A Financial Option for the Modern University Press

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Model, model. We don’t need no stinkin’ financial model.

*Or do we?*

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What have we done (to ourselves)?

- A recently published monograph entitled *Nietzsche’s Last Laugh*, which runs 235 pages, has a list price of $90 or $.38/page.


- **Inflation you say!**
- Husserl would cost about $12.50 in today’s dollars or $.02/page.
- *Nietzsche’s Last Laugh is our swan song!*
Are we creatively destroying ourselves?

• **Creative Destruction**

*Creative destruction* refers to the incessant product and process innovation mechanism by which new production units replace outdated ones. It was coined by Joseph Schumpeter (1942), who considered it “the essential fact about capitalism.”

In total, some industries will disappear but the growth in newer products will increase jobs. In other words, we don’t ride the pony express no more. We go by car. Too bad for blacksmiths but hurray Detroit!

• **Uncreative Destruction**

The internet publishing, broadcasting and search portals sector increased in the fifteen years from March 1999 until March 2014 from 64,000 to 151,000 or a net gain of 81,000 jobs. But……..

At the same time, the number of jobs in the newspaper publishing industry was halved from 424,000 to 212,000 with a decline of 212,000 jobs. That’s a net loss for the information industry.

Wassup!
Why are we failing?

Creative destruction, the process by which capitalism reinvents industries and provides expanding job opportunities, is being hampered in part because innovation in publishing, as an example, consists of putting older products into newer containers. E-books are simply digital copies of traditional books. The academy has to invent new ways for communication to spread. Maybe, the monograph is dead because it is not representative of the new communication environment. Heresy, I know!
What can we do?

Produce information socially.
(oh no, he’s talking Woodstock hippie stuff)

Yochai Benkler

To survive, how can university presses organize this process to make the collaborative monograph – the open-ended monograph!
Reduce production costs and find additional funding.
What do we need to ask?

- **How do we go about Developing a peer editorial network?**
  - See [Making Scholarly Editions in the Classroom](#)
- **How do we go about developing a peer production network?**
  - And provide experiential learning for graduate students
- **We need a modern funding source that allows interested parties to donate $10 and $20 to fund projects**
  - Can the AAUP set up the infrastructure or help defray the cost? (crowdsourcing and micro-payments)
- **We should realize that “fixed content” items (monographs) need to be transformed into “continuous content.”** The book must be come a conversation, a social network of peer-reviewed materials.