Lever Press: Why?

Denison University
October 27, 2016

Rebecca Welzenbach

Program Manager, Lever Press
Director, Strategic Integration & Partnerships, Michigan Publishing
University of Michigan Library

rebecca@leverpress.org | @rwelzenb | 734-615-0038
Why are we here?
What’s going on with monographs?

1. We’re spending more

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YBP Fiscal Year</th>
<th>YBP Approval Titles Treated</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Avg. List Price (USD)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>66,395</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>$80.39</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>64,376</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>$87.68</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>64,383</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>$83.59</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>63,871</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>$80.61</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>63,145</td>
<td>-2.1%</td>
<td>$76.58</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>64,473</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>$74.83</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>62,705</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>$71.92</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/07</td>
<td>59,732</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>$68.36</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/06</td>
<td>57,093</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>$68.10</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/05</td>
<td>52,794</td>
<td>-3.7%</td>
<td>$66.11</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/04</td>
<td>54,835</td>
<td>-6.7%</td>
<td>$63.88</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/03</td>
<td>58,766</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>$68.78</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s going on with monographs?

1. We’re spending more
2. On stuff we’re using less
What’s going on with monographs?

1. We’re spending more
2. On stuff we’re using less
3. Liberal arts colleges: especially affected/excluded?

How might liberal-arts institutions create a distinct editorial vision and approach?
It’s bad for everyone!

- **Publishers:** Average $10,000 loss on every book is unsustainable
- **Librarians:** Increased prices of books & extended digital rights management
- **Authors:** Impact of research affected by lack of circulation of copies


*While the press has seen declines across all its print products, Watkinson pointed to the “collapse of the market for print monographs” as the main reason why the press finds itself in its current situation. Its academic monograph division in 2004-5 generated more than $3.3 million in revenue on its own but made barely half that — $1.7 million — this past fiscal year, which ended in June.*
Is there a better way? Probably *many*

expectation of payment by authors

number of funders involved
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>September: Virtual workshops to gather input from more than 50 library directors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>January: Survey of faculty needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>April: Phase I Report Decision to form an OA press.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>July: Pledging begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>March: Implementation phase with Amherst, Michigan launched at ACRL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>December: Lever Press launches!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>January: Oversight Committee meeting at Amherst College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Spring: Editorial Board selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>September: Editorial Program announced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What makes Lever Press unique?

• **Alignment with mission and ethos of LACs**
  • Created and governed by LAC librarians and other faculty
  • A powerful voice for the publishing needs of LAC faculty

• **“Platinum” Open Access**
  • No author charges, ever. Thanks to LAC library support!
  • Publications selected solely on basis of merit, not ability to pay

• **Digitally native**
  • Optimized for the publication of multimodal scholarship
  • Speedy, digitally-enabled, workflows
Alignment with mission and ethos of LACs

**Governance**

- Oversight Committee
  - Heads of libraries from committed institutions
  - Nominated and elected by representatives of pledging institutions
  - Responsible for strategic direction, financial accountability, etc.

- Editorial Board
  - Faculty nominated from participating institutions
  - Selected by the Oversight Committee
  - Responsible for evaluating and approving or rejecting individual works—establishing and sustaining a reputation for high-quality, rigorously reviewed scholarship

[http://www.leverpress.org/oversight-committee/](http://www.leverpress.org/oversight-committee/)
Alignment with mission and ethos of LACs

Editorial Program (1/2)

Lever Press publications will:

• Show a deep commitment to interdisciplinarity
• Engage with major social issues
• Blur the lines between research and teaching

http://www.leverpress.org/the-lever-press-editorial-program/
Editorial Program (2/2)

Five Areas of Focus:

• **Great questions and grand challenges:** brings diverse perspectives to bear upon pressing issues of social, moral, political, and scientific concern.

• **Lever texts:** makes frequently taught works available in a useful, open-access format that both reflects the ethos of the liberal arts college and challenges traditional canons.

• **New frontiers in the digital liberal arts:** features works of original research that take advantage of digital formats and methodology to offer scholarship impossible to convey adequately in print form.

• **Special Collections:** features interdisciplinary studies of liberal arts college museum or library special collections, or thematic studies across institutional collections, with a focus on communities, movements, and populations that have been marginalized and excluded.

• **Teaching, learning, and leading in the liberal arts college:** highlights excellence in teaching and in the strategies that enable transformational student development, as well as critical reflections from academic leaders on the present and future state of liberal arts colleges.

Platinum Open Access

• Funded by a consortium of more than 45 liberal arts college libraries
• No author charges
• Author honorarium! ($1,000)
• Cost of doing business separated from selection of titles
Digitally Native

- Optimized for the publication of multimodal scholarship
  - Fulcrum platform
- Speedy, digitally-enabled, workflows
- Consideration for born-digital scholarship from contract through publication
Fulcrum

**Flexible**
By adopting an agile development approach and working in partnership with the Hydra open source community, Fulcrum is responsive to the changing needs of digital scholars.

**Durable**
Built on research university library infrastructure specifically designed to curate digital objects, Fulcrum is a trusted steward committed to preservation and stability.

**Discoverable**
Interoperable with other publishing tools and integrated into the information supply chain, Fulcrum ensures that content is discovered by readers and impact is tracked.
Fulcrum

Press in the front!

Library in the back!
Filmed scenes from Inspector General

From The Director's Prism: E. T. A. Hoffmann and the Russian Theatrical Avant-Garde by Dassia N. Posner

This series of intercutted film clips from episodes 1, 5, and 7 of Inspector General reveals the production's precise choreography of exaggerated movement, ranging from Khlestakov's sweeping gestures to the tiny movements of Anna Andreevna's eyes.

Episode 3: Anna Andreevna (Shukshin)heets with Dolochinsky (Shevtsov), pretending to fall in his arms, only to be interrupted by the sound of entrance of her daughter (Kabanova), whose head is bedecked with ridiculous looped headdress. Anna dreams of many suicides, who materialize in her room to serve her tea in a great variety of imaginary tables before shooting themselves.

Episode 5: Khlestakov (Galin) and his alter ego, the letter in transit (Kochanov), sits on opposite ends of a little table at the house of the Mayor (Raskovsky) and light their cigars in unison with candles. Khlestakov is energized, both by the serving of the town officials and by the great quantity of alcohol he has consumed. His elaborate declarations are counterbalanced by a tiny visual gesture: he takes Anna Andreevna's pinkie on a teaspoon and kisses it.

See book: p. 83, 84

Creator: Meyerhold, Vsevolod
What does Lever Press hope to achieve?

• Not to simply replace or reinvent a university press
• By the end of 2020, to produce 60 high quality scholarly books without high prices or complex DRM problems, that will really be used on the campuses of our pledging institutions.
• To move the needle on the recognition and acceptance of born digital scholarship, by way of a large group of similar institutions coming together at once
• To amplify the reach, voice, and impact of scholars, students, and campuses involved with Lever Press, by complementing existing campus services. E.g.:
  • A layer of scholarly narrative on top of an existing digitized collection
  • Pedagogical contextualization of opportunities, achievements, collections, or experiences unique to our campuses
  • High quality, classroom-ready editions of texts
What does this library hope to achieve?

• What are you most excited about?
• Most worried about?
• What are faculty and students asking you for? Do you feel capable of meeting their needs?

• What questions do you have for me?

• Topics from the presentation you’d like me to expand upon? (Fulcrum, model contract, editorial program, etc.?)
Lever Press is accepting proposals for individual works and for series. Propose something, or encourage others to do so!:
http://www.leverpress.org/authors/

In the coming year: webinars on various topics (Fulcrum, contract, etc.). What topics are you interested in? Participate!

Down the road? More sustainable business model!
Sources and further reading

• YBP Annual Price Update
  https://www.gobi3.com/StaticContent/GOBIContent/YBP/Private/Help/Pages/newtitlereport_us.html

• The Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation by Emory University (July 1, 2015)
  https://pid.emory.edu/ark:/25593/q4fd0

• A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books at Two Universities: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation by Indiana University & University of Michigan (Sept 15, 2015) http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/113671