More than a platform:

Supporting open-access, digital scholarly publications from acquisitions to distribution

Rebecca Welzenbach, Meredith Kahn, Jonathan McGlone, and Jason Colman
University of Michigan Library
SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING
NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES
IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Open Access Scholarship from a Liberal Arts Perspective

Adrian College
Agnes Scott College
Allegheny College
Amherst College
Bard College
Berea College
Bowdoin College
Carleton College
Claremont McKenna College
Clark Atlanta University
Coe College
Denison University
DePaul University
Earlham College
Furman University
Gettysburg College
Guilford College
Hamilton College
Harvey Mudd College
Haverford College
Interdenominational Theological Center
Kenyon College
Knox College
Lafayette College
Lake Forest College
Macalester College
Middlebury College

Morehouse College
Oberlin College
Pitzer College
Portland College
University of Puget Sound
Rollins College
College of Saint Benedict
Saint John’s University
Saint Lawrence College
Saint Olaf College
Santa Clara University
Scranton College
Shidler College
Smith College
Spelman College
The University of the South
Synchronous University
Swarthmore College
Tulane University
University of Virginia
Univ of Minnesota
Vassar College
Washington and Lee University
Whitman College
Williams College
The College of Wooster
Lever Press

- Digitally native
- Peer-reviewed, open access press that charges no fees to either authors or their institutions (i.e., no link between financial support and publication)
- Aligned with the ethos and mission of liberal arts colleges
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Acquisitions

- Determines scope of what is published
- Vouches for quality of what is published
- Assures throughput
Scope

University Press:

- Carefully cultivated lists
- Acquisitions editors with significant disciplinary expertise

Library Publisher:

- Alignment with university or library mission
- Service to faculty, students, and campus
- Capacity
“Aligned with the mission and ethos of the liberal arts college”

What?
Scope

http://www.leverpress.org/editorial-board/
THE LEVER PRESS EDITORIAL PROGRAM

Lever Press is a publisher of pathbreaking scholarship. Supported by a consortium of liberal arts institutions focused on, and renowned for, excellence in both research and teaching, we have founded our press on three essential commitments:

- To be a digitally native press;
- To be a peer-reviewed, open access press that charges no fees to either authors or their institutions; and
- To be a press aligned with the ethos and mission of liberal arts colleges.

This last commitment means we seek out, identify, evaluate, and advocate for transformative scholarship that:

- Emerges from creative dialogue within and between traditional fields of inquiry, with an emphasis on disciplinary innovation and transformation; and
- Engages with issues of social and civic importance, and
- Transcends inherited divisions between research and teaching by drawing on new models of collaborative inquiry and a willingness to address a broad audience.

Informed by the collaborative and interdisciplinary ethos of liberal arts colleges, we approach our work respecting the received traditions of scholarly publishing while being open to innovative scholarly questions and to working with researchers shaping new fields and with new approaches.

Our work will be published on Hydra (http://hydra.mellon.org), an emerging digital publishing platform built in the open source Hydra/ Phase software framework with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, providing a venue for research publication that treats all forms of digital objects equally and richly integrates narratives with associated data (images, videos, audio files, visualizations, etc.). This will mean that our titles are discoverable by, and accessible to, the widest possible audience, while being sustainable into the digital future. The scholarly leadership of Lever Press is exercised by an Editorial Board (http://leverpress.org/editorial-board) of faculty drawn from our participating institutions, in partnership with the Amherst College Press and Michigan Publishing.

We are eager to consider any proposals for projects aligned with the interests described above. We have also identified five distinct concepts we plan to pursue that, while not exclusive, describe some qualities of the work we are seeking:

GREAT QUESTIONS AND GRAND CHALLENGES

Recent decades have been marked by the tension between human progress and politics on one hand, and increasingly complex global crises on the other. Creating the conditions for thriving communities in the coming decades will require transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries and finding ways to think and work together across divergent methodologies, perspectives, contexts—even sometimes, fundamental commitments. Accordingly, we are seeking proposals that bring such diverse perspectives to bear on pressing issues of social, moral, political, and scientific concern. Such projects need not only be single-authored monographs. They could involve interdisciplinary groups of scholars bringing a variety of perspectives to bear on a given question, dialogues between scholars of contending, even irreconcilable, viewpoints, modeling civil discourse, or a constructive approach to a question from a discipline not ordinarily thought to be the obvious starting point. We encourage innovative thinking.

LEVER TEXTS

Lever texts will make frequently taught works available in a useful, open access format that both reflects the ethos of liberal arts colleges and challenges traditional canons. We seek texts that encourage discussion and reflection on contemporary issues and recurrent themes in human history and culture. We define “texts” broadly to include traditional written forms, new translations of foreign-language works, and media such as film, musical compositions, or still images. Each volume will build upon an authoritative version of the original text with an introduction that emphasizes its intersections with contemporary concerns, commentary or notes, an up-to-date bibliography, and suggestions for teaching the material in an immersive and experiential way appropriate to a small college classroom. All proposed texts should be in the public domain. Inquiries for translations of works likely to be under copyright restrictions should be directed to the Press.

http://www.leverpress.org/the-lever-press-editorial-program/
Scope: Lever Press Editorial Program

- Great questions and grand challenges
- Lever Texts
- New Frontiers in the Digital Liberal Arts
- Special Collections
- Teaching, Learning, and Leading in the Liberal Arts College
Quality

University Press:
- Involved development, rigorous review
- Imprimatur as valued seal of approval

Library Publisher:
- Author or editor university affiliation
- Likely not (so) hands-on
LEVER PRESS

Lever Press is committed to the highest standards of peer review in evaluating the work it considers for publication and to communicating the nature of review to readers in a transparent fashion. As a process of independent and informed evaluation of both argument and originality of scholarly work, peer review is the principal means by which Lever assures the quality and merit of the work it publishes. For each title under consideration, our peer review process addresses three specific questions:

1. **What is the object to be reviewed?**

   The first step in a peer review process is a clear decision regarding what the appropriate object is for substantive review, i.e., a full proposal or a full manuscript. Academic publishers have taken a variety of approaches to this question for practical reasons. For example, many projects are developed by editors from an initial concept and these require that the review is conducted at the proposal stage. Digital projects that involve complex interdependencies between text and multimedia are not like traditional manuscripts in that there is not a fixed object to review. In the same way as there was in an analog age, because Lever Press is oriented toward digital scholarship and commissioned products, we welcome, and will consider, substantive proposals as well as manuscripts.

   Unless an alternative review process is deemed more appropriate, all works chosen for consideration receive single-blind peer review by two outside readers as well as evaluation by the Editorial Board. The Editorial Board oversees the acquisitions process at various stages, including at the time of proposal, after peer review, and upon receipt of the completed work.

2. **Peer Review Guidelines & Commitments**

3. **Quality**

http://www.leverpress.org/peerreview/
Throughput

University Press:
- Acquisitions editor woos authors and tries to keep them
- Personal network
- Reputation of press in the discipline
- Conferences

Library Publisher:
- Outreach/information about services
- Most likely (not always) about meeting a need as opposed to building a list
- Scalability of tools, services
Throughput

Lever Press challenges

- How best to cultivate a network of authors?
- Not all books look like books
- New press + new platform = double gamble
- Contract finalization

Lever Press opportunities

- Engaged editorial board
- Flexibility
- Unique offering
- Author friendliness--copyright, contract, honorarium
Chushin gishi meimei den, Yoshitora
Pigments on mulberry paper, 1864
Used under CC0 license, Walters Art Museum
“Alignment with the mission and ethos of liberal arts colleges,” and an interest in supporting works beyond the traditional academic monograph.

Platinum open access, with all costs “borne collectively by our supporting institutions—not by individual authors or their sponsoring departments or institutions.”

Digitally native works, “unconstrained by legacy publishing processes and leveraging the opportunities for reuse facilitated by an open-access business model.”

everpress.org/commitments
Challenge: What is the work?

Opportunity: A modular and flexible agreement
The Virgin Mary Reading, Antonello da Messina
Tempera and oil on wood panel, c. 1460-1462
Used under CC0 license, Walters Art Museum
challenge: cash [no longer?] rules everything around me

opportunity: author-friendly terms & language
Springtime, Claude Monet
Oil on canvas, 1872
Used under CC0 license, Walters Art Museum
Lady Writing Poetry, Fei Yigeng
Ink on paper, c. 1860-1880
Used under CC0 license, Walters Art Museum
Three problems with making these books and how we will do it anyway
#1: Coordination
A Book For Lever Press

- Launch meeting
- Select Vendor
- Copyedit changes to author
- Page Proof approval
- XML conversion
- Fulcrum ingest
- Print proofs
- Release to distribution
- Change scholarly publishing ecosystem in the humanities

A Book For Lever Press

- Jason Colman created task 5:42pm
- Jason Colman added to A Book For Lever Press 5:42pm
- Jason Colman assigned to you 5:44pm
Launch Meetings
#2: Efficient use of staff

Outsourcing ←------→ Insourcing
#3: Variety
Consider the Marmot.
Press in the front!

Library in the back!
Canoes: A Natural History in North America
Mark Neuzil and Norman Sims

This is the story of the canoe, that singular American artifact so little changed over time. Featured here are canoes old and new, from birch bark to Douglas fir to carbon fiber; the people who made them; and the adventures they shared. With features of technology, industry, art, and survival, the canoe carries us deep into the natural and cultural history of North America.

Follow author Mark Neuzil on Twitter: @mneuzil

View book materials
The challenge with digital first
What types of digital publications can Lever publish?
What’s possible with Fulcrum?
What will my book look like?
I have a project that uses Scalar. Can Fulcrum integrate Scalar with my title?

What about my Omeka project I’ve created? Can it migrate to Fulcrum and integrate with my narrative?
Maybe? We’re agile!
Chapter Title One


Agile publishing?
Final thoughts:

- Amherst College Press is hiring an editor: https://apply.interfolio.com/41148
- Lever Press is taking proposals (anyone can submit): http://www.leverpress.org/authors/
- See you Thursday at ACRL? Everyone welcome! 1 p.m, Blake Room, Hilton (ACRL conference hotel)