

Call for Papers

By the Book3

Building Audiences for the Book in an Age of Media Proliferation

Publishing Studies Conference

Villa Finaly, Florence, Italy

Thursday 23 and Friday 24 June 2016

By the Book3 brings together scholars from the field of publishing studies, alongside industry professionals, to examine key issues around the digital transformation of the book, as well as to discuss the developing field of publishing studies.

If we examine global book production over the last 70 years, there is a clear discrepancy between the growth in population, the number of titles published, and the number of books sold and lent. Between 1940 and 2011, the population of the world grew by 366 per cent and annual global title production by more than 1,000 per cent; yet between 1954 and 2011 the number of books sold each year increased by only 35 per cent. These numbers clearly indicate that the number of book producers and authors was growing much faster than the time and money devoted to book buying and reading.

At the same time there has been a fragmentation of audiences across a range of digital media and devices, which is challenging traditional media from newspapers and books to television. The divergent trends in book production and consumption pose a set of pressing questions:

The economy of publishing

How can we better understand the global publishing economy? What are the history and geography of the increase in global book production? Have the smaller print-runs resulting from such trends created smaller incomes and profits for the majority of authors, publishers and booksellers? If so, how has this affected the publishing landscape in different book cultures? Has it now become easier to write and produce a book rather than to sell it?

Marketing

Does all publishing come down to marketing? How has social media changed the ways in which readers learn about new books and is it shaping their book purchasing choices? How can publishers use social media to build audiences and communities? How can the printed book compete with digital content for attention and audiences?

Stakeholders

How has the role of the author or reader changed in the digital environment? Is the transition from vertical to horizontal business models in publishing changing not only the ways books are sold but also our reading choices? What kind of relationships can exist between professional publishers and fan fiction and self-publishing platforms?

Skills for the publishing industry

What are the main publishing competencies and skills required in an era of media overload and self-published content? How – and in what kind of institutions - can such competencies be taught and transferred? What is the role of booksellers and librarians in the digital environment?

This is the third conference at which researchers and teachers of publishing studies can come together from a range of countries. Participants in By the Book3 are welcome from all over the world. Also invited to participate are industry practitioners who wish to contribute to the debates. Proposals are invited for individual paper presentations or themed panels (with two or three contributors on the same topic). The proposal should be of around 200 words together with a short biography of the participant/s. Subject to peer review, a selection of the best papers will be published in the premier publishing journal *Logos*.

Proposals for submission to the conference should be sent by 19 January 2016 to Miha Kovač at: miha.kovac@mkz.si

The fee for attendance at By the Book3 or the presentation of a paper (given it is accepted) is 200 euros. There is a reduced rate of 100 euros for PhD students who are not in tenured positions. There will be some accommodation available at the conference venue, the Villa Finaly, but equally delegates are free to make their own arrangements in the city. Delegates are responsible for their own travel arrangements.

Organizing committee

Benoît Berthou, University of Paris 13 (LABSIC)

Miha Kovač, University of Ljubljana

Angus Phillips, Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies

Conference committee

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