibility. Authorship is thus a function of discourse in Foucault's vision. In its connection with authorship, discourses themselves were even turned from acts into things, goods, and property. And as Foucault states, criticising Barthes in this respect, authorship is only one of the discursive practices we need to analyse. We need to explore how authorship and knowledge get to be produced in our knowledge economies and whether we need to reassess or change these discourses. In what ways do we construct an author and how do we determine the origin of a work? How can we rethink knowledge products, authority, truth claims, and originality? In what sense is an author function introduced to regulate meaning? By questioning the author, Foucault argues that we are not simply freeing the text, we are interrogating the work at the same time, the latter being the extension of certain discursive practices within a society (1977).

3.3 Critiquing Authorship in Practice

Barthes and Foucault are two of the most pre-eminent critics of authorship, and their writings on the death of the author, the author function and the role the author plays in capitalist knowledge production, have proved to be tremendously important for literary theory and authorship studies. In particularly, they have played a significant role in focusing attention away from the humanist idea of what an author *is*, to what an author *does* (Bennett 2004: 3). At the same time they have also helped to place more attention on the discursive historicity of both authorship and the work. Nonetheless it can be argued that both Foucault and Barthes didn't in practice do much to critique their own authorship position, status and practices, and they were themselves often writing in a very authorial and traditional way, focusing on the authority and originality of their mostly individually authored and published texts. In this respect, their work at times lacked a practical or practice-based performative dimension.[58] In this respect the examples of authorship critique that will be discussed below (hypertext, collaborative digital humanities work and remix practices), can be seen to offer a more practical critique of authorship, whilst targeting specific aspects, such as authority, individuality, and originality that have structured the romantic, humanist authorship discourse in academia.

3.3.1 Hypertext

Hypertext[59] has been classified as a practical application of Barthes' and Foucault's criticism of authorship, at least to the extent that in hypertext debates the focus returns to a critique of authorship exactly from this perspective of a new (literary) practice. For example, as theorist George Landow points out, hypertext can be seen as the 'electronic embodiment of poststructuralist conceptions of textuality' and it thus 'reconceive(s) the figure and function of authorship' (2006: 126). Hypertext scholarship is among other things interested

---

[58] Barthes did however experiment with a different 'language', a different style of writing, in his novel *Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, published in 1977. Foucault has discussed anonymous authorship in his writings (among others in his essay 'What is an author?' (1977: 383) and in his interviews. He has also conducted an anonymous interview with Christian Delacampagne for the French newspaper *Le Monde*, in which he states: 'Why did I suggest that we use anonymity? Out of nostalgia for a time when, being quite unknown, what I said had some chance of being heard. With the potential reader, the surface of contact was unrippled. The effects of the book might land in unexpected places and form shapes that I had never thought of. A name makes reading too easy' (Foucault 1990: 323–324). He also expressed his disappointment with the fact that, due to his fame and the immense popularity of his Collège de France seminars, he couldn't discuss and develop his work in-progress further in a more interactive and collaborative (and less one-dimensional) setting (Foucault 2003: 1–3).

[59] Ted Nelson coined the term hypertext in the early 1960s.

in bridging the gap between the author and the reader, where the reader increasingly becomes the author of the work that is being consumed, challenging the authorial role (Bolter 2001, Landow 2006). It can be argued that in hypertext theory the figures and functions of author and reader become deeper entangled, where authorial power is redirected to the reader. According to Landow this is possible due to the read/write capabilities of the net and hypertext. This offers the reader interactivity and the possibility to choose their own way through a hypertext, via hyperlinks to other nodes and locations, and thus to create their own meaning based on that path. In a networked hypertext environment, the reader becomes the 'performer' of a text, where each text is a unique enactment. The multiple meanings of a work and a text, as theorised by Barthes and Foucault, were thus arguably more practically embodied and visualised in the production and consumption of hypertexts. Hypertext's multiplicity of meanings therefore suggested a changed relationship between the reader and the text. Landow argues that radical changes in textuality, such as with hypertext, will cause radical changes in authorship, where the lack of textual autonomy, as he calls it, its unboundedness, disperses ideas of authorship too (2006: 126). Instead of the author subject and the bounded text object, we now have the network, in which both are decentred. This is also the main feature Jerome McGann attributes to hypertext: its decentred textuality, open and interactive, where hypertext is not centrally organised (2004: 25). Hayles similarly sees hypertext as dispersed, performative and processual, due to its capacity to transform on a continuous basis (2004).

Notwithstanding the potential of hypertext theory to decentre the author's authority, it has still kept many of the other 'authorship functions' in check, especially if we look at early hypertext fiction, which was seen to embody many of the possibilities the above debate focused on. Hypertext introduced a practical multiplicitous conception of authorship or of the prosumer—the reader as author—but does not deconstruct many of the other functions that are part of the romantic, humanist notion of authorship and the way it has been embodied in our institutions and practices. Hypertext works continue to be mainly published as 'whole' and finished works. In their early distribution mechanisms (using CD-ROMs or particular forms of software and/or platforms such as *Storyspace* and *Intermedia*), hypertext fiction also remained 'bound' together (albeit in a different way than books), both in a 'medial sense' as well as bound together by their authors. For hypertext fiction still came with a recognisable author, including a copyright disclaimer. Not only do hypertextual works thus remain recognisable by a distinct author, they also continue to function in terms of a reputation economy with clear attribution and responsibility, and in

this respect the originality of the work is also still attributed to the author. In the dynamic between author and reader, the author continues to stand out as the designer of the hypertext, where the specific paths or linearity created remain prescriptive in many ways. In what sense is this authorial pre-description then not already fixing possible meaning association for readers? As it is still the author who defines relationships within a hypertext, it can be argued that readers remain 2nd grade authors: it is an ad hoc relationship. When it comes to the interactivity promised by early hypertexts, on reflection this can be judged to have been rather low, having to do with the complexity of many hypertext fictions. The different paths and structures seem problematic and do not always create a coherent narrative for readers, where on a design level many of the interfaces were also hard to navigate. Finally, many of hypertext's proponents have presented hypertext as a radical discontinuity, seeing it, as Bolter has argued, as a revolutionary break with the past, similar to the rhetoric of modernist artists and writers (2001: 44). Such a dichotomous schism between the old and the new, and between networked or hypertext authors and print authors can be seen as overstated, as many print texts and works already functioned according to hypertext structures (Bolter 2001, Fitzpatrick 2011a). Was print reading not always already collaborative and performative too? And does the authorship function really undergo a practical critique in an environment were artistic creativity and ownership or acknowledgement of works still remains an important aspect of the networked environment?

3.3.2 Collaborative Authorship

Initially, hypertext structures were mostly experimented with in a non-academic context, but increasingly aspects of hypertextual structures (especially the hyperlinking capacity) have become more common in digital academic communication, and many of the elements of hypertext practice and theory, are being experimented with in both formal and informal digital publishing. In this respect developments in digital tools and media, from blogs to wikis, have made readerly interaction and prosumption easier. As Fitzpatrick has argued: 'Experiments in hypertext thus may have pointed in the general direction of a digital publishing future, but were finally hampered by difficulties in readerly engagement, as well as, I would argue, by having awakened in readers a desire for fuller participation that hypertext could not itself satisfy' (2011a: 99). Within academia, however, a practical authorship critique of its own had started to develop, one which has been mainly based upon two developments: the rise in use of digital tools, media and networked

environments in scholarly work, which has led to new forms of networked collaboration; and the growth, especially in a scientific context, of massively collaborative projects, following the principles of networked science (Nielsen 2011). These developments have lead to an enhanced questioning of the romantic discourse of single authorship, especially within certain fields in the sciences and the humanities where the developments described above have been the most apparent. High Energy Physics (HEP) is an example of a discipline where the romantic discourse on authorship as it normally functions within academia has become a serious problem. As Blaise Cronin explains, from the 17th century onwards, in a scientific context the appropriation of credit and the allocation of accountability developed as simultaneous processes, based on the idea of a work written by an author (2001: 559). Jeremy Birnholtz shows, however, that even though authorship is the accepted method in science to assess contributions of researchers to their specific discipline—playing an important role in the reputation economy and as a measurement of symbolic capital—it can be difficult to recognize an individual's contributions to a research article. Taking responsibility for an article becomes problematic on highly collaborative projects, for instance. Birnholtz shows how in HEP the authorship model has not been functioning very well in the traditional sense, as the amount of people working on a collaborative project can run into the hundreds. It is not uncommon that every article by a research team member lists *all* the participating physicists on that particular project, a phenomenon known as hyperauthorship (Birnholtz 2006: 1758–1770). As Cronin shows, the problem within such a regime of hyperauthorship is that it becomes impossible to determine where ultimately authority, credit and accountability reside. Authorship without responsibility, he points out, becomes literally meaningless, as responsibility, in the form of affixing authority, credit and accountability, is an essential part of the standard 'rights and responsibilities' model of authorship in the current scholarly communication model. For instance, I have the right to claim credit and symbolic capital for my authorship but also the responsibility to defend and stand behind my claims and take the blame if they are flawed (Cronin 2001: 562).

This has led to a situation where, in HEP, the reputation economy no longer works on the basis of authorship or formal records of contribution, but, as Birnholtz states, runs via 'informal means of assessment and evaluation' (2006: 1764). This informal system of recognition relies on word-of-mouth recommendations and the ability to get noticed within large group collaborations. Credit does not come from publications but from establishing a reputation within the work group. Although traditional authorship has therefore become

problematic within this environment, and the idea of individual responsibility seems to be bestowed upon the group and on collaborative notions of authorship within HEP publishing practices, the rights and recognition part of the standard model of authorship continues to run via individual recognition.

Although hyperauthorship is not particularly common in the humanities and social sciences to date, where the single author still dominates most fields, the example of HEP does raise some problems that can be related to our accepted notions of authorship. First of all, it shows that different research cultures have different approaches to authorship and to issues of social trust, as well as various ways of awarding responsibility and recognition for research findings. Hence there is no standard concept or definition of authorship that traverses the various research communities. There are different definitions of authorship and these tend to change too within fields, making them contingent. These examples all seem to underscore that authorship is a social construct, not a natural fact, and that these constructs, and the way authorship 'functions', differs between epistemic communities, both within the life sciences[60] and in contrast to the humanities and social sciences. Secondly, the examples from HEP show that what we perceive as the standard romantic discourse of authorship has a problem when it comes to distinguishing different kinds of research contributions and collaborations. It only works within certain limits, limits which HEP and Biomedicine seem to be exceeding and which are also increasingly being challenged in the HSS.

Collaboration and co-authorship practices, combined with a discourse that encourages collaboration, are rising in the humanities and social sciences too. For instance, Cronin has shown how, with the growth in scale and complexity of psychological research, the need for formal and informal collaboration has grown. This has led to changing disciplinary practices related to authorship. As Cronin makes clear, this can be evidenced in the growing importance of what is called 'sub-authorship collaboration', collaboration that is made visible through acknowledgments in academic writing. This form of collaboration is visible in the rise and gradual establishment of acknowledgements as a constitutive element in the scholarly journal literature in the fields of psychology and philosophy (Cronin et al. 2003). In the digital humanities, which has been defined as 'not a unified field but an array of convergent practices' (Presner and Schnapp 2009), digital tools and increasingly also scientific methods for conducting research are being applied to humanities

---

[60] For the difference in the way authorship is constructed and functions within biomedicine and HEP, for instance, see Cronin (2001).

research. Collaboration is seen as an essential aspect of the research culture here. As digital humanist Lisa Spiro puts it, 'work in many areas of the digital humanities seems to both depend upon collaboration and aim to support it' (2009). Simeone et al. explain this in more detail with the example of data mining: 'With computational tools, digital archives can reveal more than they obscure by providing organizational frameworks and tools for analysis. However, these tools—in the guise of metadata organization, indexing, searching, and analytics—are not self-generated. They require the combined work of humanists with their interdisciplinary questions and computer scientists with their disciplinary approaches to partner with one another to produce viable research methodologies and pedagogies' (2011). Digital humanities research needs collaboration but also depends on reliable infrastructures and platforms to make collaborations possible. Collaboration is visible in the valuable support received from, among others, librarians, IT departments and computer scientists, which are only slowly being acknowledged as full-fledged contributors to digital humanities projects.[61] There is thus a continued call within this environment to give credit to the various alt-ac (alternative academic) collaborators[62] in digital projects, following non-standard academic careers such as the ones mentioned above (Nowviskie 2011b).

Collaboration is also visible in the 'non-digital' humanities. In the process of preparing a publication we rely on others in multiple ways, both online and offline. For instance, via comments at conferences, in blogs and social media, via peer reviews, and support from editors, proof readers, copyeditors, book designers, printers and so forth (Danyi 2014). There is also a growing amount of interest in both the 'traditional' and digital humanities in environments and platforms for online collaborative work—in the case of international or cross-institutional research projects involving multiple project members for instance. This has led to the rise of what has been termed collaboratories, or *Virtual Research Environments*, and other instantiations of collaborative teams and technologies within the humanities (Verhaar 2009). As Simeone et al. show in their discussion of one of these collaborative projects, with the rise of large-scale, multi-participant collaborative research projects, the authorship of articles, papers, and books written by project team members becomes problematic, as it becomes hard to establish individual and collective

---

[61] See for an extensive overview of collaboration in the (digital) humanities see Spiro (2009) http://digitalscholarship.wordpress.com/2009/06/01/examples-of-collaborative-digital-humanities-projects/.

[62] As Bethany Nowviskie describes it: 'Alt-ac is the neologism and singularly-awkward Twitter hashtag we use to mark conversations about "alternative academic" careers for humanities scholars. Here, "alternative" typically denotes neither adjunct teaching positions nor wholly non-academic jobs' (2011a: 7).

contributions (2011). The romanticising of the sole author in science and scholarship leads to a notion of science as a stream of geniuses and inventors, intrinsically connected to a cultural and historical context that privileges individual creativity.[63] This narrative stands in strong contrast with the community aspect of networked scholarship that can similarly be perceived to be at the basis of our scholarly practices, and seems to be increasingly so.

However, within the digital humanities further reasons have been developed with respect to why we need to be critical of our standard notions of authorship, as some have argued that they are becoming increasingly hard to sustain in a digital environment that can be seen as privileging process over product. As Fitzpatrick explains, online texts, such as blogs, tend to work via a logic of commenting, linking and versioning, stimulating the open-ended nature of networked writing and producing texts that 'are no longer discrete or static, but that live and develop as part of a network of other such texts, among which ideas flow' (2011b). Research in blogs especially, which are becoming more important in academic scholarship,[64] but also in other forms of online publications, from wikis to ebooks, can be updated and changed—by the authorial self but increasingly by the community at large too. This challenges the notion of a fixed text and with it the author's authority based on that fixed text which, as Cronin has argued, is an essential aspect of the traditional 'rights and responsibilities' model of authorship. As Susan Brown et al. state with regard to the open-endedness of digital humanities research: 'Scholars will increasingly be able to build on existing electronic texts, restructuring or adding to them, or recombining them with new content to produce new texts. In a radical extension of earlier forms of textuality, the possibility that an electronic text will continue to morph, be reproduced, and live on in ways quite unforeseen by its producers makes "done" to an extent always provisional' (2009). In this respect traditional authorship, as is the case within the context of hypertext, is judged as having a hard time accommodating rival claims of authority from a reader or community perspective.

In practice, however, ideas based on the processual and unbound potential of digital works are still facing difficulty. Discourses building on print-based authorship, with its notions of individual ownership and authority, have functioned within academia as solidifying processes, where scholarship is from its inception already being created to function as a product to exchange on the reputation market. This process is institutionalised and enforced within the professional publishing system. David Sewell,

---

[63] On the development of this image and the continued importance of the myth of the lone genius and creativity in present day culture, see Montuori and Purser (1995).

[64] For a survey of social media use in research, see Rowlands et al. (2011).

editor at *The University of Virginia Press*, explains how under economic external constraints, the open-ended or processual character of both digital and traditional publications can be sacrificed once they become part of the formal publishing process:

> But completely extrinsic factors such as the desire to include the book in a particular season's list will often lead a press to veto an author's wish to continue tinkering with a manuscript. Similarly, an author may not consider a monograph on Chinese art formally complete without the inclusion of several dozen full-page colour reproductions on glossy inserts, but a publisher may omit them for the wholly extrinsic reason that the profit-and-loss sheet doesn't budget for them. Once a book is in print, decisions about its subsequent "done-ness" (i.e., whether to reprint, revise, issue in paperback, etc.) are based almost entirely on economic factors. In the case of digital publications, I will suggest, extrinsic factors become important at an earlier stage and are proportionately more important at every stage of composition and publication. (2009)

But this insistence on creating a finished marketable object, favouring product over process, cannot only be blamed on publishers. Fitzpatrick emphasises the 'distinctly Fordist functionalist mode of working' of scholars as writers, where in the reputation economy surrounding academia, the ultimate goal of research projects is final completion, the moment when a new item can be added to one's CV as evidence of scholarly productivity (2011b).

The narratives and institutional customs mentioned above all in different ways argue for a revision of our discourses on, and practices of, individual authorship. Rethinking and re-performing authorship might aid in promoting the discourse of collaboration that similarly accompanies authorship, and the newly developing digital research practices and their potential underlying values of scholarly openness, experimentation and sharing. However, in the narratives described above, collaborative authorship can be argued to focus mainly on *extending* (to include alt. ac. contributors etc.) forms of individual authorship to a larger group, instead of critiquing fundamentally the notions that individual humanist authorship is based upon. It might be interesting to again look at the work of Fitzpatrick at this point, who in her book *Planned Obsolescence* makes a passionate plea for the need for community and collaboration in (digital) humanist and experimental research and publishing projects. For instance, when Fitzpatrick talks about forms of collaborative authorship in her book, it seems that she wants to primarily focus on stimulating interaction and conversation and on getting the collaborative aspects of scholarship acknowledged more widely. Fitzpatrick's is a reformist stance in this respect, rather than a disruptive one, where her critique of authorship seems to focus mostly on

fostering individual authors' sense of community in order to stimulate their writing practices, and to find more pleasure (as opposed to anxiety) in their writing process (2011a: 52). As she states, her aim is 'less to disrupt all our conventional notions of authorship than to demonstrate why thinking about authorship from a different perspective—one that's always been embedded, if dormant, in many of our authorship practices—could result in a more productive, and hopefully less anxious, relationship to our work' (Fitzpatrick 2011a: 56). As Hall has pointed out in this respect, 'Kathleen Fitzpatrick, does not really offer a profound challenge to ideas of the human, subjectivity, or the associated concept of the author at all', nor is she 'radically questioning the notion of the human that underpins 'the "myth" of the stand-alone, masterful author' (2012). Hall thus argues that Fitzpatrick's notion of collaborative authorship is mainly based on the idea of a group of '"unique", stable, centred authors (…) now involved in a "social" conversation "composed of individuals"' (2012).

In this respect it can be argued that the collaborative authorship practices promoted in networked science and the digital humanities are not really an embodiment of the anti-humanist critique put forward by thinkers such as Barthes and Foucault, something this thesis does want to explore more in depth, both in theory and in practice. For instance, in the instrumentalist rhetoric of Nielsen, networked science is foremost focused on aiding discovery, more than it is on challenging the problems individual authorship has created for the way our institutions, practices and political economies of research production currently operate. Nonetheless, following Foucault's idea of rethinking the way authorship functions within academia, experimenting practically with new forms of collaborative authorship might be seen as a way of beginning to rethink, re-perform, and re-cut authorship in a more ethical way. However, in this process, we have to remain wary of simply replicating our humanist authorship discourses and practices within our notions of collaborative authorship, and we thus need to be critical of these alternative forms of authorship, in a continued fashion too. For example, replacing individual authorship by forms of community knowledge production can still promote liberal hegemonic forms of control and, as I have written elsewhere, runs the risk of creating 'problems of conformity, groupthink and bias in online communal knowledge production' (Adema 2014). How can we in this respect continue to critique the potentially 'oppressive aspects of the consensus model of community' as Fitzpatrick calls it (2011a: 42–43)?

3.3.3 Authorship in Academic Remix Practices

Remix practices within academia, from combining different media in innovative ways to collaboratively (re)mixing fragments of texts in new contexts, not only offer an alternative vision of collaborative authorship, they also challenge one of the other main aspects of romantic, humanist authorship: its discourse of originality. Remix thus offers the possibility to performatively explore and critique these humanist and essentialist notions at work within humanities scholarship, aspects that have been connected to the development of the book and a fixed print regime. At the same time, remix practices in academia have also been critiqued in a variety of ways from a scholarly perspective. For instance, they have been attacked from a viewpoint which declares that remix practices in a digital environment seem to take on what can be seen as a 'wide democratic approach', in which everyone is able to update, reuse and remix. Critics such as Andrew Keen (2007a) and Sven Birkerts (1994) see this as a threat to expert knowledge and as diluting the distinction between amateur and professional content. Others have criticised Wikipedia, which is based on the online collaborative editing and re-editing of encyclopaedic or topical entries, for its perceived failure as a reliable source due to the lack of credentials of its editors.[65] Remix practices also challenge the idea of a stable scholarly work and pose a problem for the idea of the integrity of the scholarly object. They thus question the idea that scholarly objects exist and should be preserved as discrete entities (Warwick 2004, Keen 2007b, Brown et al. 2009). Remix practices can therefore be seen to pose a challenge to our traditional conception of authorship and present a problem for responsibility and attribution in the scholarly reputation economy.

However, many contemporary scholarly remix practices, like the ones I will describe in depth in what follows, are in essence much less radical and less of a threat than they are sometimes perceived to be, to the practices, institutions and discourses surrounding this fixed print regime that continues to structure academia. I am thinking, for example, of remix practices such as the use of Creative Commons licenses for scholarly publications which in many cases (such as the CC-BY, attribution license) allow for the re-use of material; or those practices associated with Wikipedia. But I am also thinking of remix theories, including those from celebrated theorists such as Lev Manovich, Eduardo Navas and Lawrence Lessig, which focus mainly on finding a place for humanist and essentialist notions of attribution and authorship *within* remix practice and scholarship. As I

---

[65] See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reliability_of_Wikipedia#Expert_opinion

will explore more in detail later in this section, Creative Commons licenses can be seen as mere extensions or adaptations of print-based copyright, which can be perceived as enforcing humanist authorship notions, and Wikipedia incorporates many print-based functions to establish authority within its system—by keeping edit-logs of each change by a particular contributor, for instance. Manovich, Lessig and Navas's theories each in their different ways try to face the problem print-based authorship poses in a digital setting by replacing the author with the selector, the remixer, and/or the DJ as the authoritative and responsible figure. They thus primarily try to cope with, and find a solution for, the 'problem' of authorship in the digital age. Instead of fundamentally trying to re-perform or rethink the print-based and humanist notions *behind* authorship, they can in many respects be seen to reinforce these notions within a digital environment. Although remix practices in academia have the potential to shake up the authorship function, until now they have not managed to dethrone the traditional academic author-god and in some cases they even reinforce her or him.

3.3.3.1 The Selector or Curator

One of the proposals offered in discussions on remix to grapple with the problem of authorship in an increasingly digital setting, is to shift the focus from the author to the selector, the moderator or the curator. This is one of the suggested solutions to the issues raised regarding authorship and originality that have been explored by remix theorist Eduardo Navas, especially in the realm of music. Here authorship, as he states, is increasingly being replaced by sampling and 'sampling allows for the death of the author', where it is hard to trace the origin of a tiny fragment of a musical composition. This makes authorship and writing into something distinct from an original work, where it becomes an act of resampling, selecting and reinterpreting of previous material. As Navas points out, with the death of the author as the one who creates a new and original work, the author function in the Foucauldian sense of selectivity takes over. Navas argues in this respect that s/he who selects the sources to be remixed takes on the critical position or the needed distance to the material used in remix, and with that takes on a new author function (2008).

One of the problems with replacing the idea of authorship with the idea of the selector, however, is that this move only shifts the locus of authority from the author to the selector. Selection, although incorporating a broader appreciation for other forms of authorship or for an extension of the author function, can all too easily be just another form of humanist and individualistic agency, and so does not necessarily offer a fundamental challenge to the idea of authorship or authorial intention. Along with not

inherently confronting the idea of authorial authority and intentionality, the selector also cannot be seen as automatically critiquing or rethinking authority, as authority here is frequently just shifted from the author unto the curator, who still carries responsibility for the selections she or he makes. What happens when the author function is further decentered, and agency is distributed within the system? And what do we do with forms of non-human authorship? The question then is: how do we establish authority in an environment where the contributions of a single author are hard to trace back, or where content is created by anonymous users or avatars? Or, indeed, in situations where there is no human author and the content is machine-generated based on certain tags or protocols, such as is the case with data feeds, where users receive updated data from a large variety of sources in a single feed? What becomes of the role of the selector as an authoritative figure when selections can be made redundant, choices can be altered and undone by mass-collaborative, multi-user remixes and mash-ups? At what point does it become necessary to let go of our established notions of responsibility and authority, as they become impossible to uphold? What alternative cuts can we make that start to move in directions beyond individualistic forms of authority and towards distributed and posthumanist forms of authorship?

Another difficulty associated with replacing the author by s/he who selects is that this doesn't really offer a critique of the profit and object-based system of individual authorship, and therefore doesn't form a challenge to the traditional idea of ownership as it is connected to authorship. As Bill Herman shows in his excellent article on the DJ as an author, the DJ is *made* an author, not by what he or she does, but by the representation of her or his practices in a capitalist system. As Herman points out, the DJ was instilled with authorship by the music industry by marketing him or her as a brand name and promoting the sale of commodities related to the DJ. In this sense the DJ is a tool, the author-as-selector becomes an object from which commodities can be derived. Herman argues that initially in remix culture we could see the disappearance of traditional forms of authorship. As he explains: 'the authorship that was traditionally invested in the performers of songs was deteriorated as the songs' individuality disappeared into the mix' (Herman 2006: 24). The DJ started out playing a background role, foregrounding the artists and numbers that were being remixed, where s/he himself was just another member of the party. This situation didn't last long however. Following the logic of profit and capitalism, authorship was soon re-established on an even stronger basis. The DJ became a superstar to fill a commercial void. Eventually this led to the DJ being instilled by music producers as

another author-god.

Herman makes a compelling argument for seeing the commodification of music via the DJ-figure as a crucial part of the author function in the music industry (2006: 23).[66] Furthermore he offers additional proof for the idea that the author function is a sociological construct, not based on a practice, but instilled upon the author—for instance, by cultural businesspersons within the music industry. The author is created as an integral part of a larger set of social relations, a system of exchange that is governed by the logic of capital. As Herman states: 'The DJ's authorship becomes the discursive solution to an economic problem' (2006: 34).[67]

3.3.3.2 Wikis

As Hall has shown, it is interesting to look at the use of wikis as examples of experimentation with new ways of conceiving authorship practices (2009). Wikis have the potential to breakdown the authority of the specialist and replace them with forms of crowd-sourced authority. Wikipedia is the most famous example here, where its peer-production potential was seen to compete with traditional sources of expert knowledge such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.[68] Whereas in early hypertexts the potential for user interaction was still arguable low, with the implementation of hypertextual elements into a wiki environment, the distinction between readers and authors in practice seems to almost disappear. However, wikis are envisaged and structured in such a way that authorship and clear attribution, and therefore responsibility as well as version control, remain an essential part of their functioning. The structure behind most wikis is still based on an identifiable author—or at least an identifiable IP address—and on a version history which lets you check all changes and modifications, if needed. Wikipedia, the largest public wiki and one of the most well known examples of a wiki functioning via the structure described above, also encourages authors to sign their articles. As it states on Wikipedia's Etiquette site: 'Unless you have an excellent reason not to do so, sign and date your posts to talk pages (not articles).'[69] Wikipedia is also increasingly moderated and some moderators have more

---

[66] Similarly David Berry (2008: 42) and James Boyle (2009) have argued that contemporary authorship and related notions of 'creativity' are being 'reconfigured to meet the needs of capital'.

[67] It would be interesting to extend this analysis to the academic publishing industry, and the role authorship plays here in commodification processes, something I touched upon earlier but will not discuss further in this context.

[68] For an overview of this controversy and the ensuing debate see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reliability_of_Wikipedia#Comparative_studies

[69] See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki_etiquette

power than others, thus in a way becoming not unlike curators.[70] In reality, the authority of the author is therefore not fundamentally challenged in Wikipedia; nor does its authority really come to terms with the element of continual updating that wikis evoke. In this way Wikipedia can be seen to struggle between traditional notions of authorship and credibility and the more communal crowd-surfed ideologies of openness it is said to support. The prevalence of the print-based notions still seems to be strong. As the juridical researcher Ayelet Oz calls it, there is 'a conflict between the aspirational and organizational goals' within Wikipedia. As she points out: 'The enforcement mechanisms on Wikipedia enact an internal conflict between Wikipedia's open, inclusive ethos and its organizational reliance on power, hierarchy and punishment' (Oz 2010).

3.3.3.3 Creative Commons

Creative Commons licenses are some of the licenses most used to promote the free distribution of research in an open access environment. It is not only books and articles, but also blogs and wikis that stimulate academic reuse by using the CC-BY license, or another variant that allows free reuse. However, Creative Commons licenses can again be seen to be based on a relatively traditional notion of authorship, and although they do have the potential to stimulate remix and creativity, in some ways they enforce traditional author functions even more. Lawrence Lessig, one of the founders of Creative Commons, explains part of the reasoning behind these licenses in his book *Remix* (2008). Taking a pragmatic position, Lessig's copyright reform focuses on ending the copyright wars while at the same time promising artists and authors the necessary copyright protection which he claims they need as an incentive to create (2008: xix). The argument Lessig makes pro-remix culture and against the current severe copyright law is that the latter restricts creative freedom, evolution and development. Furthermore, he emphasises that the law should not be too rigid and should not criminalise an entire generation by designating them as illegal pirates. But he does not go so far as to dispute copyright altogether, as this would be to go against 'creative evolution', as authors and producers need an incentive to create, and this incentive, in Lessig's argument, is, at the very minimum, attribution, to ensure the reputation economy still functions. Here Lessig can be seen to continue to adhere to the liberal humanist notions of individual ownership and responsibility, based on privatised capital and individuated resources (Berry 2005). In its initial form Creative Commons and its licenses, set up to stimulate creativity and promote remix practices, strongly hold on to

---

[70] For more on Jimmy Wales push towards a flagged revisions moderation system, see: http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/23/wikipedia-may-restrict-publics-ability-to-change-entries/

the authorship function: CC-BY still requiring attribution, for example, despite being one of their most liberal licenses. Even with their more recently established licenses such as CC-zero, which releases a work into the public domain, this still needs to be granted (or waived) by the author.[71] It could therefore be said that Creative Commons makes copyright less rigid and more open while also placing an extra burden on the authorship function. The author becomes more powerful in determining under which exact conditions his work can be shared and distributed. Instead of seeing cultural works and information as something people are always allowed to share, we are still operating here with a system in which sharing (of individuated creative objects) needs to be authorised.

Law professor Niva Elkin-Koren offers a compelling argument in her supportive but at the same time critical review of Creative Commons. She regrets that the strategy of Creative Commons is not aimed at creating a public domain in the legal sense, free of exclusive proprietary rights. Those behind Creative Commons believe free culture will arise by a different exercise of copyright on the part of owners, where contracts are used to liberate creative works and make them more accessible (Elkin-Koren 2006: 1). As Elkin-Koren argues, however, 'in the absence of commitment to a single (even if minimal) standard of *freedom in information*, Creative Commons' strategy is left with the single unifying principle which empowers authors to govern their own work' (2006: 2). The focus point of Elkin-Koren's critique is that by maintaining the idea of copyright, Creative Commons keeps on seeing cultural goods as consumable products. It treats creative works as commodities. This only strengthens the proprietary regime in information and culture (Elkin-Koren 2006: 2).

3.4 Towards Posthumanist Forms of Authorship?

The previous section has examined some of the more recent practical strategies to re-perform authorship as developed within hypertext theory, the digital humanities and as part of various remix practices. From this analysis we can conclude that, although these fields, theories and practices try to rethink specific aspects of the romantic, humanist authorship discourse in academia (such as authority, individuality and originality), these notions continue to be strongly ingrained. Furthermore, as we have seen, targeting one of these aspects (such as originality) in most cases seems to only strengthen the others. Thus, these

---

[71] See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/ and http://creativecommons.org/about/cc0

examples of authorship critique all in some way or another continue to adhere to humanist authorship discourses and practices. What kinds of strategies and analyses of authorship and the way authorship currently functions can we then devise to try to rethink the various aspects of the romantic and humanist notion of authorship in a perhaps more comprehensive, critical and consistent fashion? We should pay more attention to the institutions and structures in which our authorship practices are embedded, as well as to the hegemonic discourse of the liberal autonomous author that continues to structure and inform these practices. What, for example, would a posthumanist critique of authorship look like in this respect?

In this section I want to offer some suggestions as to what such a posthumanist critique and practice of authorship might potentially encompass. I will first, however, look at two practices, plagiarism and anonymous authorship, that can be seen as forms of anti-authorship critique. I have chosen to focus on plagiarism and anonymous authorship due to the fact that they are potentially less focused on accommodating new forms of authorship in a digital environment or in making authorship more inclusive. In other words, they are less interested in extending individual authorship to include new liberal and autonomous subjects, and are aimed more at directly undermining our current humanist notions of authorship along with the political-economy that surrounds them.

3.4.1 Plagiarism

Even if scholarly research is shared without having to pay to access it, as is the case with certain open access publications using a CC-BY or similar license, such publications remain objects within a reputation economy that are being exchanged to create more value in the form of citations. In this sense it can be argued that it is plagiarism (understood here as not citing someone) that becomes the biggest taboo in the academic exchange economy. Yet, following Lessig's reasoning, as plagiarism is perceived to be increasingly prevalent in academic culture today[72], is it worth 'criminalising' a whole generation, when plagiarism might also be a step forward, in the sense of stimulating creativity, and it could just as well be seen as something that promotes creative freedom and development? (2008). We could think of examples where borrowing the words of others can be used as a method to learn to write. In this respect one might ask whether plagiarism is the next battle after copyright reform that we need to fight in order to stimulate forms of creativity that are less focused

---

[72] See for instance: http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/08/28/the-digital-revolution-and-higher-education/2/

on the main elements of humanist authorship: ownership, originality, and authority.

Plagiarism as a term evokes mostly negative connotations, especially within academia. It is most often defined here as taking someone else's work and presenting it as one's own original work. In the simple case of this definition plagiarism doesn't really critique or question authorship in any way, as the plagiarist's intent is to elevate one's own authorship standing and status. Additionally, the plagiarist on this account still seeks to claim something as an original work of authorship within the academic reputation economy—it's just that they are doing so falsely. However, there is a more interesting aspect to using someone else's work and representing it as one's own. Within a different discourse or framework, including, as I will argue, a discourse of authorship critique, this is called *appropriation*. Appropriation is used here instead of plagiarism, as the former is a term that is more commonly used and accepted as a creative strategy within the artistic realm. Here the difference is one of *intent*; but also, as I will show, one of cultural difference, i.e. between art and academia—and this becomes interesting when we discuss the work of conceptual poet Kenneth Goldsmith, for instance.

Rebecca Moore Howard argues that 'patchwriting', a form of copying and collating different sources without any fundamental alterations, can be a part of a pedagogy of writing as appropriation and indeed a fundamental aspect of language learning and use (1995). Kenneth Goldsmith has a similar vision with respect to appropriating, pointing out that it is creative and that he uses it as a pedagogicial method in his classes on "Uncreative Writing" (which he defines as 'the art of managing information and representing it as writing' (2011b)) at the University of Pennsylvania. As Goldsmith suggests, the author won't die, but we might start viewing authorship in a more conceptual way: 'Perhaps the best authors of the future will be ones who can write the best programs with which to manipulate, parse, and distribute language-based practices' (2011a). Goldsmith's arguments in support of appropriation criticise the idea of originality as it is traditionally connected to authorship. However, in his plea for 'uncreative writing', he does not fundamentally critique authorship; he again just elevates the role of the copier or remixer to that of the author. As he argues: ''Retyping *On the Road',* claims that the simple act of retyping a text is enough to constitute a work of literature, thereby raising the craft of the copyist to the same level as the author' (Goldsmith 2011b). Although his is an interesting attempt to challenge the continued emphasis on originality and creativity in writing, if we look closer at what Goldsmith writes, it seems that he is for the most part only broadening the categories of what counts as original and creative, instead of fundamentally challenging

them. For him the digital environment actually adds more functions to authorship helping to produce a situation where, besides originality and creativity, skills such as manipulation and management will become increasingly important.

Nonetheless, in his practical work as a conceptual poet, Goldsmith does try to push the appropriation discourse further by deliberately juxtaposing it to, and playing with the blurred lines that exist between, this discourse and plagiarism. In the works of Goldsmith as well as in those of fellow-conceptual poets such as Vanessa Place and Kent Johnson, this flirtation with plagiarism thus clearly functions as a way to undermine discourses of liberal authorship.[73]

For example, in *Day*, a text by Goldsmith, he has literally retyped word by word a whole daily issue of the *New York Times*, and has published it as his own work. Goldsmith doesn't label this as plagiarism, but as a practice of uncreativity (challenging originality) and of constrained writing. A few years later, conceptual poet Kent Johnson republished *Day*, keeping the book entirely intact, while just replacing his own name on the dust cover.[74] In this sense Johnson was extending Goldsmith's appropriation discourse further into the realm of plagiarism.

Conceptual poet Vanessa Place in her works targets both the originality and the authority that reside in our discourses on authorship. In her 'Factory' series, inspired by

---

[73] In *Uncreative Writing* Goldsmith lists projects that have engaged with what in other circles or contexts might be seen as plagiarism:

> Over the past five years we have seen works such as a retyping of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* in its entirety, a page a day, every day, on a blog for a year; an appropriation of the complete text of a day's copy of the *New York Times* published as a nine-hundred-page book; a list poem that is nothing more than reframing a listing of stores from a shopping mall directory into a poetic form; an impoverished writer who has taken every credit card application sent to him and bound them into an eight-hundred-page print-on-demand book so costly that even he can't afford a copy; a poet who has parsed the text of an entire nineteenth-century book on grammar according to its own methods, even down to the book's index; a lawyer who re-presents the legal briefs of her day job as poetry in their entirety without changing a word; another writer who spends her days at the British Library copying down the first verse of Dante's *Inferno* from every English translation that the library possesses, one after another, page after page, until she exhausts the library's supply; a writing team who scoops status updates off social networking sites and assigns them to names of deceased writers ('Jonathan Swift has got tix to the Wranglers game tonight'), creating an epic, never-ending work of poetry that rewrites itself as frequently as Facebook pages are updated; and an entire movement of writing, called Flarf, that is based on grabbing the worst of Google search results: The more offensive, the more ridiculous, the more outrageous the better. (2011b: 3)

[74] Although it was actually Geoffrey Gatza, the editor of *Day*'s publisher *BlazeVox Books*, who made the book, according to the production video that accompanied the publication, and Johnson retracted his claims to authorship and originality of *Day* as a work completely. As reviewer Bill Freind writes in a review of *Day* in *Jacket Magazine*: "In fact, Johnson emailed me to say: 'After viewing Geoffrey Gatza's video, I realized that *Day* was no longer mine. I now fully disown my 'original' idea and separate myself completely from the book. *Day* now belongs to Geoffrey Gatza.' However, Gatza himself doesn't seem particularly eager to claim ownership of the text, since *BlazeVox Books* has a special Goldsmith-to-Johnson conversion kit. It's a free PDF file that includes the fake jacket blurbs and Johnson's name that you can download here" (Freind 2010).

Andy Warhol's 'factory model' of creative production, she commissioned 10 writers and artists, or 'art-workers', to make chapbooks for her, which she subsequently published under her own name. In Place's words: "I, being the one they call 'Vanessa Place,' am the (immaterial) public author function" (2010). By appropriating/plagiarising other artists as well as her own work in an ongoing fashion, Place thus seeks to challenge the authority that underlies the 'referent' or 'signature' of the author. As she puts it: 'To extend these practices, I authorize works not authored by me or by those I authorize to author my work—copies of copies of absent authority. Like citation, the referent betrays a fundamental lack of authority on the part of the citing author. Unlike citation, there is no authoritative source. It's a rank imitation of "Vanessa Place" as "Vanessa Place" is rank imitation' (Place 2011).

It can be argued that these practices of extending what would previously perhaps be seen as plagiarism into an appropriation discourse go beyond what is commonly seen as appropriation or remix practices. For they clearly intend to actively disturb or undermine the system of authorship, and the notions of originality and authority that come with it by 'hollowing' out or putting to the test those notions. In this respect we can see the above examples as an illustration of how practices and concepts of appropriation and plagiarism exist on a spectrum, where appropriation practices in an art context will most likely be judged as plagiarism practices within academia. This might have to do with the fact that the difference between plagiarism and appropriation remains so unclear. Therefore any appropriation that takes place within an academic context that does not adhere to a citation or referencing context will run the risk of being condemned. In this respect Goldsmith's strategy can be seen as more subversive when he argues for extending forms of appropriation which are accepted within the artistic field, but which are still seen as plagiarism within a literary or academic context, into scholarship.

Therefore a focus on different forms and notions of creativity and originality might already be a significant change for those within academia who still adhere to the more print-based discourse of authorship. As Howard notes, patchwriting does not sit well with traditional notions of authorship (and ideas of originality most of all). Although in the Middle Ages patchwriting was a normal part of writing and scholarship, authorship as we now practice it, including ideas of literary individualism and ownership, is a modern invention. These notions are currently seen as natural facts relating to authorship even though, as Howard rightly argues, our views of what authorship entails keeps shifting. She states that 'their historical emergence demonstrates them to be cultural arbitraries, textual

corollaries to the technological and economic conditions of the society that instated them' (Howard 1995: 791). Although new digital practices like hypertext and wikis, as well as remix and collaborative writing endeavours, make it increasingly hard to uphold a stable category of authorship, and in the process make it difficult to establish what merits plagiarism, academia nevertheless needs authorship and its plagiarising counterpart as a taboo, to sustain traditional forms of authority. As Howard puts it, 'the prosecution of plagiarism (…) is the last line of defence for academic standards' (1995: 793).

Nonetheless, although I do consider the forms of strategic plagiarism discussed above to constitute an interesting critique of authorship, by definition plagiarism and appropriation also involve re-instating certain aspects of the liberal authorship function; albeit that this authorship function is a different, uncreative or unoriginal one. Additionally, one can argue that the way this specific form of authorship critique is 'read' risks installing the authorship function even further. As Bill Friend shows, the latter has partly to do with the lack of 'meaning' in these conceptual projects, where the deconstruction of the work has often led to the fetishisation of the author:

> Implicit in Johnson's work is a claim that the assault on the fetishized status of the artwork in (for example), Dada, language writing, or uncreative writing has not led to a similar interrogation of the status of the author. If anything, the questioning of the artwork has often led to a re-inscription of the author function, as readers look for a locus of meaning in texts that resist traditional explication. (Freind 2010)

Similarly Place has pointed out that when there is no meaning to be found within the text, the author again becomes more important: 'There is nothing to be mined from these texts, no points of constellation or dilation, no subject within which to squat. The text object simply is. The reader is, but is irrelevant. But the thinker becomes quite important' (2010).

At this point, then, it becomes important to look at a further anti-authorship critique and practice (and to also return more squarely to the academic realm) in order to discuss examples of anonymous authorship in academic writing.

3.4.2 Anonymous Authorship

Anonymous authorship has a long history in academic writing, most famously as a strategy to avoid censorship or for authors to shield themselves from political or religious prosecution. This is related to what Foucault has called 'penal appropriation': 'Texts, books, and discourses really began to have authors (other than mythical, 'sacralised' and 'sacralising' figures) to the extent that authors became subject to punishment, that is, to the

extent that discourses could be transgressive' (1977). Anonymous authorship can therefore be seen to function in a tradition of *escaping responsibility*, but it is also triggered by a critique of the individual ownership of a work. For example, Chartier has shown that anonymous authorship was quite normal in medieval and early modern times, whereas with the coming of print a new model came into prominence based on proclaiming individual authorship, as now the author was in a position to profit from these works (1994: 49).

Anonymous authorship has thus had a long history, one that extends into current scholarly and literary practices. For instance, in 2013 Duke University Press published *Speculate this!*, a manifesto in book-form to promote 'affirmative speculation'. The manifesto has been written collaboratively by an anonymous collective, going by the name of '(an) uncertain commons', in line with a more contemporary tradition of anonymous writing, which is exemplified by initiatives in the literary field such as *Luther Blissett* and *Wu Ming*, and by the collective pseudonym *Nicolas Bourbaki* that was used by a group of mathematicians in the 20th century. Uncertain commons define themselves as 'an open and non-finite group', their main reasons for choosing anonymous authorship being to 'challenge the current norms of evaluating, commodifying, and institutionalizing intellectual labour' (2013). Here they specifically refer to academic labour, and to a situation of growing corporatisation of academia, which increasingly demands 'quantifiable outcomes for merit and promotion'. Their protest is thus also focused on the 'proprietary enclosure of knowledge, imagination, and communication'. In this respect they point out that they 'do not claim authorship', nor control over the book, which they characterise not as an object but as an 'emergence'. However, they do not see their actions as a 'true resistance', or as standing outside the system, more as 'playfully inhabiting' the various forms of discourse that are already available, and which include the exploration of collective intellectual labour and the 'potentialities of the common' (uncertain commons 2013). This might explain why they chose to publish *Speculate this!* as a coherent and bound book-object with an established university press, although it is also available for free online. In this respect the question remains, in what sense has the publisher here taken on some of the authorship functions that the collective tries to dispute, and in what sense, in its final published form, can this book still count as an 'emergence'.

In this specific case, as with the case of other collectives such as *Wu Ming*, it could be argued that the name and brand of the collective can come to stand in for the author, due to the lack of other signifiers. As Scott Drake has made clear: 'While this may seem obvious given the fact that the name refers to a collective rather than an individual, on its

own this does not prevent the name from being taken up into the economic-juridical order as a single name that protects the work as a literary property' (2011: 31–32). Furthermore, as I made clear above, a celebration of collaborative authorship can also lead to new hegemonic discourses. That said, an uncertain commons do try to evade this narrative when they write that they 'do not intend to romanticize this form of communal authorship', which is also apparent in various commercial writing practices and genres, and in the example of the *team* as a specific post-industrial form of collaborative labour. From their perspective, collaborative writing practices don't rely on consensus, but on 'collaborative modes that instead embrace dissensus' (uncertain commons 2013).

It is interesting to go back to the idea of *intent* here, in relationship to what Drake has called 'self-reflexive anonymous authorship', where the intent to question authorship, as he puts it, 'acts as a dissident form of cultural production in the economic-juridical order of neoliberalism' (2011: 4). The problem here lies in the idea of self-reflexivity where, as in the case of those Creative Commons licenses discussed above, it needs to be the direct intent of the author to publish work anonymously, as authorship is otherwise granted automatically. It is the author that instils the command to not read any meanings into the work related to the authorship function, thus already shaping it from the outset. This act of renunciation is nevertheless interesting, notwithstanding the paradoxical nature of the situation. To actively renounce itself, authorship needs to be self-reflexive first.

Still, the notion of intent in anonymous authorship can also be directed to create more open-ended meanings in (scholarly) works. This is exactly why anonymous authorship, for Drake, can be such a potent alternative to the current neoliberal system of cultural reproduction and literary property. For example, Drake points out—referring to the literary collective *Wu Ming*—that by using an open name, it is the intent of this collective to conceptualise their work as 'material for further expansion'. This openness creates possibilities for seeing anonymous work as functioning within and reproducing an open public domain, instead of promoting individual property (Drake 2011: 40). Nick Thoburn argues similarly when he writes about the use of a multiple name (where anyone is free to take up this moniker to author their texts). Thoburn states that these communal works and forms of writing, although in a way extending the author function, also fragment it, expanding its openness:

> Luther Blissett is an 'open reputation' that confers a certain authority—the authority of the author, no less—on an open multiplicity of unnamed writers, activists, and cultural workers, whose work in turn contributes to and extends the open reputation.

> In this sense the author-function is magnified and writ large. But it is such in breach of the structures that generate a concentrated and unified point of rarity and authority, since the author becomes a potential available to anyone, and each manifestation of the name is as original as any other. In this fashion a different kind of individuation emerges, the individuation of the multiple single: Luther Blissett is at once *collective,* a 'con-dividual' shared by many, and *fragmented,* a 'dividual' composed of multiple situations and personalities simultaneously. (2011: 128–129)

Thoburn writes about the 'desubjectifying politics of anonymity'. What he is interested in here is a communist or collective alternative to the cult of personality and individual genius, as this discourse is both misguided and also seen as perpetuating 'an essentially capitalist structure of identity' (Thoburn 2011: 2). How can the politics of collaborative writing offer a critique of capitalism and help to shape an alternative in this respect? As Thoburn argues, the commodity form of the work is still being challenged in these anonymous practices: as no one *owns* the collaborative name of *Luther Blissett*, *Wu Ming*, or an uncertain commons for example, nor of the 'anonymous author', this means that the *author name* is not connected to the ownership of the product. However, as Thoburn also points out, the *publication* of a novel or of a scholarly book or manifesto as in the case of an uncertain commons, complicates this, as *Speculate this!* also functions as a clear commodity, of course. Nonetheless, in its published form, *Speculate this!* is also available for free online. Thoburn therefore argues with respect to openly available anonymous works that 'in their published form, these books at the least indicate and allow for circuits of distribution not constrained by commercial exchange' (2011: 13).

As we have seen from the above examples, the role of publishers in the way anonymous work are published and distributed seems to be very important, as in many ways they can be seen to take over some of the authorship functions here (authority, responsibility etc.). In what sense then do we need to acknowledge the multiple agencies involved in our scholarly knowledge production, and how does this have the potential to break down our liberal humanist notions of authorship?

3.4.3 The Emergence of a Posthumanist Authorship Critique and Practice

Now that we have examined two practices, plagiarism and anonymous authorship, that can be seen as forms of anti-authorship critique, I would like to explore how these relate to the form of authorship critique I want to investigate and promote in this thesis, namely a posthuman one. What would a posthumanist critique and practice of authorship potentially look like? One potential starting point from which to answer this question—and from which to rethink the humanist notions underlying individual liberal authorship, including

ideas such as originality, ownership, authority and responsibility—would be to focus on challenging the integrity of the subject and the priority of the human that continues to underlie knowledge production in the humanities. The posthuman subject—or author, I would argue—can then be seen, in the words of Hayles, 'as an amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-informational entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction' (1999: 3). This means that a critique of the essentialisms underlying authorship would need to be continuous and would, as Mark Fisher argues with respect to the 'dismissal of the self-present, conscious subject', need to be focused on a reformulation of agency (2013). For example, Barad in her posthumanist performative practice focuses on breaking down the barriers between human and nonhuman agency, acknowledging the agency of non-humans—among others, in scientific practices—whilst also refusing to take this human/non-human division for granted. Barad thus wants to actively explore, via a Foucauldian genealogical analysis, how these distinctions are created (2007: 32). What are the practices that stabilise the categories of human and non-human—but also I would add, of the author, the work and the reader? What would a material-discursive notion of authorship then potentially entail? As shown in the previous chapter, specific book objects and author subjects have emerged and solidified out of the cuts into the book as apparatus that we have created and that are created for us as part of our scholarly practices and institutions. How can we reconsider these boundaries while at the same time acknowledging the various entangled agencies involved in the creation of scholarly works—from the material we work with, the media and technology we use, to the various material forms and practices (paper, editors, POD, peer reviewers, software, ink) that accompany a scholarly work's production? But also, as Hanna Kuusela has shown, the socio-cultural practices, consisting of 'hybrid networks of both human and non-human actors, technologies and texts' that shape how a work is subsequently received and consumed (2013).

As part of the process of continuously questioning these humanist cuts and boundaries, would a posthumanist (critique of) authorship not also have to include both a practical *and* theoretical critique? For it should involve the discourses, the practices and the material structures in which authorship is embodied, as they are integrally entangled. Hall argues in this respect that a digital posthumanities, which entails a radical critique of the humanist notions underlying our idea of the university and of the humanities, should involve a critical theoretical investment from scholars; but it should just as much be part of our scholarly publishing and authoring practices (especially since theory, as a form of

discourse, is also materially enacted: it is a form of practice and vice versa). Hall notes a lack of uptake amongst posthumanist theorists of their ideas and politics in their own research practices. His critique focuses among others on the posthumanist feminist Rosi Braidotti, who in her recent book *The Posthuman* (2013) specifically calls for an affirmative, practical and situated critique of the humanism that underpins much of our scholarship in the humanities (2013). However, Hall shows that in her own writing and research practices Braidotti continues to adhere to liberal humanist authorship functions, to such an extent that:

> *The Posthuman* also helps sustain the not unrelated sense of Braidotti as an identifiable, self-contained, individual human, whose subjectivity is static and stable enough for her to be able to sign a contract giving her the legal right to assert her identity as the 'Author of the Work (...) in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988', and to claim this original, fixed and final version of the text as her isolable intellectual property - not least via an 'all rights reserved' copyright notice. (2013)

Hall points out that this critique does not only apply to Braidotti, but to most theorists that engage with the posthuman.

Besides providing a practical, alternative and affirmative authorship critique, a posthumanist critique of authorship, as part its criticism of essentialisms, would also have to target the relationship between the individual author and the static and bound book-object. For both can be seen to materially and/or conceptually provide essentialist forms of fixity and hence to promote notions of authority, originality and responsibility in scholarship. Related to what we saw Drake and Thoburn argue in the previous section, a posthumanist critique of authorship should also want to continuously challenge the idea of the ownership of a scholarly work. For our scholarly authorship practices currently function within an object-based neoliberal capitalist system: a system that is fed and sustained by the idea of autonomous ownership of a work, copyright, and a reputation economy based on individualised authors. In this respect, an exploration of more distributed and collaborative notions of authorship, as well as of forms of anti-authorship critique, might help us take attention away from the scholarly work as a product and the book as an academic commodity. This might potentially stimulate re-use and more processual forms of research. Similarly, it might promote a move towards envisioning the production of research as a process in which a variety of actants play a role, both in the production, dissemination and consumption of that research.

As part of its practical critique of authorship, *experimentation* with alternative forms of authorship or knowledge production, or with rethinking originality and ownership, should also be an important aspect of a posthumanist authorship. As an ongoing, emerging, and multiplicitous critique and practice of rethinking authorship in an experimental way, it can then both explore and potentially 're-cut' the boundaries of authorship, the authorship-function and anti-authorship critique for our current medial and cultural-economic condition. What is important in this experimental exploration of authorship is again a continuous engagement with expanded concepts of *agency*, such as are brought forward by posthumanist and feminist new materialist theories. For this would enable us to examine closely and experiment with the interaction that takes place between authors, readers, texts, institutions and technologies in the production of knowledge and the creation of meaning. Here the focus should be on questioning and re-cutting the distinctions that are made between the author-subject and the work-object and the other agencies at play, and the ways these cuts are enacted and by whom. What kind of power relations are at stake in these demarcations, and how can we potentially disturb these? For example, in the specific context of academic book publishing, it might be useful to explore the authorial function of publishers in contemporary scholarly publishing: what is their role in establishing authorship, and in marketing and branding it, in taking responsibility for a work and for turning it into a publishable object? In which respects do they conform to a liberal humanist discourse as part of these practices? Can we, as part of our publishing practices, experiment with more distributed forms of authorship?

Furthermore, how are we to devise our authorial practices in a world in which the stable objects they supposedly belong to are constantly changing? This means that authorship is not and has never been a stable category itself. How do we revise and rethink our authorship practices to take this into account? What would a processual and emergent—rather than an object-based—authorship look like in this respect? Finally, how do we relate to the role played by these fluid media objects when increasingly they are writing themselves? For example, as Christian Bök has stated, referring to RACTER, an automated algorithm written in the 80s that randomly generated poems: 'Why hire a poet to write a poem when the poem can in fact write itself?' (2001: 10). For a lot of our authorship is automated these days, or machinic, seemingly without any intent. In this respect it will be interesting, as part of a posthumanist critique of authorship, to focus on forms of what Bök has called 'robopoetics' (2001), defined by Goldsmith as a 'condition whereby machines write literature meant to be read by other machines, bypassing a human

readership entirely' (2011b). What do we do with machine-generated content, gathered in feeds, and collected through tags and hashtags, sourced from a variety of locations? What about the authorial actions that are being made by computers and software? How do we assess or respond to the authorship related to automatically generated prose, Flarf poetry, Google poetics or the 'Postmodernism Generator'.[75]

A posthumanist critique of authorship, as an emergent and continuous practice and theory, can of course potentially consist of a variety of strategies to re-perform the humanist notions underlying our current scholarly authoring practices. However, as part of these strategies it will be essential to continue to actively explore the consequences of the alternative cuts we make. For instance, and as discussed previously, in what sense might we, while critiquing certain aspects of the authorship function (such as individuality), reproduce or re-install other aspects of the authorship function again (such as originality)? In what ways do anonymous authorship practices run the risk of installing more authority in the publisher's author function, for example? One way we might try to potentially overcome this problem is by analysing closely how the humanist discourse and practices of authorship continue to function within academia, so that our posthumanist critique might at least try to target these forms of authorship in their ongoing complexity.

When we start to look closely at authorship, and at texts and books (as we have always been doing), and at how their fluidity or open-endedness has been marginalised in favour of a discourse and practices that privilege a more stable identity, this might mean that we need to make more rigorous choices towards what constitutes authority in our scholarly practices; but also towards, as Hall states, the 'meaning, importance, value and quality' of texts, something we need to be involved in as authors, as readers and as communities of scholars (2009: 40). This might entail taking more responsibility for the entanglements of which we are a part, and for how agency is distributed and authors and works are mediated through a system.

However, experimenting with remix, collaboration, openness and wikis as such is not enough, not if we invariably end up replicating many of the features associated with print—for reasons of stability, quality etc.—we want to re-examine. Therefore we should see these experiments as critical practices, as a way of challenging humanist notions of

---

[75] Google Poetics consists of poems based on Google autocomplete suggestions. See: http://www.googlepoetics.com/post/35060155182/info; Flarf poetry has been described as the 'heavy usage of Google search results in the creation of poems'. See: http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-flarf-poetry; The Postmodernism Generator is a computer program which automatically creates random 'postmodernist essays', written by Andrew. C. Bulhak, using the Dada Engine. See: http://www.elsewhere.org/pomo/

authorship by intervening practically in and with them on a *continuous* basis, in order to try to expand and critique the author function to take into regard alternative, potentially more ethical notions of authority and responsibility, based on distributed forms of human and non-human agency. This might entail performing our practices differently, by amending what we value about scholarship. For as our practices change we have a chance to establish different norms and values at the basis of our scholarship; values that are based on sharing, openness, experimentation, interconnectedness, and otherness, for instance; or that are focused on research as process and less on academic products and with that questioning the reputation economy as it is currently set up. The practices and projects described in this chapter can be an important move towards performing authorship differently. A first step is to be aware of how our own authorial practices and discourses function and how they have been constructed as part of the workings of our academic system. A second step would be to actively rethink and challenge them from that position.

Section 2. The Scholarly System of Material Production and the Book as Commodity

> The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut.
> (Foucault 1969b: 25)

The book as a perceived object[76] of material and discursive unity comes about partly through unitary notions such as the work and the oeuvre, both of which emerge out of the close material-discursive bond between the book and the author. In the previous chapter we have explored extensively the discourse surrounding authorship: how it developed within book history, and was taken up in theories of poststructuralism and in practices ranging from hypertext to the digital humanities and remix studies. As I showed there, this discourse has been shaped and sustained by essentialist and liberal-humanist notions such as individualism, authority and originality. These notions are, as we have seen, hard to critique or re-cut in a sustained way (both theoretically and practically). This has to do partly with the close intra-action between the author-subject and the book-object. Both, in their essentialist humanist uptake and performance, can be seen to provide bindings and fixtures to scholarly communication (connected to notions such as the work, and the ownership of a work). On the other hand, as I have argued in the previous chapter and will also argue here, both the author-subject and the book-object, in their entangled discursive-materiality, offer the potential to be performed differently: through forms of anti-authorship and posthuman authorship (critique) in the case of the author, for example; but also, as I will show in this section, through forms of open and experimental publishing in the case of the book-object. Due to their entangled state, this means that each alternative performance has consequences for both the book and the author.

Although authorship has played an important role in the formation of the book as

---

[76] When I write about the book as an 'object' here, I am referencing in the main Foucault's notion of 'discursive objects' where 'it would be the interplay of the rules that make possible the appearance of objects during a given period of time'. Objects are thus not static entities, but emerge out of or as part of certain discursive formations (Foucault 1969a: 36). At the same time, and as Barad has argued, extending her critique of Foucault, objects, in their process of materialisation, are instrumental in shaping and influencing discourses. Hence discourse and materiality are ontologically inseparable (2007: 204).

an object, the commodification of the monograph has developed alongside a more complex system of scholarly communication and publishing. Over the centuries, the system of material production that has surrounded the scholarly book—which includes its production, distribution and consumption—has played an essential role in the creation of the book-object and in how the monograph as a specific form of scholarly communication has developed and how it has been perceived and used. Related to the idea of textual and material fixity brought about by the entanglement of print technology and its variety of uses, is therefore the notion of the book as a bound and stable material object. It is this book-object that has performed a range of roles in the system of material production from which it co-emerged. Not only has it functioned as a specific medium or a technological format through which research is communicated, it has also served as a marketable commodity and as an object of symbolic value exchange (i.e. for tenure and promotion in the context of the academic profession).

The history of print can be seen to privilege a vision of the book as a fixed object of communication; a discrete medial entity that, when well preserved, can have certain cultural effects. Here, in what can be seen as a naturalising tendency in media history writing (Gitelman 2006: 2), print is often opposed to the presumed fluidity of orality, and the mutability of handwritten texts. This dualist discourse surrounding the physical materiality of the book and its inherent fixity, stability and authority, as opposed to more fluid and liquid perceptions, will be explored and critiqued in depth in the third section of this thesis in chapter 6. This second section, on the other hand, will investigate how an entanglement of technological, economical and institutional factors and structures, and the struggles between them, stimulated the development of the book into both a product and a value-laden object of knowledge exchange within academia. At the same time, it will show how the material features of the book-object, in its intra-action with these factors and structures, were involved in bringing about our modern system of scholarly communication.

In the first chapter of this section, chapter 4, the focus will be on the historical development of the scholarly book as a commodity and as an object of symbolic value exchange within publishing and academia. In which specific ways has the discourse on book history narrated and shaped this history? This chapter is closely connected and forms an introduction to chapter 5, where attention will be given to how this historical development has culminated in a system and a book-object that is no longer sustainable and which runs the risk of becoming obsolete before long, if it has not done so already

(Fitzpatrick 2011). Chapter 5 then explores how we can critique and potentially start to change the cultures and systems of material and technological production surrounding scholarly communication in such a way that it allows for alternative, critical, as well as more ethical and experimental forms of research. I will argue here that it will be useful to start rethinking and deconstructing the object-formation of the book and of scholarship, both in academia and as part of our publishing system.

Nonetheless, we can't ignore the fact that the book is and needs to be a scholarly object at some point in time and thus cannot only be processual and never-ending, for a number of reasons. One of the reasons it will be useful to rethink this object-formation is that doing so will enable us to emphasise what other points and cuts are possible that might critique certain excessive forms of the ongoing commercialisation and capitalisation of scholarship, such as the increasing need for measurement and audit criteria, and for marketable, innovative and transparent research. Although the scholarly book functions within an entangled scholarly, technological and economic context, this does not mean that we do not have a hand in constructing these realms together-apart differently (Kember and Zylinska 2012).[77] One of the ways we can begin to do this is by means of a threefold, interdependent strategy of: rethinking and re-envisioning: the discourse surrounding the past and future of the scholarly book (which I will discuss in chapter 4); the system of material and scholarly production; and our own performances of, and material-discursive practices relating to, the book (which I will discuss in chapter 5).

---

[77] With cutting things together-apart I refer to Barad's use of the phrase, meaning that a cut will not enact permanent boundaries, but functions as a reconfiguring, an alternative re-arranged form of 'cleaving'. As Barad puts it:

> As I have explained elsewhere, intra-actions enact agential cuts, which do not produce absolute separations, but rather cut together-apart (one move). Diffraction is not a set pattern, but rather an iterative (re)configuring of patterns of differentiating-entangling. As such, there is no moving beyond, no leaving the 'old' behind. There is no absolute boundary between here-now and there-then. There is nothing that is new; there is nothing that is not new. (2014: 168)

Chapter 4. Narratives of Book Formation

4.1 Introduction

How did the discourse related to the commodification and object-formation of the book, in particular the academic book, develop? How did it evolve as part of the general history of the book, but also as part of the debates surrounding the development of the scholarly press and scholarly publishing more in general? How, in this respect, has our modern system of scholarly communication and publishing been envisioned amongst object-oriented lines?

These are some of the questions I want to explore in this chapter. In doing so I will focus mainly on the first part of the above described strategy: namely, on reframing the discourse surrounding the past and the future of the book, with a specific focus on the development of the monograph as a commercial product within scholarly publishing and as a value-laden object within the academic reputation economy. For with the coming of print (or even earlier with the coming of writing), one can claim that the book turned into an object, a standardised product that can be duplicated over and over again to securely communicate and preserve thoughts. Even more, it can be argued that with the coming of the printing press, and especially with the advent of industrial mechanisation and printing processes in the 19th century, the book turned into a mass-market commodity. Due to declining production costs, the book could be produced and sold to an ever-growing audience of potential consumers. New forms of material production thus accompanied this book-object, part of which became the blossoming (early-) capitalist enterprise of the international book trade.

Similarly and simultaneously a system of scholarly communication and publishing arose as part of these new forms of print communication in Europe, with specific roles and power structures. It was a system that from the beginning was integrally connected with, and almost indistinguishable from, the developments and interests of the commercial book trade. This system for the production, distribution and consumption of scholarly research

(which can be seen as continuously in progress)[78] consisted of practices and tactics of standardisation, attribution, reviewing, selection, and quality establishment, as well as trust and reputation building. Eventually this developed into what we presently perceive as the 'modern' system of formal scholarly communication.[79]

In this chapter I will explore the ways in which this gradually developing system can be said to have been partly responsible for turning the book into a *scholarly object*, both materially and conceptually, playing specific roles and functions within the scholarly communication and publishing system, and how it influenced future scholarly journal and book forms. Some of the main issues this chapter will engage with are encapsulated in the following questions: How did publications turn into integral, trustworthy, authorised documents that were unlikely to change? How did a set of functions and roles develop, involving academics, publishers and librarians among others, all with a great stake in the system of securing the book as a stable and solid object? And, vice versa, in what ways did the specific materiality of the printed book help to shape our scholarly communication system, where some have even said that 'historically, the school and the university have been the institutional expressions of the book' (Lechte 1999: 140)?

4.2 The Scholarly Monograph and Historical Discourses of Object-Formation

As with the discourse on the presumed fixity of the scholarly book (which I touched on in chapter 2 and will return to in chapter 6)—is fixity an intrinsic element of printed books, for instance, as Eisenstein suggests, or has it been imposed on the printed object by historical actors in their intentions with and uses of books, as Johns has pointed out?—a similar discussion has taken place with respect to the rise of the book as an object and a commodity within larger networks of trade and scholarly publishing. Was the process of commodification and object-formation a direct effect of print technology, or of the system

---

[78] What I mean by this is that the system of scholarship as we know it today, including peer review, authorship, and copyright is not and has never been a static institution but is historically contingent.

[79] As Christine Borgman makes clear, 'Scholarly communication is a rich and complex sociotechnical system formed over a period of centuries' (2007: 48). This system takes on many forms, both formal and informal, and is best understood, Borgman states 'as a complex set of interactions among processes, structures, functions, and technologies' (2007: 73). However, as Borgman also points out, as a system, it builds upon a certain tradition in Western thought, based on the free flow of information nand quality control, and the functions the system needs to fulfil in order to stimulate this. These functions ensure, among other things, quality, preservation and trust, access and dissemination, reputation and reward structures, and the efficiency and effectivity of the system as a whole (Adema and Rutten 2010).

of material production that arose around the book, turning it *into* a fixed commodity that could be sold and bartered? The argument that will be made in this chapter is that it has always been both, and that the book and its environment emerged in their intra-action (Barad 2007) where the book functions as an apparatus (Foucault 1980, Deleuze 1992, Barad 2007, Stiegler 2010) in its dynamic relationship with the political-economy surrounding it.[80] The modern system of scholarly communication, as mentioned above, has always been integrally connected both to developments in publishing technology and to expansions of the book trade. Scholarly communication, and more specifically academic book publishing, has thus always been a cultural, an economic *and* a technological endeavour.

Nevertheless, a single-sided emphasis on specific (technological, economic, cultural) elements of the discursive object-formation of the book has played an important role in the various media histories that have narrated the development of the book as a scholarly and material object.[81] In this sense the way book history has been done, has played an important role in how people today perceive books, understand their history and with that the development of our academic system into the future (Gitelman 2006: 1). Book history has thus become an integral part of the power struggle surrounding the future of the book. A focus on either cultural or technological aspects of the development of the book, for instance, can be seen as neglecting the historical development of the scholarly communication system in its entangled becoming, as well as the various interests that have shaped the struggles over the book's design and implementation. Values and practices underlying scholarship, such as authorship, peer review, openness, fixity, trust etc., were not developed separately from economic, cultural-institutional and technological concerns and needs but in tandem with them, showcasing both historical as well as current struggles about the past and future of the book, scholarship, and publishing. As I will therefore argue in depth later in this chapter, when narrating the past or future of the book it will not be constructive to emphasise either of these approaches separately or distinctively, *without seeing them as integrally connected to and entangled with the system of material production of the book as a whole.*

To provide an example, in battling the increasing commercialisation of scholarship and publishing, it will not do much good to see scholarship as solely or most of all a cultural endeavour (Leavis 1979, Arnold and Garnett 2006), in a conservative and reactive

---

[80] For more on how the book functions as an apparatus, see chapter 6.
[81] For example, see the discussion between Johns and Eisenstein on book history as explored in chapter 2.

stance against market forces. And all the more so since, as Bill Readings has argued, to uphold the idea of culture and the university's cultural value as a kind of antidote against commercialism has in many ways become useless, due to the way culture has now become de-referentialised (without a specific set of referents, i.e. things or ideas to refer to) (1996: 17–18). In this respect, Stefan Collini has pointed out that we are still defining our cultural values concerning the ideal of university education based on an a-historical context, one that was always already contingent and differential from the start (2012: 21). It will therefore likewise not be particularly useful, in this specific context, to blame commercial publishers and their profit-driven interests for the impoverishment of formal scholarly publishing,[82] while at the same time seeing scholarship and research as an endeavour that is, or should be, led solely by cultural values and motives. Making a distinction between publishing as a commercial undertaking and scholarship as a purely cultural endeavour (which John Thompson is close to doing, as we shall see later in this chapter), does not do justice to the fact that scholarly research and communication has always been a commercial enterprise too, and has been intrinsically connected with and heavily involved in trade publishing from its inception. These kind of simplified, black-and-white analyses also do not help with regard to developing a sustained critique of some of the excesses and problems underlying the current highly interconnected publishing and scholarly systems and the way they function. Building on this position, I will argue that scholarship and publishing are not characterised by separate, conflicting field logics (Thompson 2005), but rather that a 'publishing function' (or any other alternative system of material production surrounding scholarly communication), should be seen as an integral aspect of scholarship and of knowledge formation. What is more, change in scholarly communication, publishing, or even scholarly practices and the university, can only come about if we take into consideration the entangled nature of scholarship and the diverse concerns that continue to shape it.

For this reason I will focus in this chapter on the genealogy of the material production of the book as a struggled over disciplining regime, involving both knowledge and bodies of knowledge across a plurality of frontiers of object formation, including technological, economical, and cultural-institutional aspects, and taking into consideration both the book as object and discourse. Hence I will argue that processes of book materialisation should be viewed as material-discursive practices, as entanglements (Barad

---

[82] For instance, see George Monbiot's attack on commercial publishers here:
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/29/academic-publishers-murdoch-socialist

2007).

However, this does not mean that specific, targeted and localised forms of critique, focused on reforming the copyright system, creating alternative economic models, or engaging in experiments to rethink our scholarly practices—such as my project is attempting to do—are not on their own important steps towards change. In their efforts to tip the balance of power, and enable alternative visions of the book and scholarship, different from those based predominantly on the market, these endeavours should be encouraged. But what is needed first and foremost is an acknowledgment that embarking on these kinds of projects comes with a need to take responsibility for the fact that these localised interventions are capable of having consequences for the system as a whole, and therefore of also influencing and targeting the entire system. A progressive, affirmative strategy that takes into account the genealogy of the book and our scholarly material-discursive practices, and that criticises aspects of the book as part of their wider entanglement with the scholarly system, is thus needed.[83] As Fitzpatrick has emphasised with respect to authorship, for instance: 'Academic authorship as we understand it today has evolved in conjunction with our publishing and employment practices, and changing one aspect of the way we work of necessity implies change across its entirety' (2011: 53). This does not mean we have to rethink everything all the time. Rather, we need to make specific decisions about what will be the most appropriate, responsible, effective or strategic parts of the system to rethink at any particular time and in each specific historical or cultural situation. However, as part of this specificity it remains important to focus on the entangled nature of these developments and on the consequences the cuts we make have for the entire system. As will be explored in more depth in chapter 5, this involves a plea for forms of radical open access that go beyond mere provision of access and that argue for a continued rethinking of the whole system of scholarly communication, starting with the scholarly monograph.

This complicated entanglement of factors, agencies, technologies and discourses that has accompanied the development of the scholarly book object, might also partly explain why its system of material production, with most of its key players derived from a print situation, has still not really been questioned with the coming of digital technologies. Until now the equilibrium of the forces of print power seems to be reinforced—for the most

---

[83] I do not want to imply that the system of scholarly communication has 'borders', or that this is in any way a stabilised structure. This system is highly contingent and historically situated, and thus differs in each instantiation. Instead I want to focus on taking responsibility for the *systemic relationships and relationalities* that structure the academic apparatus, which include technological, economical and cultural/institutional practices.

part uncritically—in digital publishing, with some of the initial experiments with open access publishing, new publishing models, and new forms of peer review, despite their critical character, at risk of becoming usurped within this larger model again. Critique of the scholarly book object, of peer review and of economic models therefore needs to be a continuous process, one that calls for an assessment that is integrally connected to an examination of institutional and technological models of innovation.

In the remainder of this chapter I will explore first the development of our modern system of scholarly communication and the initial stages of book objectification as narrated within the discourse on book history. From there I will examine the rise of the university press as an institution that epitomizes the entanglement of university extension work and the forces of the publishing economy. As part of doing so, I will analyse how the mission of the press has been narrated within the discourse on book history, before concluding by showing how a *reframing* of this discourse can be beneficial with regards to battling the ongoing commodification of the book.

4.2.1 Discursive Reflections on the Development of the Modern System of Scholarly Communication

When starting to write a history or genealogy of the material production of the monograph, the lack of a general historical overview is immediately apparent. Where the rise and development of the scholarly journal as a specific format has been reasonably well documented, resources on the development of scholarly book publishing are rather scattered, tending to be divided over individual press and publishing house histories that focus on regional or national developments (mostly concentrating on the UK and the US), or on a specific historical period. Scholarly book histories are often discussed and mixed up with general book publishing histories, and with studies on the history of print or print culture (i.e. McLuhan, 1962; Eisenstein, 1979; Ong, 1982; Chartier, 1994; Febvre & Martin, 1997; Johns, 1998). Either that or they get mentioned alongside textbook, trade publishing and journal publishing (i.e. Coser, Kadushin & Powell, 1985; Thompson, 2005), often without any focus being placed on their specific characteristics and development. And in those cases where a regional or periodic history is available, it is mostly historical facts that are provided, not a thorough analysis of the system of material production surrounding the book (i.e. Hawes 1967a). Nevertheless, an attempt has been made below, based on the available secondary resources, to provide a short, and necessarily incomplete history of the

discursive formation of the system of material production surrounding scholarly communication, and its dynamic relationship with the monograph.

4.2.1.1. Print Technology

As is made clear above, a lot of emphasis has been placed within the discourse on book history upon the influence print technology has had on the rise of both the modern scholarly communication system, and of the book as a scholarly object and a mass commodity. But was it print that started this development? Ong states that it was the objectifying movement of writing more than print that turned words into signs and time into fragments (1982: 31). Nonetheless, Ong argues at the same time that it was print that truly objectified words as things, to an extent that words were now made out of pre-existing mechanical units (types). Print 'embedded the word itself deeply in the manufacturing process and made it into a kind of commodity' (Ong 1982: 116). It was with print that we entered what McLuhan called the 'first great consumer age' (1962: 138), while Febvre and Martin declared the introduction of printing 'a stage on the road to our present society of mass consumption and of standardisation' (1997: 260). Eisenstein also emphasises that it was the advent of print that enabled the mechanical reproduction of books and transformed the conditions under which texts were produced, disseminated and consumed. Initially, it was not the product that changed (in the age of incunabula); it was that this product was reproduced in larger quantities than was ever possible before (Eisenstein 1979: 168). The organisation of printed book production also introduced new roles and functions, and with that the whole system around book production took on a different scale. By the same token, one could argue that the medieval production of manuscripts by scribes in scriptoria was already a highly commercial business. The market value of hand-copied books also remained high for a long time after the invention of the printing press (Eisenstein 1979: 50). Nonetheless, where manuscript production was producer-oriented, print was highly consumer-oriented (Ong 1982: 120). The use of abbreviations in manuscripts, for instance, was designed to help the producer of the work, not to improve the ease of reading. Texts were also often bound in one book cover in the Middle Ages, making it hard to ascertain the number of texts included in one manuscript. It was print that influenced the coming of the book as an object containing a single work (Eisenstein 1979: 43).

Eisenstein points out that the printing press was incremental in promoting one of the main values of science: that of making knowledge public (1979: 478). Print enabled feedback and it secured old and new records. Once research observations could be

duplicated in printed books, they became available to readers who could check them and feed back corrections with new observations that could then be incorporated into new editions again (1979: 487–488). Print, Eisenstein states, was a publicising machine, where it stimulated the circulation of what was previously private information as a public good, promoting the move away from a system of guild secrecy and toward one of publication, which in turn lead to more cooperative science. Print thus served both the motives of altruism and self-advancement that came to be so important in modern science (Eisenstein 1979: 560).

4.2.1.2 The Commercial Book Trade

In addition to paying attention to the role played by technology and the materiality of the printed book, the book historical discourse focuses specifically on the influence the commercial book trade had on the development of our modern system of scholarly communication. As Eisenstein emphasises, one of the effects of the modernisation and rationalisation of the new commercial book trade was that it influenced the rise of an 'ésprit de systeme' in academia (1979: 88). The newly established international book trade promoted an ethos that became associated with the community of men of letters: 'tolerant yet not secular, pious yet not fanatic' (Eisenstein 1979: 140). Besides being commercial enterprises print shops were also cultural centres as well as serving as the focal point of scientific development. Eisenstein thus argues that the rise of the republic of letters must be seen to have gone hand-in-hand with the development of the printed book trade (1979: 76). Febvre and Martin similarly point out that from its earliest days printing existed as an industry, where the scholarly book was a piece of merchandise from which to make a profit and earn a living, even for scholars (1997: 108). For example, as part of the growing market economy around books, printers used new publicising techniques such as blurbs to sell their books. Individual achievement was heightened in these processes, based on a market mechanism that followed the practical need to advertise products and bring trade to shops. Likewise it can be argued that it was 'the industry which encouraged publishers to advertise authors and authors to advertise themselves' (Eisenstein 1979: 229). The rise of scholarly authorship and the growing prestige of the inventor are also connected to new forms of intellectual property rights that were introduced in the book trade to prevent piracy.

The system of material production set up around print and scholarship played an important role in shaping the emerging scientific communication system. Johns, building on Steven Shapin's identification of trust as a key element in the making of knowledge,

focuses specifically on how this system of material production established notions of credentiality and trust (1998: 19). He argues that it was not fixity as brought about by print technology, but trust in a textual work, that was able to turn a book into both a commercial trade and scholarly object. This included constructing trust in the book's integrity, quality and authority. Johns is mainly interested in how the system of book production, distribution and consumption was constructed and how it functioned, as well as in the shifting roles that were played by printers/publishers (Stationers), booksellers, scholars, and the government or monarch, together with the various institutions that grew out of these groups, such as the *Stationers' Company* and the *Royal Society* in England. Chartier similarly emphasises the importance of studying material practices with respect to book production and consumption, but unlike Johns he directly connects this back to the book as a specific technological affordance. A text here is seen as being integrally connected to its physical support, where meaning gets constructed through the form in which a text reaches its readers. Publishing decisions as well as the constraints of print production are constituted within this form (Chartier 1994: 9). Chartier is thus interested in the controls that were exercised over printed matter as part of its production process, from exterior moral or religious censorship or forms of patronage, to constraining interior mechanisms within the book itself. Print established a market, which came with certain rules and conventions for those players that made a monetary gain from this new commercial system (Chartier 1994: 21). What kind of struggles over the construction of the scholarly book and its history took place between these various constituencies? What was the influence of these discursive struggles on the establishment of trust and the creation of the modern system of scholarly communication?

Johns, as I made clear previously, points out that it was firstly and foremost the Stationers or publishers, and to a lesser extent booksellers, who were responsible for constructing a trustworthy realm of knowledge, by articulating conventions related to propriety (1998: 34). Through the publishers' agency, following their interests and practices, printed materials and the knowledge embodied within them came into being (Johns 1998: 60). The social character of the printing house hereby influenced its products: who had access to the printing house, what were they allowed to do and under what conditions. What kinds of books were printed and who got to decide what got printed? Not unlike the present situation of academic book publishing, these decisions were often based on economics, where the priorities of the book trade came first, a state of affairs that did not always benefit academic authors nor the emerging system of scientific scholarship.

Many scholarly works were expensive to produce (often requiring special typefaces in the cases of mathematics and astronomy, for instance, as well as elaborate graphs and images) and they suffered from a small market plagued by piracy (Johns 1998: 447). This made learned titles unsustainable to produce in situations where Stationers were reluctant to publish them unless they could be guaranteed to sell. Capital was needed to print a title and only those books that satisfied a demand were actually produced at a competitive price (Febvre and Martin 1997: 108). As Febvre and Martin argue, powerful patronage from public authorities such as bishops or the state was often needed in these situations as well as capital injections through loans, to provide just one example. One could argue that in the early days of the press the main factor in its rapid development was the interest influential men and institutions had in making texts accessible (Febvre and Martin 1997: 170). Nevertheless, marketable products came first. Work on scholarly books was often delayed while printers concentrated on more immediately profitable material, such as pamphlets and ephemera, which were produced in the same space as folio volumes. These were what printers relied on for their economic sustenance, meaning that 'profitable pamphlets came before scientific books' (Johns 1998: 454).

Printers were seen to personally vouch for the propriety of their products through their character, which was determined among other things by their respect of copy (meaning no piracy) (Johns 1998: 125). Attempts to regulate the book trade against piracy and impropriety thus stressed the model of a stable, domestic household (Johns 1998: 156). This household image of propriety, comparable with today's emphasis on branding, played an important role in reading strategies too. According to Johns, a reader judged a book based on practices and pragmatics, which included looking at the name of the Stationer or publisher on a book's title page to determine reliable content (Johns 1998: 147). The craft community (including booksellers) worked to sustain good character for the book trade as a whole (Johns 1998: 187). In this process politics, propriety and print were integrally connected: trust could become possible because of a print-disciplining regime. In England the *Stationers' Company* established a propriety culture, as Johns calls it, which was essential in the establishment of the book as trade and scholarly object. The connection between the market and the emerging scholarly communication system becomes even clearer if we take into account that property and propriety used to mean the same. As Johns states: 'offenses against the property enshrined by convention in the register were seen simultaneously as offenses against proper conduct' (1998: 109). The *Stationers' Company* established a registry system for published books to counter piracy and to strengthen the representation of their

business as a respectable and moral art (Johns 1998: 222). In reality this meant they had a monopoly over the publishing industry for setting and enforcing regulations. Where concerns of the state mattered heavily when it came to the book trade, in the representation of the Stationer, licensing and propriety were both seen as integral not only to the concerns of the Stationers, but to those of the state. In this sense the Company 'constituted the conditions of existence for printed knowledge itself' (Johns 1998: 190).

4.2.1.3 The Academies and the Journal System

What role did the emerging scholarly societies play in this development? How can they be connected to the systems of material production that were set up around scholarly books? In the 16th and 17th centuries new ideas were initially communicated by means of written correspondences (Kronick 1991: 57). Gradually, with the aid of official scientific academies, the increase in correspondences led to their standardisation in journals or periodicals which, as Kronick points out, enabled these conversations to take place in a more open setting. At the same time the increase in the amount of scholarly books being published led to the development of book reviews. These developments were, as Kronick argues, the start of the development of the first journals such as *Philosophical Transaction*s, which dealt with new ideas, and the *Journal des Sçavans*, which primarily served as a medium for book-reviewing (1991: 59–60).[84]

In England, as Johns has extensively recounted, it was the *Royal Society*, chartered in 1662 as a learned society of scholars, that tried to set up an order for the communication of scholarly research that was tailored more to the needs of academia. They did this by, among other things, aggressive intervention in the realm of print (Johns 1998: 44). The Society has become famous for its publishing enterprises, among which is, as I mentioned above, the first scientific journal, the *Philosophical Transaction*s*,* and Newton's *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica.* As Johns points out, however, these are the outcome of long processes of establishing conventions based on experiments within the Society. As with the Stationers, new concepts of authorship, publication, and reading were enacted in conditions of civil trust, ensuring that productions would not be reprinted, translated, or pirated without consent (Shapin 1994: 182–183, Johns 1998: 54–55). The Royal Society thus 'attempted to contain, and even redefine, the powers of print' in direct opposition to the order set up by the *Stationers' Company*, as we will see. Experimental natural

---

[84] Not unlike blogposts today, Kronick mentions that in the 17th century the journal was probably not accepted as a formal, definitive form of publication. Frequently these articles were collected by publishers and published in a book afterwards (1991: 61).

philosophers, in cooperation with the Society, created new forms of sociability and new genres of writing such as the experimental paper, the journal, the book review, the editor, and the experimental author. Within these confines an openness and readiness to communicate was essential to promote the common good (Johns 1998: 472). Virtual forms of witnessing were developed through detailed forms of scientific reporting. This civil domain of print was based on the Society's own system of internal registration (or licensing) and external publication (Johns 1998: 480). Together, the protocols established around these systems came to constitute the emerging communication system in the experimental community.

Henry Oldenburg, secretary of the Royal Society, first developed an extensive system of external publication by setting up a network of correspondents across Europe, connecting the society to the broader world of learned men. It was this network that formed the basis of the *Philosophical Transactions* (Guédon 2001, Johns 1998: 497). The latter extended the Society's register into the 'public' realm of print, as a new strategy to secure authorship within the scholarly community of natural philosophers, creating forms of international propriety (Johns 1998: 499). Additionally, Johns narrates how licensers Atkyns and Streater proposed a radical solution to the problem of discredit, making it an expressly *political* problem by suggesting direct royal intervention in the civility of printing: the *Stationers' Company*, together with the 'print-disciplining regime' it had set up, should be replaced by a system of crown-appointed patentees, where printers would be employed as servants to the Society and the crown. The *Stationers Company* regulated property via their register which, seen as a threat to the power of the king, was ultimately challenged by this new royal patenting system that promised to replace the Stationers power with that of the monarch. In this new system property and the right to copy came to be embedded in law. In this way powerful intertwined representations of printing and politics (and power and knowledge) were constructed, representing, as Johns emphasises, a revolutionary reconstruction of the cultural politics of print (1998: 322).

This reconstruction also had a historiographical element where, in order to determine what the future of print should be (i.e. should it be based on a registration or on a patenting system?) a battle was fought over the historical origins of print, via a reconstruction of the historical origins of the press itself. The licensers from the Royal Society argued that print should return to its pure status as an 'Art' that it had enjoyed before being incorporated, owned and regulated by the mercenary interests of the Stationers as a 'Mechanick Trade' (Johns 1998: 307). They claimed that the printing craft

was the personal property of the monarch, where the Stationers pointed out that it had always been a 'common' trade. Through this anecdote Johns shows how the essential properties of print were disputed and how participants in the debate actually created print itself. As Johns states, 'practitioners of the press (…) made creative use of their own histories to delineate cultural proprieties for themselves and their craft' (1998: 325).

In the end printing would become part of court service, and would rest on the civility of this system (Johns 1998: 624). The register mechanism became the defining symbol of experimental propriety in the Society itself, and the *Philosophical Transactions* its emblem abroad (Johns 1998: 541). It is important to emphasise, however, as both Johns and Jean-Claude Guédon have done, that the emergence of this scholarly journal system had little to do with democratic scholarly ideas (in the tradition of Merton—something that is also visible in Kronick, for instance) and the public good, but with issues of copyright, with priority claims and with royal hierarchies. As Guédon remarks: 'The design of a scientific periodical, far from primarily aiming at disseminating knowledge, really seeks to reinforce property rights over ideas; intellectual property and authors were not legal concepts designed to protect writers—they were invented for the printers' or Stationers' benefits' (2001: 10). The limitation of the Stationers' property rights in favour of the *Royal Society* as a scholarly institution should thus not be seen as a form of promoting the public good and scholarship *in opposition* against economic interests. It was most of all a political conflict between the crown and the Stationers, where the crown wanted to reassert its authority via the institution of the *Royal Society* and the law. In this respect, developments such as copyright should be seen, as Guédon has argued, as specific historical constructions that arise out of a moment of equilibrium between conflicting interests and parties. And just like the system of scholarly communication, this equilibrium is not stable or solid, but keeps on evolving.

To provide another example, the peer review system did not initially appear as an integral part of science and scholarship. As Mario Biagioli has emphasised, peer review was a specifically 17th century development tied to the emergence of the new institutions of the academies. These state-sponsored institutions were granted the privilege to publish their own works. Up until then censorship systems had been controlled by religious authorities and licensing by the printers/Stationers. The genealogy of peer review thus suggests that it developed within the logic of royal censorship, not as something protecting the interests of the broader scholarly community. It was about establishing unacceptable claims (censorship), not about establishing good claims (quality), Biagioli points out (2002: 17). As

he puts it: 'So while peer review is now cast as a sign of the hard-won independence of science from socio-political interests, it actually developed as the result of royal privileges attributed to very few academies to become part and parcel of the book licensing and censorship systems' (Biagioli 2002: 14). The academies needed to control print in order to sustain themselves and their protection by the royal patron. There were also strong economic interests involved. In addition to controlling publications the academies needed to promote them in order to build their prestige and recognition to foster continued state support. This was the beginning of a cultural market: 'Publications, then, became a credit-carrying object, and these "academic banknotes" needed to be printed, not only censored' (Biagioli 2002: 20). So although it started as an early modern disciplinary technique akin to book censorship, as Biagioli shows, peer review developed in the 18th century into an in-house disciplinary technique, and then began to function as a producer of academic value. In the end it no longer depended on a centre of authority but was internalised, where it went from external disciplining (state censors) to internal review (academic reviewers). It thus functioned as a Foucauldian disciplining technique, repressing and producing knowledge at the same time (Biagioli 2002: 11–12).

Seeing the academies as promoting and enabling cultural and scholarly values and the public good in opposition to the economic and political interests of the state and the Stationers can thus be considered a misrepresentation. For this view ignores the priority struggles the academies, the state and the Stationers were involved in as part of the entanglement of political, economical and technological factors, and which enabled the rise of the modern system of scholarly communication. As Guédon rightly claims: 'In short, a good deal of irony presides over the emergence of scholarly publishing: all the democratic justifications that generally accompany our contemporary discussions of copyright seem to have been the result of reasons best forgotten, almost unmentionable. The history of scientific publishing either displays Hegel's cunning of history at its best, or it reveals how good institutions are at covering their own tracks with lofty pronouncements!' (2001: 10).

4.2.1.4 University Press Publishing

In addition to the development of the academies, universities increasingly started to set up presses of their own to communicate their scholarly findings. To find any kind of overview of the early history of the university press, however, one has to go all the way back to 1967, to Gene Hawes' handbook on university press publishing, and even then this is only a narrative that focuses mainly on the United States. Hawes provides a thorough history of the development of the university press in the States, including the rapid growth of the

sector until the end of the 60s (especially after WWII) (1967b: 11). The next paragraphs, based on Hawes, will thus mostly concentrate on developments in these regions.

In Europe it all began with *Oxford University Press* (1478) and *Cambridge University Press* (1521), both founded shortly after the coming of print. Their early development was anything but stable, however, as it was only in the 16th century that some form of continuous publishing production was established for both presses. They were integral parts of their universities but also depended on commercial activities, such as bible publishing, to survive. This monopoly on bible publishing, which was disputed in its early days by the *Stationers' Company*, supplied sufficient funding to support publishing in other, less profitable areas. American university presses were established in the late 1800s, as part of the rise of the American university itself, modelled on the German research universities. With the rise of the first universities, the need for a university press to accompany the university mission was strongly felt. In the case of *Johns Hopkins Press* (1878), for instance, it was the university president who strongly believed in the need for a press. As Thompson has noted: 'the American university presses were set up with the aim of advancing and disseminating knowledge by publishing high quality scholarly work; they were generally seen as an integral part of the function of the university' (2005: 108). After Hopkins, 1891 saw the coming of *Chicago* and 1869 of Cornell University Press, followed by the presses of the *University of California* and *Columbia* in 1893 (Hawes 1967b: 30–31). The University of California's press grew out of the interest of the institution's librarian in creating series of scholarly monographs to exchange with similar series issuing from other universities. These presses arrived at a time when higher education in the States was still in its early stages, operating on a very small scale. From the rise of the university presses onwards, this gradually started to change, in a steadily faster pace.[85] In the States, commercial publishing was already well developed by the time university presses came about. The main mission of the presses was to publish the kind of research that could not find a commercial outlet: specialised scholarly research. Again, Hawes states the importance here of university support: 'the American presses have depended essentially on funds from university appropriations and from varieties of benefactors, rather than from religious publishing, to help support the dissemination of scholarly research'. This includes their tax-exempt status in the US (Hawes 1967b: 33). It took the first presses some time to establish themselves (in a process that comprised a lot of failing and reviving) before a new wave arrived in 1905,

---

[85] Hawes gives the following numbers: in 1870 there were only 560 colleges and universities with 5600 professors and 52000 students, which grew in size to some 24000 professors and 240000 students by 1900, and to 950 institutions, 36000 teaching faculty, and 355000 students by 1910.

with the formation of *Princeton University Press*. Alumni also played an important role in this movement by providing monetary funds in support of the presses (Hawes 1967b: 34). Eleven more universities founded presses by the end of the 1920s, and another twelve did so in the 1930s (Hawes 1967b: 38). Hawes emphasises the individual, organic development of these presses, as related to the specific university and people that ran the press. Eventually, in 1946 the *Association of American University Presses* was founded—a trade organisation for scholarly publishers—stipulating membership qualifications in 1949 (Hawes 1967b: 65).

What is clear from this short overview, focussing especially on the US, is how the publishing function was seen as directly related to the university's mission, which resulted in a relationship in which university funding to support the press was essential to the functioning of the institution. As Hawes has argued: 'Just as relatively high costs and narrow markets typify the publishing economics of scholarly books, subsidy support plays a fundamental role in the publishing economics of a university press' (1967b: 127).

4.2.1.5 The Monograph Crisis

As Hawes and others have pointed out, the ability to publish specialised, experimental work is not a sustainable enterprise. University presses were brought into life exactly for this reason, as non-profit institutions to publish the kinds of works that are not commercially viable. The objective of university press publishing could therefore be seen as a form of university extension work (Brown 1970: 134, Waters 2004: 5, Adema 2010). This means they depend on forms of outside support and subsidies that lend them an advantage over commercial publishers, enabling university presses to support books which by their nature are not viable because they have a small potential market (Brown 1970: 134). Nevertheless, after the gradual if moderate development of academic publishing in the United States up to the first half of the 20th century, the 1950s and 1960s saw an extended growth as a direct result of the expansion of universities worldwide following the second world war. Other factors involved in this expansion were the baby boom, the GI bill, the influx of women in academia, economic advancement, and educational investments as part of the Cold War. This rise in student numbers and universities led to increased funds and investments in libraries, which in turn created a demand for more content. By 1967 there were sixty university presses affiliated to universities in the US and Canada, and by 1970 there were thirty smaller presses active outside the AAUP. In the UK there were seven university presses in 1970: Cambridge, Oxford, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh,

Leicester, and Athlone Press of the University of London (Brown 1970: 135, Thompson 2005: 108).

This growth-boom ended rather abruptly at the beginning of the 1970s, followed by the economic recession of the 1980s, which marked the beginning of what we now know as the *serials* and *monograph crisis* (Thompson 2005: 98). Greco has analysed a large collection of sources, based mainly on research papers from the 60s until the 90s from the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, that first talk about a crisis in scholarly communication at the beginning of the 70s, extending into the present. He narrates how the rise of commercial scholarly publishing at that time was luring commercially interesting scholars away from university presses, making it even harder for the latter to sustain themselves (Greco et al. 2006: 58). In their description of the start of the crisis, Harvey et al. note that universities were facing severe budget cuts at these times, which mostly meant their presses were the first areas of their activity to be cut, in the form of declining university subsidies. Library budgets were also cut, while publishing (warehousing, distribution etc.) costs went up (Harvey et al. 1972: 196). This lead to a situation in which presses were—and still are—forced to change the books they publish, to the detriment of specialised scholarly monographs in the humanities (Harvey et al. 1972: 198).

The serials and monograph crisis only became more pronounced in the 1980s and 1990s. Increasingly, the focus of the debate on the crisis in academic publishing became the impact it was having on the tenure review process, and on the future of early-career scholars. This period also saw the growing penetration of commercial market forces into university press practices. Academic publishing was forced to start to adhere to a business ideology more and more (Greco et al. 2006: 62). According to Thompson, a 'new climate of financial accountability' arose for university presses around this time, which strengthened their uncertainty towards the nature and purpose of a university press (2005: 109). To a growing degree they were expected to break-even and to reduce their dependence on their institutions (Thompson 2005: 88–89). In a sense the perceived mission of the university press was breached in this situation. One of the results of this development was a greater throughput model, where publishers had to publish more and more titles in order to attain the same level of revenue. The growth in titles over the years did not necessarily mean the presses were doing well, however: they may have been publishing more titles but they were making less profit per title (Thompson 2005: 125). Besides, as Hall has argued, the increase in titles didn't necessarily mean more new research was being published, as many scholarly books were 'merely repeating and repackaging old

ideas and material', with publishers focusing on more marketable overview publications, such as readers and introductions targeted at students (2008: 6).

As already remarked above, this decline of university press publishing was at the same time affected by the immense growth of commercial scholarly publishing. Since the 1970s the book publishing industry as a whole has been the focus of intensive merger and acquisitions activity leading to a situation in which international conglomerates now rule the business (Thompson, 2005:2). Thompson saw these developments coming about most clearly in: the growth of title output (also in book publishing where as part of the commodification of the sector both paperbacks *and* hardbacks were increasingly published); the concentration of corporate power; the transformation of the retail sectors; the globalisation of markets and publishing firms; and the influence of new technologies (2005). This progressively corporate concentration of scholarly publishing can, as Willinsky notes, be illustrated by the journal holdings (in 2003) of three of the major players: 'Reed Elsevier with 1,800 journals, Taylor and Francis with over 1,000 titles, and Springer with more than 500 titles' (2005: 19). Together, these control 60 per cent of the publications that are indexed in the ISI Web of Science, Willinsky states. These mergers with smaller publishers have also led to growth in subscription prices (Willinsky 2005: 19). The excessive use of commercial branding, developed as a technique to cope with information overload, created a form of core science (citation index hierarchy), and with that of core journals and reputable publishers. This creation of hierarchy out of branding has again made it easier to make a profit out of publishing, by creating an inelastic market; it has also made it easier to distinguish excellent from mediocre scholars and researchers (Guédon 2009).

Journal publishing thus turned into a very lucrative business, affecting the system of scholarly communication directly. As Thompson points out: 'The rise of powerful corporate players in the fields of STM publishing and journal publishing has squeezed the budgets of university libraries with dire consequences for academic publishers' (2005: 62–63). Furthermore, university presses have increasingly been forced into commercial trade and textbook publishing to survive, while they are faced with strong competition from the conglomerates. This development, Thompson argues, led to the development of new publishing strategies for university presses including more paperbacks, more textbooks, and a bigger focus on disciplines and subjects that sell: strategies that were seen as being inevitable if they wanted to survive.

4.3 The Neoliberal University and the Marketisation of Academia

The serials and subsequent monograph crisis continued to be a topic of hot debate from the 1990s onwards, particularly where it concerned the function and future of the university press and its relationship to the university, something which would have direct consequences for the further development of monograph publishing. As Lindsay Waters has argued with respect to the continued commercialisation of university presses: 'Academic books are not a sustainable or profitable business. The idea then that university presses should turn into profit centers and strengthen the university's budget is ludicrous' (2004: 5). Waters emphasises the role played by the market in this development. He makes clear that there is a direct connection between the university's marketisation and the crisis in publishing. Where the universities were increasingly focused on growth in productivity—i.e. more publications—this meant, in Waters words, 'the draining of all publications of any significance other than as a number'. As with journal articles this meant books increasingly turned into 'objects to quantify' (Waters 2004: 6). Here there are larger problems that need to be addressed, connected to issues of accountability in university systems, the managerial/bureaucratic revolution, and forms of what Waters calls 'cognitive rationality'.[86] This turn towards an increasingly economic rationality in both academia and publishing took place after WWII. As Waters puts it: 'the university was made over on the model of the American corporation' (2004: 11). Readings argues that the natural cultural mission that determined the university logic in the past has been declining and has been replaced by the idea of the 'University of Excellence' (1996: 3). From a connection to the nation state, producing and sustaining an idea of national culture, it has become a transnational bureaucratic company following the logic of the discourse of excellence and accountability: a 'relatively autonomous consumer-oriented corporation' (Readings 1996: 11). Consumerism replaces nationalism here, where 'culture no longer matters as an *idea* for the institution' (Readings 1996: 91). The emerging issue of the demand for publications was one of the factors, in addition to a more widespread social shift generated by neoliberalism's reliance on managerial and consultancy techniques, which has led to the

---

[86] For a summary of what this 'neoliberal turn' in HE consists of, see Hall (2008: 1–2).

emergence of an audit culture within universities. Here quality is no longer assessed but credentialing happens by counting up publications (what Waters refers to as 'Fordist production'), with the effect that decisions about tenure have been increasingly outsourced to the presses (Waters 2004: 24). The corporatisation of the university, as well as the administrative revolution and the search for excellence, thus all play an important role in the commercialisation of publishing as well as in the development of the serials and the monograph crisis (Hall 2008: 11–12, 42).

It is important to emphasise the role the corporatisation of the university played in this development, as this lays some of the responsibility for these developments on a shift in academia as a whole towards marketisation, as well as on our own institutions embracing this market logic, and ultimately on ourselves as scholars within these institutions. What is our role as scholars in this development? How can we create an alternative to the University of Excellence? Although market forces are in some sense abstract, is there a way for us to start changing our practices in order to battle these abstract movements? I will come back to say more about this in the next chapter. Here, however, I want to argue that, as I already made clear in my introduction to this chapter, it can be highly problematic to perceive academia and publishing as different fields, the one operating via a cultural logic and the other via an economic logic. In a way this points the finger of blame towards publishers or even towards the publishing function, seeing it as a separate entity, something outside the university that is outsourced and othered, instead of envisioning it as a function that could, and should (and has!) been an integral part of the development of the university. The commercialisation of scholarly publishing is deeply entangled with the waning of the humanities and the increasing lack of subsidies for these fields hitting hard on the HSS and on not-for-profit book-focused university presses. The developments in scholarly publishing are directly connected to both the commercialisation and globalisation of the book publishing business, but more importantly, they are integrally related to the neoliberal marketisation and managerialisation of the university (Hall 2008, Readings 1996, Waters 2004).

Nonetheless, there are others, such as sociologist and book scholar John Thompson, for instance, who, based on his specific reading of Bourdieu's field theory, make a clear distinction between different 'publishing fields' and the so-called 'social fields' to which they are related, such as that of higher education (which in Thompson's vision includes the world of university libraries). Although he emphasises that these fields are connected, in his application of Bourdieu's field theory Thompson has a tendency to cleave

the publishing function from the social field of the university, where, according to him, they are shaped by different interests and logics: 'These fields are not the same, they have different social and institutional characteristics, but they are locked together through multiple forms of interdependency' (Thompson 2005: 7). For Thompson, then, there is a distinction between culture (the university) and commerce (the publishing field) which gives rise to tension, misunderstanding and conflict.[87] What he tends to undervalue is the fact that this tension is already part of the university system and has been from its inception. Likewise, this tension has been part of a publishing system in which cultural values and struggles have always played an important role.[88] Thompson also underestimates that the logic of commerce within scholarly publishing is closely related to the neoliberal logic of our current university system, which is getting an increasingly tight grip on academia. Here I would like to argue that the 'publishing field' and the 'social field' of the university—as Thompson distinguishes them—are not so much governed by separate (cultural and commercial) logics. Indeed, it is the logic of commerce, or the growing monopoly that economic values have in our neoliberal institutions that is turning both the university and the university press more and more into commercial businesses. Academia as a whole, in which I include the publishing function, is structured by internal, entangled and clashing economic, cultural, technological and political logics, not by logics subdivided into publishing and social fields that are then seen as conflicting with each other. Publishing, or the publishing function, is not to be blamed in this respect for the increasing commercialisation. The root cause of this problem should be located in the larger struggle for the future of the university, where at the moment it seems commercial interests are winning.

In what ways are these functions then entangled? How do developments in (book) publishing relate to developments within universities? In addition to the examples already mentioned above, another connection can be found in the hyper-specialisation in scholarship—increasingly countered now by the need for inter- and trans-disciplinary studies. This urge to specialise within academia is connected to the demand to produce ever more research to increase one's 'research impact' (which as Collini has shown, chiefly refers to economic, medical and policy impact (2012: 171)), based on research that at the same time needs to be original and new. This kind of highly specialised scholarship is,

---

[87] In Thompson's vision, academic publishing, i.e. university press publishing, finds itself somewhere in between these two competing logics of the university and commercial scholarly publishing (2005: 175).
[88] Whereas according to Thompson the market logic structuring the publishing field 'would tend to override any obligation they might feel to the scholarly community' (2005: 97).

however, increasingly hard to market by university presses who are supposed to break-even or make a profit on their endeavours (Thompson 2005: 177, Hall 2008: 43). Another related problem is the creation of ever more PhD students, as well as academics on zero-hours and temporary contracts, who are to a growing degree working as cheap labour and replacing contracted full-time staff.[89] PhD students are also, following the accountability logic of the university, expected to publish their dissertations, which are again supposed to contain highly original and new research, in order to apply for increasingly fewer full-time positions. All this while 'at the same time (…) the market for the scholarly book has collapsed' (Thompson 2005: 175), making it harder for these early career researchers to attain tenure positions in their fields (Darnton 1999).

Thompson argues that it has been the clash between different logics that has created a situation in which the 'field of academic publishing and the field of the academy are being propelled in opposite directions' (2005: 177). Instead, I want to emphasise that this is a result of the internal contradictions structuring neoliberal marketisation, where both the publishers' need to be more selective when deciding what to publish according to market needs, and the demand on scholars to publish more for research impact, are based on principles of market competition. Credential inflation means that there are increasingly fewer positions available for scholars, which leads to a stronger selection based on more and better publications, just as more publications and less market demand means more selection and increased competition for publishers.

In the next chapter more attention will be given to alternatives to the present publishing system, focussing on those that take into account a variety of entangled factors that intend to change the way we publish, but that also have the potential to change the university and academia as a whole, taking into consideration material, technological, politico-economical, cultural and institutional structures. These initiatives intend not only to increase access to books in order to battle the object formation and increasing commodification of the book, but also to ask important questions on the material nature of books, authorship, copyright, originality, responsibility and fixity—issues that lie at the basis of our modern system of scholarly communication.

---

[89] See among others Anon. (2010), Couvée (2012) and Swain (2013).

Chapter 5. New Models of Knowledge Production. Open Access Publishing and Experimental Research Practices

5.1 Introduction

In the struggle for the future of the book and the university, access to scholarship has become an increasingly important issue, one that is standing at the basis of new knowledge practices. Many scholars however feel that access to specialised research, especially in the humanities, has diminished due to shrinking library budgets on the one hand and more trade focused scholarly presses and publishers on the other. As the previous chapter showed, due to the rise of economic ideologies and market forces in both academia and scholarly book publishing over the last few decades, the monograph as a specific publishing and communication format has increasingly developed according to market demands. In this chapter I want to explore two related efforts that might potentially offer an opportunity to intervene in the current cultures of knowledge production in academia and publishing. To do so, and as I proposed in my introduction to this section, I want to focus on the two remaining aspects of the strategy I am laying out towards re-cutting the object-formation of the book. In chapter 4 I explored the first step of this strategy, offering a potential way to reframe the discourse surrounding the past and future of the book; here I will examine the two further steps, namely rethinking and re-performing the institutions surrounding the material production of the book, as well as our own entangled scholarly communication and publishing practices.

As part of my effort to investigate potential alternatives, I will begin this chapter with a focus on some of the people and projects that are exploring (radical forms of) *open scholarship* and *open access*. Then, in the next part of this chapter, I will concentrate on research and publishing efforts that are investigating *experimentation* as a specific discourse and practice of critique, specifically with respect to the current system of scholarly object-formation (and opposed to narratives of innovation). Finally, I will conclude by arguing that, in order to sustain these affirmative critiques of the object-formation of the scholarly

monograph and scholarly research more in general, we need forms of radical open access that include experimentation.

5.2 Openness and Open Access Publishing

Open access publishing can be seen as one of the most important recent developments in digital scholarly publishing. David Prosser, the director of Research Libraries UK (RLUK) even goes so far as to call it 'the next information revolution' (2003), and both the UK and the EU have made headway with mandating open access for publicly funded research. Open access has also been important for book publishing, and, more specifically, for the struggle over the future of the book. I will therefore begin with an analysis of the relationship between open access and scholarly book publishing, and the motives behind the latter's interest in and uptake of open access. As part of that I will examine some of the forms a politics of the book based on openness might take, where a politics of the book is concerned with exploring how we can criticise and potentially start to change the cultures of material and technological production that surround scholarly communication in such a way as to allow for alternative, more ethical, critical and responsible forms of research. We can do this, I argue, by rethinking and deconstructing the object-formation of scholarship, both as part of academia's impact and audit culture, and as part of the publishing market's focus on commercially profitable book-commodities. This can be achieved, not by ignoring the fact that the book is and needs to be cut at some point in time (and thus cannot only be a processual and never-ending project), but by focusing on what other boundaries we might emphasise and take responsibility for. How might these aid us in critiquing the ongoing capitalisation of research—which comes to the fore in the increasing need for measurement, innovation and transparency, for instance?

To examine such a politics of the book based on openness, I will begin by looking at some of the critiques that have been put forward with respect to the concept of openness, and open politics more specifically. Where initially the open access and open source movements where heralded by progressive thinkers as part of a critique of the commodification of knowledge (Berry 2008: 39), openness is seen increasingly as a concept and practice that connects well with neoliberal needs and rhetoric, and that can be related

to ideas of transparency and efficiency promoted by business and government.[90] From an initially subversive idea,[91] one can argue that open access, partly related to its growing accessibility and wider general uptake, is increasingly co-opted by capitalist ideology (of which the *Finch Report*, which we will be discussing later, is ample evidence) and as a result is turning in some respects at least into yet another business model for commercial publishers to reap a profit from.

To present another context to this debate and to open up and struggle for an alternative future for the already diverse and contingent idea of openness, I will be critically engaging with the work of media scholar Nathaniel Tkacz. Tkacz has written an important article on openness in which he pinpoints what he considers to be some of the inconsistencies in the concept of openness and open politics, and how from its very inception it can be connected to neoliberal thought. He achieves this, both by going back to the 'father of open thought', Karl Popper, and by analysing the influence of open software cultures on current open movements. Tkacz's article can be seen as an illustrative example of the kind of thinking that criticises the liberatory tendencies and idealism present in many openness advocacies, and that sees openness as related to neoliberalism— a way of thinking that is no less fuelled by the recent uptake of open access by government and commercial publishing.

However, as part of my exploration of an open politics of the book, I want to offer an alternative genealogy of openness: one that is closely connected to the history of the book and of scholarly knowledge production, as discussed in the previous chapter; but also one that supplements Tkacz's analysis, which focuses mostly on openness's genealogy in the thought of Popper and the open source movement, and on the prevalence of an open-closed dichotomy. My alternative genealogy forges a stronger connection between the ideal of openness and the development of scholarly communication and open access publishing, while simultaneously seeing openness as intrinsically implicated in practices of secrecy and closure. This will then serve as impetus to explore in further detail the diversity of current engagements with openness and open access (beyond a focus on its neoliberal usurpation) by analysing some of the different value systems, motivations and politics underlying its uptake. The emphasis I am placing here on the sheer variety that makes up the 'schools of thought' on openness and open access, also serves to counter the vision that open access is intrinsically connected to neoliberalist discourses and practices, and enables me to argue

---

[90] refers in this respect to 'policy-driven' open access, related to an economic agenda that is focused on research as innovation (2014b).

[91] Also see Stevan Harnad's 'Subversive Proposal': https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subversive_Proposal

instead that it can, at least potentially, be used as a powerful critique of these systems. To illustrate this diversity of uptake I will contrast the neoliberal vision of open access publishing as envisioned in the Finch Report[92] with what could be called radical open access publishing, drawing on some recent experiments that try to challenge and rethink the book as a commercial object, as well as the political economy surrounding it, by cutting the book *together and apart* differently.[93] I will conclude my discussion of open access with an exploration of what an open politics of the book could then potentially be, the latter being a politics that has its base in forms of open-ended experimentation, but which at the same time remains aware of, and takes responsibility for, the boundaries that still need to be enacted.

5.2.1 Reasons and Motivations Behind Open Access

What, then, were the main reasons behind the uptake of open access, especially in scholarly book publishing? How was it envisioned as a potential strategy against excessive forms of commercial publishing and academic capitalism? The open access movement[94] can be seen as a direct reaction against the ongoing commercialisation of research and of the publishing industry, coupled to a felt need to make research more widely accessible in a faster and

---

[92] *The Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings*, an independent group chaired by professor Dame Janet Finch, was set up in October 2011 to examine how UK-funded research can be made more accessible. It released the report, *"Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: How to expand access to research publications"*, also known as the "Finch Report" in June 2012. On 16 July 2012, the UK government announced that it has accepted the report's recommendations. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-open-up-publicly-funded-research and http://www.researchinfonet.org/publish/finch/

[93] These experiments focus on both access *and* re-use, on a critique of the overly commercial political-economy surrounding publishing, and on establishing both a practical and experimental method. Radical open access can thus be seen as theories or practices of open access that are focused on openness as a means to: critique established systems; rethink the book and the humanist understandings that accompany it; change scholarly practices by focusing on 'doing' scholarship differently; explore experimentation, and finally—and perhaps most importantly in this context—to critique the concept and practices of openness, as well as the dichotomies between closed and open, and between the book and the net that keep one being (re-)introduced. The term radical open access was first introduced by Gary Hall at a talk at Columbia University, entitled 'Radical Open Access in the Humanities' (2010).

[94] Although divided in its views on what openness is and should be, and how we should go about *achieving* open access, one can argue that there is such a thing as an open access movement. As Guédon has put it: 'Open access became a movement after a meeting was convened in Budapest in December 2001 by the Information Program of the Open Society Institute. That meeting witnessed a vigorous debate about definitions, tactics, and strategies, and out of this discussion emerged two approaches which have become familiar to all observers, friends, or foes' (2004: 315). In order to further the promotion of open access and achieve higher rates of adoption and compliance among the academic community, a number of strategic alliances have been forged between the various proponents of open access. It can be claimed that these alliances (those associated with green open access, for instance) have focused mostly on making the *majority* if not indeed *all* of the research *accessible* online without a paywall (*Gratis open access*) as their priority. Although they cannot be simply contrasted and opposed to the former (often featuring many of the same participants), other strategic alliances have focused more on gaining the trust of the academic community, trying to take away some of the fears and misunderstandings that exist concerning open, online publishing.

more efficient way. Open access literature has been defined as 'digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions'.[95] The movement grew out of an initiative established by academic researchers, librarians, managers and administrators, who argued that the current publishing system was no longer able or willing to fulfil their communication needs, even though opportunities were now increasingly offered by new digital distribution formats and mechanisms to make research more widely accessible. From the early 1990s onwards, open access was initiated and developed within the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, where it focused mainly on the author self-archiving research works in central, subject or institutionally-based repositories (Green OA). These can be works that have been submitted for peer review (preprints), or that are final peer-reviewed versions (postprints). The other main and complementary route to open access focused on the publishing of research works in open access journals, books or other types of literature (Gold OA) (Harnad et al. 2004: 310–314, Guédon 2004). In the humanities and social sciences (HSS), the fields where books have tended to be the preferred communication medium, open access caught on later than in the STEM fields. This was due, among other reasons, to: the slow rise of book digitisation and of ebook uptake by scholars; the focus on green open access within the STEM fields, targeting the high costs of subscriptions to journals in these fields, whereas journals in the HSS are generally cheaper; the specific difficulty with copyright and licensing agreements for books; and the expenses involved in publishing books in comparison with articles (i.e. they have different publishing and business models).[96]

Open access also filled another void in the HSS, where it was perceived as the answer to the monograph crisis. As described in chapter 4, scholarly monograph publishing is seen to be facing a crisis, where its already feeble sustainability is being endangered by continually declining book sales.[97] Library spending on ebooks has gone down, due to acquisition budgets cuts and decisions to buy journals in STEM instead, which have seen rising subscription costs (Thompson 2005). This drop in library demand for HSS

---

[95] See Peter Suber's *Open Access overview*: http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm

[96] For a more detailed description of the reasons why books and book publishing were slow to adopt to open access and open access publishing, see Adema and Hall (2013).

[97] As already discussed in the introduction, this narrative of crisis can be misleading, presupposing an idealised past and the possibility of a teleological move beyond or out of this 'crisis'. In saying this, I do not intend to dismiss the dire situation in which book publishing finds itself, but I want to emphasise that the scholarly book has never been sustainable and in this sense would be in a 'perpetual crisis' (Adema 2010, Copper and Marx, 2014). In this respect Kember's insights are valuable, where she prefers instead to 'recognise the genealogy of crisis that is, in effect, no crisis at all, but rather an ongoing, dynamic and antagonistic encounter with all that is considered to be external to the humanities - digitisation and marketisation included' (Kember, 2014b: 107)

monographs has led university presses to produce smaller print runs and focus on marketable titles. This has been threatening the availability of specialised humanities research and has led to related problems for—mostly early-career—scholars, where career development within the humanities is directly coupled to the publishing of a monograph by a reputable press (Darnton 1999). Partly in response to this perceived monograph crisis, these developments have seen the rise of a number of scholarly-, library- and/or university-press initiatives that are experimenting more directly with making monographs available on an open access basis. These initiatives include scholar-led presses such as *Open Humanities Press*, *re.press*, and *Open Book Publishers*; cooperatives of university presses such as *OAPEN* and *Open Edition*; commercial presses such as *Bloomsbury Academic*; university presses, including *ANU E Press* and *Firenze University Press*; and presses established by or working with libraries, such as Athabasca University's *AU Press* and *Göttingen University Press*. As Sigi Jöttkandt and Gary Hall argue with respect to the decision to set up Open Humanities Press in relation to the monograph crisis:

> Such a situation not only affects the careers and, potentially, the choice of research areas of individuals. It also impacts the humanities itself – both because a lot of excellent work is unable to find appropriate publication outlets and also because decisions concerning the production, publication, dissemination and promotion of humanities research are being made less and less by universities and academics on intellectual grounds, and more and more by scholarly and commercial presses on economic grounds. When ground-breaking research that develops new insights is rejected in favour of more marketable introductions and readers, it is clear that academia as a whole becomes 'intellectually impoverished'. (2007)

However, as is already indicated by the variety of initiatives and the diversity of their backgrounds, the motivations behind the development of open access archiving and publishing are extremely diverse. They include the desire to: increase accessibility to specialised humanities research by making it online and openly available (to enable increased readership and to promote the impact of scholarly research, next to enabling heightened accessibility to research to those in developing countries, for instance);[98] to publish or disseminate research in an open way in order to take social responsibility and to enhance a democratic public sphere as a means of stimulating a liberal democracy that thrives on an informed public; to argue for the importance of sharing research results in a more immediate and direct way; and to offer an alternative to, and to stand up against, the large, established, profit-led, commercial publishing houses that have come to dominate the

field in order to liberate ideas and thinkers from market constraints and to be able to publish specialist scholarship that lacks a clear commercial market.

However, these liberal-democratic motives for open access exist side-by side, not just with more radical and critical motives, but also with the neoliberal rhetoric of the knowledge-economy. In the latter, open access is seen as supporting a competitive economy by making the flow of information more flexible, efficient, transparent and cost-effective, and by making research more accessible to more people. This makes it easy for knowledge, as a form of capital, to be taken up by businesses for commercial re-use, stimulating economic competition and innovation. In this way the research process, its results and their dissemination, can be efficiently monitored and measured and can be better made accountable as measurable outputs (Hall 2008a, Houghton et al. 2009, Adema 2010). This will make it easier for business and industry to capitalise on academic knowledge and it will stimulate global competition.

5.2.2 The Potentials and Pitfalls of Open's 'Openness'

As Hall has argued in *Digitize this book!*, where he gives a very detailed and comprehensive overview of the differing but often also overlapping motivations that exist concerning open access and openness, there is nothing intrinsically political or democratic about open access. Motives that focus on democratic principles often go hand in hand with neoliberal arguments concerning the benefits of open access for the knowledge economy. The politics of the book in relationship to open access publishing is thus not predefined, nor is it my intention to argue that it should be.[99] Openness in many ways can be seen as what Laclau calls a floating signifier (2005: 129–155), a concept without a fixed meaning and one that is easily adopted by different political ideologies. As I will point out, it is this very *openness* and lack of fixity of the concept that gives it its power, but also brings with it a risk of uncertainty towards its (future) adoption. However, for some scholars it is exactly this 'openness' of open access or of the concept of openness that is problematic. Before we can explore in more depth what openness or an open politics could potentially enable in the form of experimental and critical scholarly practices, we therefore need to focus on some of the criticisms that have been made of this controversial and unsettled idea of openness. Recently, a lot of this critique has focused on the ease with which open access, as a concept and practice, can be applied in a variety of political contexts—most noticeably as part of a

---

[99] Hall makes a subdivision in discourses concerning open access publishing motives. He distinguishes the liberal, democratising approach; the renewed public sphere approach; and the gift economy approach (Hall 2008a: 197).

neoliberal rhetoric and profitable commercial business models (Tkacz 2012, Eve, M. 2013, Holmwood 2013a). As I mentioned previously, media scholar Nate Tkacz is one of the thinkers who has critiqued the concept of openness extensively from this angle, and it will thus be useful to explore his analysis here more in detail.

Tkacz's assessment of openness in his article 'From Open Source to Open Government: a Critique of Open Politics', is based on what he sees as 'a critical flaw in how openness functions in relation to politics' (2012: 386). Tkacz explores 'the recent proliferation of openness as a political concept'—where it has become, as he states, 'a master category of contemporary political thought' (2012: 386–387)—through a detailed reading of the work of Karl Popper on openness and the open society, while further tracing its recent genealogy through software and network cultures. His critique focuses mainly on how openness and open politics, both in Popper and in contemporary incarnations of open politics, serves as an inscrutable political ideal, merely opposed to its empty binary, the closed society, or closed politics, which is a politics based on centralised governance (critiqued by neoliberalists such as Friedrich Hayek) and/or unchallengeable truths (such as Popper argues one can find in the politics of fascism and communism).

Tkacz is interested in how this concept and 'empty ideal' of openness has recently re-emerged in politics, and how it has been re-politicised, based on its connections with software cultures. He explores how openness has been translated into new domains, such as open access, in entities such as Wikipedia and Google, and in a variety of government initiatives, as a practical application of open-source politics. His examination leads Tkacz to conclude that 'the same rhetoric [of openness] is deployed by what are otherwise very different groups or organisations' (2012: 393). Openness shows certain consistencies throughout these cultures, Tkacz argues, such as in 'its couplings with transparency, collaboration, competition and participation, and its close ties with various enactments of liberalism' (2012: 399). These can also be seen to underpin our current neoliberal governmentality.[100] The mobilisation of openness in the politics of 'activist and marginal network cultures' (2012: 395), as well as in more mainstream organisations, urges Tkacz to coin a critique of the open, arguing that there are some crucial problems with the concept and that it has a poverty that 'makes it unsuitable for political description' (2012: 399).

---

[100]An argument can be made here, based on the work of Wendy Brown, that it is not so much an 'open' politics, as it is the logic of the free or open economy that underlies this governmentality. For one could assert that it is not an *open* politics which stimulates a neoliberal rhetoric, but the fact that there is *a lack of* politics altogether within neoliberalist forms of governmentality—following Brown's analysis of the waning of homo politicus and the rise of homo economicus in neoliberal systems. In this sense the destruction of the democratic imaginary is again not based on an open politics, but on a lack of politics, on the demise of the idea of the demos (Brown et al. 2012).

As noted above, Tkacz relates these problems to a genealogy of openness connected to the thought of Popper and the politics and political economy of software and network cultures. For Tkacz, Popper is the father of open thought, who sketches an overall theory of the open versus closed society. Tkacz sees the thought of both Popper and Hayek (one of the fathers of neoliberal thought) as highly influential with respect to the current politics of openness. He analyses the recent proliferation of openness in open movements 'largely as a reaction to a set of undesirable developments, beginning with the realm of closed systems and intellectual property and its "closed source"' (Tkacz 2012: 403). Here he sketches a conceptualisation of openness that is similar to the binary already proposed by Popper.

In his critique of openness, Tkacz thus focuses mainly on Popper and on how the binary open-closed cannot be upheld, since closure is inherent in Popper's notion of openness. Tkacz states that, based on the philosophy of Popper, the open as a concept is reactionary (where it merely states what it is *not*, i.e. *not closed*), it has no (true, positive) meaning—which would close it off—and cannot 'build a lasting affirmative dimension' (2012: 400). He further argues that if there are positive qualities to openness, they exist at the level of reality (of real practices) and are therefore subject to continual transformation, which Tkacz sees as paradoxical: how can something that is already open, then become more open, when this means that it thus must have not been open before? For Tkacz, then, clearly 'Openness (…) implies antagonism, or what the language of openness would describe as closures' (2012: 403). He argues, however, that these closures get obscured in current incarnations of open politics. The way the open is used in a forward looking and almost prophetic way in many open movements (towards 'more openness') has made these simultaneous closures invisible, which mainly has to do with the lack of critique of the open in these movements. For Tkacz's argues that there has been little reflection on the concept of openness, especially with respect to 'how seemingly radically different groups can all claim it as their own.' From this Tkacz concludes that 'openness, it seems, is beyond disagreement and beyond scrutiny', and elsewhere, 'whose meaning is so overwhelmingly positive it seems impossible to question, let alone critique' (2012: 386, 399).

In response to Tkacz's analysis that openness is 'beyond disagreement' and 'impossible to question', I would like to argue that an extensive critique of openness does exist (including his own work on the topic), and has been formulated, also from within

open movements.[101] Furthermore, I would also like to offer an alternative to Tkacz's genealogy of openness—and with that to open access and open politics. I want to do so to offer a supplement to his genealogy based on the thought of Popper and the politics of software and network cultures, but also in an attempt to offer a genealogy that does not rely so strongly on the open-closed binary. For the genealogy of openness that Tkacz traces is a very specific one; one that relates to what Hall has called 'the liberal, democratising approach' to openness (2008a: 197). An alternative genealogy that tries to re-asses the binary open-closed and that can be traced back to the early developments of scholarly publishing, influencing current incarnations of open access, might therefore be beneficial here. It might be so, not only with regard to rethinking some of the problems Tkacz describes relating to the concept of openness, but also to casting a more favourable, affirmative light on the potential of openness and of forms of what can be called radical open access.

Tkacz's problem with the concept of openness, in my opinion, relates mostly to the concept of openness as developed and used by Popper (notwithstanding the influence this has had on the political reincarnation of openness). It isn't the concept itself, in all its uses—as Tkacz describes it (2012: 399)—that has crucial problems, but the specific concept of openness developed and used by Popper. It is this concept that is based on a binary between open and closed; and that has been further developed through the thought of Hayek and network and software cultures, following a forward-looking (neo)liberal/democratic approach to openness. In this respect, Tkacz has traced the genealogy of a specific approach to openness, one that makes it easy to connect openness to neoliberalism and capitalist democracies, as well as to a teleological conception of openness as a form of looking forward, focused on being more open (in the sense of being less closed).

However, I would like to draw attention to other forms and cultures of openness that do not connect so strictly to this binary, but rather envision openness and closure as enmeshed, similarly to the argument Tkacz makes when he states that openness inevitably includes closures. Tkacz regards these closures in openness as something inherent in openness, but then following the binary conception of openness in the thought of Popper, decides to see this as problematic and paradoxical for the concept of openness, instead of

---

[101] The list of people critiquing or being critical of 'openness' is actually quite extensive, especially if we expand it to works that focus on discourses related to cognitive capitalism and knowledge work. A critical exploration of openness can be found in the following works, among others: Hall (2008a), Broekman et al. (2009), Krikorian and Kapczynski (2010), Luke and Hunsinger (2009) and Morozov (2013).

developing this further and envisioning this as a potential core strength of ideas of the open and open politics. As he states: 'closure remains an inherent part of the open; it is what openness must continually respond to and work against – a continual threat amongst the ranks' (Tkacz 2012: 403). However, building further on what Tkacz states about openness implying antagonisms, I would argue that these antagonisms, these closures, are exactly what we need (and have always had) *as part of* an open politics, and what give it its strength.

I would thus like to propose a genealogy of openness in which openness is integrally connected to and entangled with a different 'antagonist', namely, secrecy. Interestingly, in this genealogy, openness as a concept is directly related to the historical development of systems and discourses of knowledge production and communication. Scholarly research on openness in scientific communication can be seen to be far more ambivalent and contextual in its coverage of the concept of openness than Popper is, for instance (Long 2001, David 2008, Vermeir and Margócsy 2012, Vermeir 2012). By offering both a contrasting and a supplementary genealogy of openness, I would like to shed a more positive light on the potential of openness, both as a concept and as a practice and politics, to critique the ongoing marketisation of knowledge.

Extending from that, and in response to Tkacz's prompt to explore open projects more closely,[102] I would like to take a more contextualised look at some specific open access projects at the end of this section. There I will argue that if we analyse specific instances of how openness is practised and theorised, we will see that open access is not one thing, that its meaning is highly disputed, that it is (or can be) implemented in different ways and that this leads to different and often contrasting politics. For neither the same rhetoric nor the same underlying motivations for openness are shared by the different groups of people involved in open access practices, where these groups theorise openness in (often highly) different ways, and according to different underlying value systems.[103] This includes practices and theories of radical open access that are critical of openness in its neoliberal/democratic guises, but still try to engage with the open in an affirmative way too. The latter are projects that don't necessarily adhere to a teleological vision of openness (towards the goal of more openness, whatever that would be), but argue instead that

---

[102] As Tkacz states: 'Rather than using the open to look forward, there is a need to look more closely at the specific projects that operate under its name—at their details, emergent relations, consistencies, modes of organising and stabilising, points of difference, and forms of exclusion and inclusion' (2012: 404). For example, Tkacz has been doing this extensively for Wikipedia; see Tkacz and Lovink (2011).

[103] Similarly, diverse 'schools of thought' exist in relation to the concept and practice of 'open science', as Fecher and Friesike have argued on the basis of an extensive literary analysis (2013).

openness is not about being *more open*, for instance, but is rather about *being open* to change and experimentation—depending on the contingent circumstances, the political and ethical decisions and cuts that need to be made and so on—in a process of continual critique, without necessarily being forward looking in a teleological sense. In our ongoing affirmative politics and practices of the open we make cuts and close down the open; however, as I will argue, we can start to think more responsibly and ethically about the closures we enact and enable in our communication practices: for instance, by focussing on creating difference as part of the incisions (closures) we make, and by promoting otherness, variety and processual becoming. Instead of shying away from these closures, these boundaries that are already implied in openness, might a more interesting approach not be to explore how these decisions are made, by whom, and how we can re-cut them in different ways? And might it not be more interesting to do so especially with respect to how we currently publish our scholarly books?

I will thus explore an alternative and complimentary genealogy of openness to that offered by Tkacz next—one that fits better, I will argue, with the specific, contextual politics of open access and radical open access publishing, and that does indeed see openness and secrecy/closure not as binaries but as integrally enmeshed. After the examination of that alternative genealogy, I will provide an account of some of the different ways in which openness and open access have been and are being theorised and practised, by comparing the neoliberal analysis of open access the Finch report offers, with the practices and critique of radical open access publishing. I will do so to emphasise the contingency and contextuality of openness, but also to bring attention to more radical and critical incarnations of open access and openness, which focus on a critique of the business ethics underlying neoliberal politics, among other things.

5.2.2.1 A Genealogy of Openness and Secrecy

In her book *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship* (2001), the historian Pamela Long provides a genealogy of openness that is closely connected to the development of specific cultures of knowledge, and the way these have categorised and conceptualised knowledge. She shows how openness advanced in connection to ideas and practices of secrecy, authorship, and property rights, and alongside the establishment of print and the printed scholarly book in the West (although her exploration of openness, secrecy, authorship and the technical arts stretches back to developments in antiquity). Long looks at the influence and development of craft and practice-based or mechanical knowledge, alongside traditions of theoretical knowledge, and their mutual influence and interaction with respect to the construction of

the discourse surrounding knowledge over the centuries, including its relationship to openness and secrecy. Where initially in antiquity Aristotelian science made strict divisions between têchne (material and technical production), praxis (action) and episteme (theoretical knowledge), Long argues that it was the direct links and closer interaction between the mechanical arts (craft knowledge), political power, and theoretical knowledge (or learned traditions), which led to the development of empirical and experimental scientific methodologies in the 17th century, including an expansion of scientific authorship into practices of 'openly purveyed treatises' (2001: 102).

As Long points out, it was the new alliance between power (praxis) and the technical arts (têchne) that initially enabled authorship in these fields to expand in an effort to legitimate and promote those in political power. New city-based rulers wanted to emphasise their legitimacy, and did so through, among other things, grand urban redesigns and other construction projects. Books on the mechanical arts thus became a worthy subject from the 15th and 16th century onwards, where many of these volumes emerged from a patronage system, produced to enhance the status of the patron. However, they also served to enhance the status of mechanical and craft knowledge, for one important aspect of openness, as Long states, was the accurate or proper crediting of authorship, which in the mechanical arts led to validation of practice in an environment where priority and novelty became of growing value (2001: 180). As Long makes clear, 'open display of technological practices and of practitioners-authors developed in tandem with the growing value of novelty and priority,' where as she puts it 'open authorship often could be used to establish priority' (2001: 209). These practices led to 'the development of an arena of discursive practice in which the productive value of certain technical arts (inherent in their ability to produce fabricated and constructed objects) was augmented by their status as knowledge-based disciplines' (Long 2001: 243). It was this improved cultural status for the mechanical fields as well as for new forms of open authorship that significantly influenced the culture of knowledge. Long claims that it was these forms of open authorship that developed in the technical and mechanical arts that were highly influential when it came to 'seventeenth-century struggles to validate new experimental methodologies', including open authorship, in the scientific fields (2001: 250).

However, and this is where Long's argument becomes important in this context, she also argues that these new, open traditions of authorship developed *at the same time* that

neoplatonic secrecy and magic and esoteric knowledge saw a rise in popularity.[104] Part of the complexity of early modern science was exactly the co-existence of 'diverse values of transmission, including both openness and secrecy, as well as evolving attitudes of ownership and priority' (Long 2001: 250). Long clearly complicates the opposition between openness and secrecy here, as well as the identification of science with openness. As she states: 'until recently openness was taken to be characteristic of science, and there was very little reflection concerning whether scientific practices were actually open and, if they were, what that openness meant' (Long 2001: 4). We can locate this association of science with openness in scholars such as Robert Merton (1973) and Derek de Solla Price (1969), who argue that *science* is intrinsically open (to communicate findings the scientific norm of communism is seen as essential), where *technology* is regarded as intrinsically secret (to sell material trademarked objects). However, as Long argues, recent historical research into the development of early modern natural philosophy, shows a far more complex and contextual picture, where Vermeir and Margócsy write that 'the opposition between secretive technology and open science has been qualified, nuanced and contextualized' (2012). Openness is thus intricate and enmeshed with secrecy, and integrally connected to issues of priority and patronage, where it functions in a complicated network of alliances, mixed up with authorship in relationships of power and secrecy. This is something that is supported by Paul David, who argues that a functionalist search for the origin of open science can know a historicist bias, where we take our current conception of open science for granted. A more contextualised historical search for origins shows a very different and more messy picture, one caught up in systems of power and rival political patronage (David 2008: 14–16).

Long gives neither a positive nor a negative definition of openness, but connects it to secrecy directly when she states that 'openness refers to the relative degree of freedom given to the dissemination of information or knowledge and involves assumptions concerning the nature and extent of the audience' (2001: 5). Historian Koen Vermeir has similarly pointed out that 'openness and secrecy are often interlocked, impossible to take apart, and they might even reinforce each other. They should be understood as positive (instead of privative) categories that do not necessarily stand in opposition to each other' (2012: 165). Vermeir argues that we need to pay more attention to the specific genealogies and contexts in which the values as well as the practices of openness and secrecy have

---

[104] This coexistence and entanglement of open and secret knowledge right up until the 18th century has been corroborated by historian Paul David, among others (2008: 9).

operated. Normally they are seen as negations of each other, but Vermeir notes that it might be useful to see them as gradational categories that need to be judged according to their specific historicity where openness now means something different than it did in the 17th century, for instance. We might also consider positive notions of openness and secrecy (as in the positive notion of freedom), by looking at the intentionality behind openness: how or in what way is circulation/dissemination of scholarship positively promoted? Vermeir emphasises that something can be open but at the same time undiscoverable in a sea of information overload, which can make for new forms of secrecy.[105] Openness and secrecy also don't always exclude each other, Vermeir states—in the publication of a coded text, for example. Finally, whether we see something as open or secret also depends on the perceiver's viewpoint.

This short overview of an alternative genealogy of openness shows that, if we look at the history of our cultures of knowledge and scholarly authorship and at the development of our modern systems of scholarly communication and publishing (including its technological advances), we can see that openness as a concept has always been integrally entangled with notions of secrecy. At the same time it enables us to argue, following Vermeir and Long, that it is essential to take this genealogy into account if we want to study and understand the development of the open access movement—particularly as a specific incarnation of open politics. The particular context in which the open access movement arose, related to developments in (digital) technology, the existing cultures of knowledge and unfavourable economic and material conditions, requires us to acknowledge the influence this longstanding tradition of open scholarship has had on its values and underlying motivations. At the same time it is important to study this ideal of open science and the assumption that knowledge needs to be shared by efficient forms of dissemination and consumption, as part of a historical development where, in practice,

---

[105] The same argument can be made with respect to the current method of hierarchisation according to 'impact factors' as part of our modern journal system, where 'indexed', high impact journals are the journals that will be bought by libraries and others mostly fall by the wayside. As Guédon explains:

> No longer was it sufficient to be a good scientist in order to do research; one also had to be part of an institution that could afford to buy the record of the 'Great Conversation', i.e. to subscribe to the set of journals defined by SCI. And if one wanted to join the 'Great Conversation', simply publishing in a journal recognized as scientific was no longer enough; it had to be a journal included in the SCI set of journals. All the other journals simply disappeared from most radar screens, particular when they could not be ranked according to a new device based on citation counts: the impact factor (IF). (2014: 90–91)

openness and secrecy co-developed in changing conditions of power, patronage, and technological development.[106]

5.2.2.2 Openness Contested

Now that I have provided an alternative genealogy of openness—one more focused on the complex interaction between openness and secrecy/closure, and the intricate relationship between the concept and practice of openness and the development of our modern system of scholarly communication—I want to offer an account of the different ways in which openness and open access have recently been theorised and practiced. What I want to show here is that openness (which as I made clear above functions as a floating signifier), and especially open access, has indeed increasingly been taken up in neoliberal rhetoric and politics. However, contrary to Tkacz and those critics of open access that relate it or its roots to neoliberalism, or see its current uptake in the Finch report or profit-focused author-pays models as exemplary, I want to explore how the understanding of open access, openness and open science has been heavily contested and how separate discourses on the concept of openness have been developed within the scholarly communication realm (Hall 2008a, Adema and Hall 2013, Eve, M. P. 2013, Fecher and Friesike 2013, Holmwood 2013b). It is important to emphasise this because if the implementation of open access in the UK, for instance, proceeds along the lines of the Finch report (2012), then there is a risk that this version of open access will become the dominant or hegemonic narrative, subsuming the variety of discourses that currently exist on open access as well as its multifaceted history.

It is for this reason that I want to both reclaim and put forward another version of open access, one that targets business oriented approaches directly and instead positions open access as an ongoing critical project. Focused on experimentation and the exploration of new institutions and practices, this approach towards openness, examining new formats and stimulating sharing and re-use of content, can be seen as a radical alternative to, and critique of, the business ethics underlying innovations in the knowledge economy. It also offers a potential way to break-through the object-formation of the scholarly book—something that prevails in the neoliberal vision of open access (which sees the book as a product)—and the exploitation of scholarly communication as capital, as objects to sustain and innovate the knowledge economy.

---

[106] This entanglement of openness and secrecy continued throughout history and is visible, as Vermeir and Margócsy have argued, in the discrepancies between the Mertonian norms of communism and the security concerns of the McCarthy era, as well as in modern biotechnology, a scientific field communicating its findings amid a context of trade secrets and strict confidentiality (2012).

To do this I will compare the (mainly neoliberal) motives that the Finch report identifies as being fundamental to open access with the values underlying a series of experiments with radical open access publishing. I will begin by giving a short general overview of the influence of neoliberal rhetoric and ethics on higher education, and on experiments with digital academic and open access publishing more in general.

5.2.2.3 The Neoliberal Discourse on Open Access

The discourse of neoliberalism, which focuses on the reshaping of culture and society according to the demands and needs of the market, has infiltrated higher education on a number of different levels (Pekkola 2009). It has turned capitalism from a mode of production into a cultural logic where economic freedom is seen as the necessary precondition for political freedom. David Harvey, in his history of neoliberalism, describes it as 'a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade' (2007: 2). Wendy Brown conceptualises neoliberalism as a political rationality that extends market values and economic rationality beyond the economy into all dimensions of human life, including our institutions, where they become part of our social actions. Neoliberalism can thus be seen a form of governmentality which 'produces subjects, forms of citizenship and behaviour, and a new organization of the social' (Brown 2003). Within this mode of thinking, not only are universities forced to act more and more like profit-making enterprises instead of public institutions—in a process that also involves the ongoing privatisation of Higher Education in the UK—but the focus of the knowledge economy is also placed to an ever higher degree on the extensive standardisation and the economic exploitation of knowledge, as a form of capital produced within these universities (Hall 2008a). This leads to a situation where researchers within the knowledge economy are asked to produce research that feeds directly into and sustains the neoliberal economy (Olssen and Peters 2005).

Increasingly, open access publishing is featuring in neoliberal discourses in Higher Education and government as a system to promote innovation and transparency of research (fitting in well with the aforementioned audit culture). Open access supports the knowledge economy by making the flow of information more flexible, efficient and cost-effective, and by making research more accessible to more people. This makes it easy for knowledge, as a form of capital, to be taken up by businesses for commercial re-use, stimulating economic competition and innovation. Additionally, the research process, its

results and their dissemination, can be efficiently monitored and can be better made accountable as measurable outputs as part of an audit culture: think of experiments with bibliometrics and data mining, for instance, which can be used as tools to stimulate greater transparency of research. In conclusion, according to this neoliberal rhetoric, society, or better said, the individual taxpayer, gets improved value for money or return on investment with open access (Hall 2008a).

As I argued earlier, the *openness* of the discourse around open access has made it easy to incorporate in a neoliberal context. Martin Eve, although critical of an equation of open access with neoliberalism, argues that open access is easily connected to measures related to the REF, its impact agenda and call for transparency and the privatisation of knowledge (Eve, M. P. 2013). This connection can be used to explain to some extent the current resistance of certain scholars to open access, again related to its potential towards increasing transparency, and towards promoting an audit culture and state control.[107] Their opposition focuses on how, in the new system proposed by government (together with HEFCE and RCUK), universities, or more specifically, university management, will have more widespread control over their academics' ability to publish. These scholars argue that the specific implementation of the gold open access (as favoured in the report)—in which in order to publish in an open access journal a fee needs to be paid beforehand (e.g. by one's institution)—is an attack on academic freedoms, and will most likely be aligned with the REF's impact agenda (Sabaratnam and Kirby 2012). In this sense, while many academics are not against increasing access to scholarly publications, they are afraid that the policy recommendations of transparency and openness will be used as an instrumentalist justification for the imposition of a certain version of open access. It is one which has the potential to promote a further expansion of neoliberalism and which, as sociologist John Holmwood has argued, will function to 'open all activities to the market and reduce public accountability of its operation' (2013a).[108]

To explore this neoliberal rhetoric surrounding open access in more depth, let's now take a closer look at the *Report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings*—or the Finch report as it is commonly known after its chair, Dame Janet Finch. This is an independent study commissioned by the then UK government science

---

[107] For instance, the protest of diverse groups of humanities scholars in the UK, such as *The Council for the Defence of British Universities, The Royal Historical Society, The Political Studies Association,* and the editors of 21 history journals attached to *the Institute of Historical Research,* is directly connected to the implementation of open access in the UK, as set out in the Finch Report, among other places (Boffey 2013, Sabaratnam and Kirby 2012). Also see: http://www.history.ac.uk/news/2012-12-10/statement-position-relation-open-access

[108] For instance, Holmwood sees this as being imminent in the CC-BY license promoted by RCUK (and Finch), where for him an alternative would be a 'non-commercial share-alike' license (2013a).

minister David Willetts, released in June 2012, drawing on the advice and support of a group of representatives of the research, library and publishing communities. The report recommends the further implementation of author-side fees for the open access publishing of journals, where an article processing charge (APC) will be needed to cover the publishing costs. This fee, paid for by authors or in most cases by their institutions, will enable the article to be opened up to the wider public under a CC-BY license (as recommended by the Finch report). This is a strategy that can be seen as maintaining and favouring the system of communication (or ecology, as the Finch report calls it) as it is currently set up.[109] In this gold APC system, the publishers' profits will be sustained, where in green open access, depositing of articles in repositories will not require an APC. But as Philip Sykes, a librarian on the Finch panel, has said, 'It's not in the interests of UK scholarship to make recommendations which undermine the sustainability of the publishing industry' (Van Noorden 2012). This has provoked Stevan Harnad to conclude that 'The Finch Report is a successful case of lobbying by publishers to protect the interests of publishing at the expense of the interests of research and the public that funds research' (2012).

The report offers recommendations to ensure sustainable and efficient models for future scholarly communication defining, among other things, the criteria for success with regard to how to reach this goal. In the following quote related to APCs they accurately illustrate the neoliberal vision of promoting market mechanisms in Higher Education, and of universities acting as businesses: 'The measures we recommend will bring greater competition on price as well as the status of the journals in which researchers wish to publish. We therefore expect market competition to intensify, and that universities and funders should be able to use their power as purchasers to bear down on the costs to them both of APCs and of subscriptions' (Finch 2012: 11).

But this vision comes to the fore even more directly when we look at the motivations underlying the wider dissemination of research that the Finch report identifies and supports. According to the report, improving the flows of information and knowledge will promote:

- enhanced transparency, openness and accountability, and public engagement with research;

---

[109] It does not have to be this way. The OAPEN-NL project, for instance, was heavily involved in experimenting with an author-pays model for books. However, their attempts were accompanied by an extensive study on the costs of monographs, in order to make these prices more transparent and to distinguish costs from profits, to promote a fairer subsidy system (Ferwerda et al. 2013).

- closer linkages between research and innovation, with benefits for public policy and services, and for economic growth;
- improved efficiency in the research process itself, through increases in the amount of information that is readily accessible, reductions in the time spent in finding it, and greater use of the latest tools and services to organise, manipulate and analyse it;
- increased returns on the investments made in research, especially the investments from public funds (Finch 2012: 5)

In short, according to the vision of the Finch report, 'these are the motivations behind the growth of the world-wide open access movement': promoting greater transparency, accountability, innovation, economic growth, efficiency and return on investment (Finch 2012: 5). The report thus locates the values underlying open access for the most part in the effect it will have on the knowledge economy, and on how it will be a valuable return on investment.

5.2.2.4 Radical Open Access

Motivations for experimenting with alternative forms of open academic publishing are not only focused on serving the knowledge economy, however, as is implied above. Many open access advocates, for instance, see it as a movement and a practice that actually has the potential to critique and provide alternatives to the increasing marketisation of higher education and scholarly publishing. But as I will show, the schools of thought involved in open access publishing and research can be said to be more wide-reaching, more complex and enmeshed, even than that. It will therefore not be fruitful to create yet another dichotomy, distinguishing neoliberal motives for open access publishing from anti-neoliberal ones, as Holmwood implies, for instance (2013b).

What I want to explore at this point are examples of experiments with openness in digital publishing that offer affirmative, practical dimensions, through their uptake, critique and experimentations with openness; experiments that work with their own, alternative value systems that cannot easily be classified as the negative side of a dialectic. Instead, they can be seen to endorse another set of values, based on a different underlying system of ethics, distinct from the motivations for open access as defined by the Finch report. Mostly academic-led and centred, these consist of experiments with making research available on an open access basis, using new formats such as liquid monographs, wiki-publications and remixed books. Additionally, with the establishment of new, alternative institutions and practices, they try to challenge and reconceptualise scholarly communication, while simultaneously experimenting with and rethinking openness itself. This approach towards

openness, exploring new formats and stimulating sharing and re-use of content, can be seen as a potentially radical alternative to, and a critique of, the business ethics underlying innovations in the knowledge economy. At the same time it is an approach focused on creating strong alternatives that try to break down the commercial object-formation that has encompassed the scholarly book by envisioning open access as an ongoing critical project.

What I am calling, for shorthand, radical open access, is not one thing, however, nor is it an overarching project. It consists of various groups, peoples, institutions and projects, with their own affordances. Moreover, radical open access is also a contingent and contextual approach that cannot easily be pinned-down as, again, it is an ongoing critical project, one that endeavours to embrace its own inconsistencies, and struggles with its own conceptions of openness. Nonetheless, I want to try and point out some points of similarity that radical open access projects seem to share, not least as a way of contrasting them to the vision of open access put forward in the Finch report. I would like to mention three examples in particular of what can be seen as radical open access initiatives that have tried to experiment with progressive, counter-institutional alternatives, namely *Open Humanities Press*, Ted Striphas' *Differences & Repetitions* wiki and Kathleen Fitzpatrick's experiments with open peer review for her book *Planned Obsolescence.*

Open Humanities Press (OHP) is an international open access publishing collective in critical and cultural theory, founded in 2006 by 'Open Access journal editors, librarians and technologists', experimenting with open access journal and book publishing (Jöttkandt 2007: 4). OHP focuses on countering negative perceptions that still exist concerning open access and online publishing by creating a trustworthy, reliable, high-quality system for those scholars sceptical about online modes of distribution and dissemination. Battling these negative perceptions serves two goals, they argue: first, it makes experimentation with new business models possible and can therefore work to help solve the current publishing crisis in the humanities; secondly, it paves the way for further experiments in scholarly communication—with new forms of writing and publishing; with open content and open editing, for instance—something that stands at the basis of OHP's projects (Jöttkandt 2007: 3–4). The *Differences & Repetitions* wiki is a site for open source writing (along the lines of libre/read-write open access), set up by Ted Striphas, which contains fully editable projects or working papers. As a personal (though at the same time collaborative) archive of writings, Striphas explores what it means to publish scholarly findings in a different way, and to experiment with new, digital, collaborative writing practices that try to not give in to

the compulsion to repeat established practices. Kathleen Fitzpatrick co-established *MediaCommons*, a scholarly publishing community, to build networks and collaborations among media scholars. She used *MediaCommons Press*, a digital text platform and publishing experiment from *MediaCommons*, to openly review the manuscript of *Planned Obsolescence*. Adopting *CommentPress* software—a WordPress plugin that allows comments to be made next to specific paragraphs of text—the draft was made available online in 2009 to potential reviewers and commentators (alongside a traditional peer review process by NYU Press).

First of all, then, looking at these initiatives, it becomes clear that radical open access offers a practical, affirmative engagement with open access. However, next to establishing practical and experimental (and also scholar-led) alternatives to the present scholarly publishing system, these initiatives also serve to question the system of (commercial) academic publishing as it is currently set up—a system which, as I outlined in the previous chapter, functions increasingly according to market needs. In this respect these projects aim to critique the commodification and commercialisation of research in and through academic publishing. For example, Fitzpatrick argues for the importance of establishing open access presses to save certain forms of specialised research, such as the monograph, from obsolescence in the current 'fiscally impossible' system of scholarly publishing. This as part of an effort to rethink our publishing practices and to 'revitalize the academy' (Fitzpatrick 2011: 156). Gary Hall, co-founder of OHP, has similarly noted that the current profit-driven publishing system does not allow space for works that are specialised, advanced, difficult, or avant-garde, but favours instead more marketable products, making academia as a whole 'intellectually impoverished' (Jöttkandt and Hall 2007). These initiatives, in a shared critique, therefore focus on how our current publishing system increasingly serves marketisation, instead of our communication needs as academics. As Striphas claims 'the system is functioning only too well these days—just not for the scholars it is intended to serve' (2010).

What's more, we can see how experiments in radical open access not only aim to stimulate access and re-use of scholarly content by critiquing the economics and excessive commercialisation of the current scholarly publishing system, and by setting up their own alternative publishing institutions. For these initiatives open access also forms the starting point for a further interrogation of our institutions, practices, notions of academic authorship, the book, content creation, copyright and publication, among other things. Here the focus is on exploring the kind of ethical and responsible questions that, according

to Hall 'we really should have been asking all along' (2011: 13). This questioning of institutions also focuses on the hegemonic print-on-paper paradigm that, as Hall and Jöttkandt from OHP argue, still structures our current (digital) scholarly practices, including our standards for reviewing and certifying academic work (2007). We also need to keep in mind, as Striphas notes, the specific historical context in which our currently dominant structures were forged, according to circumstances which might not apply anymore today (2010). In this respect there seems to be a combined aim to, as Fitzpatrick argues, ensure our interrogations not only explore our scholarly institutions but also our own scholarly practices of doing research, writing and reviewing in a digital context (2011: 10). As Hall and Jöttkandt point out, this might involve exploring 'a new knowledge, a new grammar, a new language and literacy, a new visual/aural/linguistic code of the digital that is capable of responding to the singularity and inventiveness of such [digital] texts with an answering singularity and inventiveness?' (2007).

The practical aspects of these interrogations of our scholarly forms of communication come to the fore in some of these radical open access projects too. For instance, Fitzpatrick's experiment with peer-to-peer review very much focussed on re-envisioning peer review and quality control in a digital context, pushing it towards a more community-oriented system. Furthermore, her experiment aimed to change the way we think about academic publishing and peer review away from 'a system focused on the production and dissemination of individual *products* to imagining it as a system focused more broadly on facilitating the *processes* of scholarly work' (Fitzpatrick 2011: 11). Striphas similarly argues that we need to engage with peer review—as a specific fixture of scholarly communication—more creatively in order to explore its future. His wiki, functioning as a form of pre-publication review, is a good example of that, as well as comprising an investigation into more communal forms of writing, questioning the individual author (Striphas 2011). Hall and his colleagues explored the rethinking of the book, authorship and authority in OHP's *Liquid* and *Living Books* series, which are books published using wikis that are available on a read/write basis. With this open, collaborative, and distributed way of publishing OHP endeavours to raise 'all sorts of interesting questions for ideas of academic authorship, fair use, quality control, accreditation, peer-review, copyright, Intellectual Property, and content creation' (Hall 2008b).

But radical open access also involves the critique of openness as a concept and the practices of openness themselves. This is of course something that Tkacz, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, sees as missing in open projects, where he feels there has

been too little reflection on the concept of openness and on its specific projects. What radical open access projects share, however, is a common aim to emphasise that there are ways for open access not to be simply a neoliberal or even an economic issue. Instead, they explore open access as a concept and practice based on experimentation, sharing and community, among other things. We can see this in Fitzpatrick's aim to shift the discourse on the way we perceive open access away from a focus on costs to a focus on values (2012a); but we can also see this in Striphas ongoing critical exploration of the drawbacks and benefits of his own open research projects, where he sees his *Differences & Repetitions* wiki not as 'a model' but as a 'thing to think with' (2011). In this respect the engagement of radical open access with openness is very similar to a specific vision of *open politics* where politics can and needs to be rethought in an ongoing manner, adapting to new contexts and conditions, functioning as a floating signifier. According to Étienne Balibar, for instance, a more interesting and radical notion of politics involves focusing on the *process* of the democratisation of democracy itself, thus turning democracy into a form of continuous struggle or critical self-reflection. Democracy is not an established reality, nor is it a mere ideal; it is rather a permanent struggle for democratisation (Balibar 2008). And in this respect open access can and should be understood in similar terms: not as a homogeneous project striving to become a dominating model or force; not as a thing, an object, or a model with pre-described meaning or ideology, but as a project with an unknown outcome, as an ongoing series of critical struggles. And this is exactly why we cannot pin down open (nor radical open access) as a concept, but instead need to leave it *open*: open to otherness and difference, and open to adapt to different circumstances. To explore this idea of open politics in relation to open access more in depth, it will be helpful to look at the work of Gary Hall, who has written extensively on this subject.

5.2.2.5 *Radical Open Politics*

Hall, in his always already contingent conception of open politics, engages with the work of media theorist Mark Poster, to think through what (an open) politics might be, which he formulates in the context of this theoretical exchange as a 'hypercyberdemocracy'. Similar to Balibar, Hall's conception of openness and open politics is not one that should be conceptualised as a project or a model. He warns, for instance, that when it comes to politics on the Internet, we should be cautious about forms of predetermined politics in which 'politics would be reduced to just the rolling out of a political plan, project, or program that is already known and decided upon in advance' (Hall 2008a: 36). This would close down what politics is, and what it means to be political, without giving space to the

potential of the new and the experimental. As Hall states, in such a scenario 'there would be no responsible or ethical opening to the future, the unknown, uncertain, unseen, and unexpected' (2008a: 36). Hall thus argues for the development of new, specific and singular theories of politics—especially concerning the politics of digital media; theories in which politics is responsive to the context and developments it encounters (such as those described in Poster's account of cyberdemocracy), where these have the potential to alter both our politics and our understanding and analysis of digital culture (2008a: 158–159). Hall points out that in Poster's essay, this contextual connection comes to the fore in, among other things, his argument toward the intrinsic connection between humans and technology. Hall extends this argumentation—referring to Stiegler's idea of *originary technology* and Derrida's concept of *the technological condition*—by explaining that political subjects are continuously constituted by the political networks in which they interact and vice versa. Since 'the human is always already constituted in and by a relation with technology' (Hall 2008a: 178), this means we are already cyborgs *before* we interact with Internet politics. For Hall, cyberdemocracy emerges as a potential space for new, 'unthought' forms of democracy, where 'in order to understand the politics of the Internet we need to remain open to the possibility of a form of politics that is "something other than democracy" as we can currently conceive it' (2008a: 179–180).

Such a conception of open politics runs into a number of challenges as for many embracing such a position or way of thinking and practicing might be to risk too much, not least because it has the potential ultimately to place in question what we have come to understand as democracy. In this sense, as Hall claims, many critics hold on to conventional conceptions of (Internet) politics and democracy, 'including ideas that view it in terms of technological determinism, citizenship, the public sphere, and democracy' (2008a: 182). In this sense Hall and Poster go further than Balibar. For Balibar, rethinking politics as a process is still seen as a 'democratisation of democracy', where we can end being caught up in a framework of change that necessarily needs to be more democratic, instead of thinking out of the democratic box. Hall eventually argues, beyond, but at the same time with, Poster (whilst pointing to the 'modernistic' aspects that remain part of Poster's politics), that we need to be open to both politics *and* hyperpolitics—which are not easily disconnected—where hyperpolitics 'names a refusal to consider the question of politics as closed or decided in advance, and a concomitant willingness to open up an unconditional space for thinking about politics and the political "beyond" the way in which they have been conventionally conceived—a thinking of politics which is more than

politics, while still being political' (2008a: 197–198).

Applying this argumentation to the specific politics of open access publishing and archiving, Hall states that it is too easy to see open access as merely an extension of neoliberalism, which it necessarily is or can be, when it can also be conceived as a progressive cyberutopian democratic concept. However, Hall is not interested in exploring open access along either of these lines as the two sides of the digital debate, which as we argued before, are not so easily distinguished in the form of a dialectic. He is concerned, not so much with attaching pre-existing political labels to open access publishing, as in the potential of open access and of Internet politics 'to resist and reconfigure the very nature of politics as we currently understand it, its basis in notions of citizenship, the public sphere, democracy, and so on' (Hall 2008a: 195). This focus on a 'politics of undecidability' doesn't mean though that we do not need to make decisions, or don't need to cut - and this is where the opposition of openness versus closure again becomes untenable as they are intrinsically two sides of the same coin. By the same token, while Hall does not offer a fully-fledged *politics*, he nonetheless insists that we need to be *political*, as we still need to make affirmative, practical and ethical political decisions (2008a: 196–197). And through these decisions we need to imagine, invent and experiment with new forms of politics, by asking questions and remaining open towards, our notions of politics, scholarship, authorship and, in this context specifically, with the book. As Hall concludes, with respect to a cultural studies politics, 'as such, digitization and open access represent an opportunity, a chance, a risk, for the (re)politicization—or, better, hyperpoliticization—of cultural studies; a reactivization of the antagonistic dimension that is precisely what cultural studies' politics is' (2008a: 203).

Hall is not the only one who is exploring such ideas of openness and experimentation in relation to the political in an academic context. In his influential book *The University in Ruins*, Readings formulated a similarly forceful argument focused on openness (though not specifically on open access) and experimentation in his exploration of the ideal type of the *University of Thought*, which he envisions as an alternative to the *University of Excellence*. As he puts it, 'What I would like to suggest is that we recognise that, with the decline of the nation-state, the University has become an open and flexible system and that we should try to replace the empty idea of excellence with the empty name of Thought' (Readings 1996: 3). Readings argues that the original cultural mission that determined the logic of the university in the past has been declining, producing a situation where from a connection to the nation state (producing and sustaining an idea of national

166

culture) it has become a transnational bureaucratic company following the discourse of excellence and accountability (1996: 11). From this position Readings points out that we should let go of the idea that the university has a social mission connected to cultural identity, when 'the notion of culture ceases to mean anything vital for the University as a whole' and 'culture no longer matters as an *idea* for the institution' (1996: 90–91). As he states, introducing new referents won't do the university any good; rather it is important that the university provides a context where judgement towards cultural value as well as to the value and meaning of the university *itself* is left open. In this de-referentialised space that the university then becomes, Readings suggests we can start to think notions of community and communication differently, and thus begin to envision them as places for radical dissensus (1996: 167). We need a community without a common identity, which consists of singularities, not of subjects. In this respect we can't refer to an idea outside of ourselves and the university for a community's justification; instead, we need to take responsibility for our immediate actions *here*, in relation to our present contextualized practices. Readings thus reiterates that we need to keep the question of evaluation open. However, just as in the thinking of Hall (and Barad), this does not absolve us from the responsibility of making cuts, a necessity Readings formulates as the need to make judgments about issues of values. At the same time, Readings does not see these judgments as final, as they themselves are part of an ongoing critique and discussion: 'Value is a question of judgment, a question whose answers must continually be discussed' (1996: 134). Knowledge for Readings then becomes a permanent question, where 'Thought does not function as an answer but as a *question'* (Readings 1996: 159–160). He is thus interested in conditions of openness and decidedness in higher education that enable agonism and heteronomous communities of dissent. This comes to the fore when he argues that disciplinary structures should be rethought and reconfigured periodically; they should remain open to ensure disciplinarity remains a permanent question (Readings 1996: 177). In Readings' vision these communities of dissent are also non-humanist in their basic outlook, where they profess an obligation to nonhuman otherness. As he states: 'to speak of obligation is to engage with an ethics in which the human subject is no longer a unique point of reference. The obligation is not to other humans but to the condition of things, *ta pragmata'* (Readings 1996: 187).

What these two readings of openness in an academic context by Hall and Readings show is the importance of remaining open to, and affirmatively exploring new forms of, *open* politics, while still taking responsibility for the decisions and value judgments we need

to make as part of these experiments. Experimentation in this respect can be seen as a form of ongoing critique. This is also the way experimentation is being explored in forms of radical open access, I would argue, where it serves as a means to re-perform our existing institutions and scholarly practices in a more ethical and responsible way. Experimentation thus stands at the basis of a rethinking of scholarly communication and the university in general, and can even potentially be seen as a means to rethink politics itself too. For instance, by experimenting in an open way with the idea and the concept of the book, but also with the materiality and the system of material production surrounding it—which includes our ideas of the material and materiality—we can ask important questions concerning authorship, the fixity of the text, quality, authority and responsibility; issues that lie at the basis of what scholarship is and what the functions of the university should be. Radical open access, as an affirmative and experimental practice, can therefore be seen as an effort towards the deconstruction of the object-formation and commodification of the book, which is maintained by the print-based institutions of material production as well as by our own repetitive and consolidating scholarly communication practices. It can be seen as a political and ethical effort to re-perform these stabilisations (Derrida et al. 2003: 86, Hall 2008a: 76).[110]

In the previous passages I have explored open access, and in specific forms of radical open access book publishing, as affirmative and continuous strategies directed toward rethinking our market-based publishing institutions and our own academic research practices, as well as the object formation that takes part through forms of academic capitalism. Although open access, in its neoliberal guise, also has the potential to contribute to this object formation, this chapter has made a plea for reclaiming open access by focusing: on its potential to critically re-perform our print-based institutions and practices; and on its potential to experiment with new ideas of politics, scholarly communication, the university, and the book. Now is precisely the time to focus on a different discourse of openness—similar to reframing the historical discourse on the book as an object, as discussed in the previous chapter—to emphasise these other aspects of openness, and the potential for change it also inhibits, and to encourage a diversity of experiments with open access books.

Experimentation is essential here, not only as an integral aspect of forms of radical

---

[110] As Derrida argues, with respect to deconstruction: 'If there were continual stability, there would be no need for politics, and it is to the extent that stability is not natural, essential or substantial, that politics exists and ethics is possible. Chaos is at once a risk and a chance, and it is here that the possible and the impossible cross each other' (2003: 86).

open access, but also as a strategy on its own to break-through the material structures and practices surrounding the object-formation of the book. As Kember has written, 'Experimenting with academic writing and publishing is a form of political intervention, a direct engagement with the underlying issues of privatization and marketization in academia' (2014). To explore this concept of experimentation in more depth, however, I want to distinguish it from neoliberal notions of *innovation*. I want to do so because, as with open access, the motives, values, as well as the goals that lie behind these two concepts differ fundamentally. (For instance, the undecidedness (or openness) towards its outcomes can be seen as an important aspect of experiments with radical open access.) In what follows I therefore want to differentiate the business rhetoric of *innovation* that accompanies the university of excellence and more neoliberal visions of openness, from the vision of experimentation as promoted from within cultural studies, among other fields. The latter vision that will be illustrated by a selection of research and publishing efforts that specifically explore experimentation as a discourse and practice of critique, especially with respect to the current system of scholarly object-formation.

5.3 Experimental Research Practices

5.3.1 Commodification of Knowledge and the Business Logic of Innovation

As established above, the open access discourse on making knowledge available for free on the web without barriers to access and reuse, is being accompanied increasingly by a neoliberal rhetoric. In particular, this rhetoric pertains to the knowledge economy and its need for continual *innovation*. Following this demand for innovation and the transparency that it relates to, making research results available online is seen to aid the search for new sustainable business models, to help the creation of competitive advantage, and to maintain the successive testing of new products to satisfy consumer demand. Within this context, experiments with digital, open publishing increasingly takes place with a specific outcome already in place: to ensure that a new publishing or business model is viable, and that it is effective, in order for it to become a model which can be monetised with the ultimate goal of increasing return on investment. Besides that, making publicly created research information and data available in this way is designed to allow the private sector in general to thrive and to help drive further innovation and creativity for all kinds of business

opportunities, enabling the private sector and our economy at large to be more profitable and competitive.

Consequentially, this can create situations where our ideas of experimentation, or even of critique as open intellectual enquiry, are challenged by this corporate rhetoric of innovation. Researchers are increasingly asked to experiment with new ideas, methods or practices not just for experiments sake, but in the name of innovation, leading to results that are deemed to be an improvement to the previous situation, in the sense that they serve dynamic economic growth. For if we adhere to a neoliberal logic, then we need continual innovation to stimulate the competitive mechanisms that encourage this dynamic growth. As Giroux states: 'In its dubious appeals to universal laws, neutrality, and selective scientific research, neoliberalism eliminates the very possibility of critical thinking, without which democratic debate becomes impossible' (2005: 10). Critical thought, Giroux argues, has given way to market-driven values and corporate interests. Knowledge becomes a product, a commodity, just another form of capital (Giroux 2010). As Fitzpatrick similarly argues, 'having marketability as our only indicator of the value of scholarship or a scholar's work represents a neoliberal corruption of the critical project in which we as scholars are ostensibly engaged' (2012b).

We can see a situation arise where the elements of unpredictability that accompany experimental scholarly methods are filtered out in favour of risk assessments and contingency plans (risk-aversion), where the notion of critique, of pushing boundaries, of rethinking systems, is replaced by demands for increased efficiency and transparency. The goal is to make experimentation predictable, where experiments are designed to achieve the goals they were set out to achieve, creating outcomes that are measurable and demonstrable, namely mirroring a situation where innovation is often closely linked to specific objectives, namely those that encourage economic growth.

Pellizzoni and Ylönen point out that perpetual innovation as part of the knowledge economy is seen as one of the guiding principles of the neoliberal era (2012). Within the knowledge economy, innovation is then conceptualized as a collective endeavour, as a coalition between education and industry. The OECD report *The knowledge-based economy* (1996), quoted in Roberts and Peters, states that 'innovation is driven by the interaction of producers and users in the exchange of both codified and tacit knowledge', and pertains to a model of knowledge flows and relationships among industry, government and academia in the development of science and technology (2008). Based on her analysis of the perceptions of Canadian health scientists, Wendy McGuire argues that this reorientation of

knowledge production towards a collaboration of research and industry is promoting a new vision of what constitutes legitimate science, one based on innovation policies: 'Innovation policy is both an ideological discourse that promotes a new vision of legitimate science, emphasizing social and economic relevance, and a neoliberal strategy to change the organization of knowledge production through the intensification of relationships between university scientists, industry and government' (2013). In order to develop a critique of this notion of perpetual innovation that is increasingly structuring our knowledge domains, I will look at experimentation as an alternative discourse. In particular I want to turn to a selection of alternative conceptualisations of experimentation, to examine how these are practically implemented in radical forms of open, online publishing. The openness of the politics of these projects lies with their will to experiment, where experimentation is understood as a heterogeneous, unpredictable, singular and uncontained process or experience. In this respect they argue for a more inclusive vision of experimentation, one that is open for ambivalence and for failure. This vision is all the more important in the context of monograph publishing, where it could be argued that issues of access and experimentation are crucial to the future of the scholarly book, if the critical potentiality of the book as a medium is to remain open to new political, economic and intellectual contingencies. I will thus explore the idea of experimentation in more depth from a specific cultural studies perspective. I want to do so because cultural studies has a special relationship with experimentation and because of this it is in an excellent position to put forward an alternative vision with respect to experimenting in open digital publishing, a vision that is different from the neoliberal focus on experimentation as a force to drive innovation, capital accumulation and object-formation.

5.3.2 Cultural Studies and Experimentation

In her book *The Ethics of Cultural Studies* (2005), Zylinska refers to this specific engagement of cultural studies with experimentation, which marks the 'open-ended nature of the cultural studies project', as Zylinska calls it. This means that, as a project, cultural studies is constantly being repositioned, without an assured or fixed outcome. For Zylinska, this openness to the unknown, to forms of knowledge and politics that cannot be described that easily in more 'established disciplinary discourses', is what makes cultural studies intrinsically ethical (2005: 38–39).

Cultural studies has also been interested in exploring more inclusive forms of knowledge that acknowledge otherness and differentiation, and that are more affective and

experiential. This exploration by cultural theorists of different forms of knowledge was initiated by restoring the separation between the concepts of *experience* and *experiment*. Under the heading of *Empiricism*, Raymond Williams, in his *Keywords* volume, explores the etymology of experiment and how it got to mean something different from experience with which, until the 18th century, it was interchangeable. Experience started to mean subjective or internal knowledge, where experiment came to be aligned with the scientific method of an arranged methodical observation of an event, a theoretical knowledge directed towards the external world. Cultural theorist Gregory Seigworth identifies the search for a more inclusive knowledge, one that includes both experience and experiment, not only in Williams, but in the projects of a variety of other thinkers too, most notably Deleuze, Benjamin and Bergson (2006). Seigworth argues that the current renewed attention to empiricism, as a resurgent culturalist *experiential* paradigm, is based on the influence and popularity of these thinkers within cultural studies as a result of the boom in Deleuzian cultural studies. This is an empiricism where experience and experiment—or practice and theory in more general terms—are still one and the same and are not split up. Within this paradigm the concept of *experience* operates beyond the interpretative powers of a being's knowing sensibility. Experience does not belong to the subject, nor is it mediating between subject and object. It is, as Seigworth states, referring to Williams and his concept of 'structures of feeling', something that needs a form of autonomy; experience needs to become an active potential, freed from the fixed and the personal it has come to be associated with in daily life. For Williams, experience is crucial to tackle and grasp change, flux, flow, all that escapes our fixed efforts at signification and at knowing. Experience is thus directed towards process and emergence. The splitting of experience and experiment, however, lead to the distinction between practical and theoretical, between subjective and objective knowledge, and between experience past and present. As Seigworth states, Williams wanted wholeness again with respect to this concept, where experience was now based upon a set of exclusions (of theory, of creativity, of the present and future) and upon a subjectively centred model of consciousness (2006).

In keeping with the viewpoint I expressed earlier when presenting my alternative genealogy of openness, just as it is not useful to maintain the binary between open and closed, so it is likewise not beneficial to emphasise the rupture between experience and experiment. Instead, we need to enable a critique that remains open to question, but that can at the same time be reconfigured, that can be cut and (temporally) fixed at some points

to establish meaning and signify knowing. It is a knowing that in this case goes beyond an internal subjectivity and includes the external life world.

Seigworth goes on to show how Benjamin, Deleuze and Bergson all explored ways to establish this wholeness. Benjamin's notion of speculative knowledge, the knowledge derived from experience, focuses on the incorporeal and the ephemeral. Unlike a model of knowledge based on representation and resemblance, and similar to Barad's theory of posthumanist performativity, speculative knowledge for Benjamin is nonrepresentational. It belongs to neither subject nor object and is neither inside nor outside. For Deleuze, experience refers to open intensities and sensations (affect), which are not subsumed necessarily by faculties of knowing and interpretation. Experience is open-ended and emergent, not yet articulated. For Bergson, experience and experiment are linked in intuition, which exceeds or overflows the intellect. Intuition is a lived immediacy, it is mobile, processual; it connects past, present and future, where experience can then be seen as memory, duration and experiment. This relates to William's idea of the pre-emergent, the not yet articulated, where a practical consciousness functions as a creative process. Williams tried to find space for creative intuition, for an experimental openness to the world beyond our fixing, interpretive consciousness and pre-existent conceptual frameworks—an openness towards multiplicities. In this respect Williams wanted to analyse the flows between process and structure, between a thing's singularity and its contexts of relations, to explore where something new emerges (Seigworth 2006).

Similar to Williams' aim to explore experimentation as a way of opening up space for difference and otherness beyond our totalising conceptual knowledge frameworks, philosopher Samuel Weber intends to use experimentation to deconstruct one of our most established knowledge fixtures: the university. In the context of experimenting with and rethinking scholarly institutions and practices, his work is therefore essential. Weber connects the search for a different concept and meaning for experimentation directly to the need to break down the modern conception of the university. This conception depends, he argues, on a bias towards universally valid interpretative knowledge, or on a notion of knowledge as well as a vision of the human as unifying, holistic, and totalising. Weber notices the integral connection between this perception of knowledge and neoliberalism: 'What lurks behind its ostensible universalism is the message that there are no longer any alternatives to the dominant neoliberal political-economic system' (2000). For Weber, however, hope lies in the experimental method derived from the modern sciences, which is focused on creating replicable sequences and repetition, and which has an orientation

towards the future and the world as open, consisting of a plurality of possibilities. However, the scientific method still subsumes the particular under a general conceptual framework. Like Seigworth, Weber therefore explores alternative conceptualisations of experimentation that are open to ambivalence. To this end he adopts Kierkegaard's notion of *experimenting* as a verb. The latter emphasises experimentation as a notion where the singular gets articulated without letting its particularities dissolve into the universal. This opens up room for that what is different in repetition, for the exception, and for transformation in repetition. Using Kierkegaard's notion, Weber finds a way to introduce uncertainty, unpredictability and ambivalence in our modern conception of experimentation, one that seems to go directly against the neoliberal rhetoric of planned outcomes, risk analysis and contingency plans, all of which are designed to filter out the uncertain and the unpredictable (2000).

Here we can see how a re-conceptualisation of experimentation within the discourse of cultural studies towards iterability and difference in repetition, has opened up possibilities to imagine cultural studies itself as a space of experimentation. In addition to the relationship Zylinska sketches between the role played by experimentation in cultural studies and the latter's open-ended nature, Simon O'Sullivan connects experimentation directly to cultural studies' performative dimension. In a Deleuzian posthumanist reading of cultural studies as experimentation, O'Sullivan breaks with a focus on the interpretation and representation of culture, and opposes the idea of an object of study (culture) that gets interpreted by a human subject. This idea works as a mechanism to fix and define culture, as well as fixing both the subject and knowledge, however fragmented they are. O'Sullivan proposes cultural studies be understood as a pragmatic experimental program moving away from stability, affirming cultural studies as a critical process, as a *doing*. Using the Deleuzian metaphor of the rhizome, he envisions cultural studies as a dynamic, fluid, open and interdisciplinary system, capable of creating the world differently. This enables multiplicities and the thinking of virtual potentialities. O'Sullivan notices how cultural studies, through its actual institutionalising mechanisms stabilises, and through experimentation creates new lines of flight. Cultural studies is thus both programmatic and diagrammatic (2002). It is this performative dimension—more than a representational one—and the way it is apparent in and being practiced in cultural studies as part of its engagement with experimenting, that I am most interested in here.

Now that we have taken a closer look at the way Williams, Seigworth, Weber and O'Sullivan have re-conceptualised the concept of experimentation from within the

discourse of cultural studies, we can make some more general remarks about experimentation from the wider perspective of humanities knowledge production, while still opposing the business logic underlying neoliberal forms of experimentation as innovation. According to the above thinkers, experimenting means to welcome the possibility of new thinking, to explore the conditions where ideas and phenomena that escape the formulations of previous conceptual paradigms emerge. To create and think new forms of knowledge, experimentation is reconciled with experience to include speculative forms of knowledge and difference in repetition, thus providing room for ambivalence, for the ephemeral and for failure, for that which does not fit. Experimentation here has the potential to become part of knowledge production in general, where it can be used to critique the essentialising object-formation of our scholarly institutions (including the book), and to explore what new forms scholarship will take, how it will continue to transform itself, ourselves, and our understanding of the world we live in.

In this respect, it is important to emphasise—and this is where I want to connect back to the work of Barad—that we as scholars are always already a part of the intra-action of the experiment. Based on her reading of Bohr, Barad argues that our experimenting, intertwined with our theorising, is a material practice. Both theory and experiment are complexly entangled dynamic practices of material engagement with the world. They are both material-discursive enactments that we as scholars perform through our scholarly practices. We therefore produce matter and meaning through our experimenting. And this is in turn a material engaging with the world in which our experimenting is not an intervening from the outside, but an intra-acting from within, as we as scholars are part of the experimental apparatus (Barad 2007: 55–56).

5.3.3 Radical Open Access and Experimentation

We can see the value of the above articulation of experimentation for the concept of openness, and open access publishing more specifically, in forms of what I have called radical open access. Here experimentation in many ways takes central stage, in contrast with more mainstream forms of publishing. For instance, Striphas has noted that experiments in cultural studies publishing have taken place at the fringes of the field, where the former has mostly been ignored and undervalued as a subject of exploration (2010). The same can be said about experiments in open access publishing. Radical open access can therefore be seen to function as a critique of the wider open access movement. In the

latter, strategies of providing access to information and of making open, online scholarship more qualitatively esteemed, are rather disconnected from strategies focused on experimentation.[111] In this respect radical open access also constitutes an integral critique of openness, both of the strategic openness of the wider open access movement, but also of the more neoliberal incarnations of open access that favour a business logic and that promote the existing hegemonic power structures and vested interests of the scholarly publishing system. Both are in their own way very anxious about questioning or disturbing the object-formation of the book.

Meanwhile, experimentation, as described above, also serves to question the fixtures in scholarly (book) publishing that we have grown accustomed too, especially those established as part of our modern system of scholarly communication and the mostly print-based media ecologies of the 20th century. For example, Striphas is interested in exploring how, through experimentation, we can perform our scholarly practices differently in order to rethink those practices that are pertinent today, both in theory and practice. Our socially constructed habits and honoured ways of doing things lead us to engage with repetitive practices in the way we read, write, do research, publish and assess our research findings. We need to think more creatively and expansively, he argues, about the fixtures in scholarly communication and how they might work otherwise, like peer review and authorship, for instance. As stated previously, Striphas uses his *Difference and Repetitions* wiki to explore this: to experiment with new, digital, and collaborative writing practices that challenge the accustomed tradition of single authorship and the idea of ownership of works and ideas, trying to not give in to the compulsion to repeat and merely produce more of the same. For Striphas, the open wiki experiment is not meant to function as a new type of institution but as a thing to think with, ongoing, changing, uncertain. As he points out, this experiment has thought him, and can teach us, 'a great deal about the types of questions we might ask about our performances of scholarly communication in general, and of academic journal publishing in particular' (Striphas 2011).

Tara McPherson likewise frames some of the publishing projects she has been involved in—such as *Vectors*, an openly available multimedia journal and platform that investigates the intersections of technology and culture, and *Scalar*, a multimedia scholarly

---

[111] The strategies described above that seek to attain critical mass for open access and to stimulate open access book publishing and accessibility by focusing on print-based values and practices, seem hard to combine with a simultaneous critical reflection on these practices. Conducting experiments with the form of electronic books in the digital age might be hard to do if at the same time we might not want to push too far, as this might risk estranging the average humanities scholar from the open access project.

publishing and authoring platform—specifically within a framework of experimentation. The aim of both of these projects is to use experimentation to explore new publishing practices that try to make better use of the potentialities and affordances that the Internet has to offer, from multimodal scholarship to networked forms of communication. As McPherson puts it, in this respect, 'Vectors has functioned largely as an experimental space, publishing work that is formally challenging and that explores the boundaries of what might count as scholarly argument' (2010). For these specific projects this has meant examining the boundaries between creative expression and scholarship, exploring so-called 'emergent genres' that 'better take advantage of the affordances of computation'. This includes investigating 'bold new forms of experimentation and bookishness' to push scholarly publishing in the humanities further (McPherson 2010). For McPherson, experimentation and open access are aligned projects here, where for her this framework of experimentation also stretches to the ownership and distribution of scholarly content (2010). Although she promotes broad experimentation, McPherson is also aware of the fact that it might not be sustainable in the long run. Although we need to continue to experiment, we should also, as she puts it, 'evolve more "standardized" structures and interfaces that will allow us to delineate more stable genres and to scale multimodal scholarship' (2010). Nonetheless, this process should not stand in the way of exploring new modes of scholarship and publishing, where McPherson emphasises the ongoing need for forms of bold experimentation.

A similar sense of open experimentation can be found in the *C-Search* publishing project. C-Search, the cultural studies e-archive, is a free, open access archive for cultural studies research literature and related materials, and is provided as a further supplement to the *Culture Machine* e-journal. These archives can be seen as an experiment with digital, open texts, to explore some of the possibilities these have beyond merely replicating print in the online world. With their lack of fixity, and permanence, with their undermining of traditional intermediaries and roles, and their use of and incorporation of different media, they have the potential to fundamentally transform the content they transmit, and with that, to change our relationship to knowledge. This provides us with radical ethical and political questions with respect to authority and legitimacy in a digital age. The clear intention of Hall (one of the founders of C-Search), is to experiment with these latter, more uncomfortable issues, and the kind of impact open publishing has on these (2008a: 19). He argues that C-Search is motivated by a need to creatively experiment with the invention of new institutional forms, to think the university differently, and to helps us

conceive a different future for it (Hall 2008a: 10). Hall and his colleagues, as mentioned before, also experiment with how to reimagine our institutions via *Open Humanities Press*, especially in its experiments with publishing work in non-traditional formats, such as liquid, living, wiki-books that re-use and repackage existing material, and that are open for collaborative editing. These books are questioning our notions of authorship, legitimacy, and quality assessment and are exploring the idea of research as a more processual event. These kinds of institutions, Hall argues, are structurally open. As a form or experiment, this makes it easier for them to be incorporated into a neoliberal discourse—as I have tried to show with the example of the Finch report and open access publishing. But it also gives them their force as forms and sites of resistance. In particular, it gives them ethical and political power to create something different, an alternative, a critique and a resistance to the neoliberal discourse and its hegemonic project.[112] Echoing Bergson, Hall argues that these kinds of experimental archives and institutions can be seen as, as he calls it, singular, different, alternative instances of a kind of experimental, creative militantism from the side of cultural studies (2008a: 207). These institutions, like Weberian experiments, are never finished, nor do they know the answers to the theoretical and practical questions they pose or the outcomes of the various experiments they are conducting. In this sense they can be seen as always emerging institutions (Hall 2008a: 227).

5.4 Conclusion

The last two chapters have explored the systems and narratives that surround the material production of academic books, books that we as scholars produce, disseminate and consume on a daily basis. This analysis has tried to pay attention to the specific technological developments and affordances of the book, its entangled political economy of knowledge production, and the discourses narrating the object-formation of the book in academia and scholarly publishing, which have been the subject of chapter 4. Through this exploration I have examined what specific roles the book as a scholarly object, both materially and conceptually, has come to play in the current scholarly communication

---

[112] For example, it can be argued that it's hard to attribute ownership to a text that is co-written, in a wiki environment for instance. This in turns makes it harder for any of its authors to sell it, as they'd need approval from all others. Which in turns makes it harder for the forces of neoliberalism to privatise and commodify it.

constellation, what struggles it has encountered along its way, and what potential opportunities for intervention this might offer.

In this chapter I have tried to supplement this material-discursive genealogy of the monograph's object-formation with alternative visions and practices related to both its past and future, to show how a politics of the book can extend beyond dichotomies such as openness and closure/secrecy, experimentation and experience, and object and process. In this respect, the book, and the practices and discourses surrounding the production, distribution and consumption of its material incarnation, offers an important starting point to envision and shape our scholarly communication system differently. Through its open-ended nature (again, both conceptually and materially) (Drucker 2004), the book offers an opportunity for experimental/experiential critique, and for practices of ongoing experimentation. Affirmatively engaging with its affordances can thus enable us to explore more ethical, alternative and responsible forms of doing research. Experimenting through our discourses and practices and through the material form of the book will potentially give us the opportunity to deconstruct and re-cut what we still see as fixed and naturalised features of how we communicate as scholars. Critiquing these structures, however, means at the same time taking responsibility for the new boundaries that we enact, with respect to authorship, copyright, originality and authority. Nevertheless, through our alternative incisions we can start to imagine a potentially new politics of the book, one that is open-ended but which responds to its environment; and with that we might be able to also invent new forms of politics. This critique of our forms, narratives and performances of publishing and research needs to be ongoing however, where it involves a series of continuous critical struggles concerning both the past and the future of the book, materiality, the university, politics, etc. Within this contingent context, our open-ended book experiments will need to respond perpetually to the new technological, economical and institutional constellations that they encounter.

Section 3. Fixity

> Books traditionally have edges: some are rough-cut, some are smooth-cut, and a few, at least at my extravagant publishing house, are even top-stained. In the electronic anthill, where are the edges? The book revolution, which, from the Renaissance on, taught men and women to cherish and cultivate their individuality, threatens to end in a sparkling cloud of snippets. So, booksellers, defend your lonely forts. Keep your edges dry. Your edges are our edges. For some of us, books are intrinsic to our sense of personal identity. (Updike 2006)

Fixity, or the idea of a stable, standardised, and reliable text, ready to endure the ages, is a quality that often gets attributed to printed, codex books. So much so that it has come to signify one of the essential defining elements of what we perceive a book to be today: a collection of bound pages. Fixity here relates to the bound nature of the printed codex book in a spatial sense, but it also refers to the book's stability, continuity and durability as a means of communication over time. This is because the combination of bound and easily duplicated printed editions of texts, has offered an excellent preservation strategy (Eisenstein 1979; Cramer 2011). Fixity, however, not only emerged in connection to the medial, technological, and material affordances of the printed book, exemplified by developments in design and by typographic elements—look, for instance, at cover pages, titles, chapters, standardised fonts, indices and concordances, all of which were incremental in turning the book into a fixed object that is easy to navigate. Fixity also advanced as part of the practices, institutions and discourses that surround the printed book, as we briefly touched upon in the previous chapters. Here, concepts and practices such as authorship, the ownership of a work, and copyright, were incremental in fixing, legally and morally, the contents of a book (Hall 2011). Moreover, and as discussed in chapters 4 and 5, books have also been sold and disseminated as finalised and bound commodities by scholarly publishers, as well as being preserved and indexed by our libraries and archives as permanent, stable and solid artefacts.

The concept of 'gathering' plays an important role in creating fixity, as emphasised in commentaries on Mallarmé's *Un Coup de Dés*[113] by both Blanchot (2003) and Derrida (2005). Binding takes place here in the sense of 'gathering together from dispersion', something that, as Derrida has argued, is essential to the idea of the library too. Readers also bind and gather a book together through their reading practices, both conceptually—

---

[113] *Un Coup de Dés* is a modernist poem by the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé, using experimental forms of typography and typographical lay out and free verse.

cutting it down in their interpretation or meaning giving—and practically. For instance, when it comes to hypertexts, it is specific readings that serve to bind disparate routes and texts together. In an online environment readers-as-writers cut, paste and gather dispersed networked nodes together in fluid digital scrapbooks and book collections. However, alongside these practices and institutions, there have also been strong cultural discourses that have stimulated the bound nature of the book, promoting its perception as a finished and completed object, the culmination of a writer's work. This discourse is strongly embedded in academia, where the final published book is most often perceived as the end-point of the research process, in certain areas of the humanities especially. Similarly, it is common practice in many humanities disciplines that an academic only becomes an author or a researcher in the true sense, viable for employment, tenure and promotion and so forth, once their first book has been published. Here the book fixes or determines the author in a similar way too.

In this section I will analyse the discursive-material practices that have promoted the idea and use of the book as a fixed object of communication. The printed codex book has come to exemplify durability, authority and responsibility, as opposed to the more fluid, flowing visions of information transmission that are commonly attached to oral cultures and exchanges, and, more recently, to digital forms of communication. This alternative fluid or liquid vision of communication carries important consequences with it for scholarly research, which one could argue has based its modern existence on the reliable transmission of research results. Under the influence of digital technology what is seen as the essential fixed and bound nature of the book has, however, increasingly given way to visions of the rhizomatic, the fluid, the wikified, the networked and the liquid book—as well as to other, similar entities that explore the book's potential unbinding. What do these more fluent forms entail for the idea of 'the limits' or 'the edges' of the book? Can a collection of texts, pages, or websites still be called a book without some form of enduring stability? What would a potential unbinding entail for academic research? For bound and stable texts have been of fundamental importance to our ideas of science and scholarship: to ensure that experiments can be repeated according to the same conditions in which they were originally conducted; as a preservation mechanism to make sure academics have access to the research materials needed; but also as a means to assure that authors can take responsibility for certain fixed and relatively unchangeable sequences of text, guaranteeing a work's integrity. Will we be able to imagine new forms of scholarship and preservation of research that no longer rely so strongly on the idea of a fixed and stable text? Will we be

able to allow for more fluidity in our age of virtually unlimited digital dissemination and storage capabilities?

When considering these questions it might be beneficial to look at them from a different angle. For it can also be argued that books have never been fixed, stable and linear, and that print as a medium and technology is not and has never been able to guarantee fixity—not the least because fixity is embedded in social structures (Johns 1998). Similarly, the digital medium, in the way it has been taken up in academic publishing—its potential for unbinding the book notwithstanding—mostly mirrors the practices of fixing and stabilising that were introduced and further developed as part of the print medium. It can even be argued that, with its potential for unlimited storage, the digital is much better suited to create forms of fixity than print ever was. This becomes obvious if we look at *Wikipedia*. Its *MediaWiki* software has made it much easier to preserve changes to a text and therefore to detect and track these changes. All alterations to, and revisions of, a text can now conceivably be saved.[114] Therefore, the preservation capacities of the net have the possibility to offer texts far more durability, and in that sense stability, than print could potentially ever have.

In this respect it might be more useful to start thinking beyond such dialectical oppositions as bound/unbound and fixed/fluid, and to explore the idea of research being processual (although it also necessarily needs to be bound and cut at some point for us to make sense of it). If we then conceive the book as a potential form of binding or gathering this processual research together, we may be able to start to shift our focus towards questions of *why* it is that we cut and bind.

It is these questions that I will explore in the next chapter, where I will analyse the cuts or boundaries that we as academics enact. But I also want to examine the bindings that are made *for us* by the book's changing materiality and the institutions, discourses and power struggles that have grown up around it. The question then becomes: how can we rethink the way we cut and paste our processual research together? Also, how can we emphasise that these boundaries that are enacted (including forms of print fixity) are actually unstable, and that we iteratively produce research and books through our incisions and boundary-making practices? How can we start to rework these forms of binding? What role can the book continue to play in these processes of gathering and collecting? It is important to emphasise here that books are not determinate objects-in-themselves that are

---

[114] This kind of temporal fixity can become very problematic where it concerns personal data, which the current European Court ruling on 'the right to be forgotten' responds to. See:
 http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2014-05/cp140070en.pdf

bound or unbound or that have inherent properties and boundaries. Books emerge from specific intra-actions or phenomena which, in Barad's words, 'do not merely mark the epistemological inseparability of observer and observed, or the results of measurements; rather, phenomena are the ontological inseparability/entanglement of intra-acting 'agencies'' (2007: 139). In this sense, and as I have argued previously, it is through our book-binding and unbinding practices, cutting our research together and apart, that both the book as we know it and we ourselves as scholars arise.

Rethinking how we bind research therefore includes asking questions as to who and what binds, and about the ways in which we currently gather our research together. What are the particular medial factors in the book's material becoming that force forms of binding on us in their intra-actions with our institutions and practices? In which specific ways do these material structures currently tie our research and our books together, and what new forms of (digital) gathering do they propose? Chapter 6 will begin with a focus on how, historically, the printed book, in its materiality and through its institutions and practices, developed the forms of book fixity and trust that we are now accustomed to today. I will then explore a number of current digital experiments that are focused on the unbinding of scholarly research, most notably in the form of fluid, remixed, and modular books, and projects that are focused on remixed authorship and digital archives. I will argue that these unbound book alternatives are not so much examples of unbinding, as proposals for alternative ways of gathering research together. This section will thus focus on some of the critiques these experiments have formulated concerning some of the ways we bind and are being bound, along with analysing some of the different forms of cutting and pasting that are currently being put forward. The fact that these alternative projects and practices do not so much unbind as propose new forms of gathering—forms that still seem to mirror in the main our codex-based forms of closure (i.e. via authorship, copyright, design and interface)—shows how difficult it is to let go of the methods of gathering developed as part of the print-paradigm.

Nonetheless, as I have argued in previous chapters of this thesis, it is important to challenge, critique and rethink some of the major practices and institutions of gathering and fixity we currently adhere to, from copyright to authorship, to the book as a published object and commodity. It is important to do so, not only to challenge the humanist focus on essentialised notions such as the unity of the work and the individual author, but also to counter the problems created by the book-bound commodity fetish within academic publishing, which I discussed in chapters 4 and 5. This includes investigating the power

structures and interests that are invested in maintaining stable texts and that determine when a text is fixed and finalised, and for what reasons. For instance, commercial interests promote the creation of heavily copyrighted or DRM-ed academic works, which it can be argued are standing in the way of the more widespread sharing and dissemination of scholarly research online. The current communication model is based on codex-shaped journals and books with stable and static content, a situation that protects the integrity of an author's work. In this context experiments with alternative hypertextual and multimodal forms of publishing, or with re-use, updating and versioning, are hard to sustain. And this is the case even though these experiments with the form and shape of publications could offer us ways to rethink and re-perform scholarly communication in a different and potentially more ethical way, along with offering us the possibility to explore what Tara McPherson has referred to as 'emergent genres' for multimodal scholarship (2010). What could be the potential in these alternative 'unbound book' projects to re-envision the way we perceive the book and do research; to explore different forms of cutting and binding; and to promote forms of processual research? Are there other ways of binding that do not necessarily close down research and the book by means of strict forms of authorship and copyright, for example?

We need to emphasise—and this is something scholars of bibliography and critical editing are already intensely familiar with—that print has always been an unstable medium and only offers, as Drucker has emphasised, 'the illusion of fixity' (2012: 6). As she continues: 'a book is a snapshot of a continuous stream of intellectual activity. Texts are fluid. They change from edition to edition, from copy to copy, and only temporarily fix the state of a conversation among many individuals and works across time (…) A book is a temporary intervention in that living field' (Drucker 2012: 6). In the second part of chapter 6 I will explore these issues in more depth by looking at the concept of the cut as theorised in new materialism, continental philosophy and remix studies. Again, this analysis is not an attempt on my part to explore the problem of the fixity and stability of the book from a perspective of bound or unbound—where both print and digital media have the potential to bind and unbind—but rather from that of cutting and iterative boundary-making. I want to focus on how we can shape and bind our work in such a way that we don't foreclose its open-endedness. In this respect chapter 6 asks, if we see research as an ongoing process that needs to be gathered together at some point, that needs to be cut, how can we do it differently and potentially better? Here the focus is not on the book object unbinding, but

on the processes of research and how we can imagine different cuts to stabilise it: how can we give meaning to its fluidity by making the right incisions?

Chapter 6. On Liquid Books and Fluid Humanities

6.1 From Orality to Fixity?

In line with the general discourse surrounding the history of the book I discussed previously, the main debate concerning the development of fixity focuses on whether a book can ever be defined as a stable text; and, if so, whether this quality of stability and fixity is an intrinsic element of print—or in a lesser extent of manuscripts—or whether it is something that has been imposed on the printed object by historical actors.

As I established earlier, Eisenstein is a proponent of the former view. She sees standardisation and uniformity as properties of print culture, properties that were usually absent in a predominantly scribal environment (1979: 16). Where Eisenstein emphasises the fixity brought about by printing in comparison to the scribal culture that preceded it, Ong meanwhile focuses more on the relationship between orality and literacy, specifically on the differences in mentality between oral and writing cultures. The shift from orality to writing, he argues, is essentially a shift from sound to visual space, where print mostly had effects on the use of the latter. Writing locks words into a visual field—as opposed to orality where language is much more flexible (Ong 1982: 11). In oral culture, language is fluid and stories are adapted according to the situation and the specific audience, knowledge being stored in mnemonic formulas of repetition and cliché (Ong 1982: 59). With writing these elaborate techniques were no longer necessary, freeing the mind for more abstract and original thinking (Ong 1982: 24). For Ong, it is thus writing and literacy that are inherently connected to fixity and stability: he argues that scientific thinking is also a result of writing, for instance.

Eisenstein, however, emphasises that fixity could only really come about with the development of print. Hand copying of manuscripts was based on luck or chance as the survival of a book or text depended on the shifting demand for copies by local elites, on copies being made by interested scholars, and on the availability and skills of scribes. Copies were also not always 'identical' or identically multiplied, as hand-copying often led

to variants in the text copied (Eisenstein 1979: 46). No manuscript at that time could thus be preserved without undergoing corruption by copyists. Long-term preservation of these unique objects also left a lot to be desired, as the use of manuscripts lead to wear and tear, while moisture, vermin, theft and fire all meant that 'their ultimate dispersal and loss was inevitable' (Eisenstein 1979: 114). Although printing required the use of paper, which is much less durable than either parchment or vellum, the preservative powers of print lay mainly in its strategy of conservation by duplication and making public: printing a lot of books and spreading them widely proved a viable preservation strategy.

In *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Eisenstein analyses how print influenced many aspects of scholarship and science. Print influenced the dissemination, standardisation, and organisation of research results, but it also impacted upon data collection and the preservation, amplification and reinforcement of science (Eisenstein 1979: 71). Books became much cheaper and a more varied selection of books was available, to the benefit of scholars. It encouraged the transition from the wandering to the sedentary scholar and stimulated the cross-referencing of books. Increasingly printers also began standardising the design of books. They started by experimenting with the readability and classification of data in books, introducing title pages, indexes, running heads, footnotes, and cross-references (Eisenstein 1979: 52, Ong 1982: 121–123). Nonetheless, as McLuhan, Eisenstein and Ong among others have made clear, scholars benefitted most from the standardisation of printed images, maps, charts, and diagrams, which had previously proven very difficult to multiply identically by hand. This was essential for the development of modern science (McLuhan 1962: 78, Ong 1982: 124). As McLuhan argues, print enhanced visuality over audile-tactile culture, creating a predominantly visual-based world, promoting homogeneity, uniformity and repeatability (1962: 24).

McLuhan speaks in this respect of the frontier of two cultures and of conflicting technologies, which have led to the typographic and electronic revolutions, as he calls them. Eisenstein similarly points out that printing, through its powers of precise reproduction, helped spread a number of cultural revolutions (i.e. the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution); revolutions that were, as Eisenstein claims, essential in the shaping of the modern mind (1979: 170–172). Febvre and Martin also explore the influence of the book on the Renaissance and the Reformation, analysing print's causes and effects as part of a socio-economic history of book production and consumption over a long period of time. Being slightly more cautious, they wonder how successful the book has been as an agent for the propagation of new ideas (Febvre and

Martin 1997: 9). They see preservation through duplication and (typographic) fixity as basic prerequisites for the advancement of learning, agreeing that it was print that gave the book a permanent and unchanging text (Febvre and Martin 1997: 320). However, printing for them is just part of a *set* of innovations. The printing press is only one of a *number of actors* in the general social and political history they try to reconstruct.

Although Eisenstein acknowledges this plurality of actors, in her view print was the *main* agent of change impacting on the revolutionary developments detailed above. Of course it builds on previous achievements, however, the preservative powers of print were more permanent than previous movements. As Eisenstein emphasises, print revolutionised these previous systems. Even though the early modern hand press did not of course meet modern standards of duplication, its development still meant that early print books were more fixed and standardised than hand-copied manuscripts (Eisenstein 1979: 345–346). Where scribal copying ultimately led to more mistakes and corruption of the text, successive print editions allowed for corrections and improvements to be made, so with fixity came 'cumulative cognitive advance' (Eisenstein 1979: 432). Even if the printing press also multiplied and accelerated errors and variants—and many errata had to be issued—the fact was that errata could now be issued. Print thus made corruption more visible at the same time (Eisenstein 1979: 80). Texts were now sufficiently alike for scholars in different regions to correspond with each other about what was, to all intents and purposes, a uniform text. Networks of correspondents were created which in turn lead to new forms of feedback that had not been possible in the age of scribes. This again was an influence on the scientific method, and on the modern idea of scientific cooperation. Print, however, went further than just encouraging popularisation and propaganda and the mere spreading of new ideas (Eisenstein 1979: 454). It was the availability and access to diverse materials that was really revolutionary.

Permanence was also able to bring out progressive change where 'the preservation of the old (…) launched a tradition of the new' (Eisenstein 1979: 124). From valuing the ancients the emphasis increasingly came to be placed on admiring the new. Classical texts were recovered through print, offering adequate equipment to systematically explore and classify antiquity. According to Eisenstein, the communications revolution created a 'fixed distance in time', influencing the development of a modern historical consciousness. McLuhan similarly claims that with print a fixed point of view became possible where print fosters the separation of functions and a specialist outlook (1962: 175). Eisenstein confesses that it is hard to establish how exactly printed materials affected human

behaviour; nonetheless, we have to understand how greater access to a greater abundance of records and a standardisation brought about by printing influenced the literate elite (1979: 8). Printing standardised vernacular languages and led to the nationalisation of politics (where increasingly political documents were written in the vernacular) and the fragmentation of Latin. Drawing further on McLuhan, Eisenstein also shows how the thoughts of readers are guided by the way the contents of books are arranged and presented. Basic changes in book format thus lead to changes in thought patterns. Standardisation helped to reorder the thought of all readers and a new 'esprit de système' was developed (including systematic cataloguing and indexing) which proved of the utmost importance for the commercial book-trade. Bookseller's lists were created to promote works and attract customers, for instance. Eisenstein also makes a clear claim for the importance of print on the development of the Reformation. The press was the ultimate propaganda machine. However, Eisenstein points out that print not only diffused Reformation views but also shaped them. Where print stabilised 'the bible' (and scholars were being provided with Greek and Hebrew texts), its availability in vernacular languages changed who read the bible and how they read it (Eisenstein 1979: 326).

As we have established previously, in opposition to Eisenstein's arguments for the agency of print, Adrian Johns emphasises that it is not printing *per se* that possesses preservative power, but the way printing is put to use in particular ways. He states that knowledge such as we understand it today has come to depend on stability; however, such a situation of stability has not always been prevalent. It is not easy for us to imagine a realm in which printed records were not necessarily authorised or faithful, Johns remarks. What could one know in such a realm, and how could one know it? (Johns 1998: 5). If we were to reassess the way print has been 'constructed', we can contribute to our historical understanding of the conditions of knowledge itself and how knowledge emerged (Johns 1998: 6). Printed books themselves do not contain attributes of credibility and fixity, which are features that take much work to maintain. According to Johns, it was the social system then in place, not the technology, which needed to change first in order for the printing revolution or print culture to gain ground.

Johns brings the cultural and the social to the centre of our attention through his interest in the roles of historical figures (i.e. readers, authors and publishers) in bringing about fixity (1998: 19–20). He argues that Eisenstein neglects the labours through which fixity was achieved, to the extent that she describes what Johns sees as being the results of those labours, as being powers or agency intrinsic to texts instead (Johns 1998: 19). For

Johns, then, fixity is not an inherent quality but a transitive one; fixity exists only inasmuch as it is recognized and acted upon by people—and not otherwise. In this sense, fixity is the result of manifold representations, practices and, most importantly, conflicts and struggles that arise out of the establishment of different print cultures.

Chartier similarly argues against the direct influence of print on readers' consciousness. Chartier is interested in the effects of meaning that books as material forms produce, forms that in his view do not impose, but command uses and appropriations (1994: viii–ix). This means that works have no stable, universal, or fixed meaning as they are invested with plural and mobile significations that are constructed in the encounter between a proposal and a reception. Chartier sees it as part of his work as a historian to reconstruct the variations in what he calls the 'espaces lisibles', the texts in their discursive and material forms, and the variations that govern their effectuation. According to Chartier, books aim at installing an order during their whole production process: there is the order of the author's intentions, of the institution or authority which sponsored or allowed the book, and there is the order that is imposed by the materiality or the physical form of the book, via its diverse modalities. Chartier's route map to a history of reading is based on the paradox of the freedom of the reader versus the order of the book. How is the order of the book constructed and how is it subverted through reading? Reception and decipherment of material forms again take place according to the mental and affective schemes that make up the culture of communities of readers. In this respect Chartier is interested in the relationship between the text, the book, and the reader (1994: 10).

Although Johns acknowledges that print to some extent led to the stabilisation of texts, he questions 'the character of the link between the two' (1998: 36). For him, printed texts were not intrinsically trustworthy, nor were they seen as self-evidently creditable in early modern times, where piracy and plagiarism and other forms of 'impropriety' were widespread. This meant that the focus was not so much on 'assumptions of fixity', as Johns calls it, but on 'questions of credit' and on the importance of trust in the making of knowledge (1998: 31). Print culture came about through changes in the conventions of civility and in the practice of investing credit in materials (i.e. by the historical labours of publishers, authors and readers) as much as through changes in technology (Johns 1998: 35–36). Johns is therefore interested in *how* knowledge was made (where knowledge is seen as contingent). How did readers decide *what* to believe?

Reading practices were very important to cope with the appraisal of books. Especially with respect to the issue of piracy, the credibility of print became a significant

issue, one with both economic and epistemic implications (Johns 1998: 32). Charges of piracy could lead to allegations of plagiarism (as Johns notes, 'they were seldom *just* claims of piracy'), which meant that such charges had direct implications for the reputation of authors as well as threatening the credibility attributed to their ideas. Piracy was always in a way accompanied by accusations of appropriation, and (textual) corruption, meaning the violation of virtues and propriety, which would put at risk a scholar's authorship, knowledge, and livelihood, as well as those of a publisher or bookseller (Johns 1998: 460). Piracy thus affected both 'the structure and content of knowledge' (Johns 1998: 33).

As discussed in previous chapters, the character of a printer or Stationer was very influential in the establishment of trust or credit. This trust was related to a respect of the principle of *copy*, meaning the recognition of another (printer's) prior claim to the printing of a work, based on a repudiation of piracy. As Johns shows, the name of the Stationer on a book's title page could tell a prospective reader as much about the contents as could that of the author (1998: 147). The character of booksellers mattered, too, as they determined what appeared in print and what could be bought, sold, borrowed, and read. Readers thus assessed printed books according to the places, personnel, and practices of their production and distribution. To contemporaries, the link between print and stable or fixed knowledge seemed far less secure, not least because a certain amount of creativity (i.e. textual adaptation) was essential to the Stationer's craft. Piracy was also not unfamiliar: it was far more common than was certainty and uniform editions. Furthermore, pirates were not a distinguishable social group, existing as they did at all ranks of the Stationers' community, and at times they were among its most prominent and 'proper' members, Johns explains (1998: 167). It is important in this respect to realise that piracy was not attached to an *object*; it was used as a category or a label to cope with print, as a tactic to construct and maintain truth-claims.

The reliability of printed books thus depended in large part on *representations* of the larger Stationers' community as proper and well ordered (Johns 1998: 624). This clashed with the characteristic feature of the Stationers' Commonwealth, namely *uncertainty*, where print culture was characterized by endemic distrust, conspiracies and 'counterfeits'. The concept of piracy was used as a representation of these cultural conditions and practices as they were prevailing in the domain of print. With this uncertainty it became clear that the achievement of print-based knowledge as well as authorship was transient (Johns 1998: 187). Yet readers did come to trust and use print, as books were of course produced, sold, read, and put to use, meaning that the epistemological problems of reading them

were, in practice, overcome. Trust could become possible, Johns argues, because of a disciplining regime—including elaborate mechanisms to deal with all the problems of piracy—brought about by publishers, booksellers, authors and the wider realm of institutions and governments, as is exemplified for Johns by the *Stationers' Company.* Licensing, patenting and copyright were similarly machineries for producing credit. But the register set up by the Royal Society—which became one of the defining symbols of experimental propriety in the Society itself—and the *Philosophical Transactions,* which came to function as its brand abroad, were similarly achievements that required strenuous efforts to discipline the processes of printing and reading (Johns 1998: 623). With this regime in place, Johns claims that trust in printed books could become a routine possibility (1998: 188). As he explains, however, struggles over power arose regarding who gets to decide on or govern these social mechanisms for generating and protecting credit in printed books, displaying the complex interactions of piracy, propriety, political power, and knowledge. Conflicts arose over the implementation of patents and/or copyright and on the different consequences a print culture governed by a specific entity (e.g. Stationers or the crown, for Johns) would face. These conflicts held, according to Johns, 'the potential for a fundamental reconsideration of the nature, order, and consequences of printing in early modern society' (1998: 258–259).

6.2 Fluid Publishing

As becomes clear from the discourse sketched above, a combination of technological, formal, and cultural factors (as well as discursive, practical and institutional ones) has brought about a certain semblance of fixity, trust and endurance, together with a number of conventions related to the preservation of the printed book. It is these conventions, or the disciplining regime Johns talks about, that have privileged certain cuts in intra-action with the book's material becoming. With the growing use and importance of the digital medium in scholarship, one could argue that the book's material becoming has altered. However, it is in the interaction with the established disciplining regime that its development has been structured. An increasing interest in the communication and publishing of humanities research in what can be seen as a less fixed and more open way, has nonetheless challenged the integrity of the book, something that the system surrounding it has tried so hard to develop and maintain.

Why is this disciplining regime, and the specific print-based stabilisations it promotes, being interrogated at this particular point in time? First of all, and as was made clear by the history provided above, in order to answer this question we need to keep in mind that this regime has seen a continuing power struggle over its upkeep and constituency, and as such has always been disputed. Nonetheless, changes in technology, and in particular the development of digital media, have acted as a disruptive force, especially since much of the discourse surrounding digital media, culture and technology tends to promote a narrative of openness, fluidity and change. Therefore this specific moment of disruption and remediation brings with it an increased awareness of how the semblances of fixity that were created and upheld in, and by, the printed medium, are a construct, upheld to maintain certain established institutional, economical and political structures (Johns 1998). This has lead to a growing awareness of the fact that these structures are formations we can rethink and perform otherwise. All of which may explain why there is currently a heightened interest in how we can intra-act with the digital medium in such a way as to explore potential alternative forms of fixity and fluidity, from blogs to multimodal publications.

The construction of what we perceive as stable knowledge objects serves certain goals, mostly to do with the establishment of authority, preservation (archiving), reputation building (stability as threshold) and commercialisation (the stable object as a reproducible product). In *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print* (2001), Bolter conceptualises stability (as well as authority) as a value under negotiation, as well as the product of a certain writing technology: 'it is important to remember, however, that the values of stability, monumentality and authority, are themselves not entirely stable: they have always been interpreted in terms of the contemporary technology of handwriting or printing' (2001: 16). This acknowledgment of the relative and constructed nature of stability and of the way we presently cut with and through media, encourages us to conduct a closer analysis of the structures underlying our knowledge and communication system and how they are set-up at present: who is involved in creating a consensus on fixity and stability, and what is valued and what is not in this process?

It could therefore be argued that it is the specific cuts or forms of fixing and cutting down of scholarship that are being critiqued at the moment, while the potential of more processual research is being explored at the same time: for example, via the publication of work in progress on blogs or personal websites. The ease with which continual updates can be made has brought into question not only the stability of

documents but also the need for such stable objects. Wikipedia is one of the most frequently cited examples of how the speed of improving factual errors and the efficiency of real-time updating in a collaborative setting can win out over the perceived benefits of stable material knowledge objects. There has perhaps been a shift away from the need for fixity in scholarly research and communication towards the importance of other values such as collaboration, quality, speed and efficiency, combined with a desire for more autonomous forms of publishing. Scholars are using digital media to explore the possibilities for publishing research in more direct ways, often cutting out the traditional middlemen (publishers and libraries) that have become part of the print disciplining regime they aim to critique. Accordingly, they are raising the question: do these middlemen still serve the needs of its users, of scholars as authors and readers? For example, the desire for flexibility, speed, autonomy etc. has caused new genres of formal and informal scholarly communication to arise; a focus on openness and fluidity is seen as having the potential to expand academic scholarship to new audiences; digital forms of publishing have the potential to include informal and multi-modal scholarship that hasn't been communicated particularly extensively before; and new experimental publishing practices are assisting scholars in sharing research results and forms of publication that cannot exist in print, because of their scale, their multimodality, or even their genre. Making the processual aspect of scholarship more visible—which includes the way we collaborate, informally communicate, review, and publish our research—and highlighting not only the successes but also the failures that come with that, has the potential to demystify the way scholarship is produced.

From blogging software and social media, to mailing lists and institutional repositories, scholars have thus increasingly moved to digital media and the Internet to publish both their informal and formal research in what they perceive as a more straightforward, direct and open way. This includes the mechanisms developed for the more formal publication of research I discussed in the previous chapter, via either green (archiving) or gold (journal publishing) open access. Nonetheless, the question remains whether these specific open forms of publishing have really produced a fundamental shift away from fixity. In this section I therefore would like to draw attention to a specific feature of openness—a feature that can in many ways be seen as one of its most contested aspects (Adema 2010: 60)—namely, the possibility to reuse, adapt, modify and remix

material.[115] It is this part of the ethos or definition of openness (libre more than gratis)[116] that can be said to most actively challenge the concepts of stability, fixity, trust and authority that have accompanied the rhetoric of printed publications for so long (Johns 1998). Where more stripped-down versions of openness focus on achieving access, and on doing so in a way that the stability of a text or product need not be threatened (indeed, the open and online distribution of books might even promote its fixity and durability due to the enlarged availability of digital copies in multiple places), libre openness directly challenges the integrity of a work by enabling different versions of a work to exist simultaneously. At the same time libre forms of openness also problematise such integrity by offering readers the opportunity to remix and re-use (parts of) the content in different settings and contexts, from publications and learning materials, to translations and data mining. Within academia this creates not only practical problems (which version to cite and preserve, who is the original author, who is responsible for the text), it creates theoretical problems too (what is an author, in what ways are texts ever stable, where does the authority of a text lie?). Fitzpatrick discusses the 'repurposing' of academic content in this regard:

> What digital publishing facilitates, however, is a kind of repurposing of published material that extends beyond mere reprinting. The ability of an author to return to previously published work, to rework it, to think through it anew, is one of the gifts of digital text's malleability—but our ability to accept and make good use of such a gift will require us to shake many of the preconceptions that we carry over from print. (2011: 2)

The ability to expand and build upon, to make modifications and create derivative works, to appropriate, change and update content within a digital environment, also has the potential to shift the focus in scholarly communication away from the product of our publishing and on to the process of researching. It is a shift that, as I discussed previously in this section, may have the ability to make us more aware of the contingency of our research and the cuts and boundaries we enact and that are enacted for us when we communicate and disseminate our findings. It is this shift away from models of print stability and towards process and fluidity (including the necessary cuts) that I want to focus

---

[115] I am here invoking what Lawrence Lessig refers to as a Read/Write (RW) culture, as opposed to a Read/Only (RO) culture (2008: 28–29).

[116] Where open access (in its weak version) can be seen to focus mainly on accessibility (and in many cases wants to preserve the integrity of the work), open content includes the right to *modify* specifically. The problem is that where it comes to open access definitions and providers, some permit derivative works and some do not. The open knowledge definition encompasses both, as does the BBB definition of open access.

on here, in order to explore some of the ways in which both the practical and theoretical problems that are posed within this development are being dealt with at this moment in time, and whether these should or can be approached differently.

To investigate these potential features of openness, the following section on *Remixing Knowledge* will analyse a variety of theoretical and practical explorations of fluidity, liquidity and remix, focusing specifically on scholarly research in a digital context. The aim is to examine some of the ways in which scholars within the humanities are dealing with these issues of fluidity and versioning, especially where they concern the scholarly book. This section therefore looks at theories and performative practices that have tried to problematise ideas such as authorship and stability by exploring critically concepts of the archive, selection and agency. At the same time it will offer a critique of these theories and practices and the way they still mostly adhere to fixtures and boundaries—such as authorship and copyright—that have been created within the print paradigm, thus maintaining established institutions and practices. My aim in offering such a critique is to push forward our thinking on the different kind of cuts and stabilisations that are possible within humanities research, its institutions and practices; interruptions that are perhaps both more ethical and open to difference, and which are critical of both the print paradigm *and* of the promises of the digital.[117] How might these alternative and affirmative cuts enable us to conceive a concept of the book built upon openness, and with that, a concept of the humanities built upon fluidity?

6.2.1 Remixing Knowledge

The ability to reuse and remix data and research to create derivative works is a practice that challenges the stability of a text, and puts into question its perceived boundaries.[118] Within a scholarly context the concept of derivative works also offers the potential to challenge

---

[117] More ethical interventions in scholarly communication might start with—but are not limited to—a critical involvement with the various relationships in academic publishing by, for example: exercising an ethics of care with respect to the various (human and non-human) agencies involved in the publication process; a focus on free labour and a concern with power and difference in academic life; experimenting with alternatives, such as new economic models and fair pricing policies, to counter exploitative forms of publishing; exploring how we can open up the conventions of scholarly research (from formats to editing, reviewing, and revising); critically reflecting on the new potential closures we enact (McHardy et al. 2013, Danyi 2014, Kember, 2014a).

[118] In the United States, the Copyright Act defines "derivative work" in 17 U.S.C. § 101:

a "derivative work" is a work based upon one or more pre-existing works, such as a translation, musical arrangement, dramatization, fictionalization, motion picture version, sound recording, art reproduction, abridgment, condensation, or any other form in which a work may be recast, transformed, or adapted. A work consisting of editorial revisions, annotations, elaborations, or other modifications which, as a whole, represent an original work of authorship, is a "derivative work". See:
http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html - 101

the idea of authorship or, again, the authority of a certain text. The founding act of a work, that specific function of authorship described by Foucault in his seminal article 'What is an Author?', can be seen as becoming less important for both the interpretation and the development of a text, once it goes through the processes of adaptation and reinterpretation and the meaning given as part of the author function becomes dispersed (1977). In this section I therefore want to focus on three alternatives to authorship, authority and stability as put forward in discussions on remix; alternatives I will argue are important for knowledge production in the humanities. I will shortly discuss the concept of modularity; before proceeding to the concept of the fluid text and, related to that, the agency of the selector or moderator; and finally, to the concept of the (networked) archive, by looking at the work of remix theorists Lev Manovich and Eduardo Navas, among others, as well as the writing of the textual critic John Bryant.

6.2.1.1 Modularity

Media theorist Lev Manovich discusses the concept of modularity extensively in his research on remix. He explores how, with the coming of software, a shift in the nature of what constitutes a cultural object has taken place, where cultural content no longer has finite boundaries. Content is no longer received by the user, in Manovich's vision, but is traversed, constructed and managed. With the shift away from stable environments in a digital online environment, he argues that there are no longer senders and receivers of information in the classical sense. There are only temporary reception points in information's path through remix. Therefore, culture for Manovich is a product that is constructed, both by the maker as well as the consumer, where it is actively being modularised by users to make it more adaptive (2005). In other words, culture *is* not modular; it is (increasingly) *made* modular in digital environments. However, the real remix revolution lies not in this kind of agency provoked by the possession of production tools. According to Manovich it lies in the possibility this generates to exchange information between media; what in *Software Takes Command* he calls the concept of 'deep remixability'. Here, Manovich talks about a situation in which modularity is increasingly being extended to media themselves. The remixing of various media has now become possible in a common software-based environment, along with a remixing of the methodologies of these media, offering the possibility of mash-ups of text with audio and visual content, expanding the range of cultural and scholarly communication (Manovich 2008).

In his writings on remix, Manovich thus sketches a rather utopian future (one that does not take into account present copyright regimes, for instance) in which cultural forms

will be deliberately made from Lego-like modular building blocks, designed to be easily copied and pasted into new objects and projects. For Manovich, these forms of standardisation function as a strategy to make culture freer and more shareable, with the aim of creating an ecology in which remix and modularity are a reality. In this respect 'helping bits move around more easily' is a method for Manovich to devise a new way with which we can perform cultural analysis (2005). These concepts of modularisation and of recombinable data-sets offer a way of looking beyond static knowledge objects, presenting an alternative view on how we structure and control culture and data, as well as how we can analyse our ever-expanding information flows. With the help of his software-based concepts, he thus examines how remix can be an active stance by which people will be able to shape culture in the future and deal with knowledge objects in a digital context.

Within scholarly communication the concept of modularity has already proved popular when it comes to making research more efficient and coping with information overload: from triplets[119] and nano-publications[120], to forms of modular publishing, these kind of software-inspired concepts have mostly found their way into scientific publishing. Instead of structuring scholarly research according to linear articles, for instance, Joost Kirzc argues that we should have a coherent set of 'well-defined, cognitive, textual modules' (1998). Similarly, Jan Velterop and Barend Mons suggest moving towards nano-publications to deal with information overload, which can be seen as a move in the direction of both more modularity and the standardisation of research outcomes (Groth et al. 2010).

There are, however, problems with applying this modular database logic to cultural objects. Of course, when culture is already structured and modular this makes reuse and repurposing much easier. However, cultural objects differ, and it is not necessarily possible or appropriate to modularise or cut-up a scholarly or fictional work. Not all cultural objects are translatable into digital media objects either. Hence, too strict a focus on modularity might be detrimental to our ideas of cultural difference. Tara McPherson formulates an important critique of modularity to this end. She is mostly interested in how the digital, privileging as it does a logic of modularity and seriality, became such a dominant paradigm in contemporary culture.[121] How did these discourses from coding culture translate into the

---

[119] A triplet or assertion is the shortest meaningful sentence or statement: a combination of subject, predicate and object. See: http://nanopub.org/wordpress/?page_id=65

[120] A nano-publication is the smallest unit of publishable information: an assertion about anything that can be uniquely identified and attributed to its author. See: http://nanopub.org/wordpress/?page_id=65

[121] McPherson argues that we can see this focus on the discreet in, among other things, digital technologies, in UNIX and in languages like c and c++.

wider social world? What is the specific relationship between context and code in this historical context? How have code and culture become so intermingled? As McPherson argues, in the mid-20th century modular thinking took hold in a period that also saw the rise of identity politics and racial formations in the US, hyper-specialisation and niched production of knowledge in the university, and forms of Fordist capitalism in economic systems—all of which represent a move toward modular knowledges. However, modular thinking, she points out, tends to obscure the political, cultural and social context from which it emerged. McPherson emphasises that we need to understand the discourses and peculiar histories that have created these forms of the digital and of digital culture, which encourage forms of partitioning. We also need to be more aware that cultural and computational operating systems mutually infect one another. In this respect, McPherson wonders 'how has computation pushed modularity in new directions, directions in dialogue with other cultural shifts and ruptures? Why does modularity emerge in our systems with such a vengeance across the 1960s?' (2012). She argues that these forms of modular thinking, which function via a lenticular logic, offer 'a logic of the fragment or the chunk, a way of seeing the world as discrete modules or nodes, a mode that suppresses relation and context. As such, the lenticular also manages and controls complexity' (McPherson 2012: 25). We therefore need to be wary of this 'bracketing of identity' in computational culture, McPherson warns, where it holds back complexity and difference. She favours the application of Barad's concept of the agential cut in these contexts, using this to replace bracketing strategies (which bring modularity back). For, as McPherson states, the cut as a methodological paradigm is more fluid and mobile (2014).

The concept of modularity, as described by Manovich (where culture is *made* modular), does not seem able to guarantee these more fluid movements of culture and knowledge. The kind of modularity he is suggesting does not offer so much of a challenge to object and commodity-thinking, as apply the same logic of stability and standardised cultural objects or works, only on another scale. Indeed, Manovich defines his modular Lego-blocks as 'any well-defined part of any finished cultural object' (2005). There is thus still the idea of a finished and bound entity (the module) at work here, only it is smaller, compartmentalised.

6.2.1.2 Fluid Environments and Liquid Publications

Where Manovich's concept of modularity mostly focuses on criticising stability and fixity from a spatial perspective (dividing objects into smaller re-combinable blocks), within a web environment forms of temporal instability—where over time cultural objects change,

adapt, get added to, re-envisioned, enhanced etc.—are also being increasingly introduced. In this respect, experiments with liquid texts and with fluid books not only stress the benefits and potential of processual scholarship, of capturing research developments over time and so forth, they also challenge the essentialist notions that underlie the perceived stability of scholarly works.

Textual scholar John Bryant theorises the concept of fluidity extensively in his book *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Revision and Editing for Book and Screen* (2002). Bryant's main argument is that stability is a myth and that all works are fluid texts. As he explains, this is because fluidity is an inherent phenomenon of writing itself, where we keep on revising our words to approach our thoughts more closely, with our thoughts changing again in this process of revision. In *The Fluid Text*, Bryant displays (and puts into practice) a way of editing and doing textual scholarship that is based not on a final authoritative text, but on revisions. He argues that for many readers, critics and scholars, the idea of textual scholarship is designed to do away with the otherness that surrounds a work and to establish an authoritative or definitive text. This urge for stability is part of a desire for what Bryant calls 'authenticity, authority, exactitude, singularity, fixity in the midst of the inherent indeterminacy of language' (2002: 2). By contrast, Bryant calls for the recognition of a multiplicity of texts, or rather 'the fluid text'. Texts are fluid in his view because the versions flow from one to another. For this he uses the metaphor of a work as energy that flows from version to version.

In Bryant's vision this idea of a multiplicity of texts extends from different material manifestations (drafts, proofs, editions) of a certain work to an extension of the social text (translations and adaptations). Logically this also leads to a vision of multiple authorship, where Bryant wants to give a place to what he calls 'the collaborators' of or on a text, to include those readers who also materially alter texts. For Bryant, with his emphasis on the revisions of a text and the differences between versions, it is essential to focus on the different intentionalities of both authors and collaborators. The digital medium offers the perfect possibility to achieve this and to create a fluid text edition. Bryant established such an edition—both in a print and an online edition—for Melville's *Typee*, showing how a combination of book format and screen can be used to effectively present a fluid textual work.[122]

For Bryant, this specific choice of a textual presentation focusing on revision is at the same time a moral choice. This is because, for him, understanding the fluidity of

---

[122] For the fluid text edition of Melvilles's Typee, see: http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/melville/

language enables us to better understand social change. Furthermore, constructionist intentions to pin a text down fail to acknowledge that, as Bryant puts it, 'the past, too, is a fluid text that we revise as we desire' (2002: 174). Finally, he argues that the idea of a fluid text encourages a new kind of critical thinking, one that is based on difference, otherness, variation and change. This is where the fixation on the idea of having a stable text to achieve easy retrieval and unified reading experiences loses out to a discourse that focuses on the energies that drive text from version to version. In Bryant's words, 'by masking the energies of revision, it reduces our ability to historicize our reading, and, in turn, disempowers the citizen reader from gaining a fuller experience of the necessary elements of change that drive a democratic culture' (2002: 113).

Alongside Bryant's edition of Melville's *Typee*, another example of a practical experiment focusing upon the benefits of fluidity specifically for scholarly communication is the Liquid Publications (or *LiquidPub*) project.[123] As described by Casati, Giunchiglia, and Marchese (2007), this is a project that tries to bring into practice the idea of modularity as described previously. Focusing mainly on textbooks in the sciences, the aim of the project is to enable teachers to compose a customised and evolving book out of modular pre-composed content. This book will then be a 'multi-author' collection of materials on a given topic that can include different types of documents.

The *LiquidPub* project tries to cope with issues of authority and authorship in a liquid environment by making a distinction between versions and editions. Editions are solidifications of the liquid book, with stable and fixed content, which can be referred to, preserved, and made commercially available. Furthermore the project creates different roles for authors, from editors to collaborators, accompanied by an elaborate rights structure, with the possibility for authors to give away certain rights to their modular pieces whilst holding on to others. As a result, the *LiquidPub* project is very pragmatic, catering to the needs and demands of authors (mainly for the recognition of their moral rights), while at the same time trying to benefit from, and create efficiencies and modularity within, a fluid environment. In this way it offers authors a choice of different ways to distribute content, from completely open, to partially open, to completely closed books.

Introducing graduations of authorship such as editors and collaborators, as proposed in the work of Bryant and in the *LiquidPub* project, is one way to deal with multiple authorship or authorship in collaborative research or writing environments. However, as I showed in chapter 3, it does not address the problem of how to establish

---

[123] See: http://liquidpub.org/

authority in an environment where the contributions of a single author are difficult to trace back; or where content is created by anonymous users or by avatars; or in situations where there is no human author, but where the content is machine-generated. What becomes of the role of the editor or the selector as an authoritative figure when selections can be made redundant and choices altered and undone by mass-collaborative, multi-user remixes and mash-ups? The projects mentioned above are therefore not so much posing a challenge to authorship or questioning the authorship function as it is currently established, as they are merely applying this established function to smaller compartments of text and dividing them up accordingly.

Furthermore the concept of fluidity as described by Bryant, together with the notion of liquidity as used in the *LiquidPub* project, does not significantly disturb the idea of object-like thinking or stability within scholarly communication either. For Bryant, a fluid book edition is still made up of separate, different versions, while in the *LiquidPub* Project, which focuses mostly on an ethos of speed and efficiency, a liquid book is a customised combination of different recombinable documents. In this sense both projects adhere quite closely to the concept of modularity as described by Manovich (where culture is *made* modular), and therefore do not reach a fluid or liquid state in which the stability and fixity of a text is fundamentally reconsidered in a continual or processual manner. There is still the idea of the object (the module); however, it is smaller; compartmentalised. Witness the way both of these projects still hinge on the idea of extracted objects, of editions and versions, in the liquid project. For example, Bryant's analysis is focused not so much on creating fluidity or a fluid text—however impossible this might be—but on creating a network between more or less stable versions, whilst showcasing their revision history. He thus still makes a distinction between works and versions, neither seeing them as part of one extended work, nor giving them the status of separate works. In this way he keeps a hierarchical thinking alive: 'a version can never be revised into a different work because by its nature, revision begins with an original to which it cannot be unlinked unless through some form of amnesia we forget the continuities that link it to its parent. Put another way, a descendant is always a descendant, and no amount of material erasure can remove the chromosomal link' (Bryant 2002: 85). Texts here are not fluid, at least not in the sense of their being process-oriented; they are networked at the most. McKenzie Wark's terminology for his book *Gamertheory*—which Wark distinctively calls a 'networked book'— might therefore be more fitting and applicable in such cases, where a networked book, at

least in its wording, positions itself as being located more in between the ideal types of stability and fluidity.[124]

A final remark concerning the way in which these two projects theorise and bring into practice the fluid or liquid book: in both projects, texts are actively *made* modular or fluid by outside agents, by authors and editors. There is not a lot of consideration here of the inherent fluidity or liquidity that exists as part of the text or book's emergent materiality, in intra-action with the elements of what theorists such as Jerome McGann and D.F. McKenzie have called 'the social text'—which, in an extended version, is what underlies Bryant's concept of the fluid text. In the social text, human agents create fluidity through the creation of various instantiations of a text post-production. As McKenzie has put it: 'a book is never simply a remarkable object. Like every other technology, it is invariably the product of human agency in complex and highly volatile contexts' (1999). McKenzie, in his exploration of the social text, sought to highlight the importance of a wide variety of actors in a text's emergence and meaning giving, from printers to typesetters. He does so in order to argue against a narrow focus on a text's materiality or an author's intention. However, there is a lack of acknowledgement here of how the processual nature of the book comes about out of an interplay of agential processes of both a human and non-human nature.

Something similar can be seen in the work of Bryant, in that for him a fluid text is foremost fluid because it consists of various versions. Bryant wants to showcase material revision here, by authors, editors, or readers, among others. But this is a very specific—and humanist—understanding of the fluid text. For revision is, arguably, only one major source of textual variation or fluidity. In this sense, to provide some alternative examples, it is not the inherent emergent discursive-materiality of a text, nor the plurality of material (human or machinic) reading paths through a text, that make a text always already unstable, for Bryant. What does make a text fluid for him is the existence of multiple versions brought into play by human and authorial agents of some sort. This is related to his insistence on a hermeneutic context in which fluid texts are representations of extended and distributed forms of *intentionality*. As I will ask in what follows, would it not be more interesting to perceive of fluidity or the fluid text rather as a process that comes about out of the entanglement and performance of a plurality of agentic processes: material, discursive, technological, medial, human and non-human, intentional and non-intentional? From this

---

[124] See: http://www.futureofthebook.org/gamertheory2.0/?page_id=2. This refers mostly to GAM3R 7H30RY 1.1, which can be seen as, as stated on the website, a first stab at a new sort of "networked book," a book that actually contains the conversation it engenders, and which, in turn, engenders it (Wark 2007).

position, a focus on how cuts and boundaries are being enacted within processual texts and books, in an inherently emergent and ongoing manner, might offer a more inclusive strategy to deal with the complexity of a book's fluidity. This idea will be explored in more depth toward the end of this chapter when I take a closer look at Jerome McGann's theories of textual criticism.

6.2.1.3 The Archive

As discussed in chapter 3, remix as a practice has the potential to raise questions for the idea of authorship as well as for the related concepts of authority and legitimacy. For example, do moral and ownership rights of an author extend to derivative works? And who can be held responsible for the creation of a work when authorship is increasingly difficult to establish in music mash-ups or in data feeds, where users receive updated information from a large variety of sources? As I touched upon previously, one of the suggestions made in discussions of remix to cope with the problem of authorship in a digital context has involved shifting the focus from the author to the *selector, moderator* or *curator*. Similarly, in cases where authorship is hard to establish or even absent, *the archive* could potentially establish authority. Navas examined both of these notions as potential alternatives to established forms of authority in an environment that relies on continual updates and where process is preferred to product. Navas stresses, however, that keeping a critical distance from the text is necessary to make knowledge possible and to establish authority. As authorship has been replaced by sampling—and 'sampling allows for the death of the author', according to Navas, as the origin of a tiny fragment of a musical composition becomes hard to trace—he argues that the critical position in remix is taken in by s/he who selects the sources to be remixed. However, in mashups, this critical distance increasingly becomes difficult to uphold. As Navas puts it, 'this shift is beyond anyone's control, because the flow of information demands that individuals embed themselves within the actual space of critique, and use constant updating as a critical tool' (2010).

To deal with the constantly changing present, Navas turns to history as a source of authority: to give legitimacy to fluidity retrospectively by means of the archive. The ability to search the archive gives the remix both its reliability as well as its market value, Navas points out. By recording information it becomes meta-information, information that is static, available when needed and always in the same form. Retrospectively, this recorded state, this staticity of information, is what makes theory and philosophical thinking possible. As Navas claims, 'the archive, then, legitimates constant updates allegorically. The database becomes a delivery device of authority in potentia: when needed, call upon it to

verify the reliability of accessed material; but until that time, all that is needed is to know that such archives exist' (2010).

At the same time Navas is ambivalent about the archive as a search engine. He argues that in many ways it is a truly egalitarian space—able to answer 'all queries possible'—but one that is easily commercialised too. What does it mean when Google harvests the data we collect and our databases are predominantly built upon social media sites? In this respect we are also witnessing an increasing rise of information flow control (Navas 2010).

The importance of Navas' theorising in this context lies in the possibilities his thinking offers for the book and the knowledge system we have created around it. First of all, he explores the archive as a way of both stabilising flow and of creating a form of authority out of fluidity and the continual updating of information. Additionally, he proposes the role of s/he who selects, curates or moderates as an alternative to that of the author. In a way one can argue that this model of agency is already quite akin to that found in scholarly communication, where selection of resources and referring to other sources, next to collection building, is part of the research and writing process of most academics. Manovich argues for a similar potential, namely the potential of knowledge producers to modularise data and make it adaptable within multiple media and various platforms, mirroring scientific achievements with standardised meta-data and the semantic web.

These are all interesting steps to think beyond the status quo of the book, challenging scholarly thinking to experiment with notions of process and sharing, and to let go of idealised ideas of authorship. Nonetheless, the archive as a tool poses some serious problems with respect to legitimating fluidity retrospectively and providing the necessary critical distance, as Navas positions it. For the archive as such does not provide any legitimation but is built upon the authority and the commands that constitute it. This is what Derrida calls 'the politics of the archive' (1996). What is kept and preserved is connected to power structures, to the interests of those who decide what to collect (and on what grounds) and the capacity to interpret the archive and its content when called upon for legitimation claims later on. The question of authority does not so much lie with the archive, but with who has access to the archive and with who gets to constitute it. At the same time, although it has no real power of its own to legitimize fluidity, the archive is used as an objectified extension of the power structures that control it. Furthermore, as Derrida shows, archiving is an act of externalisation, of trying to create stable abstracts (1996: 12). A still further critique of the archive is that, rather than functioning as a legitimising device,

its focus is first and foremost on objectification, commercialisation and consummation. In the archive, knowledge streams are turned into knowledge objects when we order our research into consumable bits of data. As Navas has shown, the search engine, based on the growing digital archive we are collectively building, is Google's bread and butter. By initiating large projects like *Google Books*, for instance, Google aims to make the world's archive digitally available or to digitise the 'world's knowledge'—or at least, that part of it that Google finds appropriate to digitise (i.e. mostly works in American and British libraries, and thus mostly English language works). In Google's terms, this means making the information they deem most relevant—based on the specific programming of their algorithms—freely *searchable*, and Google partners with many libraries worldwide to make this service available. However, most of the time only snippets of poorly digitised information are freely available, and for full-text functionality, or more contextualised information, books must be acquired via *Google Play Books* (formerly *Google Editions*) for instance, the company's ebook store. This makes it clear how search is fully embedded within a commercial framework in this environment.

The interpretation of the archive is therefore a fluctuating one and the stability it seems to offer is, arguably, relatively selective and limited. As Derrida shows, the digital offers new and different ways of archiving, and thus also provides a different vision on what it constitutes and archives (both from a producer as well as from a consumer perspective) (1996: 17). Furthermore, the archiving possibilities also determine the structure of the content that will be archived as it is becoming. The archive thus *produces* just as much as it *records* the event. In this respect the archive is highly performative: it produces information, creates knowledge, and decides how we determine what knowledge will be. And the way the archive is constructed is very much a consideration under institutional and practical constraints. For example, what made the *Library of Congress* decide to preserve and archive all public Twitter feeds starting from its inception in 2006, and why only Twitter and not other similar social media platforms? The relationship of the archive to scholarship is a mutual one, as they determine one another. A new scholarly paradigm therefore also asks for and creates a new vision of the archive. This is why, as Derrida states, 'the archive is never closed. It opens out of the future' (1996: 45).[125] Therefore the archive does not stabilise or guarantee any concept.

---

[125] Derrida gives the example of Freud's archive and how, with the coming of digital media, a new vision on what constitutes an archive comes into being, which in turn will create a new vision of psychoanalysis.

Foucault acknowledges this fluidity of the archive, where he sees it as a general system of both the formation *and* transformation of statements. However, the archive also structures our way of perceiving the world, as we operate and see the world from within the archive. As Foucault states: 'it is from within these rules that we speak' (1969: 146). The archive can thus be seen as governing us, and this again directly opposes the idea of critical distance that Navas wants to achieve with his notion of the archive, as we can never be outside of it. Matthew Kirschenbaum argues along similar lines when he discusses the preservation of digital objects, pointing out that their preservation is '*logically inseparable* from the act of their creation (emphasis in the original)' (2013). He explains this as follows:

> The lag between creation and preservation collapses completely, since a digital object may only ever be said to be preserved *if* it is accessible, and each individual access creates the object anew. One can, in a very literal sense, *never* access the "same" electronic file twice, since each and every access constitutes a distinct instance of the file that will be addressed and stored in a unique location in computer memory. (Kirschenbaum 2013)

This means that every time we access a digital object, we duplicate it, we copy it. And this is exactly why, in our strategies of conservation, every time we access a file we also (re)create these objects anew over and over again. Critical distance here is impossible when we are actively involved in the archive's functioning. As Kirschenbaum states, 'the act of retrieval precipitates the temporary reassembling of 0's and 1's into a meaningful sequence that can be decoded by software and hardware' (2013). Here the agency of the archive, of the software and hardware, also becomes apparent. Kirschenbaum refers to Wolfgang Ernst's notion of *archaeography*, which denotes forms of machinic or medial writing, or as Ernst puts it, 'expressions of the machines themselves, functions of their very mediatic logic' (2011: 242). At this point archives become 'active "archaeologists" of knowledge' (Ernst 2011: 239), or as Kirschenbaum puts it, 'the archive writes itself' (2013).

Let me reiterate that the above critique is not focused on doing away with either the archive or the creation of (open access) archives: archives play an essential role in making scholarly research accessible, preserving it, adding metadata and making it harvestable. However, I do want scholars to be aware of the structures at play behind the archive, and I want to put question marks at both its perceived stability, as well as at its (objective) authority and legitimacy.

6.2.2 The Limits of Fluidity and Stability

The theories and experiments described above in relation to modularity, fluid and liquid publications, new forms of authorship and the archive, offer valuable insights into some of the important problems, as well as some of the possibilities, with knowledge production in a digital context. I will however argue that most of the solutions presented above when it comes to engaging with fluidity in online environments still rely on print-based answers (favouring established forms of fixity and stability). The concepts and projects I have described have not actively explored the potential of networked forms of communication to truly disrupt or rethink our conventional understandings of the autonomous human subject, the author, the text, and fixity in relation to the printed book. Although they take on the challenge of finding alternative ways of establishing authority and authorship in order to cope with an increasingly fluid environment, they still very much rely on the print-based concept of stability and on the knowledge and power systems built around it. In many ways they thus remain bound to the essentialisms of this object-oriented scholarly communication system. The concepts of the archive, of the idea of the selector or moderator, of modularity, and of fluidity and liquidity neither fundamentally challenge nor form a real critical alternative to our established notions of authorship, authority and stability in a digital context.

As I said before, my critique of these notions is not intended as a condemnation of their experimental potential. On the contrary, I support these explorations of fluidity strongly, for all the reasons I have outlined here. However, instead of focussing on reproducing print-based forms of fixture and stability in a digital context, as the concepts and projects mentioned above still end up doing, I want to examine these practices of stabilising, and the value systems on which they are based. Books are an emergent property. Instead of trying to cope with the fluidity offered by the digital medium by using the same disciplinary regime we are used to from a print context, to fix and cut down the digital medium, I want to argue that we should direct our attention more toward the cuts we make in, and as part of our research, and on the reasons *why* we make them (both in a print and digital context) as part of our intra-active becoming with the book.

As I made clear in my introduction to this section, instead of emphasising the dualities of fixity/fluidity, closed/open, bound/unbound, and print/digital, I want to shift attention to the issue of the cut; or better said, to the performative agential processes of cutting. How can we, through the cut, take responsibility for the boundaries we enact and that are being enacted? How can we do this whilst simultaneously enabling responsiveness

by promoting forms and practices of cutting that allow the book to remain emergent and processual (i.e. that do not tie it down or bind it to fixed and determined meanings, practices and institutions), and that also examine and disturb the humanist and print-based notions that continue to accompany the book?

Rather than seeing the book as either a stable or a processual entity, a focus on the agential processes that bring about book objects, on the constructions and value systems we adhere to as part of our daily scholarly practices, might be key in understanding the performative nature of the book as an on-going effect of these agential cuts. In the next section I therefore want to return to remix theory, this time exploring it from the perspective of the cut. I want to analyse the potential of remix as part of a discourse of critical resistance against essentialism to question humanist notions such as quality, fixity and authorship/authority; notions which continue to structure humanities scholarship, and on which a great deal of the print-based academic institution continues to rest. I will argue that within a posthumanist performative framework remix can be a means to intervene in and rethink humanities knowledge production, specifically with respect to the political-economy of book publishing and the commodification of scholarship into knowledge objects. I will illustrate this at the end of the next section with an analysis of two book publishing projects that have experimented with remix and reuse.

6.3 Remix and the Cut: Cutting Scholarship Together/Apart

Cutting can be understood as an essential aspect of the way reality at large is structured and provided with meaning. I want to focus on how remix specifically, as a form of 'differential cutting', can be a means of intervening in and rethinking humanities knowledge production—in particular with respect to the political-economy of book publishing and the commodification of scholarship into knowledge objects—thus opening up and enabling a potential alternative open-ended politics of the book.

In this section I will provide an analysis of how there has been a tendency within remix studies to theorise the cut and the practice of cutting from a *representationalist* framework. At the same time, my analysis will be juxtaposed and entangled with a

diffractive[126] reading of a selection of critical theory, feminist new materialist and media studies texts that specifically focus on the act of cutting from a *performative* perspective, to explore what forms a posthumanist vision of remix and the cut might take. I will then explore how the potential of the cut and, relating to that, how the politics inherent in the act of cutting, can be applied to scholarly book publishing in an affirmative way. How can we account for our own ethical entanglements as scholars in the becoming of the book?[127] Based on Foucault's concept of 'the apparatus', as well as on Barad's posthumanist expansion of this concept,[128] I will argue that the scholarly book currently functions as an apparatus that cuts the processes of scholarly creation and becoming into authors, scholarly objects and an observed world separate from these and us. Drawing attention to the processual and unstable nature of the book instead, I will focus on the book's critical and political potential to question these cuts and to disturb these existing scholarly practices and institutions.

After analysing how the book functions as an apparatus, a material-discursive formation or assemblage which enacts cuts, I will explore two book publishing projects— Open Humanities Press's *Living Books about Life* and Mark Amerika's *remixthebook*—that have tried to re-think and re-perform this apparatus by specifically taking responsibility for the cuts they make in an effort to 'cut-well' (Kember and Zylinska 2012). I will end this chapter by exploring how these projects have established an alternative politics and ethics of the cut that is open to change, whilst simultaneously analysing what some of their potential shortcomings are.

6.3.1 The Material-Discursive Cut within a Performative Framework

As I have shown above, Navas has written extensively about cut/copy paste as a practice and concept within remixed music and art. For Navas, remix as a process is deeply embedded in a cultural and linguistic framework, where he sees it as a form of discourse at play across culture (2012: 3). This focus on remix as a *cultural variable* or as a form of

---

[126] See chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of diffraction as a methodology.

[127] By engaging in a diffractive reading, this is a performative text too. This means that it is not only a piece of writing on the topic of remix and on 'cutting things together and apart', but through its methodology it also affirmatively 'remixes' a variety of theories from seemingly disparate fields, locations, times and contexts. This might enable us to understand both the practice and concept of the cut and the entangled theories themselves better. This is akin to what the net artist Mark Amerika calls 'performing theory'. As a 'remixologist', Amerika sees data as a renewable energy source where ideas, theories and samples become his source material. By creating and performing remixes of this source material, which is again based on a mash-up of other source material, a collaborative interweaving of different texts, thinkers and artists emerges, one that celebrates and highlights the communal aspect of creativity in both art and academia (Amerika 2011).

[128] In which apparatuses are conceptualised as specific material configurations that effect an agential cut between, and hence produce, subject and object (Barad 2007: 148).

cultural *representation* seems to be one of the dominant modes of analysis within remix studies as a field.[129] Based on his discursive framework of remix as representation and repetition (following Jacques Attali), Navas makes a distinction between copying and cutting. He sees cutting (into something physical) as materially altering the world, while copying, as a specific form of cutting, keeps the integrity of the original intact. Navas explores how the concept of sampling was altered under the influence of changes in mechanical reproduction, where sampling as a term started to take on the meaning of copying as the act of taking, not from the world, but from an archive of representations of the world. Sampling thus came to be understood culturally as a meta-activity (Navas 2012: 12). In this sense Navas distinguishes between material sampling from the world (which is disturbing) and sampling from representations (which is a form of meta-representation that keeps the original intact). The latter is a form of cultural citation—where one cites in terms of discourse—and this citation is strictly conceptual (Navas 2012: 11–16).

It can be beneficial here to apply the insights of new materialist theorists to explore what their 'material-discursive' and performative visions of cutting and the cut are able to contribute to the idea of remix as a critical affirmative *doing*. Here I want to extend remix beyond a *cultural* logic operating at the level of *representations*, by seeing it as an always already *material* practice that disturbs and intervenes in the world. As Barad states, for instance: 'the move toward performative alternatives to representationalism shifts the focus from questions of correspondence between descriptions and reality (e.g. do they mirror nature or culture?) to matters of practices/doings/actions' (2003: 802). Here remixes as representations are not just mirrors or allegories *of* the world, but direct interventions *in* the world. Therefore, both copying and cutting are performative, in the sense that they change the world; they alter and disturb it.[130] Following this reasoning, copying is not ontologically distinct from cutting, as there is no distinction between discourse and the real world:

---

[129] For example, Henry Jenkins and Owen Gallagher talk about remix *cultures* and Lessig refers to remix as a R/W (Read/Write) *culture*, although they all see these cultures as embedded in technology and encapsulated by powers of material economic production (Lessig 2008, Jenkins 2013, Jenkins and Gallagher 2008). An exception is Elisabeth Nesheim who in her talk *Remixed Culture/Nature* argues for a different conception of remix, one that goes beyond seeing it as a cultural concept and explores principles of remix in nature. Although still starting from a position of *human agency*, she talks about bio-engineering as a form of genetic remixing, and about bio-artists who remix nature/culture as a form of critique and reflection (Nesheim 2009).
[130] See also Matthew Kirschenbaum's arguments on how digital copying = preservation = creation, as discussed in the previous section.

language and matter are entangled, where matter is always already discursive and vice versa.[131]

As was explored in more depth in my first chapter, Barad's material-discursive vision of the cut focuses on the complex relationship between the social and the non-social, moving beyond the binary distinction between reality and representation by replacing *representationalism* with a theory of *posthumanist performativity*. Her form of realism is not about representing an independent reality outside of us, but about performatively intervening, intra-acting with and as part of the world (Barad 2007: 37). For Barad, intentions are attributable to complex networks of agencies, both human and non-human, functioning within a certain context of material conditions (2007: 23). Where in reality agencies and differences are entangled phenomena, what Barad calls agential cuts cleave things together and apart, creating subjects and objects by enacting determinate boundaries, properties, and meanings. These separations that we create also enact specific inclusions and exclusions, insides and outsides. Barad argues that it is important to take responsibility for the incisions that we make, where being accountable for the entanglements of self and other that we weave also means we need to take responsibility for the exclusions we create (2007: 393). Although not enacted directly by us, but rather by the larger material arrangement of which we are a part (cuts are made from the inside), we are still accountable to the cuts we help to enact: there are new possibilities and ethical obligations to act (cut) at every moment (Barad 2007: 178–179). In this sense, 'cuts do violence but also open up and rework the agential conditions of possibility' (Barad et al. 2012). It matters which incisions are enacted, where different cuts enact different materialised becomings. As Barad states: 'It's all a matter of where we place the cut. (…) what is at stake is accountability to marks on bodies in their specificity by attending to how different cuts produce differences that matter' (2007: 348).

6.3.1.1 Cutting Well

Kember and Zylinska explore the notion of the cut as an inevitable conceptual and material interruption in the process of mediation, focusing specifically on *where* to cut in so far as it relates to *how to cut well*. They point out that the cut is both a technique and an ethical imperative, in which cutting is an act necessary to create meaning, to be able to say something about things (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 27). On a more ontological level they

---

[131] I am talking here about the fact that there is no onto-epistemological distinction between cutting and copying. From an ethical perspective, however, one might argue, as Navas has done extensively, that making a distinction between referencing ideas in conceptual and material form, might help us in our aid towards copyright reform (2011).

argue that 'cutting is fundamental to our emergence in the world, as well as our differentiation from it' (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 168). Here they see a similarity with Derrida's notion of 'différance', a term that functions as an incision, where it stabilises the flow of mediation into things, objects, and subjects (Kember and Zylinska 2012: xvi).[132] Through the act of cutting we shape our temporally stabilised selves (we become individuated), as well as actively forming the world we are part of and the matter surrounding us (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 168). Kember and Zylinska are specifically interested in the ethics of the cut. If we inevitably have to intervene in the process of becoming (to shape it and give it meaning), how is it that we can cut well? How can we engage with a process of differential cutting, as they call it, enabling space for the vitality of becoming? To enable a 'productive engagement with the cut', Kember and Zylinska are interested in performative and affirmative acts of cutting. They use the example of photography to explore 'this imperative [which] entails a call to make cuts where necessary, while not forgoing the duration of things' (Kember and Zylinska 2012: 81). Cutting becomes a technique, not of rendering or representing the world, but of managing it, of ordering and creating it, of giving it meaning. The act of cutting is crucial, as Kember and Zylinska put it, to our 'becoming-with and becoming-different from the world', by shaping the universe and shaping ourselves in it (2012: 75). Through cutting we enact both separation and relationality where an 'incision' becomes an ethical imperative, a 'decision', one which is not made by a *humanist, liberal subject* but by *agentic processes*. For Kember and Zylinska, a vitalist and affirmative way of 'cutting well' thus leaves space for duration, it does not close down creativity or 'foreclose on the creative possibility of life' (2012: 82).

6.3.2 The Affirmative Cut in Remix

To explore further the imperative to *cut well*, I want to return to remix theory and practice, where the potential of the cut and of remix as subversion and affirmative logic, and of appropriation as a political tool and a form of critical production, has been explored extensively. In particular, I want to examine what forms a more performative vision of remix might take to again examine how this might help us in reconstructing an alternative politics of the book. In what sense do remix theory and practice also function, in the words of Barad, as 'specific agential practices/intra-actions/performances through which specific exclusionary boundaries are enacted' (2008: 816)? Navas, for instance, conceptualises remix as a vitalism: as a formless force, capable of taking on any form and medium. In this

---

[132] Akin to what the sociologist and feminist theorist Vicki Kirby calls 'the cut of difference' (2011: 101).

vitalism lies the power of remix to create something new out of something already existing, by reconfiguring it. In this sense, as Navas states, 'to remix is to compose'. However, remix, through these reconfiguring and juxtaposing gestures, also has the potential to question and critique, becoming an act that interrogates 'authorship, creativity, originality, and the economics that supported the discourse behind these terms as stable cultural forms' (Navas 2012: 61). However, Navas warns of the potential of remix to be both what he calls 'regressive and reflexive', where the openness of its politics means that it can also be easily co-opted, where 'sampling and principles of Remix … have been turned into the preferred tools for consumer culture' (2012: 160). A regressive remix, then, is a re-combination of something that is already familiar and has proved to be successful for the commercial market. A reflexive remix on the other hand is re-generative, as it allows for constant change (Navas 2012: 92–93). Here we can find the potential seeds of resistance in remix, where as a type of intervention, Navas states it has the potential to question conventions, 'to rupture the norm in order to open spaces of expression for marginalized communities', and, if implemented well, can become a tool of autonomy (2012: 109).

One of the realms of remix practice in which an affirmative position of critique and politics has been explored in depth, whilst taking clear responsibility for the material-discursive entanglements it enacts, is in feminist remix culture, most specifically in vidding and political remix video. Francesca Coppa defines vidding as 'a grassroots art form in which fans re-edit television or film into music videos called "vids" or "fanvids"' (2011: 123). By cutting and selecting certain bits of videos and juxtaposing them with others, the practice of vidding, beyond or as part of a celebratory fan work, has the potential to become a critical textual engagement as well as a re-cutting and recomposing (cutting-together) of the world differently. As Kristina Busse and Alexis Lothian state, vidding practically takes apart 'the ideological frameworks of film and TV by unmaking those frameworks technologically' (2011: 141). Coppa sees vidding as an act of both bringing together and taking apart: 'what a vidder cuts out can be just as important as what she chooses to include' (2011: 124). The act of cutting is empowering to vidders in Coppa's vision, where 'she who cuts', is better than 'she who is cut into pieces' (2011: 128).

Video artist Elisa Kreisinger, who makes queer video remixes of TV series such as *Sex and the City* and *Mad Men*, states that political remix videos harvest more of an element of critique in order to correct certain elements (such as gender norms) in media works, without necessarily having to be fan works. As Kreisinger argues, 'I see remixing as the rebuilding and reclaiming of once-oppressive images into a positive vision of just society'

(2010). Africana studies scholar Renee Slajda is interested in how Kreisinger's remix videos can be seen as part of a feminist move beyond criticism, where Slajda is interested in how remix artists turn critical consciousness into a creative practice aiming to 'reshape the media—and the world—as they would like to see it' (2013). For Kreisinger, too, political remix video is not only about creating 'more diverse and affirming narratives of representation' (2011). It also has the potential to effect actual change (although, like Navas, she is aware that remix is also often co-opted by corporations to reinforce stereotypes). Remix challenges dominant notions of ownership and copyright as well as the author/reader and owner/user binaries that support these notions. By challenging these notions and binaries, remix videos also challenge the production and political economy of media (Kreisinger 2011). As video artist Martin Leduc argues, 'we may find that remix can offer a means not only of responding to the commercial media industry, but of replacing it' (2011).

6.3.3 The Agentic Cut in Remix

Together with providing valuable affirmative contributions to the imperative to cut-well, and to reconfiguring boundaries, remix has also been important with regard to rethinking and re-performing agency and authorship in art and academia. In this context it critiques the liberal humanist subject that underpins most academic performances of the author, whilst exploring more posthumanist and entangled notions of agency in the form of agentic processes in which agency is more distributed. Paul Miller writes about flows and cuts in his artist's book *Rhythm Science.* For Miller, sampling is a doing, a creating with found objects, but this also means that we need to take responsibility for its genealogy, for those 'who speak through you' (2004: 037). Miller's practical and critical engagement with remix and the cut is especially interesting when it comes to his conceptualising of identity, where—as in the new materialist thinking of Barad—he does not presuppose a pre-given identity or self, but states that our identity comes about *through* our incisions, the act of cutting shaping and creating our selves. The collage becomes my identity, he states (Miller 2004: 024). For Miller, agency is thus not related to our identity as creators or artists, but to the flow or becoming, which always comes first. We are so immersed in and defined by the data that surrounds us on a daily basis that 'we are entering an era of multiplex consciousness', Miller argues (2004: 061).

Where Miller talks about creating different persona as shareware, Amerika is interested in the concept of performing theory and critiquing individuality and the self

through notions such as 'flux personae', establishing the self as an 'artist-medium' and a 'post-production medium' (2011: 26). Amerika sees performing theory as a creative process, in which pluralities of conceptual personae are created that explore their becoming. Through these various personae, Amerika wants to challenge the 'unity of the self' (2011: 28). In this vision the artist becomes a medium through which language, in the form of prior inhabited data, flows. When artists write their words they don't feel like their *own* words but like a 'compilation of sampled artefacts' from the artist's co-creators and collaborators. By becoming an artist-medium, Amerika argues that 'the self per se disappears in a sea of source material' (2011: 47). By exploring this idea of the networked author concept or of the writer as an artist-medium, Amerika contemplates what could be a new (posthuman) author function for the digital age, with the artist as a post-production medium 'becoming instrument' and 'becoming electronics' (2011: 58).

6.4 Re-Cutting the Scholarly Apparatus

What can we take away from this transversal reading of feminist new materialism, critical and media theory, and remix studies, with respect to cutting as an affirmative material-discursive practice—especially where this reading concerns how remix and the cut can performatively critique the established humanist notions such as authorship, authority, quality and fixity underlying scholarly book publishing? How can this reading trigger alternatives to the political economy of book publishing, with the latter's current focus on ownership and copyright and the book as a consumer object? This (re-)reading of remix might pose potential problems for our idea of critique and ethics when notions of stability, objectivity and distance tend to disappear. The question is, then: how can we make ethical, critical cuts in our scholarship whilst at the same time promoting a politics of the book that is open and responsible to change, difference and the inevitable exclusions that result?

To explore this, we need to analyse the way the book functions as an apparatus. The concept of 'dispositif' or 'apparatus' originates from Foucault's later work.[133] As a concept, it went beyond 'discursive formation' connecting discourse more closely with material practices (Foucault 1980: 194–195). The apparatus is the system of relations that can be established between these disparate elements. However, an apparatus for Foucault is not a stable and solid 'thing' but a shifting set of relations inscribed in a play of power, one

---

[133] First appearing as a concept in Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1976).

that is strategic and responds to an 'urgent need', a need to control (1980: 196).[134] Deleuze's more fluid outlook sees the apparatus as an assemblage capable of escaping attempts of subversion and control. He is interested in the variable creativity that arises out of dispositifs (in their actuality), or in the ability of the apparatus to transform itself, where we as human beings belong to dispositifs and act within them (Deleuze 1992). Barad, meanwhile, connects the notion of the cut to her posthuman Bohrian concept of the apparatus. As part of our intra-actions, apparatuses, in the form of certain material arrangements or practices, effect an agential cut between subject and object, which are not separate but come into being through these intra-actions (Barad 2007: 141–142). Apparatuses, for Barad, are therefore open-ended and dynamic material-discursive practices, articulating concepts and things (2007: 334).

In what way has the apparatus of the book—consisting of an entanglement of relationships between, among other things, authors, books, the outside world, readers, the material production and political economy of book publishing and the discursive formation of scholarship—executed its power relations through cutting in a certain way? In the present scholarly book publishing constellation, it has mostly operated via a logic of incision: one that favours neat separations between books, authors (as human creators) and readers; that cuts out fixed scholarly book objects of an established quality and originality; and that simultaneously pastes this system together via a system of strict ownership and copyright rules. The manner in which the apparatus of the book cuts at the present moment, does not take into full consideration the processual aspects of the book, research and authorship. Neither does the current print-based apparatus explore in depth the possibilities to re-cut our research results in such a way as to experiment with collaboration, updates, versionings and multimedia enhancements in a digital context. The dominant book-apparatus instead enforces a political economy that keeps books and scholarship closed-off from the majority of the world's potential readers, functioning in an increasingly commercial environment (albeit one fuelled by public money), which makes it very difficult to publish specialised scholarship lacking marketable promise. The dominant book-apparatus thus does not take into consideration how the humanist discourse on authorship, quality and originality that continues to underlie the humanities, perpetuates this publishing system in a material sense. Nor does it analyse how the specific print based materiality of the book and the publishing institutions that have grown around it have

---

[134] In Agamben's vision the apparatus is an all-oppressive formation, one that human beings stand outside of. Agamben here creates new binaries between inside/outside and material/discursive that might not be helpful for the posthuman vision of the apparatus I want to explore here (2009: 14).

likewise been incremental in shaping the discursive formation of the humanities and scholarship as a whole.

Following this chapter's diffractively collected insights on remix and the cut, I want to again underscore the need to see and understand the book as a process of becoming, as an entanglement of plural (human and non-human) agencies. The separations or cuts that have been forced out of these entanglements by specific material-discursive practices have created inclusions and exclusions, book objects and author subjects, both controlling positions.[135] Books as apparatuses are thus performative, they are reality shaping. Not enough responsibility is taken—not by us as scholars, nor by publishers nor the academic system as a whole—for the cuts that are enacted with and through the book as an apparatus. We need to acknowledge the roles we all play and the responsibility we have in shaping the way we publish research, where now most humanities research ends up as a conventional, bound, printed (or increasingly hybrid) and single authored book, published by an established publisher and disseminated to mainly university libraries. However, we also need to take into consideration that our approved, dominant scholarly practices—which include the (printed) book—are simultaneously affecting us as scholars and the way we act in and describe the world and/or our object of study, including as Hayles has argued, the way we are 'conceptualizing projects, implementing research programs, designing curricula, and educating students' (2012: 1). It is important to acknowledge our entangled nature in all this, where scholars need to take more responsibility for the practices they enact and enforce and the cuts that they make, especially in their own book publishing practices.

6.4.1 Open-Ended Scholarly Re-Cutting

However, following the insights of Foucault, Deleuze and Barad as discussed above, the book-apparatus, of which we are a part, also offers new 'lines of flight' or opportunities to recut and (re)perform the book and scholarship, as well as ourselves, differently. *Living Books about Life* and *remixthebook* are two book-publishing projects that have explored the potential of the cut and remix for an affirmative politics of publishing, to challenge our object-oriented and modular systems. In the analysis of these projects that follows, I want

---

[135] See, for example, the way the PhD student as a discoursing subject is being (re)produced by the dissertation and by the dominant discourses and practices accompanying it (Adema 2013).

to explore in what sense they have been able to promote, through their specific cuts, an open-ended politics of the book that enables duration and difference.[136]

6.4.1.1 Remixthebook

At the beginning of August 2011, Mark Amerika launched remixthebook.com, a website designed to serve as an online companion to his new print volume, *remixthebook* (2011). Amerika is a multi-disciplinary artist, theorist and writer, who's various personas[137] offer him the possibility of experimenting with hypertext fiction and net.art as well as with more academic forms of theory and artist's writings, and to do so from a plurality of perspectives.[138]

Remixthebook is a collection of multimedia writings that explore the remix as a cultural phenomenon by themselves referencing and mashing-up curated selections of earlier theory, avant-garde and art writings on remix, collage and sampling. It consists of a printed book and an accompanying website that functions as a platform for a collaboration between artists and theorists exploring practice-based research (Amerika 2011: xiv–xv). The platform features multimedia remixes from over 25 international artists and theorists who were invited to contribute a remix to the project site based on selected sample material of the printed book. Amerika questions the bound nature of the printed book and its fixity and authority, by bringing together this community of diverse practitioners, performing and discussing the theories and texts presented in the book via video, audio and text-based remixes published on the website—opening the book and its source material up for continuous multimedia re-cutting. Amerika also challenges dominant ideas of authorship by playing with personas and by drawing from a variety of remixed source material in his book, as well as by directly involving his remix community as collaborators on the project.

For Amerika, then, the *remixthebook* project is not a traditional form of scholarship. Indeed, it is not even a book in the first instance. As he states in the book's introduction, it should rather be seen as 'a hybridized publication and performance art project that appears in both print and digital forms' (Amerika 2011: xi). Amerika applies a form of patch or

---

[136] I have contributed texts/books/remixes to both projects and my analysis underneath is thus partially written from a participant's perspective.

[137] For instance, as remix artist and author, and as professor of Art and Art History at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

[138] Amerika wrote the hypertext trilogy *GRAMMATRON, PHON:E:ME* and *FILMTEXT* and founded one of the oldest online net.art networks, *Alt-X*, in 1992.

collage writing[139] in the 12 essays that make up *remixthebook*. He also endeavours to develop a new form of new media writing, one that constitutes a crossover between the scholarly and the artistic, and between theory and poetry, mixing these different modalities. For all that, Amerika's project has the potential to change scholarly communication in a manner that goes *beyond* merely promoting a more fluid form of new media writing. What is particularly interesting about his hybrid project, both from the print book side and from the platform network performance angle, is the explicit connections Amerika makes through the format of the remix to previous theories, and to those artists/theorists who are currently working in and theorising the realm of digital art, humanities and remix. At the same time, *remixthebook* the website functions as a powerful platform for collaboration between artists and theorists who are exploring the same realm, celebrating the kind of practice-based research Amerika applauds (Amerika 2011: xiv–xv). By creating and performing remixes of Amerika's source material that is again based on a mash-up of other sources, a collaborative interweaving of different texts, thinkers and artists emerges, one that celebrates and highlights the communal aspect of creativity in both art and academia.

However, a discrepancy remains visible between Amerika's aim to create a commons of renewable source material along with a platform on which everyone (amateurs and experts alike) can remix his and others' source material, and the specific choices Amerika makes and the outlets he chooses to fulfil this aim. For instance, *remixthebook* is published as a traditional printed book (in paperback and hardcover); more importantly, it is not published on an open access basis, a publishing model which would make it far easier to remix and reuse Amerika's material by copying and pasting directly from the web or a PDF, for instance.

Amerika in many ways tries to evade the bounded nature of the printed edition by creating this community of people remixing the theories and texts presented in the book. He does so not only via the remixes that are published on the accompanying website, but also via the platform's blog and the *remixthebook* Twitter feed to which new artists and thinkers are asked to contribute on a weekly basis. However, here again, the website is not openly available for everyone to contribute to. The remixes have been selected or curated by Amerika along with his fellow artist and co-curator Rick Silva, and the artists and theorists contributing to the blog and Twitter as an extension of the project have also been

---

[139] Patch or collage writing, consisting of disconnected bits of writing pasted together in one work or collage, is relatively common in works of remix and appropriation art and theory, and is explored in Jonathan Lethem's essay 'The ecstasy of influence' (2007), David Shield's *Reality Hunger* (2011), and Paul D. Miller's *Rhythm Science* (2004) It is a practice that can be traced at least as far back as the cut-up methods applied by William Boroughs and the Dadaists.

selected by Amerika's editorial team. Even though people are invited to contribute to the project and platform, then, it is not openly accessible to everyone. Furthermore, although the remixes and blogposts are available and accessible on the website, they are themselves not available to remix, as they all fall under the website's copyright regime, which is licensed under a traditional 'all rights reserved' copyright. Given all the possibilities such a digital platform could potentially offer, the question remains as to how much Amerika has really put the source material 'out there' to create a 'commons of renewable source material' for others to 'remix the book' (Amerika 2011: xv).

Notwithstanding the fact that *remixthebook* is based on selections of manipulated and mashed-up source material from all kinds of disparate backgrounds, and to that extent challenges the idea of individual creativity, originality and authorship, this project, for all its experimental potentiality, also draws on some quite conventional notions of authorship. Theoretically, Amerika challenges such ideas by playing with different personas and by drawing on a variety of source material, which he proceeds to remix in his book. Practically, however, Amerika is still acting very much as a traditional humanist author of his book, of his curated collection of material. Amerika takes responsibility for the project when he signs his name on the cover of the book.[140] He is the book's originator in the sense that he has created an authentic product by selecting and re-writing the material. Moreover, he seeks attribution for this endeavour (where it is copyrighted all rights reserved © Mark Amerika), and wants to receive the necessary credit for this work—a monograph published by an established university press (University of Minnesota Press)— in the context of the artistic and scholarly reputation economies. Amerika and co-curator Rick Silva are also the authors or curators of the accompanying website of remixes— similarly copyrighted with a traditional license—as they commissioned the remixes. Furthermore, all the remixes, which are again based on a variety of remixed (and often unattributed) source material, are attributed to the participating remixers (thus performing the function of quite traditional authors), complete with their bios and artist's statements. In spite of its experimental aims related to new forms of authorship, remix and openness, it seems that practically the cuts that have been enacted and performed as part of the

---

[140] Derrida remarks in his discussion of the significance of the signature that, although we cannot perceive it as a literal stand-in for an authentic, and with that, authoritative source, it does however function as and implies both the presence and the non-presence of the signing subject. Derrida argues for a non-essentialist notion of the signature where the singularity of the event of signing is maintained (and with that the presence of the subject is maintained) in what Derrida calls a past and a future now. Through the signature as a performative act the singularity of the original signing event is thus forever maintained in the signature, and becomes iterative in every copy (Derrida 1985).

remixthebook project still adhere for a large part to our established humanist and print-based scholarly practices and institutions.

6.4.1.2 Living Books about Life

In 2011 the media and cultural theorists Clare Birchall, Gary Hall and Joanna Zylinska initiated *Living Books about Life*, a series of open access books about life published by Open Humanities Press, and designed to provide a bridge between the humanities and sciences. All the books in this series repackage existing open access science-related research, supplementing this with an original editorial essay to tie the collection together. They also provide additional multimedia material, from videos to podcasts to whole books. The books have been published online on an open source wiki platform, meaning they are themselves 'living' or 'open on a read/write basis for users to help compose, edit, annotate, translate and remix' (Hall 2012). Interested potential contributors can also contact the series editors to contribute a new living book. These living books can then collectively or individually be used and/or adapted for scholarly and educational contexts as an interdisciplinary resource bridging the sciences and humanities.

As Hall has argued, this project is designed to, among other things, challenge the physical and conceptual limitations of the traditional codex by including multimedia material and even whole books in its living books, but also by emphasising its duration by publishing using a wiki platform and thus 'rethinking "the book" itself as a living, collaborative endeavour' (2012). However, the mediawiki software employed by the *Living Books about Life* project, in common with a lot of wiki software, keeps accurate track of which 'user' is making what changes. This offers the possibility that other users can monitor recent changes to pages, explore a page's revision history, and examine all the contributions of a specific user. The software thus already has mechanisms written into it to 'manage' or fix the text and its authors, by keeping a track-record or archive of all the changes that are made. But the project also continues to enforce stability and fixity (both of the text and of its users) on the front-end side: by clearly mentioning the specific editor's name underneath the title of each collection, as well as on the book's title page; by adding a fixed and frozen version of the text in PDF format, preserving the collection as it was originally created by the editors; but also by binding the book together by adding a cover page, and following a rather conventional book structure (complete with an editorial introduction followed by thematic sections of curated materials). Mirroring the physical materiality of the book (in its design, layout, and structuring) in such a way also reproduces 'the aura' of the book, including the discourse of scholarship (as stable and fixed, with clear

authority) this brings with it. This might explain why the user interaction with the books in the series has been limited in comparison to some other wikis, which are perhaps more clearly perceived as multi-authoring environments. Here the choice to re-cut the collected information as a book, with clear authors and editors, whilst and as part of re-thinking and re-performing the book as concept and form, might paradoxically have been responsible for both the success and the failure of the project.

What both the *Living Books about Life* and OHP's earlier *Liquid Books* project share, however, is a continued theoretical reflection on issues of fixity, authorship and authority, both by its editors and by its contributors in various spaces connected to the project. This comes to the fore in the many presentations and papers the series editors and authors have delivered on these projects, engaging people with their practical and theoretical issues. These discussions have also taken place on the blog[141] that has accompanied the *Living Books about Life* series, and in Hall and Birchall's multimodal text and video-based introduction to the *Liquid Books* series, to give just some examples. It is in these connected spaces that continued discussions are being had about copyright, ownership, authority, the book, editing, openness, fluidity and fixity, the benefits and drawbacks of wikis, quality and peer review, etc. I would like to argue that it is here, on this discursive level that the aliveness of these living books is perhaps most ensured. These books live on in continued discussion on where we should cut them, and when, and who should be making the incisions, taking into consideration the strategic compromises—which might indeed include a frozen version and a book cover, and clearly identifiable editors—we might have to make due to our current entanglements with certain practices, institutions and pieces of software, all with their own specific power structures and affordances.

In 'Future books: a Wikipedia model?' an introduction to one the books in the *Liquid Books* series—namely *Technology and Cultural Form: A Liquid Reader* that has been, collaboratively edited and written by Joanna Zylinska and her MA students (together forming a 'liquid author')—the various decisions and discussions we could make and have concerning liquid, living and wiki books are considered in depth: 'It seems from the above that a completely open liquid book can never be achieved, and that some limitations, decisions, interventions and cuts have to be made to its "openness". The following question then presents itself: how do we ensure that we do not foreclose on this openness too early and too quickly? Perhaps liquid editing is also a question of time, then; of

---

[141] See: http://www.livingbooksaboutlife.org/blog/

managing time responsibly and prudently' (2010). Looking at it from this angle, these discussions are triggering critical questions from a user (writer/reader) perspective, in their entanglements and negotiations with the institutions, practices and technologies of scholarly communication. Within a wiki setting, questions concerning what new kinds of boundaries are being set up are important: who moderates decisions over what is included or excluded (what about spam?) Is it the editors? The software? The press? Our notions of scholarly quality and authority? What is kept and preserved and what new forms of closure and inclusion are being created in this process? How is the book disturbed and at the same time re-cut? It is our continued critical engagement with these kinds of questions, both theoretically and practically, in an affirmative manner that will keep these books open and alive.

6.5 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, I would like to briefly return to textual studies or textual criticism, which as a field has always actively engaged itself with issues concerning the fixity and fluidity of texts. This is embodied mainly in the search for the ideal text or archetype, but also in the continued confrontation with a text's pluralities of meaning and intentionality, next to issues of interpretation and materiality. In this respect critical editing, as a means of stabilising a text, has always revolved around an awareness of the cuts that are made to a text in the creation of scholarly editions. It can therefore be stated that, as Bryant has argued, the task of a textual scholar is to 'manage textual fluidity' (2002: 26).

One of the other strengths of textual criticism is an awareness on the part of many of the scholars in the field that their own practical and theoretical decisions or cuts influence the interpretation of a text. They can therefore be seen to be mindful of their entanglement with its becoming. As Bryant has put it, 'editors' choices inevitably constitute yet another version of the fluid text they are editing. Thus critical editing perpetuates textual fluidity' (Bryant 2002: 26). These specific cuts, or 'historical write-ups', that textual scholars create as part of their work with critical editions, don't only construct the past from a vision of the present, they also say something about the future. As textual scholar Jerome McGann has pointed out:

> All poems and cultural products are included in history—*including* the producers
> and the reproducers of such works, the poet and their readers and interpreters …

> To the historicist imagination, history is the past, or perhaps the past as seen in and through the present; and the historical task is to attempt a reconstruction of the past, including, perhaps, the present of that past. But the *Cantos* reminds us that history includes the future, and that the historical task involves as well the construction of what shall be possible. (1988)

It is this awareness that a critical edition is the product of editorial intervention (which creates a material-discursive framework that influences future texts' becoming) that I am interested in here, especially in relation to McGann's work on the performativity of texts. For McGann every text is a social text, created under specific socio-historical conditions, where he theorises texts not as things or objects, but as events. He argues therefore that texts are not representations of intentions, but they are processual events in themselves. Thus every version or reading of a text is a performative (as well as a deformative) act (McGann, J. 2004: 225). In this sense, McGann makes the move in textual criticism from a focus on authorial intention and hermeneutics or representation, to seeing a text as a performative event and critical editions as performative acts.

McGann therefore argues for a different, dynamic engagement with texts, not focused on discovering what a text 'is', but on an 'analysis [that] must be applied to the text *as it is performative*' (2004: 206). This includes taking into consideration the specific material iteration of the text one is studying (and how this functions, as Hayles has argued, as a *technotext*, i.e. how its specific material apparatus produces the work as a physical artifact (Hayles 2002)), as well as an awareness of how the scholar's textual analysis is itself part of the iteration and 'othering' of the text (McGann, J. 2004: 206). And connected to this, as Barad has argued, we have to be aware how the text's performativity shapes us in our entanglement with it.

The question then is: why we can't be more like critical textual editors (in the style of Jerome McGann) ourselves when it comes to *our own scholarly works*, taking into consideration the various cuts we make and that are made for us as part of the processes of knowledge production? Assuming responsibility for our own incisions as textual critics of our own work, exploring the poetics or po*ethics* of scholarship in this respect should involve: taking responsibility for our entanglement in the production, dissemination and consumption of the book; engaging with the material-discursive institutional and cultural aspects of the book and book publishing; and experimenting with an open-ended and radical politics of the book (which includes exploring the processual nature of the book, whilst taking responsibility for the need to cut). This would also involve experimenting with alternative ways of cutting our bookish scholarship together-apart: with different

forms of authorship, both-human and non-human; with the materialities and modalities of the book, exploring multimodal and emergent genres, whilst continuously rethinking and performing the fixity of the book itself; and with the publishing process, examining ways to disturb the current political economy of the book and the objectification of the book within publishing and research. From my perspective, this would mean we continue our experimentations with remixed and living books, with versionings, and with radical forms of openness, while at the same time remaining critical of the alternative incisions we make as part of these projects, of the new forms of binding they might weave. This also involves being aware of the potential strategic decisions we make to keep some iterative bindings intact (for reasons of authority and reputation, for instance) and why we choose to do so. We should therefore engage with this experimenting not from the angle of the fixed or fluid book, but from the perspective of the cut that cuts-together-apart the emergent book and, when done well, enables its ongoing becoming.

This text, just as the projects mentioned above, has attempted to start the process of rethinking (through its diffractive methodology) how we might start to cut differently where it comes to our research and publication practices. Cutting and stabilising still needs to be done, but it might be accomplished in different ways, at different stages of the research process, and for different reasons than we are doing now. What I want to emphasise here is that we can start to rethink and re-perform the way we publish our research if we start to pay closer attention to the specific cuts we make (and that are made for us) as part of our publishing practices. The politics of the book itself can be helpful in this respect where, as Gary Hall and I have argued elsewhere, 'if it is to continue to be able to serve 'new ends' as a medium through which politics itself can be rethought (…) then the material and cultural constitution of the book needs to be continually reviewed, re-evaluated and reconceived' (2013: 138). The book itself can thus be a medium with the critical and political potential to question specific cuts and to disturb existing scholarly practices and institutions. Books are always a process of becoming (albeit one that is continuously interrupted and disturbed). Books are entanglements of different agencies that cannot be discerned beforehand. In the cuts that we make to untangle them we create specific material book objects. In these incisions, the book has always already redeveloped, remixed. It has mutated and moved on. The book is thus a processual, ephemeral and contextualised entity, which we can use a means to critique our established practices and institutions, both through its forms (and the cuts we make to create these forms) and its metaphors, and through the practices that accompany it.

Conclusion

As the title above already indicates, this thesis includes a conclusion. A conclusion is one of the explicit elements in a linear text that serves to bind all the arguments together by looking back and summarising the line of reasoning. In this respect, a conclusion can be seen as a structural feature within a text that serves as a logical ending, which cuts a text down to some extent, turning it into a whole, into a 'work' separate from other content: for example, internally from the appendix or from supplementary material that can be regarded 'outside' of this whole; or externally from other texts, both by the work's author and by other authors. This conclusion does not serve as an ending, however, and more importantly, this thesis does not end with its conclusion. In other words it is not done, completed, finished, fixed or stable. It does not provide this kind of closure. Indeed, another function of a conclusion could be to suggest new pathways for further research, or to speculate on other directions and areas of investigation next to making recommendations for future work. Therefore it can be argued that a conclusion does not necessarily have to function as the ending to a text. It simultaneously connects the text to future incarnations, adaptations and versions, as well as to other texts that might reference it, rework it, or in some other way connect to it.

This conclusion will both summarise and extend outwards. However, it is not the kind of conclusion that brings the argumentation to a logical outcome either, as the main argument has already been made throughout this thesis, i.e. that we need to pay more attention to the way our scholarship, and the scholarly book specifically, is currently cut together-and-apart (one move) and for what reasons. This conclusion includes an appeal to academics themselves to examine and critique their entanglement with the book, both through their scholarly communication practices and the systems that sustain them. This conclusion entails a plea to book and media scholars to take into consideration how their discursive representation of the past and future of the book is also a material practice (and vice versa), and hence a performance of its history and becoming. Finally, this conclusion is a call to scholars to start thinking and performing the apparatus of the book otherwise, in a potentially more ethical way, as part of a reconceptualisation of the book to come, and alongside an ongoing review of scholarly identity. However, our alternative incisions in the book apparatus will be contingent on the specific academic and publishing contexts in

which we will have to make our cuts, and will hence be continuous and driven by various underlying motivations (from sharing to reputation building).

As I have observed in my introduction, the scholarly book has been and remains one of the key locations of struggle over the future of academia, of scholarly communication, and of the university. The monograph has been shaped by our systems and structures of scholarly communication and by the practices and discourses connected to them. But it has simultaneously played an important role in the becoming of our modern system of science and scholarship, influencing how it came about, presently functions and, most likely, how it will continue to develop in the future. The impact of the emergent and dynamic materiality of the book thus needs to be taken into account here. At the same time, through its open-ended nature, the book forms a potential site for experimentation and intervention, where it constitutes an opportunity to start to think this system differently and embody and perform alternative scholarly practices and new institutional forms, as I have attempted to do here.

I have also shown in this thesis why it is important at this specific point in time to imagine a different future for the scholarly book. It is important first of all because monographs—and certain specialised, experimental and difficult instantiations of the monograph, in particular—are endangered at the moment. This is largely due to hegemonic communication power structures, which are focused more on increasing reputation and reward for their stakeholders rather than on promoting access to and reuse of scholarly research for the public at large. Rethinking and experimenting with how these communication and publishing structures might function differently remains one of our main tasks at hand. Secondly, this is a key moment to imagine a different future for the book because the digital provides us with an opportune context in which to re-examine our print-based and humanist communication systems, practices and discourses. This is the case especially with respect to how these systems, practices and discourses are determining our authorship practices, our material systems of knowledge production, and our conceptions of the inherent affordances or essential material features of the book (i.e. fixity, authority, originality and trust).

In this thesis I have explored the ways in which the scholarly book has been bound together and fixed in the course of its development. I have focused on the various agencies that have enforced forms of binding on the book, and on the specific practices, systems, and discourses that have accompanied and further stimulated these disciplining regimes. At the same time I have examined the material role and agency of the printed—and now

the digital—book in intra-action with these developments. Yet I have also explored alternative ways of both thinking and performing the book, highlighting various forms of *unbinding* that are currently being proposed in a digital context—often as part of a highly agonistic battle over the future of the book (i.e. print versus digital). I have based my analysis of these formations of binding and unbinding of the book on scholarship that has paid particular attention to the entanglement of the material and the discursive. This includes feminist new materialist theories (i.e. Barad, Haraway), and critical and cultural theorists who are both attentive to the material-discursive and performative nature of our media (i.e. Foucault, Hayles), as well as to the ethical and political implications of the cuts we make in our scholarship (i.e. Derrida, Levinas, Hall, Kember and Zylinska). Building on these theories and theorists, I have contributed a posthumanist performative vision to the debate on the past and future of the book, seeing the book as a processual object entangled in a meshwork of material and discursive formations. With this vision I have provided an alternative to, and a critique of, the existing prevailing discourse on book history. In particular, I have argued that this discourse remains too focused on an essentialist, representationalist, and humanist framework that does not give due recognition to the intra-action of elements and agencies involved, nor to our own entanglements as scholars with the becoming of the book. However, I have not attempted to submit a new 'master narrative' to supersede this currently hegemonic discourse on book history. Instead of establishing yet another binary, I have provided a transversal and diffractive reading of the existing debate, reframing it to some extent.

This reframed debate has subsequently served as an introduction to each of the three forms of binding that have together made up the framework of this thesis. These forms of binding have been brought forward by—and have at the same time stimulated—a print-based and humanist vision of the book. They include: authorship, the book-as-commodity within systems of knowledge production, and the perceived fixity or stability of the book as an inherently bound material object. As mentioned above, through a transversal and diffractive reading of the book-historical discourse and the book's material formation, I have explored how these forms of binding have emerged, developed and sustained themselves over time—and how they are currently being reiterated in a digital context. I have simultaneously examined possible means of unbinding as they are experimented with within a digital framework, based on ideas and practices of remix, openness and liquidity. These potential forms of unbinding have been used to critique the perceived originality, object-formation, and fixity of the scholarly book. I have argued

however that these forms of unbinding too, especially in their implementation, continue to adhere to many of the humanist and print-based aspects I have examined as part of the becoming of the book. These are aspects that, as I have shown, are strongly ingrained in our systems and practices of scholarly communication and are maintained by its existing stakeholders. Yet I have also explored the ongoing potential for disruption that these forms of unbinding embody. I have done so by showcasing some of the exciting new experiments that have been undertaken to reimagine and (re)perform the scholarly monograph in a digital environment, and by exploring the potential of these experiments to envision a knowledge system that goes beyond the humanist and essentialist notions commonly attached to the printed book. For example, I have presented posthuman forms of authorship (critique), and I have provided an alternative genealogy and reading of openness and open access—reclaiming it from its current neoliberal implementation—based on a vision of radical open access and experimentation. I also made a sustained case for the fact that scholarship and publishing are not separate fields but that publishing should be seen as an integral aspect of scholarship and knowledge formation.

Finally, I have suggested that instead of analysing the perceived medial fixity of the book from a perspective of binding/unbinding or fixed/fluid, it might be more useful to look at fixity from the perspective of the cut or cutting. In place of providing a binary analysis based on the fixed/fluid dialectic, I have therefore offered an alternative vision based on cuts and contingent stabilisations. As part of this, I have emphasised our own entanglements as scholars with the apparatus of the book and have examined ways in which we can focus on a politics and ethics of 'cutting-well', as Kember and Zylinska have called it, especially where it concerns our own scholarly publishing and communication practices.

Alongside analysing current experiments with forms of unbinding—such as remix, openness and liquidity—and their potential to cut the book together-apart differently on the basis of alternative values and criteria, I have envisioned this thesis itself as an experiment in making affirmative incisions into the book apparatus. I have done so by following a methodology of critical praxis, which offers an alternative to simply conforming to and repeating established practices with respect to writing a thesis, without analysing the assumptions and perceptions upon which they are based. Developing a critical praxis by experimenting with digital tools and technologies, and by performing a thesis in an alternative way, might help us to not give in to the compulsion to repeat established forms and practices, and might allow us to contribute to a further critique and

transformation of our current forms of knowledge production. With the digital and open research practice I have adopted in this thesis as part of its performative, experimental and interventionist approach, I have therefore attempted to focus on the processual nature of our research. Through the performance of my thesis I have endeavoured to rethink how we make incisions in our research and communicate it and share it. I have done so by experimenting with different ways of versioning this thesis during its development, which have included—and will include—the use of a weblog, various open archiving media and a hypermedia platform. This in an attempt on my part to critique the continued emphasis on the end-result of our research as well as the object-centred publication approach promoted by publishers, universities and funders alike. Instead a focus on the processual and collaborative nature of our research-in-development might make us more aware of when we share and publish our research and for what reasons; but also where we publish it, on which platforms, using which media and in which forms; and how we do so, with what kind of stipulations for its further uptake. It also provides us with an opportunity to give credit to the people we collaborate with during our research, who comment upon our work-in-progress, critique it, adapt it or share it. This experiment in versioning my thesis— which is ongoing—is thus intended to make myself as well as other scholars aware of the incisions we make during our research, and to explore whether we can potentially make different, more ethical, and more informed cuts in our research, at different stages during its development.

Future Book-Entanglements

Analysing the history and potential future becoming of the book, as I have attempted to do here, is a complex and multi-faceted undertaking. Therefore, of necessity, this thesis has had to make decisions to focus on certain aspects related to the future of the book in particular: for instance, on some of the main aspects of binding and unbinding the book has been confronted with, and on the role that has been played by the scholarly book in the humanities specifically. One aspect relating to the future of the book that deserves more attention than I have been able to give it here, however, is the history of the monograph. It would be very valuable to have a dedicated overview of how the monograph has developed in intra-action with our modern systems of science and scholarship and our formal publishing and communication structures. Any such history would do well to include a more thorough overview of the development of university presses, and the relationship

between the book and commerce, as well as the various power struggles that have been played out over the book's material and discursive becoming.

The other aspect relating to the future of the book that might benefit from increased attention concerns our relationship as scholars with the book's becoming. It would be very useful if more research would be conducted on the performative aspects of the book and our own material-discursive entanglement in this performance as scholars, producers, disseminators and consumers of book-works. As I have outlined in this thesis, a lot of research is already being done on the material performativity of the book, on media-specific analysis, and on the way design, different formats, media and platforms, structure the way we perceive and perform research. However, I would like to see more attention being paid to our own role as scholars in this, which would include further experiments with different forms of doing scholarship, of disseminating it and of consuming it. Included in this should be a re-assessment of both the media in which we communicate our research and of our current publishing practices (in closed or open forms, in print or online etc.) as well as the various constraints on choice (for example with relation to early career and later career academics, or with respect to the often lacking availability of open access options) that continue to inhabit the uptake of alternative and experimental practices.

A further feature this thesis could have explored in more depth, and which functions as another important form of binding for the scholarly book, is copyright. It would be especially useful to examine how copyright functions with respect to scholarly books in the humanities at the moment, and for whom it is actually beneficial. This should include attention to copyright's relationship with authorship and moral rights, how it connects to the ownership of a work, and how it serves to bind a work together and at the same time potentially restricts its intra-actions and performances, as well as the material formats and platforms in and on which it appears (proprietary or open source, DRM-ed etc.). Finally, I think it would be beneficial to explore the various ways in which the future of the book has been perceived and imagined during the course of its history, in both utopian and dystopian fashions (i.e. the universal library, the death of the book). These discourses connected to the future of the book will provide us with valuable information on how the book has been perceived, struggled over, and imagined as part of its development, and could supply us with more information about how the book has been shaped and formed in relationship to these visions. How have these specific discursive formations influenced the further development of the book's future and past?

Most importantly, and as I have already reiterated during this thesis, I want to make a plea for the availability of more space and time to experiment with the ways in which we publish and communicate our research. Experimentation needs to be an ongoing critical process in this respect; a process through which we evaluate our scholarly publishing and communication practices in a continuous manner, and through which we explore different cuts and potentially more ethical futures for our scholarship. Experimentation equally should be conceived as something that is part of all aspects of the development of our research: we should experiment with the way we conduct and produce our research, how we share and disseminate it, but also with how we consume it, and in which modes and formats. An ongoing examination of, and experimentation with, these aspects should be an integral aspect of how we train as researchers in order to remain critical of the ways in which we are being shaped as scholars, and of the ways in which we, simultaneously, shape the outcomes of our research.

Bibliography

Adema, J. (2010) *Open Access Business Models for Books in the Humanities and Social Sciences: An Overview of Initiatives and Experiments (OAPEN Project Report)*. Amsterdam

Adema, J. (2013) 'Practise What You Preach: Engaging in Humanities Research through Critical Praxis'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 16 (5), 491–505

Adema, J. (2014) 'Reviving the Undead Book'. *Cultural Studies* 28 (2), 346–349

Adema, J. and Ferwerda, E. (2009) 'Peer Review: Open Access for Monographs'. *LOGOS: The Journal of the World Book Community* 20 (1-1), 176–183

Adema, J. and Hall, G. (2013) 'The Political Nature of the Book: On Artists' Books and Radical Open Access'. *New Formations* 78 (1), 138–156

Adema, J. and Rutten, P. (2010) *Digital Monographs in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Report on User Needs (OAPEN Project Report)*. Amsterdam

Agamben, G. (2009) *What Is an Apparatus?: And Other Essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Ahmed, S. (2008) 'Open Forum Imaginary Prohibitions Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the `New Materialism''. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 15 (1), 23–39

Alaimo, S. and Hekman, S.J. (2008) *Material Feminisms*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Amerika, M. (2011) *Remixthebook*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Anon. (2010) 'The Disposable Academic'. *The Economist* [online] 16 December. available from <http://www.economist.com/node/17723223> [12 May 2014]

Arnold, M. and Garnett, J. (2006) *Culture and Anarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Attridge, D., Bennington, G., and Young, R. (1989) *Post-Structuralism and the Question of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Badmington, N. (2000) *Posthumanism*. New York: Palgrave

Balibar, E. (2008) 'Historical Dilemmas of Democracy and Their Contemporary Relevance for Citizenship'. *Rethinking Marxism* 20 (4), 522–538

Barad, K. (2000) 'Reconceiving Scientific Literacy as Agential Literacy. Or, Learning How to Intra-Act Responsibly within the World'. in *Doing Science + Culture*. ed. by Reid, R. and Traweek, S. New York: Routledge

Barad, K. (2003) 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter'. *Signs* 28 (3), 801–831

Barad, K. (2007) *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press

Barad, K. (2008) 'Posthumanist Performativity. Towards an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter'. in *Material Feminisms*. ed. by Alaimo, S. and Hekman, S.J. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Barad, K. (2010) 'Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/Continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come'. *Derrida Today* 3 (2), 240–268

Barad, K. (2014) 'Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart'. *Parallax* 20 (3), 168–187

Barad, K. (2012) 'Interview with Karen Barad' [interview by R. Dolphijn, and I. Van der Tuin] in Dolphijn, R. and Van der Tuin, I. (2012) *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*. University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Barker, N. and Adams, T.R. (2001) 'A New Model for the Study of the Book'. in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society: The Clark Lectures, 1986-1987*. Second Edition. ed. by Barker, N. London: Oak Knoll Press

Baron, S.A., Lindquist, E.N., and Shevlin, E.F. (2007) *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies After Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press

Barthes, R. (1967) 'The Death of the Author'. *Aspen* (no. 5-6)

Bennett, A. (2004) *The Author*. Abingdon: Routledge

Berry, D.M. (2005) 'On the "Creative Commons": A Critique of the Commons without Commonalty'. *Free Software Magazine* [online] 15 July. available from <http://www.freesoftwaremagazine.com/articles/commons_without_commonality> [13 April 2014]

Berry, D.M. (2008) *Copy, Rip, Burn: The Politics of Copyleft and Open Source*. London: Pluto Press

Biagioli, M. (2002) 'From Book Censorship to Academic Peer Review'. *Emergences: Journal for the Study of Media & Composite Cultures* 12 (1), 11–45

Birkerts, S. (1994) *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age*. Winchester: Faber & Faber

Birnholtz, J.P. (2006) 'What Does It Mean to Be an Author? The Intersection of Credit, Contribution, and Collaboration in Science'. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 57, 1758–1770

Blanchot, M. (2003) *The Book to Come*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Bletsas, A. (2011) 'The PhD Thesis as "text": A Post-Structuralist Encounter with the Limits of Discourse'. *New Scholar* [online] 1 (1). available from <http://www.newscholar.org.au/index.php/ns/article/view/2> [11 March 2012]

Boffey, D. (2013) 'Historians Warn Minister: Hands off Our Academic Freedoms'. *The Guardian* [online] 26 January. available from <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/jan/26/historians-warn-minister-over-academic-freedom> [19 January 2014]

Bök, C. (2001) 'The Piecemeal Bard Is Deconstructed: Notes Toward a Potential Robopoetics'. in *UbuWeb: Papers* [online] ed. by Goldsmith, K. available from <http://ubu.com/papers/object/03_bok.pdf>

Bolter, J.D. (2001) *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*. New York: Routledge

Bolter, J.D. and Grusin, R. (1999) *Remediation Understanding New Media*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press

Borgman, C. (2007) *Scholarship in the Digital Age : Information, Infrastructure, and the Internet*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press

Bowers, F.T. (1949) *Principles of Bibliographical Description*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Boyle, J. (2009) *Shamans, Software, and Spleens: Law and the Construction of the Information Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Braidotti, R. (2010) 'On Putting the Active Back into Activism'. *New Formations* 68 (1), 42–57

Braidotti, R. (2013) *The Posthuman*. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA, USA: Polity Press

Broekman, P. van M., Corris, M., and Slater, J.B. (eds.) (2009) *Proud to Be Flesh: A Mute Magazine Anthology of Cultural Politics After the Net*. London: Mute Publishing Ltd

Brown (1970) 'University Press Publishing'. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*

Brown, S., Clements, P., Grundy, I., Ruecker, S., Antoniuk, J., and Balazs, S. (2009) 'Published Yet Never Done: The Tension Between Projection and Completion in Digital Humanities Research'. *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3 (2)

Brown, W. (2003) 'Neo-Liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy'. *Theory & Event* [online] 7 (1). available from <https://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/theory_and_event/v007/7.1brown.html> [3 December 2013]

Brown, W. (2012) 'Reclaiming Democracy: An Interview with Wendy Brown on Occupy, Sovereignty and Secularism' [interview by R. Celikates, R., and Y. Jansen] *Krisis* 2012 (3), 68–77

Bruining, D. (2013) 'A Somatechnics of Moralism: New Materialism or Material Foundationalism'. *Somatechnics* 3 (1), 149–168

Bryant, J. (2002) *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Revision and Editing for Book and Screen.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Busse, K. and Lothian, A. (2011) 'Scholarly Critiques and Critiques of Scholarship: The Uses of Remix Video'. *Camera Obscura* 26 (2 77), 139–146

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'.* New York: Routledge

Casati, F., Giunchiglia, F., Marchese, M., Casati, F., Giunchiglia, F., and Marchese, M. (2007) *Liquid Publications: Scientific Publications Meet the Web Changing the Way Scientific Knowledge Is Produced, Disseminated, Evaluated and Consumed 1.* [online] available from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/summary?doi=10.1.1.108.6070> [30 January 2011]

Chartier, R. (1994) *The Order of Books : Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries.* Stanford: Stanford University Press

Colebrook, C. (1997) *New Literary Histories: New Historicism and Contemporary Criticism.* Manchester: Manchester University Press

Collini, S. (2012) *What Are Universities For?.* London: Penguin

Coole, D.H. and Frost, S. (eds.) (2010) *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics.* Durham: Duke University Press

Cooper, M.G. and Marx, J. (2014) 'Crisis, Crisis, Crisis: Big Media and the Humanities Workforce'. *differences* 24 (3), 127–159

Coppa, F. (2011) 'An Editing Room of One's Own: Vidding as Women's Work'. *Camera Obscura* 26 (2 77), 123–130

Coser, L.A., Kadushin, C., and Powell, W.W. (1985) *Books: The Culture and Commerce of Publishing.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Couvée, K. (2012) 'Postgraduate Students Are Being Used as 'Slave Labour''. *The Independent* [online] 27 May. available from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/postgraduate-students-are-being-used-as-slave-labour-7791509.html> [12 May 2014]

Cramer, F. (2011) *Unbound Books: Bound Ex Negativo.* in 'The Unbound Book Conference'. held 20 May 2011 at The Hague

Cramer, F. (2013) *Anti-Media: Ephemera on Speculative Arts.* Rotterdam: nai010 publishers

Cronin, B. (2001) 'Hyperauthorship: A Postmodern Perversion or Evidence of a Structural Shift in Scholarly Communication Practices?'. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 52, 558–569

Cronin, B., Shaw, D., and Barre, K.L. (2003) 'A Cast of Thousands: Coauthorship and Subauthorship Collaboration in the 20th Century as Manifested in the Scholarly Journal Literature of Psychology and Philosophy'. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 54, 855–871

Danyi, E. (2014) 'Samizdat Lessons for Mattering Press'. [3 December 2014] available from <http://installingorder.org/2014/03/12/samizdat-lessons-for-mattering-press/> [12 April 2014]

Darnton, R. (1982) 'What Is the History of Books?'. *Daedalus* 111 (3), 65–83

Darnton, R. (1999) 'The New Age of the Book'. *The New York review of books.* 46 (5), 5

David, P.A. (2008) 'The Historical Origins of "Open Science": An Essay on Patronage, Reputation and Common Agency Contracting in the Scientific Revolution'. *Capitalism and Society* [online] 3 (2). available from <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2209188> [26 November 2013]

Davidson, A. (1986) 'Archaeology, Genealogy, Ethics'. in *Foucault: A Critical Reader.* ed. by Hoy, D.C. London: Basil Blackwell, 221–233

Deleuze, G. (1992) 'What Is a Dispositif?'. in *Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays.* ed. by Armstrong, T.J. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Derrida, J. (1983) *Dissemination.* ed. by Johnson, B. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Derrida, J. (1985) *Margins of Philosophy.* trans. by Bass, A. University Of Chicago Press

Derrida, J. (1996) *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Derrida, J. (1999) *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas.* Stanford: Stanford University Press

Derrida, J. (2005) *Paper Machine.* Stanford: Stanford University Press

Derrida, J., Critchley, S., Laclau, E., and Rorty, R. (2003) 'Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism'. in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism.* ed. by Mouffe, C. London: Routledge

Dolphijn, R. and Van der Tuin, I. (eds.) (2012) *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies.* University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press

Drake, S. (2011) *Departure Acts: Anonymous Authorship in the Late Twentieth Century.* PhD dissertation. Burnaby, BC, Canada: Simon Fraser University

Dreyfus, H.L., Rabinow, P., and Foucault, M. (1983) *Michel Foucault, beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Drucker, J. (2004) *The Century of Artists' Books.* 2nd edn. New York: Granary Books.

Drucker, J. (2009) *SpecLab: Digital Aesthetics and Projects in Speculative Computing.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Drucker, J. (2012) *Mimicry or Invention?.* in 'The Rare Book and Manuscript Section meeting, "Futures!".' held June 2012 at San Diego

Drucker, J. (2013) 'Performative Materiality and Theoretical Approaches to Interface'. *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 7 (1)

Drucker, J. (2014a) 'Distributed and Conditional Documents: Conceptualizing Bibliographical Alterities'. *MATLIT: Revista do Programa de Doutoramento em Materialidades da Literatura* 2 (1), 11–29

Drucker, J. (2014b) 'Pixel Dust: Illusions of Innovation in Scholarly Publishing'. *LA Review of Books* [online] 16 January. available from <https://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/pixel-dust-illusions-innovation-scholarly-publishing/> [18 May 2014]

Duguid, P. (1996) 'Material Matters: The Past and Futurology of the Book'. in *The Future of the Book.* ed. by Nunberg, G. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press

Eduardo Navas (2011) 'Notes on Everything Is a Remix, Part 1, 2, and 3'. [9 March 2011] available from <http://remixtheory.net/?p=480> [28 November 2013]

Eisenstein, E.L. (1979) *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change.* 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Eisenstein, E.L. (2002) 'An Unacknowledge Revolution Revisited'. *The American Historical Review* 107 (1), 87–105

Eisenstein, E.L. (2005) *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe.* 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Elisabeth Nesheim (2009) *Remixed Culture/Nature. Is Our Current Remix Culture Giving Way to a Remixed Nature?.*

Elkin-Koren, N. (2006) 'Creative Commons: A Skeptical View of a Worthy Pursuit'. in *The Future of the Public Domain* [online] ed. by Hugenholtz, P.B. and Guibault, L. Kluwer Law International. available from <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=885466> [15 May 2013]

Engelsing, R. (1973) *Analphabetentum Und Lektüre. Zur Sozialgeschichte Des Lesens in Deutschland Zwischen Feudaler Und Industrieller Gesellschaft.*

Ernst, W. (2003) <*nettime*> *Interview with German Media Archeologist Wolfgang Ernst* [interview by G. Lovink], 26 February 2003

Ernst, W. (2011) 'Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media'. in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*. ed. by Huhtamo, E. and Parikka, J. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press

Esposito, J. (2011) *Disintermediation and Its Discontents: Publishers, Libraries, and the Value Chain* [online] available from <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2011/04/18/disintermediation-and-its-discontents-publishers-libraries-and-the-value-chain/> [8 October 2012]

Eve, M. (2013) 'Open Access, "Neoliberalism", "Impact" and the Privatisation of Knowledge'. available from <https://www.martineve.com/2013/03/10/open-access-neoliberalism-impact-and-the-privatisation-of-knowledge/> [16 October 2014]

Eve, M.P. (2013) *Open Access, 'Neoliberalism', 'Impact' and the Privatisation of Knowledge*. [3 October 2013] available from <https://www.martineve.com/2013/03/10/open-access-neoliberalism-impact-and-the-privatisation-of-knowledge/> [12 January 2014]

Febvre, L. and Martin, H. J. (1997) *The Coming of the Book: Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*. New edition. trans. by Gerard, D. London: Verso Books

Fecher, B. and Friesike, S. (2013) *Open Science: One Term, Five Schools of Thought* [online] ID 2272036. SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network. available from <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2272036> [17 January 2014]

Ferwerda, E., Snijder, R., and Adema, J. (2013) *OAPEN-NL. A Project Exploring Open Access Monograph Publishing in the Netherlands: Final Report* [online] The Hague: OAPEN Foundation. available from <http://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/docs/OAPEN-NL-final-report.pdf>

Finch, J. (2012) *Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence: How to Expand Access to Research Publications*. Report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings

Finkelstein, D. (2006) *The Book History Reader*. 2nd ed. Abingdon: Routledge

Finkelstein, D. and McCleery, A. (2005) *An Introduction to Book History*. New Ed. Abingdon: Routledge

Fisher, M. (2013) 'Anti-Humanism and the Humanities in the Era of Capitalist Realism'. [1 October 2013] available from <http://www.onlineopen.org/essays/anti-humanism-and-the-humanities-in-the-era-of-capitalist-realism/3> [28 April 2014]

Fitzpatrick, K. (2011a) 'Do "the Risky Thing" in Digital Humanities'. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* [online] 25 September. available from <http://chronicle.com/article/Do-the-Risky-Thing-in/129132/> [11 March 2012]

Fitzpatrick, K. (2011b) *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy*. New York: NYU Press

Fitzpatrick, K. (2011c) 'The Digital Future of Authorship: Rethinking Originality'. *Culture Machine* [online] 12. available from <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/433> [15 March 2012]

Fitzpatrick, K. (2012a) 'Giving It Away: Sharing and the Future of Scholarly Communication'. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 43 (4), 347–362

Fitzpatrick, K. (2012b) *Neoliberal* [online] available from <http://www.plannedobsolescence.net/blog/neoliberal/> [4 December 2013]

Foucault, M. (1969) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. 2002nd edn. Routledge

Foucault, M. (1970) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Pantheon Books

Foucault, M. (1977) 'What Is an Author?'. in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. ed. by Bouchard, D.F. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 124–127

Foucault, M. (1980a) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. First American Edition, Stained. ed. by Gordon, C. New York: Pantheon

Foucault, M. (1980b) 'Two Lectures'. in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. First American Edition, Stained. ed. by Gordon, C. New York: Pantheon

Foucault, M. (1990) 'The Masked Philosopher'. in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984*. New Ed. New York: Routledge

Foucault, M. (1996) 'The Discourse of History. Interview with Raymond Bellour'. in *Foucault Live: Collected Interviewsn1961-1984*. ed. by Lotringer, S. New York: Semiotext(e)

Foucault, M. (2003) *'Society Must Be Defended': Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*. Reprint edition. New York: Picador

Freind, B. (2010) 'In the Conceptual Vacuum: On [Kenneth Goldsmith's] Kent Johnson's «Day»'. *Jacket* [online] 40. available from <http://jacketmagazine.com/40/freind-johnson-day.shtml> [30 April 2014]

Giroux, H.A. (2000) 'Cultural Politics and the Crisis of the University'. *Culture Machine* [online] 2. available from <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/309/294> [11 March 2012]

Giroux, H.A. (2005) 'The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics'. *College Literature* 32 (1)

Giroux, H.A. (2010) 'The University Debate: Public Values, Higher Education and the Scourge of Neoliberalism: Politics at the Limits of the Social'. *Culture Machine, InterZone* [online] 0 (0). available from <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/426> [4 December 2013]

Gitelman, L. (2006) *Always Already New: Media, History and the Data of Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Gitelman, L. (2014) *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*. Durham: Duke University Press

Goldsmith, K. (2011a) 'It's Not Plagiarism. In the Digital Age, It's "Repurposing."' *The Chronicle of Higher Education* [online] 11 September. available from <https://chronicle.com/article/Uncreative-Writing/128908/> [15 May 2013]

Goldsmith, K. (2011b) *Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in the Digital Age*. New York: Columbia University Press

Greco, A.N., Rodríguez, C.E., and Wharton, R.M. (2006) *Culture and Commerce of Publishing in the Twenty-First Century*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Green, C. (2004) 'Diging Archaeology: Sources of Foucault's Historiography'. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Crossroad* (1), 121–141

Gregg, W.W. (1966) *W W Gregg: Collected Papers*. First Edition. ed. by Maxwell, J.C. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Grosz, E. (1993) 'Bodies and Knowledges: Feminism and the Crisis of Reason'. in *Feminist Epistemologies*. ed. by Alcoff, L. and Potter, E. New York: Routledge, 187–216

Groth, P., Gibson, A., and Velterop, J. (2010) 'The Anatomy of a Nanopublication'. *Information Services and Use* 30 (1), 51–56

Grusin, R. (2010) *Premediation: Affect and Mediality After 9/11*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Guédon, J.-C. (2001) *In Oldenburg's Long Shadow: Librarians, Research Scientists, Publishers, and the Control of Scientific Publishing*. Association of Research Libraries

Guédon, J.-C. (2004) 'The "Green" and "Gold" Roads to Open Access: The Case for Mixing and Matching'. *Serials Review* 30 (4), 315–328

Guédon, J.-C. (2009) *Between Excellence and Quality: The European Research Area in Search of Itself*. in *Rethinking the university after Bologna*. ed. by Barnett et al. Antwerp: UCSIA

Guédon, J.-C. (2014) 'Sustaining the "Great Conversation": The Future of Scholarly and Scientific Journals'. in *The Future of the Academic Journal*. 2nd Edition. ed. by Phillips, A. and Cope, B. Oxford: Chandos Publishing

Hall, D.D. (1996) *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book*. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press

Hall, G. (2008a) *Digitize This Book!: The Politics of New Media, or Why We Need Open Access Now*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Hall, G. (2008b) 'Liquid Theory'. paper presented at University of California Santa Barbara, US, April 4.

Hall, G. (2009) 'Fluid Notes on Liquid Books'. in *Putting Knowledge to Work and Letting Information Play: The Center for Digital Discourse and Culture*. Timothy W. Luke and Jeremy Hunsinger. Blacksburg: Center for Digital Discourse and Culture

Hall, G. (2010) *Radical Open Access in the Humanities*. in 'Research Without Borders' [online] held 18 October 2010 at Columbia University. available from <http://scholcomm.columbia.edu/2011/01/18/radical-open-access-in-the-humanities/> [1 December 2014]

Hall, G. (2011a) *Force of Binding: On Liquid, Living Books (Version 2.0: Mark Amerika Mix) | Remixthebook*. [online] available from <http://www.remixthebook.com/force-of-binding-on-liquid-living-books-version-2-0-mark-amerika-mix> [15 May 2013]

Hall, G. (2011b) 'Towards a New Political Economy: Open Humanities Press and the Open Access Monograph'. *OAPEN 2011: The First OAPEN (Open Access Publishing in European Networks) Conference*. held February 24 – 25 at Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany.

Hall, G. (2012a) 'Better Living through Sharing: Living Books about Life and Other Open Media Projects'. [17 June 2012] available from <http://garyhall.squarespace.com/journal/2012/6/17/better-living-through-sharing-living-books-about-life-and-ot.html> [4 September 2013]

Hall, G. (2012b) 'Pirate Radical Philosophy'. *Radical Philosophy* [online] 173. available from <http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/pirate-radical-philosophy-2> [28 April 2014]

Hall, G. (2013) 'What Are the Digital Posthumanities?'. [31 August 2013] available from <http://www.garyhall.info/journal/2013/8/31/what-are-the-digital-posthumanities.html> [5 May 2014]

Hall, G. (2014) 'Copyfight'. in *Critical Keywords for the Digital Humanities*, [online] Lueneburg: Centre for Digital Cultures (CDC). available from <http://cdckeywords.leuphana.com/copyfight/> [5 December 2014]

Haraway, D. (1988) 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective'. *Feminist Studies* 14 (3), 575–599

Haraway, D. (2004) 'Otherworldly Conversations; Terran Topics; Local Terms'. in *The Haraway Reader*. New York: Routledge

Haraway, D. and Goodeve, T. (2000) *How Like a Leaf: An Interview with Donna Haraway*. New York: Routledge

Harnad, S. (2012) 'Finch Report, a Trojan Horse, Serves Publishing Industry Interests Instead of UK Research Interests'. [19 June 2012] available from <http://openaccess.eprints.org/index.php?/archives/904-Finch-Report,-a-Trojan-

Horse,-Serves-Publishing-Industry-Interests-Instead-of-UK-Research-Interests.html> [20 January 2014]

Harnad, S., Brody, T., Vallières, F., Carr, L., Hitchcock, S., Gingras, Y., Oppenheim, C., Stamerjohanns, H., and Hilf, E.R. (2004) 'The Access/Impact Problem and the Green and Gold Roads to Open Access'. *Serials Review* 30 (4), 310–314

Harvey, D. (2007) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press

Harvey, W.B., Bailey, H.S., Becker, W.C., and Putnam, J.B. (1972) 'The Impending Crisis in University Publishing Journal of Scholarly Publishing Volume 3 Number 3, April 1972, 195-200.' *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 3 (3), 195–200

Hawes, G.R. (1967) *To Advance Knowledge: A Handbook on American University Press Publishing*. Published for the Association of American University Presses [by] American University Press Services

Hayles, N.K. (1999) *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature and Informatics*. 74th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Hayles, N.K. (2002) *Writing Machines*. Cambridge: MIT Press

Hayles, N.K. (2003) 'Translating Media: Why We Should Rethink Textuality'. *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 16 (2), 263–290

Hayles, N.K. (2004) 'Print Is Flat, Code Is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis'. *Poetics Today* 25 (1), 67–90

Hayles, N.K. (2012) *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press

Hayles, N.K. and Pressman, J. (2013) *Comparative Textual Media: Transforming the Humanities in the Postprint Era*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Herbrechter, S. (2013) *Posthumanism: a critical analysis*. London: Bloomsbury Academic

Herman, B.D. (2006) 'Scratching Out Authorship: Representations of the Electronic Music DJ at the Turn of the 21st Century'. *Popular Communication* 4 (1), 21–38

Hertz, G. and Parikka, J. (2012) 'Zombie Media: Circuit Bending Media Archaeology into an Art Method'. *Leonardo* 45 (5), 424–430

Hesse (1992) *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1810*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Holmwood, J. (2013a) 'Commercial Enclosure: Whatever Happened to Open Access?'. *Radical Philosophy* [online] 181. available from <http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/commercial-enclosure> [17 January 2014]

Holmwood, J. (2013b) 'Markets versus Dialogue: The Debate over Open Access Ignores Competing Philosophies of Openness'. [21 October 2013] available from <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/10/21/markets-versus-dialogue/> [17 January 2014]

Houghton, J., Rasmussen, B., and Sheehan, P. (2009) *Economic Implications of Alternative Scholarly Publishing Models: Exploring the Costs and Benefits. A Report to the Joint Information Systems Committee*. JISC

Howard, R.M. (1995) 'Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty'. *College English* 57 (7), 708–36

Howsam, L. (1998) 'In My View: Women and Book History'. *SHARP News* 7 (4), 1–2

Howsam, L. (2006) *Old Books And New Histories: An Orientation to Studies in Book And Print Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Hugo, V. (1978) *Notre-Dame de Paris*. New Ed. trans. by Sturrock, J. Penguin Classics

Huhtamo, E. and Parikka, J. (2011) *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Jay, G. (2005) 'Taking Multiculturalism Personally: Ethnos and Ethos in the Classroom'. in *Pedagogy: The Question of Impersonation*. ed. by Gallop, J. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Jenkins, H. (2013) 'Is It Appropriate to Appropriate'. in *Reading in a Participatory Culture: Remixing Moby-Dick in the English Classroom*. ed. by Jenkins, H. and Kelley, W. New York: Teachers College Press

Jenkins, H. and Gallagher, O. (2008) '"What Is Remix Culture?": An Interview with Total Recut's Owen Gallagher'. [2 June 2008] available from <http://henryjenkins.org/2008/06/interview_with_total_remixs_ow.html>

Johns, A. (1998) *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Johns, A. (2002) 'How to Acknowledge a Revolution'. *The American Historical Review* 107 (1), 106–125

Johns, A. (2012) 'Gutenberg and the Samurai: Or, The Information Revolution Is History'. *Anthropological Quarterly* 85 (3), 859–883

Jöttkandt, S. (2007) 'No-Fee OA Journals in the Humanities, Three Case Studies: A Presentation by Open Humanities Press'. *Berlin 5 Open Access: From Practice to Impact: Consequences of Knowledge Dissemination*. held 19-21 September. Padua, Italy.

Jöttkandt, S. and Hall, G. (2007) 'Beyond Impact: OA in the Humanities'. *presentation at the signing of the Berlin Declaration by Belgian universities*. held 13 February. Brussels, Belgium.

Keen, A. (2007a) *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet Is Killing Our Culture and Assaulting Our Economy*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing

Keen, A. (2007b) 'Why Google's Universal Library Is an Assault on Human Identity'. [6 March 2007] available from <http://www.zdnet.com/blog/keen/why-googles-universal-library-is-an-assault-on-human-identity/107> [15 May 2013]

Kellner, D. and Share, J. (2005) 'Toward Critical Media Literacy: Core Concepts, Debates, Organizations, and Policy'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 26 (3), 369–386

Kelly, K. (2006) 'Scan This Book!'. *The New York Times* 14 May

Kember, S. (2014a) 'Opening out from Open Access: Writing and Publishing in Response to Neoliberalism'. [21 April 2014] available from <http://adanewmedia.org/2014/04/issue4/> [12 May 2014]

Kember, S. (2014b) 'Why Write?: Feminism, Publishing and the Politics of Communication'. *new formations: a journal of culture/theory/politics* 83 (1), 99–116

Kember, S. and Zylinska, J. (2012) *Life After New Media: Mediation as a Vital Process*. Cambridge: MIT Press

Kirby, V. (2011) *Quantum Anthropologies: Life at Large*. Durham: Duke University Press

Kircz, J.G. (1998) 'Modularity: The next Form of Scientific Information Presentation?'. *Journal of Documentation* 54 (2), 210–235

Kirschenbaum, M. (2013) 'The .txtual Condition: Digital Humanities, Born-Digital Archives, and the Future Literary'. *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly* 7 (1)

Kontturi, K. and Tiainen, M. (2007) 'Feminism, Art, Deleuze, and Darwin: An Interview with Elizabeth Grosz'. *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 15 (4), 246–256

Kreisinger, E. (2011) 'Queer Video Remix and LGBTQ Online Communities'. *Transformative Works and Cultures* [online] 9 (0). available from <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/395> [2 September 2013]

Kreisinger, E. and Coppa, F. (2010) 'Interview with Elisa Kreisinger'. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 5 (0)

Krikorian, G. and Kapczynski, A. (2010) *Access to Knowledge in the Age of Intellectual Property*. Cambridge: MIT Press

Kronick, D.A. (1991) *Scientific and Technical Periodicals of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Guide*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press

Kuusela, H. (2013) 'On the Materiality of Contemporary Reading Formations: The Case of Jari Tervo's Layla'. *New Formations* 78 (1), 65–82

Laclau, E. (2005) *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso

Lai, C.-H. (2006) 'Limits and Beyond: Greenblatt, New Historicism and a Feminist Genealogy'. *Intergrams* 7.1-7.2

Landow, G.P. (2006) *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization: Critical Theory and New Media in a Global Era*. third edition. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Leavis, F.R. (1979) *Education & the University: A Sketch for an 'English School'*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press

Lechte, J. (1999) 'The Who and the What of Writing in the Electronic Age'. *Oxford Literary Review* 21 (1), 135–160

Leduc, M. (2011) 'The Two-Source Illusion: How Vidding Practices Changed Jonathan McIntosh's Political Remix Videos'. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 9 (0)

Lessig, L. (2008) *Remix : Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*. New York: Penguin Press

Lethem, J. (2007) 'The Ecstacy of influence: A Plagiarism'. *Harpers* (1881), 59–72

Levinas, E. (1979) *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers

Liquid Author (2010) 'Future Books: A Wikipedia Model?'. in *Technology and Cultural Form: A Liquid Reader*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press

Liu, A. (1989) 'The Power of Formalism: The New Historicism'. *ELH* 56 (4), 721

Long, P.O. (2001) *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship: Technical Arts and the Culture of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Ludovico, A. (2012) *Post-Digital Print - the Mutation of Publishing Since 1984*. Eindhoven: Onomatopee

Luke, T.W. and Hunsinger, J. (eds.) (2009) *Putting Knowledge to Work and Letting Information Play: The Center for Digital Discourse and Culture* [online] Blacksburg: Center for Digital Discourse and Culture. available from <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/10th-book/> [1 November 2013]

Mahon, M. (1992) *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Manovich, L. (2005) *Remixing and Remixability*. [online] available from <www.manovich.net/DOCS/Remixability_2.doc>

Manovich, L. (2008) *Software Takes Command*. draft version.

Mark Nixon (2004) *Figuring the Past: New Historicism and Modern Historiography*. in 'Social Theory MPhil Seminar'. held 1 December 2004 at Glasgow University

McGann, J. (2004) *Radiant Textuality: Literature after the World Wide Web*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

McGann, J.J. (1988) *Social Values and Poetic Acts: A Historical Judgment of Literary Work*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

McGuire, W. (2013) *Innovation Policy as Neoliberal Discourse and Strategy and the (Re) Stratification of the Scientific Field*. in 'The 4S Annual Meeting' [online] held 29 December 2013 at Crystal City. available from <http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/3/8/5/5/0/p385504_index.html?phpsessid=n7fgph1rjeuv5h3jcau7339r52> [22 January 2014]

McHardy, J., Spencer, M., Danyi, E., Deville, J., Beisel, U., and Abrahamsson, S. (2013) 'Mattering Press: New Forms of Care for STS Books'. *The EASST Review* [online] 32 (4). available from <http://easst.net/easst-review-volume-32-4-december-2013/mattering-press-new-forms-of-care-for-sts-books/> [17 October 2014]

McKenzie, D.F. (1999) *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McKenzie, D.F. (2002) *Making Meaning: Printers of the Mind and Other Essays*. ed. by McDonald, P.D., Suarez, M.F., D, M.P., and S.J, M.F.S. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press

McKerrow, R.B. (2002) *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students*. New edition. New Castle: Oak Knoll Press, US

McKitterick, R. (2000) 'Books and Sciences before Print'. in *Books and the Sciences in History*. 1st edn. ed. by Frasca-Spada, M. and Jardine, N. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 13–34

McLeod, J. and Vasinda, S. (2008) 'Critical Literacy and Web 2.0: Exercising and Negotiating Power'. *Computers in the Schools* 25 (3-4), 259–274

McLuhan, M. (1962) *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the Making of Typographic Man.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press

McLuhan, M. and Fiore, Q. (1967) *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. New York: Bantam Books

McPherson, T. (2010) 'Scaling Vectors: Thoughts on the Future of Scholarly Communication'. *Journal of Electronic Publishing* [online] 13 (2). available from <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3336451.0013.208>

McPherson, T. (2012) 'Why Are the Digital Humanities So White?, Or, Thinking the Histories of Race and Computation'. in *Debates in the Digital Humanities* ed. by Gold, M.K. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McPherson, T. (2014a) 'Designing for Difference'. *differences. A journal of feminist cultural studies* 25 (1), 177–188

McPherson, T. (2014b) *Designing for Difference. Notes on the Humanities and Software Design*. in 'Rewiring the futures of publishing - Hybrid Publishing Lab' [online] held 2014 at Lueneburg. available from <http://openreflections.wordpress.com/2014/03/18/hybrid-publishing-scalar-and-watching-reading-write/> [2 June 2014]

Merton, R.K. (1973) *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Miller, P.D. (2004) *Rhythm Science*. 1st edn. Cambridge: The MIT Press

Montrose, L. (1989) 'Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Cultures'. in *The New Historicism*. New York & London: Routledge, 15–36

Montuori, A. and Purser, R.E. (1995) 'Deconstructing the Lone Genius Myth: Toward a Contextual View of Creativity'. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 35 (3), 69–112

Morozov, E. (2013) *To Save Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism*. New York: Public Affairs

Navas, E. (2008) *The Author Function in Remix*. [05 2008] available from <http://remixtheory.net/?p=309> [30 January 2011]

Navas, E. (2010) 'Regressive and Reflexive Mashups in Sampling Culture, 2010 Revision'. [13 August 2010] available from <http://remixtheory.net/?p=444> [8 December 2010]

Navas, E. (2012) *Remix Theory: The Aesthetics of Sampling*. 2012th edn. Vienna: Springer

Newton, J. (1988) 'History as Usual? Feminism and the "New Historicism".' *Cultural Critique* (9), 87–121

Nielsen, M. (2011) *Reinventing Discovery: The New Era of Networked Science.* Princeton, N.J:
    Princeton University Press

Van Noorden, R. (2012) 'Britain Aims for Broad Open Access'. *Nature* 486 (7403), 302–
    303

Nowviskie, B. (2011a) 'Introduction: Two Tramps in Mud Time'. in *#Alt-Academy: 1
    Alternative Academic Careers for Humanities Scholars.* MediaCommons

Nowviskie, B. (2011b) 'Where Credit Is Due: Preconditions for the Evaluation of
    Collaborative Digital Scholarship'. *Profession* 2011 (1), 169–181

Olssen, M. and Peters, M.A. (2005) 'Neoliberalism, Higher Education and the Knowledge
    Economy: From the Free Market to Knowledge Capitalism'. *Journal of Education
    Policy* 20 (3), 313–345

Ong, W.J. (1982) *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word.* New edition. New York:
    Routledge

O'Shea, A. (1998) 'A Special Relationship? Cultural Studies, Academia and Pedagogy'.
    Cultural Studies 12 (4), 513–527

O'Sullivan, S. (2002) 'Cultural Studies as Rhizome - Rhizomes in Cultural Studies'. in
    Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinarity, and Translation [online] ed. by Herbrechter, S.
    Critical Studies. vol. 20. 81–93. available from
    <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/rodopi/crst/2002/00000020/0000000
    1/art00006>

Oz, A. (2010) *'Move Along Now, Nothing to See Here': The Private Discussion Spheres of Wikipedia.*
    in 'Wikimania conference 2009.' [online] held 17 December 2010 at Rochester, NY.
    Social Science Research Network. available from
    <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1726450> [15 May 2013]

Paras, E. (2006) *Foucault 2.0: Beyond Power and Knowledge.* New York: Other Press

Parikka, J. (2012) *What Is Media Archaeology.* Cambridge: Polity

Pekkola, M. (2009) 'Neoliberal Politics of Innovation and Its Opposition at the University:
    The Case of Finland'. *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy* 5 (2)

Pellizzoni, D.L. and Ylönen, M. (2012) *Neoliberalism and Technoscience: Critical Assessments.*
    Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Perloff, M. (2006) 'Digital Poetics and the Differential Text'. in *New Media Poetics: Contexts,
    Tecnhotexts and Theories* [online] ed. by Morris, A. and Swiss, T. Cambridge and
    London: MIT Press, 143–164. available from <http://marjorieperloff.com/stein-
    duchamp-picasso/digital-poetics-and-the-differential-text/#ixzz2egUdsV2z> [6
    January 2014]

Pieters, J. (2000) 'New Historicism: Postmodern Historiography Between Narrativism and
    Heterology'. *History and Theory* 39 (1), 21–38

Piper, A. (2012) *Book Was There: Reading in Electronic Times.* Chicago: University Of Chicago
    Press

Place, V. (2010) 'A Poetics of Radical Evil'. *Lana Turner. A Journal of poetry and opinion* 3, 97–
    99

Place, V. (2011) ''Nothing That's Quite Your Own': Vanessa Place Interviewed'.
    Intercapillary Space [interview by E. Hardy] August 8, 2011

Plato (2005) *Phaedrus.* Revised. trans. by Rowe, C. London: Penguin Classics

Pochoda, P. (2012) 'The Big One: The Epistemic System Break in Scholarly Monograph
    Publishing'. *New Media & Society* [online] available from
    <http://nms.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/12/06/1461444812465143> [15
    May 2013]

Presner, T. and Schnapp, J. (2009) *The Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0.* available from
    <www.humanitiesblast.com/manifesto/Manifesto_V2.pdf>

Price, D.J. de S. (1969) *Little Science, Big Science.* New York: Columbia University Press

Price, L. (2012) 'The Death of the Book Through the Ages'. *The New York Times* [online] 10 August. available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/books/review/the-death-of-the-book-through-the-ages.html> [2 January 2013]

Prosser, D. (2003) 'The Next Information Revolution - How Open Access Repositories and Journals Will Transform Scholarly Communications'. *LIBER Quarterly* [online] 14 (1). available from <http://liber.library.uu.nl/index.php/lq/article/view/URN%3ANBN%3ANL%3AUI%3A10-1-113359> [12 May 2014]

Purcell, E. (2011) *No New Normal – The Value Web* [online] available from <http://eoinpurcellsblog.com/2011/05/24/no-new-normal-the-value-web/> [8 October 2012]

Readings, B. (1996) *The University in Ruins*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Renee Slajda (2013) '"Don't Blame the Media, Become the Media": Feminist Remix as Utopian Practice'. [30 May 2013] available from <http://bcrw.barnard.edu/blog/dont-blame-the-media-become-the-media-feminist-remix-as-utopian-practice/> [2 September 2013]

Roberts, P. and Peters, M.A. (2008) *Neoliberalism, Higher Education and Research*. Educational futures; v. 26. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers

Rose, M. (1993) *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Roth, T.L. (2010) 'Hacking the Dissertation Process'. [26 May 2010] available from <http://tanyaroth.wordpress.com> [11 March 2012]

Rowlands, I., Nicholas, D., Russell, B., Canty, N., and Watkinson, A. (2011) 'Social Media Use in the Research Workflow'. *Learned Publishing* 24 (3), 183–195

Sabaratnam, M. and Kirby, P. (2012) 'Open Access: HEFCE, REF2020 and the Threat to Academic Freedom'. [4 December 2012] available from <http://thedisorderofthings.com/2012/12/04/open-access-hefce-ref2020-and-the-threat-to-academic-freedom/> [19 January 2014]

Salter, A. (2010) 'Rethinking the Humanities Dissertation'. [27 May 2010] available from <http://selfloud.blogspot.com/2010/05/rethinking-humanities-dissertation.html> [11 March 2012]

Seigworth, G.J. (2006) 'Cultural Studies and Gilles Deleuze'. in *New Cultural Studies: Adventures in Theory*. ed. by Birchall, C. and Hall, G. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Sewell, D. (2009) 'It's For Sale, So It Must Be Finished: Digital Projects in the Scholarly Publishing World.' *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3 (2)

Shapin, S. (1994) *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Shields, D. (2011) *Reality Hunger: A Manifesto*. New York: Vintage

Simeone, M., Guiliano, J., Kooper, R., and Bajcsy, P. (2011) 'Digging into Data Using New Collaborative Infrastructures Supporting Humanities-Based Computer Science Research'. *First Monday; Volume 16, Number 5 - 2 May 2011* [online] available from <http://www.firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3372/2950> [1 January 2011]

Spiro, L. (2009) 'Examples of Collaborative Digital Humanities Projects'. [1 June 2009] available from <http://digitalscholarship.wordpress.com> [15 March 2012]

Stiegler, B. (2010) *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Striphas, T. (2010) 'Acknowledged Goods: Cultural Studies and the Politics of Academic Journal Publishing'. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 7 (1), 3–25

Striphas, T. (2011) 'Performing Scholarly Communication'. *Text and Performance Quarterly* 32 (1), 78–84

Swain, H. (2013) 'Zero Hours in Universities: "You Never Know If It"ll Be Enough to Survive". *The Guardian* [online] 16 September. available from <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/sep/16/zero-hours-contracts-at-universities> [12 May 2014]

Thoburn, N. (2011) 'To Conquer the Anonymous: Authorship and Myth in the Wu Ming Foundation'. *Cultural Critique* 78 (1), 119–150

Thompson, J. (2005) *Books in the Digital Age : The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States*. Malden MA: Polity Press

Thompson, J.W. (2002) 'The Death of the Scholarly Monograph in the Humanities ? Citation Patterns in Literary Scholarship'. *Libri* 52 (3), 121–136

Threadgold, T. (1997) *Feminist Poetics. Poiesis, Performance, Histories.* London: Routledge

Tkacz, N. (2012) 'From Open Source to Open Government: A Critique of Open Politics | Ephemera'. *Ephemera: theory in politics & organization* 12 (4), 386–405

Tkacz, N. and Lovink, G. (eds.) (2011) *Critical Point of View: A Wikipedia Reader.* Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures

Trettien, W. (2009) *Media Studies and the History of the Book | MIT Comparative Media Studies* [online] available from <http://cms.mit.edu/news/features/2009/01/media_studies_and_the_history.php> [13 December 2012]

uncertain commons (2013) *Speculate This!.* Durham: Duke University Press

Updike, J. (2006) 'The End of Authorship'. *The New York Times* [online] 25 June. available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/25/books/review/25updike.html> [30 September 2014]

Van der Tuin, I. (2008) 'Deflationary Logic Response to Sara Ahmed's `Imaginary Prohibitions: Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the "New Materialism" "'. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 15 (4), 411–416

Van der Tuin, I. (2011a) '"A Different Starting Point, a Different Metaphysics": Reading Bergson and Barad Diffractively'. *Hypatia* 26 (1), 22–42

Van der Tuin, I. (2011b) '"New Feminist Materialisms".' *Women's Studies International Forum* 34 (4), 271–277

Verhaar, P. (2009) 'Sharing Tales of the Dutch Revolt in a Virtual Research Environment'. *Logos* 20 (1-4), 1–13

Vermeir, K. (2012) 'Openness versus Secrecy? Historical and Historiographical Remarks'. *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45 (Special Issue 02), 165–188

Vermeir, K. and Margócsy, D. (2012) 'States of Secrecy: An Introduction'. *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45 (Special Issue 02), 153–164

Visnjic, F. (2012) *Electrolibrary by Waldek Węgrzyn - Paper Book as Interface* [online] available from <http://www.creativeapplications.net/objects/electrolibrary-by-waldek-wegrzyn-paper-book-as-interface/> [29 October 2012]

Wark, M. (2007) *Gamer Theory.* Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press

Warwick, C. (2004) 'Print Scholarship and Digital Resources'. in *Companion to Digital Humanities* [online] Hardcover. ed. by Schreibman, S., Siemens, R., and Unsworth, J. Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Professional. available from <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/>

Waters, L. (2004) *Enemies of Promise: Publishing, Perishing, and the Eclipse of Scholarship.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Weber, S. (2000) 'The Future of the Humanities: Experimenting'. *Culture Machine* [online] 2 (0). available from

<http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/311> [4 December 2013]

Van der Weel, A. (2012) *Changing Our Textual Minds: Towards a Digital Order of Knowledge.* Manchester: Manchester University Press

Williams, P., Stevenson, I., Nicholas, D., Watkinson, A., and Rowlands, I. (2009) 'The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities Research'. *Aslib Proceedings* 61 (1), 67–82

Willinsky, J. (2005) *The Access Principle: The Case for Open Access to Research and Scholarship.* Cambridge: MIT Press

Woodmansee, M. and Jaszi, P. (1993) *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature.* Durham: Duke University Press

Wright, H.K. (2003) 'Cultural Studies as Praxis: (making) an Autobiographical Case'. *Cultural Studies* 17 (6), 805–822

Zylinska, J. (2005) *The Ethics of Cultural Studies.* London: Continuum International Publishing Group