Introducing...
The case against Book Processing Charges

Expensive

€12,000 - €14,000 for larger commercial presses

€5,000 - €7,000 for smaller, non-profit presses

Unequal

Likely only accessible by researchers on large research grants (as things stand, in the UK)

Likely more accessible to later career scholars in more secure academic positions

Lacking imagination

Reproduces a ‘thin’ version of OA: Open Access not a baseline necessity but a ‘benefit’

Entrenches business as usual

Likely to only be affordable by academics in wealthier national contexts

A failure of imagination, including of infrastructural possibilities
Aims

- Raise new revenue streams for OA publishers & SPs
- Support a model of OA book publishing not reliant on BPCs
- Build a new community of authors, publishers, service providers, librarians
- Make it easier for librarians to subscribe to OA membership schemes

Ethos

- Open infrastructure
- Not for profit (a charity, in the process of being registered)
- Community led
- Supporting bibliodiversity
Why open access?

- OA books as a group show a higher geographic diversity of usage and reach more countries, i.e. they have a greater proportion of usage in a wider range of countries.

- OA books have increased access and usage for underserved populations and low or middle income countries, including a high number of countries from Africa.

- OA books as a group have ten times more downloads than non-OA books and more than double the number of citations.

- There is higher (at least 2.7-fold) usage (via downloads) of OA books across every stratum in our sample. That is for every type of book, every discipline and each of the three years of publication in the sample, OA books show more usage than their non-OA comparison groups. This holds for every month after publication and for alternate categories such as imprints.

- Books that contain the name of a country or region in their title generally show increased usage in that country or region. This effect is clearest for Latin America and Africa and is greater for OA titles.

- Anonymous downloads are generally around double that of logged downloads. This means reporting that relies on institutional identification will be substantially undercounting the usage of OA books.

Why Open Book Collective?

“Open access book publishing stands at a crossroads: one avenue leads to the monopolisation of open access by large commercial publishers and for-profit intermediaries, with infrastructures and funding systems set up to serve those businesses and their approaches; the other opens up a more diverse, scholar-led, community-owned, and not-for-profit publishing ecosystem that enables smaller and more community-focused presses to thrive and multiply.” COPIM. (2019). About us. https://www.copim.ac.uk/about-us/

- Sustainability: **scaling small** and collaboration
- **Community-driven**
- **More inclusive options to publish open access** for long-form scholarship
- Increase **bibliodiversity**
- **Small-medium sized publishers**
  - Scholar-led Presses
  - New University Presses
  - Independent Presses
Common misconceptions:

* I or my funder must pay to publish an OA book

  - False. There are many ways of funding OA book publication including...
  - Subscription models (Open Book Collective, Opening the Future, individual publisher schemes)
  - Hybrid publication models
  - Library/grant supported publication
  - Books that are OA without BPC are often called ‘Diamond OA’
OA books are lower quality

• False. There are several high quality Diamond OA publishers, such as those approved for membership by the OBC. These must meet high criteria for standards such as peer review, production quality and metadata. Look also for memberships: DOAB, OASPA.

• A study by Deville et. al (2019) showed no significant difference in acceptance rates between OA and closed access book publishers
No-one will find my OA book; OA publishers are less discoverable

• Changing. Historically, discoverability has been an issue for OA books due to lack of consistent high quality metadata. Open Book Collective/Open Book Futures is working to change this.
OA books means electronic books only

• False. Many OA book publishers use hybrid models, including all the OBC publishers.
“meson press publishes research on digital cultures and networked media. Our open access publications challenge contemporary theories and advance key debates in the humanities of today.”

- Publishing, STS, technology
- Peer review
- Diamond open access
- Print on demand
Digitale Kulturen und Kritik nach ihrem Ende

Laura Hille und Daniela Wenz!

• Academics are not [...] passive players in the move towards OA. They do have choices, to an extent, about where they publish and how they invest their research time, and can also be working with librarian colleagues to evidence and promote the academic rigour, standards and value of OA. They can organise with fellow academics and scholar-publishers in the compilation and presentation of such data (Fathallah 2022, 16)
Open Book Futures: Key OBC areas of focus

- Expansion of outreach both within Anglophone contexts & beyond
- Grant giving pilot, via Collective Development Fund, to build publishing capacity
- Platform enhancements + new OBC Info Hub
Resources to explore

The Open Book Collective

Open Book Collective documentation site

Our organizational model, including membership criteria

The COPIM project: Community-Led Open Publishing Infrastructures for Monographs

The Open Book Futures Project (COPIM successor)

Thoth