



Humanities researchers' perspectives towards scholarly communication practices

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Dominic Hewett

Research Support Librarian

Collections Access and Research
Team

dhewett@iwm.org.uk



Methodology

- Semi-structured interviews (in-person, online)
- English Literature researchers from four UK universities
- Thematic analysis of the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022)
- Limitations: small sample size, recording issues



Considerations when sharing their research

- Audience
- Maximising the impact
- Publication timescales
- Prestige

“I think it's mostly, you know, scope, the size of the audience it reaches, and prestige, really” (Early modernist 2).



Considerations when sharing their research

- Audience
- Maximising the impact
- Publication timescales
- Prestige

“Prestige is a big issue because it's not *just* prestige. It's not snobbery. It's that it's linked to some kind of quality guarantee.” (Victorianist 2).

Audiences for scholarly research

- Scholarly community
- Broader public audiences
- Interdisciplinary audiences

“I've written four of them [monographs] now and of those, two would cross over wider public interest beyond my immediate field and two of them are more confined to my field.”
(Victorianist 2).

Audiences for scholarly research

- Scholarly community
- Broader public audiences
- Interdisciplinary audiences

“Chiefly in the scholarly community for sure. But it is quite an interdisciplinary audience [...] other disciplines looking at relationships between print and/or technology and broader culture.”
(Modernist 1).



Perceptions of different types of formal publication

- Monograph
- Journal article
- Book chapter
- Critical edition

“[...] start with a book, get that out early on, maybe two strong articles around it, preferably on two different subjects and you go from there” (Victorianist 2).



Perceptions of different types of formal publication

- Monograph
- Journal article
- Book chapter
- Critical edition

“I can't get my head round the circularity of the argument that there are small sales, so it has to be expensive, and so there are small sales, and so it's expensive.” (Early modernist 1).



Perceptions of different types of formal publication

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“[...] a significant quality difference between journal articles where that process of peer review is happening, and many book collections where it doesn't happen with the same intensity” (Victorianist 2).



Perceptions of different types of formal publication

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“[...] it's part of the scholarly imperative to make the materials that I use available as widely as possible, or at least as available to the specialised community that I publish for, so that they can see what I'm looking at.” (Modernist 1).

Role of informal channels of dissemination

- Blogs and social media
 - ‘Blogs don’t count’
 - Heritage institutions
 - Aural formats
- “[...] useful in terms of publication opportunities, finding conferences, and just making connections as well. [...] And academics all seem to be on Twitter.”
(Modernist 2).

Role of informal channels of dissemination

- Blogs and social media “Because it doesn't count for, in the end it counts for very little.” (Victorianist 2).
- ‘Blogs don’t count’
- Heritage institutions
- Aural formats

Role of informal channels of dissemination

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“... they totally understand how to cater to both worlds [...] I've done a couple of videos for museums, and they'll ask me questions, I'll say something and then they'll say, ‘Yes [name], that's very nice, you know, well done. But could you perhaps use less jargon?’” (Victorianist 1)

Role of informal channels of dissemination

- Blogs and social media
- ‘Blogs don’t count’
- Heritage institutions
- Aural formats

“I think it would be a really interesting step forward for more academic publishing to think about the audiobook revolution, which has been a big driver of nonfiction sales, trade nonfiction sales.” (Early modernist 1).



Contextual factors

- Career development
- Research assessment
- Career stage
- Open access

“... for me research is driven, not just by kind of my interests, but also an eye on kind of career progression and career security.” (Victorianist 1).



Contextual factors

- Career development
- Research assessment
- Career stage
- Open access

“I think there's been a big change in the REF as well in that there's been more emphasis on higher quality publications rather than lots of kind of like less high-quality publications.”
(Modernist 3).



Contextual factors

- Career development
- Research assessment
- Career stage
- Open access

“I notice with more senior colleagues [...] they might do less narrow, like traditionally academic forms of writing, when they have a bit more kind of security.” (Modernist 3).



Contextual factors

- Career development
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- Open access

“... we'll be kind of looking at a hybrid ecology of scholarly outputs going forward, and it's gonna be messy and quite unresolved for a number of years. [...] It's a really tough one - because you need to get the money somehow. That circle still needs to be squared”
(Modernist 1).



References

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic analysis: A practical guide. SAGE.



dhewett@iwm.org.uk