Experimental Publishing as a Critical Praxis: Rethinking Distinctions between Research and Publishing

Janneke Adema

Centre for Postdigital Cultures – Coventry University

Supervising Artistic and Practice-based Research: Publishing for Urgency

August 19 to August 22, 2024

Art Hub Copenhagen

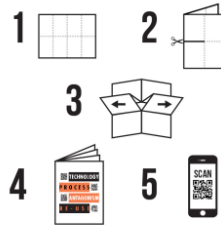**RADICAL OPEN ACCESS**

ARTISTS' BOOKS

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

MATERIALITY

RADICAL OPEN ACCESS
ARTISTS' BOOKS
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION
MATERIALITY

SCHOLARLY MONOGRAPH
EXPERIMENTATION
AUTHORSHIP
INTERVENTION

POLITICS OF THE BOOK
THE GALLERY SYSTEM
ACCESS
OBJECT

DIGITAL
PRINT
COMMODIFICATION
MONOGRAPH CRISIS

MEDIUM
DEMOCRACY
PEER REVIEW
ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

RE-USE
ANTAGONISM
PROCESS
TECHNOLOGY

DISSEMINATION
MULTIPLE
DEMOCRATIC
ALTERNATIVE SPACE
ARTIST-LED SCHOLAR-LED

ABOUT

This website and the accompanying posters have been designed by Nabaa Baqir, Mila Spasova and Serhan Curti, 2nd year design students at Coventry University, as part of a project on performative publications run by Janneke Adema. They offer a different take on the article 'The political nature of the book. On artists' books and radical open access', written by Janneke Adema and Gary Hall and originally published in the journal New Formations.

The Posters and Website

This website consists of 3 sections that all offer an alternative way to engage with the article, as well as to access or distribute it. The first section consists of the original postprint article text, which offers a familiar linear reading experience. The second section consists of 28 keywords, which relate to some of the main themes and topics that characterise and structure the article's content. By clicking on them these offer an alternative non-linear route through the text, as they are connected to snippets of text extracted from the original text that refer to the various keywords. The third section offers an offline engagement, consisting of 7 posters, each with 4 keywords and 4 QR codes that can be printed off at home. The QR code for each keyword will direct the reader to the corresponding keyword on the website, offering them the availability to access the various text snippets through their mobile devices. The posters can be printed on A3 or A4 format, which makes them easy to access with the aid of a home printer and simple to disseminate. On the backside of each poster you can find all the 7 separate posters in a reduced size with the accompanying keywords and QR codes. The poster can then be folded in such a way (see the folding instructions) that it forms a little booklet consisting of all the posters via which the entire article can be accessed.

Performative Publications

Together the website and posters try to envision what a 'performative publication' might be. A performative publication wants to explore how we can bring together and align more closely the material form of a publication with its content. The term performative publication was coined by Christopher P. Long. He defines it as a publication in which 'the mode of publication performs one of the central ideas the text itself seeks to articulate and explore'. In this respect this concept relates to Katherine Hayles' term technotext, which she defines as something that comes about 'when a literary work interrogates the inscription technology that produces

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Guerrilla Open Access
Memory of the World
Laurie Allen
Balázs Bodó
Christopher Kelty

The Geopolitics of Open
George Chen
Maggie Huang
Gabriela Méndez Cota
Ángel Octavio Álvarez Solís
Culture Machine

Edited by Memory of the World

Guerrilla Open Access

Christopher Kelty

Balázs Bodó

Laurie Allen

Edited by Samuel Moore Mattering Press

The Commons and Care

Joe Deville

Samuel Moore

Tahani Nadim

Edited by Open Humanities Press

Competition and Cooperation

Sebastian Nordhoff

Maddalena Fragnito

Valeria Graziano

the agency of the material book, which Fajfer and Bazarnik emphasise as integral to the totality of the work, they emphasise that it is the author that determines both the content and the format of the liberatic work. They highlight the author's 'artistic liberty' or freedom (liberature relates here to libertas) when they state: 'It is the writer who intentionally shapes the form of the book to suit the text' (Bazarnik and Fajfer 2010). What kind of agency does this leave for the book and its specific materiality itself? What I want to explore is how in performative publications this intentionality is distributed, how it is part of various human and non-human agencies, which include the discursive practices that shape both the book and its author. Fajfer and Bazarnik instead emphasise that the material format is subjected to the text as part of authorial intention. Here they don't leave much room to explore how both text and context, discourse and material, are similarly involved in shaping authorial intention. Do liberatic works not remain disembodied in this vision, when their material agency is simply replaced by total authorial intention?

There is a tendency towards purity and control in liberature, where the author's intentions remain more important than the influence of other agencies in the creation of (literary) works. For example, as Fajfer and Bazarnik (in line with romantic and intentionalist traditions of textual criticism (Bowers 1949, Tanselle 1990)) state: 'In preparing each publication we pay special attention to the author's intentions, trying to establish or restore the original layout usually ruined by editors who, strange as it may seem, usually disregard the author's design' (Bazarnik and Fajfer 2010). Although I support Fajfer and Bazarnik's vision that writers should take more responsibility for the material production and becoming of their publication, and for the various aspects of the publishing process, for me this does not imply that these aspects should be (or ever can be) in control of a total intentional author. Although I agree with Fajfer that 'the shape of the book should not be determined by generally accepted conventions', I would like to emphasise forms of distributed intentionality or agency as part of our writing and publishing processes; processes which, albeit not under our control, we should nonetheless take responsibility for. This is clearly a route Fajfer does not want to take: 'Otherwise, one would have to agree with Raymond Federman and admit that one shares the authorship of one's masterpieces with the editor, typesetter, and manuscript reviser; and what writer would like to do that?' (Fajfer 2010, 25)

Janneke_Adema A further distinction between performative publications and liberature lies in the fact that liberature very clearly distinguishes itself as a literary genre or phenomenon. Fajfer argues that it is necessary to create this separate genre because he too often sees non-traditional literary works being judged as works of art, not as literature. In this sense liberature should be seen as differing from artists' books and concrete poetry. Bazarnik and Fajfer state: 'So the concept of 'liberature' grew out of Oka-leczenie, the book we labelled as such, partly in order to avoid the term 'the artists' book'. We had to come up with an appropriate term to describe it, or to give critics an appropriate tool to handle it if we wanted them to take it seriously. Otherwise, it would have been labelled 'the artists' book' or a typographic happening, as someone called it, and relegated to the margins of literature. Instead of getting to libraries and bookshops, it would have ended up in galleries and exhibitions. But we wanted it to be read. Our priority in writing and designing it was not to make it visually appealing, but to find an appropriate form that would suit its subject (…)' (Bazarnik and Fajfer 2010). Perhaps this literary context also explains why it is harder for Bazarnik and Fajfer to complicate authorial intention, something that has perhaps been worked through more extensively in an artistic context than it has been in a literary one.

Janneke_Adema A final distinction seems to lie in the fact that liberature remains very much focused on text-based and non-digital works of literature. Can a video-work be liberature for example? In liberature the totality of the work remains key, which includes the semantics of the text in combination with its materiality, together forming a semiotic unity or symbiosis. Does this focus on a total work also mean that liberature sees (literary) works as objects, as fixed and static (as opposed to fluid and processual, for example)?

Fajfer emphasises that for him, liberature does not mean adherence to the codex form: 'There is no reason for constraining oneself to the traditional form of the codex. These work can assume any shape at all and be made of any material' (Fajfer 2010, 44). However, this definition does not seem to include digital works. In their analysis of liberature Bazarnik and Fajfer focus mainly on modernist and avant-garde print-based works. With respect to current developments, liberature can be seen as a response to digital media (*Tree of Codes*, Jonathan Safran Foer's work that is often seen as extremely hard to adapt to a digital environment is often mentioned as a work of liberature). Here there seems to be some overlap with post-digital works, which show a renewed interest in experimentation with print, craft, artist and even 'hipster' publishing. Print in this sense is seen as evading the restrictions and control that the digital environment and its distribution models impose (Ludovico 2012, Cramer 2012)

Fajfer even goes so far as to oppose liberature to digital hypertexts, predominantly because, due to their specific materiality, liberatic works can not easily be translated into hypertext: 'The book (from Latin "liber") is a part of the work; its physical shape and structure constitute its integral part. So it is not easy to take out the text and place it in the virtual space since in the liberatic work the space in which words are contained is not neutral' (Fajfer 2010, 10). There is a tendency here to both experiment with the book's format whilst also maintaining the printed book, or the codex or book object. In this sense liberature seems to have limited

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interest in experimentation with digital or hybrid print/digital content, where Fajfer even professes a fear for digital media: 'We can only hope that a future masterpiece will change the present situation and the attitude of writers to the material aspect of the book, which they have ignored so far. This is, I believe, the only way of saving hardcopy books from obliteration by electronic media' (Fajfer 2010, 27–28).

FROM TECHNOTEXTS TO PERFORMATIVE MATERIALITY

Janneke_Adema As a term, performative publications have a lot in common with Katherine Hayles's concept 'technotexts'. In her book *Writing Machines* (itself a technotext, beautifully designed by Anne Burdick in a hybrid print and 'webtake' version) Hayles introduces the term technotext as a relative and alternative to concepts such as hypertext and cybertext. She defines a technotext as something that comes about 'when a literary work interrogates the inscription technology that produces it' (Hayles 2002, 25) and elsewhere as 'a book that embodies its own critical concepts (Hayles 2002, 140)'. In *Writing Machines* Hayles then goes on to analyse 3 technotexts, Talan Memmott's work of electronic literature *Lexia to Perplexia* (2000), Tom Phillips artist's book *A Humument* (1970), and Mark Z. Danielewski's novel *House of Leaves* (2000).

Janneke_Adema Yet there exists a difference in focus and emphasis between what Hayles defines as technotexts and what I here would like to put forward as performative publications. In the latter the accent lies more on the material agency of publications, not merely *investigating* or *interrogating* their own mediality or materiality, but *actively enacting* or *performing* it. How does the term 'technotext' in this sense relate to the emphasis in a lot of current theory on what texts do and not just what they mean or signify, or even embody? In this respect it is useful to go back to Johanna Drucker's conceptualisation of *performative materiality*, where she states that 'performative materiality is based on the conviction that a system should be understood by what it does, not only how it is structured' (Drucker 2013). Hayles does however also focus on this aspect of 'doing' when she states that what technotexts do, is 'bring into view the machinery that gives their verbal constructions physical reality' (Hayles 2002, 25). However, here again one could argue that performative publications move beyond a 'bringing into view' or a 'reflecting on' their own mediality, where they are actively involved in performing (or performatively disrupting or intervening in) it.

Critique of the closed access profit-driven scholarly publishing industry, which inhibits:

1) wider access to research

2) more equitable and bibliodiverse forms of knowledge production

3) the exploration of new forms of scholarship, and

4) experiments with not-for-profit, scholar-led, and collaborative publishing

Critical Praxis and Scholarly Poethics

- Critical praxis refers to the awareness of and the reflection on how our ideas and ideologies related to the book become embodied in our publishing practices, making it possible to start to transform them.

- scholarly poethics refers to a form of doing scholarship that pays specific attention to the relation between context and content, ethics and aesthetics in our research; between the methods and theories informing our scholarship and the media formats and graphic spaces we communicate through.

- A scholarly poethics tries to connect the doing of scholarship with its political, ethical, and aesthetical elements.

Living Books

Experiments in the Posthumanities

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Living Books:
Experiments in the Posthumanities

By Janneke Adema

The MIT Press
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Publication date: 2021

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Reimagining the scholarly book as living and collaborative — not as commodified and essentialized, but in all its dynamic materiality.

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by Roger F. Malina
Series Foreword

by Janneke Adema
Acknowledgments

Introduction
by Janneke Adema
Published: Aug 31, 2021

1. Toward a Diffractive Genealogy of Book History
by Janneke Adema
Published: Aug 31, 2021

2. From Romantic to Posthumanist Authorship
by Janneke Adema
Published: Aug 31, 2021

3. The Commodification of the Book and Its Discursive Formation
by Janneke Adema
Published: Aug 31, 2021

4. Publishing as a Relational Practice: Radical Open Access and Experimentation
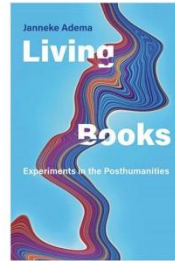*by Janneke Adema*
Published: Aug 31, 2021

5. On Liquid Books and Fluid Humanities
by Janneke Adema
Published: Aug 31, 2021

The Publishing Process: Versioning

About

¶1 This is the CommentPress version of *Knowledge Production Beyond the Book? Performing the Scholarly Monograph in Contemporary Digital Culture*, an openly produced, processual and versioned PhD thesis, open to reuse and remix. This thesis has been developed on the Open Reflections weblog, and also includes a wiki version (which allows editing directly into the text) which is available here.

¶2 For more information about this project, have a look at the blogpost I have written about versioning here, based on material from chapter 1 of this thesis.

¶3 The *CommentPress WordPress* plugin was developed by the *Institute for the Future of the Book*. This plugin enables users to leave comments alongside the text, next to 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* (2011). 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'.

How to comment on this text

¶4 The CommentPress wordpress plugin which allows comments to be attached to individual paragraphs, whole pages, or to an entire document. To leave a comment on a paragraph, click the speech bubble to its left; to leave a comment on an entire page, click the link to "comments

MARCH 25, 2015 — culture and th...
Technogenesis and Media Specific Analysis: N. Katherine Hayles

MARCH 8, 2015
On Liquid Books and Fluid Humanities (part III)

MARCH 6, 2015
On Liquid Books and Fluid Humanities (part II)

MARCH 5, 2015
On Liquid Books and Fluid Humanities (part I)

FEBRUARY 27, 2015
New Models of Knowledge Production. Open Access Publishing and Experimental Research Practices (Part III)

FEBRUARY 26, 2015
New Models of Knowledge Production. Open Access Publishing and Experimental Research Practices (Part II)

Knowledge Production Beyond the Book Wiki

ENTER THE WIKI

Introduction

Posted on 14th May 2015 By Janneke Adema

Page | Discussion | History   Edit | Create

Wikis > Introduction

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

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

Instead I want to imagine more experimental, ethical, and critical futures for the scholarly bo this thesis; futures in which we as scholars take greater responsibility for our conti engagement with the book's becoming. As such, this is something that requires a cr investigation of our academic communication practices, our systems of knowledge productio well as the debates that surround both scholarly publishing and the past and future of the acad monograph. This thesis can be seen as an example of such an investigation. Additionally, it see encourage other academics to rigorously explore their own relationship and entanglement wit

down barriers between the humanities and the sciences by repurposing previously published science research and clustering it around a specific topic (e.g., energy, air, pharmacology, or bioethics) accompanied by an editorial introduction. This experiment in connecting and reusing various open access research materials—including articles, books, texts, data, images, video, and sound—and in exploring collective writing and open editing was designed to challenge "the physical and conceptual limitations" of the codex book, but it also questioned the various institutions and material practices that accompany it (e.g., the liberal humanist author, copyright, its aesthetics of bookishness). Yet more than that, it was an experiment in reimagining the book itself as living and collaborative, as an iterative and processual form of cocreation. With this, Living Books About Life—together with its sister series, Culture Machine Liquid Books—was one of the first experiments in humanities book publishing to rigorously explore the potential implications and possibilities of the digital medium for the humanities monograph, for the humanities, and, ultimately, for the human.[3]

Erzsebet Toth-Czifra   2 months ago

Hi Janneke and thanks for teaming up with me to experiment with an interview format that unfolds on the margins of the book. My expectation is that this way, we can better, deeper connect our discussion to the text itself and also on the other hand, we can open up the introduction chapter of your book to a dialogue.

Could you start off by telling us a bit about what motivated the creation of *Living Books*? What kinds of experiences were influential in this respect and how did you manage to turn it into an experimental book writing project?

Janneke Adema   2 months ago

Thank you Erzsébet for engaging with *Living Books* here in the margins of the text, further extending it and keeping it alive! I guess the start of the book in some ways lies back in 2008 when I just finished my MA in Book and Digital Media Studies (with a dissertation on open access publishing). I first encountered the open access movement during my MA and shortly afterwards I started working as a researcher on the OAPEN project, which focused on developing open access models for academic books (at a time when this still seemed like a far-fetched ideal to many). Around that time I also started writing a research blog, *Open Reflections*, which was a way for me to publish my research ideas as they were developing, report back from conferences and events, and establish connections with other research projects and researchers. Blogs were both still relatively novel in academia then while also being heavily experimented with in DH and media studies circles. In this sense it provided me the opportunity to

Post

Post

Post

Posthumanities

Post

Post

Post

What are the implications of the decentering of the human and of the rise of digital technologies for the humanities, for theory, for how we practice the (digital) humanities, for how we create, perform, share, and access it?

Posthumanities Publishing

An ongoing critique of our current publishing systems and practices, deconstructing existing hegemonies and questioning the fixtures in publishing to which we have grown accustomed— from the book as a stable object to single authorship and copyright.

"Post" here is not intended to be oppositional, where it also does not denote "after;" it rather reflects a questioning and deconstructing of the humanities' humanist legacy.

Explores how new (digital) tools and technologies offer opportunities to rethink and reperform our humanist fixtures, institutions, and practices.

Methodology of versioning, processual publishing, performative publishing. Focus on openness, remix, and reuse

gentle pressure

blade away
from your body

cut as the blade
draws out of the
book
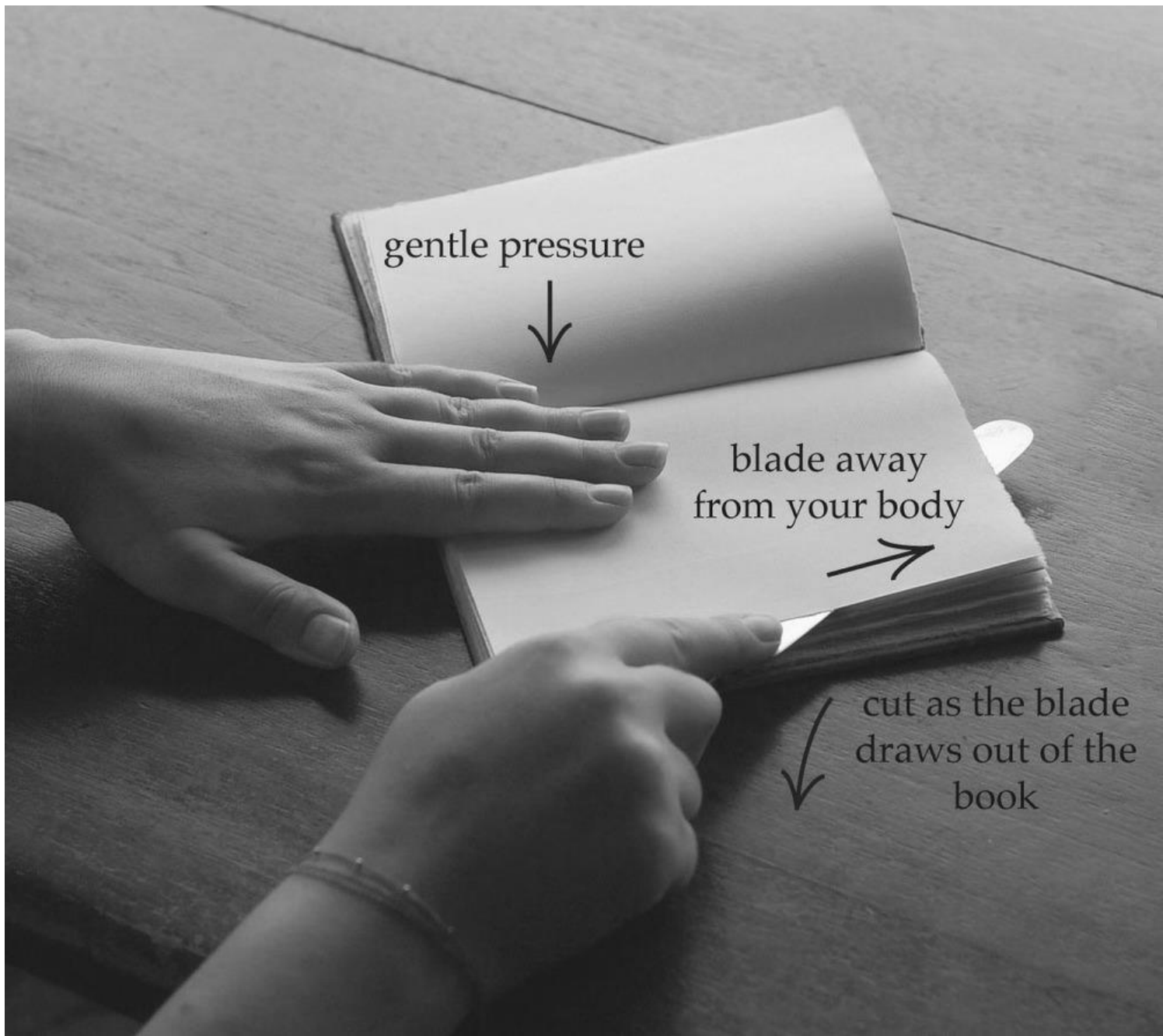
About

Screenshot of Vectors project Technologies of History by Steve Anderson Design by Erik Loyer

Post-Publishing is a research theme at the Centre for Postdigital Cultures that gathers together researchers and practitioners who, both collaboratively and individually, explore alternative pasts, presents, and futures for publishing. For us, reimagining what publishing *is* and what it *does* means performing it differently: beyond the commercial and humanist legacy systems that still dominate publishing, beyond a focus on books as objects and commodities and on binaries between print and digital, and beyond the way oppressions along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, ability, and language, continue to shape our writing and publishing practices.

We do so by actively intervening in the way research and writing is produced and disseminated and how communities and publics are created around it. We share a willingness to question and disturb existing hegemonies and enclosures of knowledge production, and to subject deeply ingrained communication practices to creative critique, together with the institutions that sustain

HTTPS://POST-PUBLISHING.ORG

P C

RESEARCH STRANDS

Post-Publishing

Post-Publishing is a research theme that gathers together researchers and practitioners who, both collaboratively and individually, explore alternative pasts, presents, and futures for publishing. For us, reimagining what publishing *is* and what it *does* means performing it differently: beyond the commercial and humanist legacy systems that still dominate publishing, beyond a focus on books as objects and commodities and on binaries between print and digital, and beyond the way oppressions along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, ability, and language, continue to shape our writing and publishing practices.

AMARANTH BORSUK

23 JUNE 2021
18:30-19:30 BST

Centre for Postdigital Cultures (online talk)

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EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING V

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

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image: a detail from the cover design for Perfect Love by Pavel Büchler (Jam 2019) based on a page of Robert Musil's manuscript

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WINNIE SOON
ROOPIKA RISAM

24 MARCH 2022
17:00-19:00 GMT

Centre for Postdigital Cultures (online talk)

REGISTRATION:
https://www.post-publishing.org/events/

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING VI

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

image: a detail from the cover design for Perfect Love by Pavel Büchler (Jam 2019) based on a page of Robert Musil's manuscript

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REBEKKA KIESEWETTER
EVA WEINMAYR

11 April 2019
13:00-17:00

Centre for Postdigital Cultures
Teaching Room
Lanchester Library, 3rd Floor
Coventry University

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

Coventry University

image: a detail from the cover design for Perfect Love by Pavel Büchler (Jam 2019) based on a page of Robert Musil's manuscript

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PAUL SOULELLIS

11 JUNE 2021
17:00-18:00 BST

Centre for Postdigital Cultures (online talk)

REGISTRATION:
https://www.post-publishing.org/events/

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING IV

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

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Coventry University

image: a detail from the cover design for Perfect Love by Pavel Büchler (Jam 2019) based on a page of Robert Musil's manuscript

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POST-PUBLISHING

MARK AMERIKA
NICK THURSTON

28 May 2019
14:15-17:30

Centre for Postdigital Cultures
Teaching Room
Lanchester Library, 3rd Floor
Coventry University

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING II

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

Coventry University

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AYMERIC MANSOUX
CRISTINA GARRIGA

21 October 2019
14:30-17:30

Centre for Postdigital Cultures
The DigiLab
William Morris Building
Coventry University

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING III

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

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Coventry University

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REBEKKA KIESEWETTER
EVA WEINMAYR

11 April 2019
13:00-17:00

Centre for Postdigital Cultures
Teaching Room
Lanchester Library, 3rd Floor
Coventry University

EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING

Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

image: a detail from the cover design for *Perfect Love* by Pavel Büchler (iam 2019) based on a page of Robert Musil's manuscript

Coventry University

Events

Experimental Publishing – Critique, Intervention, And Speculation

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Symposia

April 11 2019: Experimental Publishing I – Rebekka Kiesewetter and Eva Weinmayr

May 28 2019: Experimental Publishing II – Mark Amerika and Nick Thurston

October 21 2019: Experimental Publishing III – Cristina Garriga and Aymeric Mansoux

June 11 2021: Experimental Publishing IV – Paul Soulellis

June 23 2021: Experimental Publishing V – Amaranth Borsuk

October 1 2021: Radical Open Access: Experiments in (Post-)Publishing Symposium

March 24 2022: Experimental Publishing VI – Winnie Soon and Roopika Risam

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Since 2019, the Centre for Postdigital Cultures (CPC) has been hosting a series of symposia exploring contemporary approaches to experimental publishing. Over the course of the series, we will ask questions about the role and nature of experimentation in publishing, about ways in which experimental publishing has been formulated and performed in the past, and ways in which it shapes our publishing imaginaries at present. This series aims to conceptualise and map what experimental publishing is or can be and to think through what lies behind our aims and motivations to experiment *through* publishing. As such, it forms one of the main activities within the CPC's Post-Publishing programme.

24 MARCH 2022
17:00-19:00 GMT
Centre for Postdigital
Cultures (online talk)

REGISTRATION:
https://www.post-
publishing.org/events/

WINNIE SOON
ROOPIKA RISAM
EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING VI
Critique, Intervention, Speculation

https://post-publishing.org

Concept

Experimental publishing can be positioned as an intervention, a mode of critique, and a tool of speculation. It is a way of thinking about writing and publishing today that has at its centre a commitment to questioning and breaking down distinctions between practice and theory, criticality and creativity, and between the scholarly and the artistic.
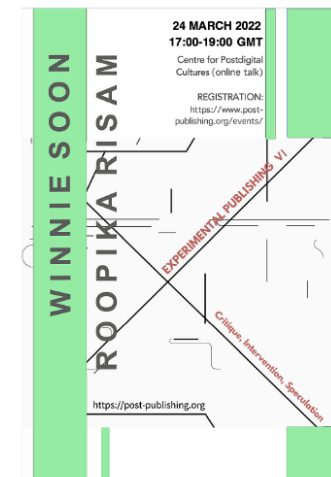
Post-Publishing Programme

- Why and for what reasons do we cut down or publish our processual research?

- What is our responsibility when choosing a specific format or platform to publish our work in/on, and how does this fit best with/perform/actively forms our research? (i.e., performative publications)

- How do we want to re-imagine a future publishing? What would a speculative, experimental post-publishing entail? What does publishing mean in an inherently post-digital environment?

- What does this mean for our established concepts of the book, the author, copyright, the university?

- How do we situate ourselves as co-researchers within the activist movements and organisations we study and are a part of?

Combinatorial Books: Gathering Flowers

Series Editors: Janneke Adema, Simon Bowie, Gary Hall, Rebekka Kiesewetter

Combinatorial Books: Gathering Flowers explores the rewriting of books in the Open Humanities Press (OHP) back catalogue. With this series we are experimenting with ways of encouraging readers/writers to actively reuse existing open access book content that is published using Creative Commons licenses. As long as they do not include the ND: no derivatives element, Creative Commons licenses make it possible for both books and the text they contain to be copied, remixed, built upon, translated, and reused in any medium, so long as the 'original' author is credited (if the particular CC license applied contains the BY element). What's more, collaborative open writing and editing tools enable the reworking of published works by communities of authors. They thus have the potential to help us move us even further away from modernist, Euro-Western conceptions of the fixed and finished autograph text that is produced by a single, self-identical (liberal humanist) author working in isolation from all human and nonhuman others. Despite what open licensing affords, very few people or presses take advantage of the possibilities for such experimentation and reuse, other than producing translations.

With the Combinatorial Book series we want to address the unfamiliarity of readers/writers with the kind of tools and environments that provide opportunities for more collective, emergent and processual ways of creating and publishing open access books, along with some of the cultural barriers that continue to exist around the integrity of the academic monograph and fear of derivatives. The way in which we want to do so is through combinatorial creativity. This is the process of combining existing ideas to produce something new. While examples of combinatorial creativity can be found in contemporary remix cultures, the cutting and pasting of texts to create new manuscripts can be traced all the way back to the practice of compiling scrapbooks or so-called commonplace books in early modern times. An even older medieval version of the commonplace book is the florilegium (plural florilegia). Both 'anthology' and 'florilegium' translate as 'gathering of flowers' - from the Latin flos (flower) and legere (to gather). The florilegium, then, is literally a collection of plant illustrations. However, the term was also used to denote a compilation of excerpts from other writings. Hence our choice of subtitle for the series: Gathering Flowers.

In collaboration with the COPIM project, we have developed a publishing workflow that enables the creation of new combinatorial books out of those OHP books published under a CC licence that means they are available for reuse. We now invite authors or groups of authors to collaborate on rereading/rewriting/reworking one of the books (or several volumes) from the Open Humanities Press catalogue by remixing it, editing it, adding to it, annotating it, revising it, translating it, or marking it up, even completely recreating it using an Open AI text generator such as the open source GPT-Neo and GPT-J, if they wish.

To contribute to the series, please contact Janneke Adema and Gary Hall.

Combinatorial Books: Gathering Flowers

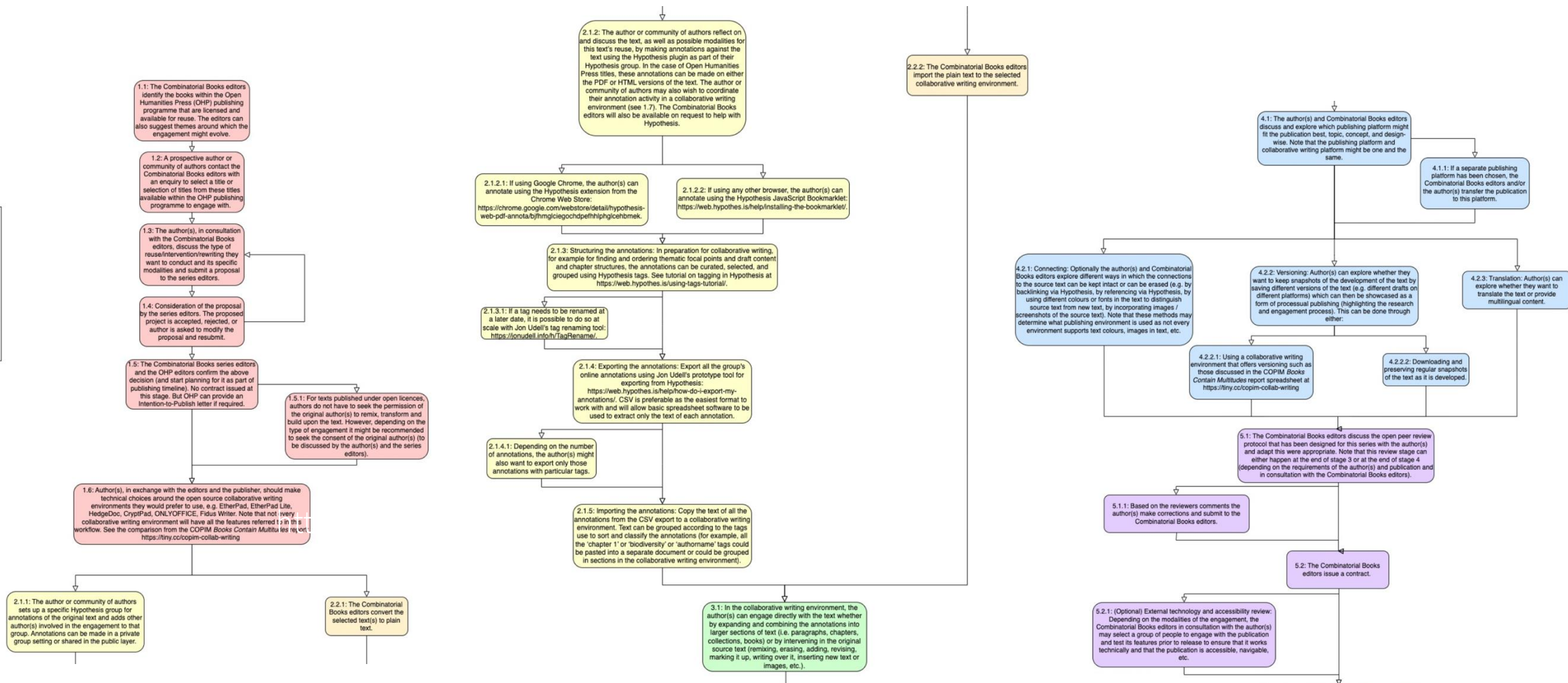Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México

Open Humanities Press

COPIM

Publishing Workflow

Legend:
- 1: Selection
- 2.1: Annotation
- 2.2: Remixing source text
- 3: Collaborative writing
- 4: Publishing
- 5: Peer review and editing
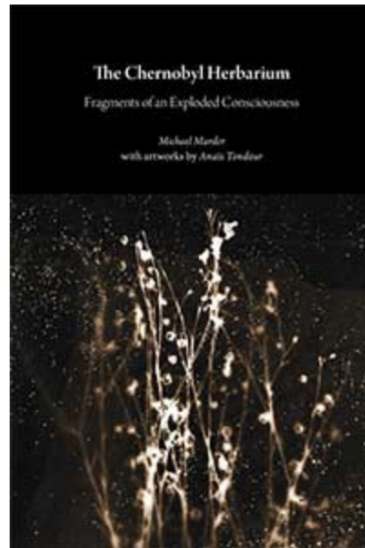- 6: Dissemination
- 7: Preservation

1.1: The Combinatorial Books editors identify the books within the Open Humanities Press (OHP) publishing programme that are licensed and available for reuse. The editors can also suggest themes around which the engagement might evolve.

1.2: A prospective author or community of authors contact the Combinatorial Books editors with an enquiry to select a title or selection of titles from these titles available within the OHP publishing programme to engage with.

1.3: The author(s), in consultation with the Combinatorial Books editors, discuss the type of reuse/intervention/rewriting they want to conduct and its specific modalities and submit a proposal to the series editors.

1.4: Consideration of the proposal by the series editors. The proposed project is accepted, rejected, or author is asked to modify the proposal and resubmit.

1.5: The Combinatorial Books series editors and the OHP editors confirm the above decision (and start planning for it as part of publishing timeline). No contract issued at this stage. But OHP can provide an Intention-to-Publish letter if required.

1.5.1: For texts published under open licences, authors do not have to seek the permission of the original author(s) to remix, transform and build upon the text. However, depending on the type of engagement it might be recommended to seek the consent of the original author(s) (to be discussed by the author(s) and the series editors).

1.6: Author(s), in exchange with the editors and the publisher, should make technical choices around the open source collaborative writing environments they would prefer to use, e.g. EtherPad, EtherPad Lite, HedgeDoc, CryptPad, ONLYOFFICE, Fidus Writer. Note that not every collaborative writing environment will have all the features referred to in this workflow. See the comparison from the COPIM *Books Contain Multitudes* report: https://tiny.cc/copim-collab-writing

2.1.1: The author or community of authors sets up a specific Hypothesis group for annotations of the original text and adds other author(s) involved in the engagement to that group. Annotations can be made in a private group setting or shared in the public layer.

2.1.2: The author or community of authors reflect on and discuss the text, as well as possible modalities for this text's reuse, by making annotations against the text using the Hypothesis plugin as part of their Hypothesis group. In the case of Open Humanities Press titles, these annotations can be made on either the PDF or HTML versions of the text. The author or community of authors may also wish to coordinate their annotation activity in a collaborative writing environment (see 1.7). The Combinatorial Books editors will also be available on request to help with Hypothesis.

2.1.2.1: If using Google Chrome, the author(s) can annotate using the Hypothesis extension from the Chrome Web Store: https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/hypothesis-web-pdf-annota/bjfhmglciegochdpefhhlphglcehbmek.

2.1.2.2: If using any other browser, the author(s) can annotate using the Hypothesis JavaScript Bookmarklet: https://web.hypothes.is/help/installing-the-bookmarklet/.

2.1.3: Structuring the annotations: In preparation for collaborative writing, for example for finding and ordering thematic focal points and draft content and chapter structures, the annotations can be curated, selected, and grouped using Hypothesis tags. See tutorial on tagging in Hypothesis at https://web.hypothes.is/using-tags-tutorial/.

2.1.3.1: If a tag needs to be renamed at a later date, it is possible to do so at scale with Jon Udell's tag renaming tool: https://jonudell.info/h/TagRename/.

2.1.4: Exporting the annotations: Export all the group's online annotations using Jon Udell's prototype tool for exporting from Hypothesis: https://web.hypothes.is/help/how-do-i-export-my-annotations/. CSV is preferable as the easiest format to work with and will allow basic spreadsheet software to be used to extract only the text of each annotation.

2.1.4.1: Depending on the number of annotations, the author(s) might also want to export only those annotations with particular tags.

2.1.5: Importing the annotations: Copy the text of all the annotations from the CSV export to a collaborative writing environment. Text can be grouped according to the tags use to sort and classify the annotations (for example, all the 'chapter 1' or 'biodiversity' or 'authorname' tags could be pasted into a separate document or could be grouped in sections in the collaborative writing environment).

2.2.1: The Combinatorial Books editors convert the selected text(s) to plain text.

2.2.2: The Combinatorial Books editors import the plain text to the selected collaborative writing environment.

3.1: In the collaborative writing environment, the author(s) can engage directly with the text whether by expanding and combining the annotations into larger sections of text (i.e. paragraphs, chapters, collections, books) or by intervening in the original source text (remixing, erasing, adding, revising, marking it up, writing over it, inserting new text or images, etc.).

4.1: The author(s) and Combinatorial Books editors discuss and explore which publishing platform might fit the publication best, topic, concept, and design-wise. Note that the publishing platform and collaborative writing platform might be one and the same.

4.1.1: If a separate publishing platform has been chosen, the Combinatorial Books editors and/or the author(s) transfer the publication to this platform.

4.2.1: Connecting: Optionally the author(s) and Combinatorial Books editors explore different ways in which the connections to the source text can be kept intact or can be erased (e.g. by backlinking via Hypothesis, by referencing via Hypothesis, by using different colours or fonts in the text to distinguish source text from new text, by incorporating images / screenshots of the source text). Note that these methods may determine what publishing environment is used as not every environment supports text colours, images in text, etc.

4.2.2: Versioning: Author(s) can explore whether they want to keep snapshots of the development of the text by saving different versions of the text (e.g. different drafts on different platforms) which can then be showcased as a form of processual publishing (highlighting the research and engagement process). This can be done through either:

4.2.2.1: Using a collaborative writing environment that offers versioning such as those discussed in the COPIM *Books Contain Multitudes* report spreadsheet at https://tiny.cc/copim-collab-writing

4.2.2.2: Downloading and preserving regular snapshots of the text as it is developed.

4.2.3: Translation: Author(s) can explore whether they want to translate the text or provide multilingual content.

5.1: The Combinatorial Books editors discuss the open peer review protocol that has been designed for this series with the author(s) and adapt this were appropriate. Note that this review stage can either happen at the end of stage 3 or at the end of stage 4 (depending on the requirements of the author(s) and publication and in consultation with the Combinatorial Books editors).

5.1.1: Based on the reviewers comments the author(s) make corrections and submit to the Combinatorial Books editors.

5.2: The Combinatorial Books editors issue a contract.

5.2.1: (Optional) External technology and accessibility review: Depending on the modalities of the engagement, the Combinatorial Books editors in consultation with the author(s) may select a group of people to engage with the publication and test its features prior to release to ensure that it works technically and that the publication is accessible, navigable, etc.

Books

Series | Titles

A History of Asking
Steven Connor

A Stubborn Fury
Gary Hall

Aesthetic Programming
Winnie Soon and Geoff Cox

after.video
Oliver Lerone Schultz, Adnan Hadzi, Pablo de Soto and Laila Shereen Sakr
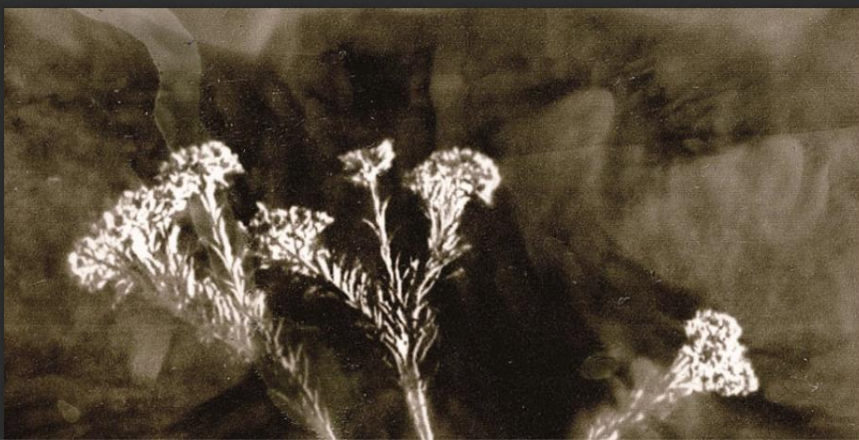
AI Art
Joanna Zylinska

Anthropocene Back Loop
Stephanie Wakefield

The Chernobyl Herbarium: Fragments of an Exploded Consciousness

by Michael Marder and Anaïs Tondeur

Download PDF   Buy Hardcopy

Critical Climate Change

Published: 2016
ISBN: 978-1-78542-026-9
PDF ISBN: 978-1-78542-027-6

We entrust readers with thirty fragments of reflections, meditations, recollections, and images — one for each year that has passed since the explosion that rocked and destroyed a part of the Chernobyl nuclear power station in April 1986. The aesthetic visions, thoughts, and experiences that have made their way into this book hover in a grey region between the singular and self-enclosed, on the one hand, and the generally applicable and universal, on the other. Through words and images, we wish to contribute our humble share to a collaborative grappling with the event of Chernobyl. Unthinkable and unrepresentable as it is, we insist on the need to reflect upon, signify, and symbolize it, taking stock of the consciousness it fragmented and, perhaps, cultivating another, more environmentally attuned way of living.

"*The Chernobyl Herbarium* is stunning. Taking 'plants as their guides', Michael Marder and Anaïs Tondeur cast us into the 'exploded consciousness' resulting from Chernobyl in this arresting collection that pairs philosophical meditations with imprints of radioactive plant specimens. Radiant, dazzling, disturbing, *The Chernobyl Herbarium* is utterly indispensable for anyone considering cataclysmic yet imperceptible events, the

Fragment 1 **Train station**

It's April 26, 1986. I am on a sleeper train, traveling from Moscow to the town of Anapa, located in Southern Russia, on the shore of the Black Sea. I have been aboard one of the cars for nearly two days and the provisions we had brought from home are running out. The train is stopped in Rostov-on-Don, a thousand and two hundred kilometers away from the city where I live. From my upper-level bed, I look out the window and a lively scene is unfolding before my eyes: the hustle and bustle typical of a central station; older ladies selling hot meat- and potato-pies, fried chicken, and pickles; people rushing in and out of the train. No one has any idea about what is going on eight hundred kilometers northwest. That is the true meaning of an event: it happens without us awakening to it, that is, it happens as though it did not happen, confined to the thing itself, in the thing itself, which nonetheless includes us, enfolds us, gathers us into its assembly, asking us not whether we wish to be included. Radioactive fallout clouds from Chernobyl and the official information about the incident, the one a distorted mirror reflection of the other, have not reached us yet, and they will not do so for some days. But the event is afoot. It will catch up with us, before we have a chance to catch up with it, if at all. In the meantime, life will continue to wind through its "normal" course. I am espying its ebbs and flows on the Rostov-on-Don platform, from inside the train compartment, in which I am traveling.

COPIM Pilot Case - Rewriting the Chernobyl Herbarium in Mexico

[Herbariodepreguntas](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_preguntas)

Table of Contents 1

[Introduction: Ecological reWriting as *Desapropiación*](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_introduction)

[Chapter 1. Fragments of a Crisis](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_ch1_fragments)

[Chapter 2. A Catastrophe of Time](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_ch2_catastrophe)

[Chapter 3. Pandemic Herbarium](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_ch3_pandemicherbarium)

[References](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_references)

[Rewriter Bios](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_bios)

Table of Contents 2

[Fragmento por fragmento](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_herbario_fragmentos)

Table of Contents 3

[Fragmento por fragmento --un herbario del movimiento anti-nuclear en México](https://pad.programando.li/reescritura_herbario_seguimientohem)

Documentos de Trabajo

[Original Book: The Chernobyl Herbarium: Fragments of an Exploded Consciousness](http://www.openhumanitiespress.org/books/titles/the-chernobyl-herbarium/)

[Annotations/Anotaciones en Hypothes.is](https://via.hypothes.is/https://clientes.programando.li/ibero/chernobil/chernobil.pdf#annotations:P8tcpo3MEeuEkNuIXnOgng)

[Minuta de Reuniones Reescritoras](https://pad.programando.li/rescrituraherbariochernobil?both#)

[En busca del quelite perdido](https://enbuscadelqueliteperdido.net/)

[Filosofía de la Práctica Editorial](https://filosofiadelapracticaeditorial.net/convocatoria-a-reescribir-el-herbario-de-chernobil/)

Proyectos

Pilot Case: Combinatorial Books
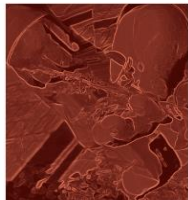
Preserving Combinatorial Books
by Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Apr 28, 2023

As part of the documentation for the first book coming out of the Combinatorial Books Pilot Project, we are sharing some considerations around the archiving and preservation of
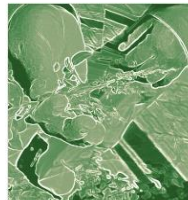
Experimenting with Workflows for Open Peer Review
by Janneke Adema

Published: Apr 28, 2023
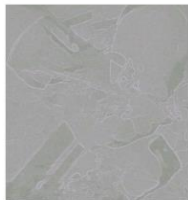
Experimenting with Copyright Licences
by Gary Hall

Published: Apr 20, 2023

As part of the documentation for the first book coming out of the Combinatorial Books Pilot Project, we are discussing our rationale for choosing

Open Sourcing Reuse
by Janneke Adema, Simon Bowie, and Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Apr 03, 2023

As part of the documentation for the first book coming out of the Combinatorial Books Pilot Project, we are introducing and discussing the set
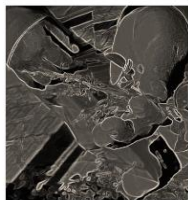
Implementing a Workflow for Combinatorial Books
by Simon Bowie, Gary Hall, and Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Dec 01, 2022

In the fourth blogpost documenting the first book

A workflow for Combinatorial Books
by Janneke Adema, Simon Bowie, Gary Hall, and Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Dec 01, 2022

Our proposed workflow for creating, peer
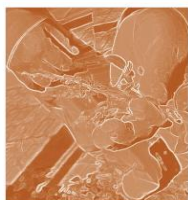
A Community of Communities
by Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Oct 27, 2022

As part of the documentation for the first book coming out of the Combinatorial Books Pilot Project, we are introducing the manifold communities involved in making this book and we
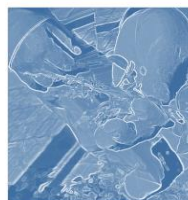
Re-use and/as Re-writing
by Janneke Adema and Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Jun 30, 2022

As part of the documentation for the first book coming out of the Combinatorial Books Pilot Project, we are reflecting on its application of collaborative re-writing as a form of re-use.
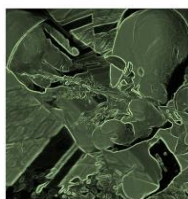
Combinatorial Books Pilot Case: Introduction to Project Documentation
by Janneke Adema and Rebekka Kiesewetter

Published: Jun 30, 2022

A series of co-written multi-media blogposts

Tentative Florilegium: Experiments & Recipes for ReWriting Books
by Julien McHardy

Published: Sep 30, 2021

Combinatorial Books - Gathering Flowers - Part III
by Janneke Adema, Gary Hall, and Gabriela Méndez Cota

Published: Apr 30, 2021

Combinatorial Books - Gathering Flowers - Part II
by Janneke Adema, Gary Hall, and Gabriela Méndez Cota

Published: Apr 29, 2021

Combinatorial Books Documentation

Ecological Rewriting: Situated Engagements with The Chernobyl Herbarium – Earlier versions of the book in development

Experimental Publishing Compendium

The Experimental Publishing Compendium is a guide and reference for scholars, publishers, developers, librarians, and designers who want to challenge, push and redefine the shape, form and rationale of scholarly books. The compendium brings together tools, practices, and books to promote the publication of experimental scholarly works. Read more

▦ Expanded   ☰ List

Book

As I Remember It: Teachings (ʔəms taʔaw) from the Life of a Sliammon Elder

2019, Elsie Paul with Davis McKenzie, Paige Raibmon, and Harmony Johnson
This media-rich, multi-path book offers a rare glimpse into the life of a Coast Salish woman and the history and lifeways of her people. It...

Related Tools

Scalar
Enables users to assemble media from multiple sources and juxtapose them with text in a variety of ways with minimal technical expertise required....

TK Licenses
A range of alternative Traditional Knowledge Licenses designed to address the diversity of Indigenous needs in relation to intellectual property.

Related Practices

Acknowledging

Preserving
Preservation aims to keep valuable objects safe from harm. Experiment, by contrast, implies potential failure and the possibility that value is...

Designing

Tool

CommentPress
CommentPress is an open source theme and plugin for the WordPress blogging engine that allows readers to comment paragraph-by-paragraph,...

Related Books

Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy
2011, Kathleen Fitzpatrick
Planned Obsolescence springs from the author Kathleen Fitzpatrick's hands-on experiments in new modes of scholarly communication...

Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University
2019, Kathleen Fitzpatrick
Developed in an open way by a process of community review, still us CommentPress plugin, but now on the Humanities Commons platfor

Related   *Annotating*   *Reviewing*

Book

Aesthetic Programming: A Handbook of Software Studies

2020
Winnie Soon
Geoff Cox

Typology category
computational

URL
http://www.openhumanitiespress.org/books/titles/aesthetic-programming/

ISBN-13
9781785420948

Author
Winnie Soon and Geoff Cox

Publication year
2021

Publisher's description
The book explores the technical as well as cultural imaginaries of programming from its insides, demonstrating the reflexive practice of aesthetic programming, to understand and question existing technological objects and paradigms.

Experimental aspects:
Aesthetic Programming asks "how power differentials are implicit in code in terms of binary

Tools

GitLab
Hosting for Git repositories which can be turned into static sites for monograph publications. Able to include live code snippets which can be run…

Git
Git is a free and open source distributed version control system designed to handle everything from small to very large projects with speed and efficiency.

Pelican
Pelican is a static site generator written in Python that requires no database or server-side logic. It allows the user to make a site by writing…

paged.js
Paged.js is a free and open source JavaScript library that paginates content in the browser to create PDF output from any HTML content. This means…

Practices

Computational publishing

Forking
Forking is a form of computational publishing that involves creating a derivative version of a previously published text or book to make revisions…

Translating
Translating is inherently experimental because it requires the approximation of meaning through trial and error. Translating experiments have the…

Versioning
Versioning (also known as processual, iterative, or continuous publishing), as a concept and practice used within academic research and…

Tools   *Practices*   **Books**

Search

Experimental books undo, critique, reinvent, and expand the processes and norms of scholarly publishing.

▦ **Expanded**   ☰ List   Practices ⌄   Year ⌄   ✓ **Typologies**   set

authorship

computational

database

design

enhanced

hybrid

interactive

living

performative

remixed

reviewing

versioned

The Ethnogra
Case

2017, Emily Yates-Doerr and Christine Labuski

The Ethnographic Case is an exp
Open Access book, that invites r
with it in a process of post-publi

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CommentPress

CommentPress is an open source theme and plugin for the WordPress blogging engine that allows readers to comment paragraph-by-paragraph,...

Related Practices

Annotating

Annotations, notes scribbled in the margins or digitally overlain, spin out from a source text, adding layers of meaning, interpretations,...

Reviewing

Evaluation of research by the scholarly community is essential to conducting and publishing research. In response to changing publication...

# The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects

2008, Marshall McLuhan, Quentin Fiore, and Jerome Angel

Fiore described The Medium is the Massage as having 'no "original" manuscript. The idea was to select some of McLuhan's ideas from previous...

Related Practices

Designing

Video walk-through of the Experimental Publishing Compendium

https://archive.org/details/Experimental_Publishing_Compendium_walkthrough
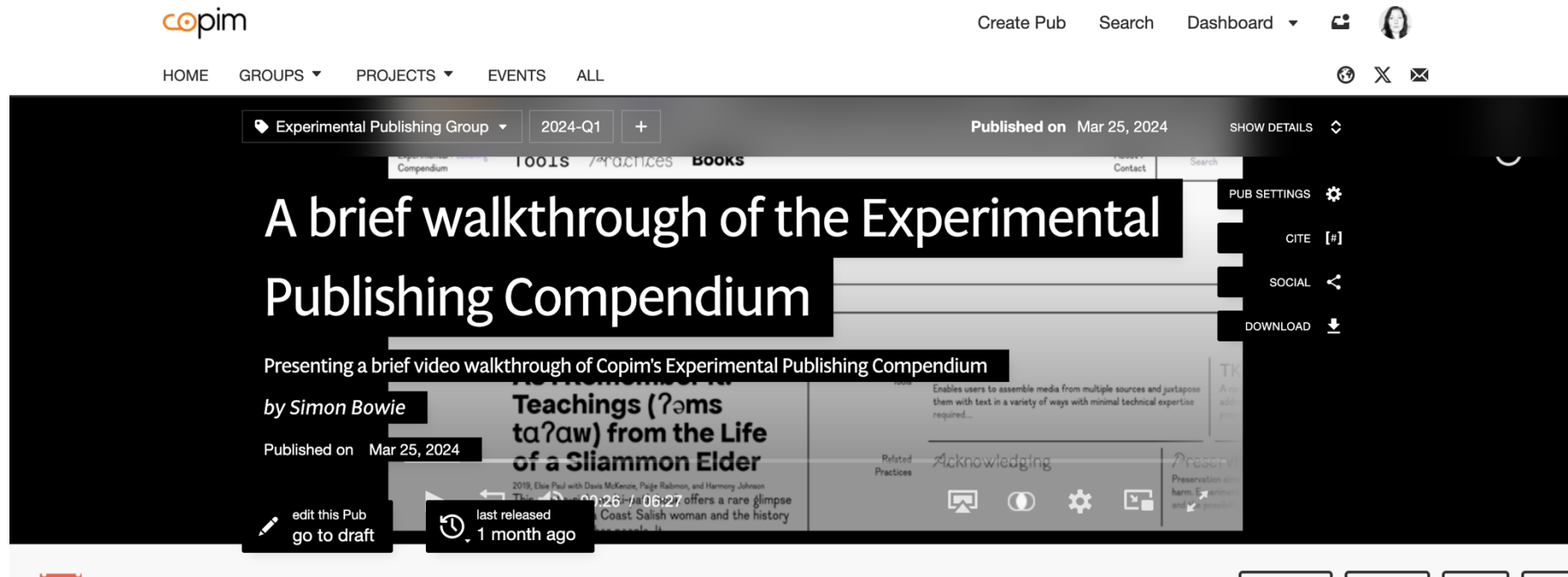
We're pleased to unveil a video walkthrough of Copim's *Experimental Publishing Compendium.* This video shows you around the *Compendium* showcasing how it arranges tools, practices, and books in the experimental publishing space, how it charts the relationships between these different elements, and showing some other useful features.