More Alike than Not: The Open Access Preferences of Humanities Scholars

Rachel Elizabeth Scott and Ana Dubnjakovic

Several studies have noted that humanists have not been as quick or enthusiastic in their adoption of Open Access (OA) as their colleagues in other disciplines. This article leverages the Ithaka S+R US 2021 Faculty Survey to provide contextualized analysis of the OA and Open Education Resources (OER) preferences of humanities scholars, as well as some practices related to OA and OER, relative to their colleagues in other disciplines. Findings suggest that although humanists do stand apart in many OA preferences, the small effect sizes render these differences less important than previously suspected. The implications of these findings are considered alongside the lower rates of OA publication among humanists.

Introduction

Interest in Open Access (OA) publishing and teaching with Open Educational Resources (OER) has been thought to be discipline-specific, with the particularities and histories of subject areas defining motivations and incentives. Several studies have investigated the differences between publishing and teaching in the humanities versus the sciences, for example, and demonstrated considerable variations in these activities across disciplinary lines.[1] Although disciplinary differences in teaching, learning, and research persist, the preferences of faculty members across the academic disciplines surrounding OA and OER may not be as divergent as their practices suggest.

The 2021 Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey provides valuable data on the research, teaching, and publishing practices and beliefs of faculty across disciplines.[2] This study leverages that data to promote a more holistic understanding of how humanities scholars perceive and interact with OA and OER—an understanding that might not be so obvious at a first glance, or even after examining the report accompanying the Ithaka data—and to question if and how these differ from those of faculty in other disciplines. The authors investigate descriptive statistics and conduct inferential statistical analysis of survey questions pertaining to OA and OER in the Ithaka survey by participant discipline to pose the following research questions: do humanists differ in their OA publishing preferences, relative to colleagues in other disciplines, and do humanists differ from colleagues in other disciplines with respect to their preferences for OER? By focusing on the intersection of disciplinarity and open practices in publishing

* *Rachel Elizabeth Scott is Associate Dean for Information Assets in Milner Library at Illinois State University; email: rescot2@ilstu.edu; Ana Dubnjakovic is Head, Music Library at University of South Carolina, email: ana@mailbox.sc.edu.*

and teaching, the authors call into question the extent to which humanists are the outliers the literature has suggested them to be.

Literature Review

Research Practices of Humanist Scholars

Studies of the library and research needs of humanist scholars published in the 1980s and 1990s summarized these needs as: focused on human endeavors and achievements, not those of the physical world; cumulative, unlike science, in which one discovery may supersede the next; occurring in the library or archive and not a laboratory; book-bound, or at least text-bound; less rigid in citation practices; a social, but nonetheless independent or individual endeavor; and subjective rather than objective.[3] In a 1982 study of the research practices and needs of humanist scholars, Stone found that humanists discover sources through their colleagues or casual browsing more than their colleagues in the sciences and asserts that they also engage with and analyze materials differently: "the subjective interaction between the humanist and material is a unique factor."[4] Despite the passing of some decades, the Ithaka 2021 survey and report echo previous findings about how humanist scholars conduct their research. Highlighting, for example, the importance to humanists of recommending materials among colleagues, reading book reviews, and reviewing catalogs or announcements from scholarly publishers compared to their scientist or medical faculty colleagues. Over 50 percent of humanists reported reading book reviews compared to around 30 percent of social scientists and fewer than 20 percent of science and medical scholars.[5]

The importance of the monograph to humanists is well established in the literature and remains integral to their tenure and promotion processes.[6] As a group of book-based fields, the humanities continue to hold publication of a scholarly monograph, and preferably one published by a prestigious scholarly press, as essential. Not only is the monograph the expected publication output, but it is also integral to research and discovery in the humanities. Nearly three quarters of humanists indicated they are "dependent" on browsing physical library materials, for example, compared to 43 percent in social sciences and 28 percent in sciences.[7] Studies have also demonstrated that format preferences in the research process vary by discipline. Dubnjakovic, for example, found that disciplinary differences exert more influence than years of experience on book and journal format preference.[8] The Ithaka Survey similarly documented disciplinary differences in format preferences. Over 70 percent of humanists asserted that "Print versions of scholarly monographs play a very important role in my research and teaching"; all other disciplines favored electronic versions to print.[9]

Several studies have documented disciplinary differences across the humanities. In their report for the Center for Studies in Higher Education, Harley et al. analyzed the scholarly communication practices of seven fields based on tenure and promotion requirements, research dissemination, sharing work and keeping up-to-date, research collaboration, research needs, and engagement with the public to discuss and problematize disciplinary differences.[10] Despite uncovering differences in their extensive reports on archeology, history, and music, they nonetheless reiterated these fields' deep investment in peer-review, monographic publishing, prestigious society publications, archival and field research, single author papers, slower speed to publication, and publications remaining vital after decades. More recent studies affirm that publishing patterns and expectations in the humanities remain different from those in the sciences.[11]

Recent studies have documented the impact of advances in information technology on the research and information seeking practices of humanists. Collins and Jubb conducted interviews and focus groups with humanist scholars in 2011 to explore how technology had influenced their research practices and information needs and learned that humanities scholars are open to using technologies that allow them to work more effectively and that traditional practices remain pervasive.[12] Given and Willson interviewed 20 humanists to discuss their digital research practices and found that digital technologies not only support traditional humanities research but also facilitate new scholarly processes.[13] Although these articles delved into digital projects and digital dissemination of scholarship, they did not engage deeply with the topics of OA publishing or OER. Collins and Jubb noted the potential of OA publishing to make it easier for scholars to share their research, citing PLoS One as an example, but the authors highlight skepticism around OA publishers compared to traditional publishers.[14]

Open Access Publishing in Humanities

Research on OA publishing is rapidly proliferating, and a few large-scale studies have recently confirmed the open-access citation advantage.[15] It is important to note, however, that scholarly practices within the arts and humanities may not allow for large-scale analysis. This is due in part to the underrepresentation of arts and humanities content in citation databases such as Web of Science and a lack unique identifiers (e.g., DOI) that facilitate gathering and analyzing a sufficiently large sample of data.[16] A 2018 report prepared by Science-Metrix identified other challenges to studying OA publications in arts and humanities, namely that they: often lack structured metadata that facilitates automated aggregation; require greater effort to be discovered and harvested; and constitute only a small proportion of the overall number of scholarly papers.[17] The report notes that arts and humanities publication venues are often smaller; include non-English content; have a regional focus; feature fewer authors per paper, which means fewer opportunities for green OA depositing; and lack robust metadata or identifiers that facilitate harvesting. Because of these and other factors, attempts to systematically study humanities OA publishing outputs using scientific methodology require many qualifications and may be stymied.

The 2018 Science-Metrix report found the lowest levels of OA availability in the arts and humanities.[18] Of articles published in 2014, the following percent could be read for free in 2016: health sciences, 59 percent; natural sciences, 55 percent; applied sciences, 47 percent; economic and social sciences, 44 percent; and arts and humanities, 24 percent. Further, green and gold OA were more evenly used in the humanities than in health sciences, where gold dominated and the natural sciences, applied sciences, and economic and social sciences, where green was more prevalent.[19] Although this report did not explore explanations for these discrepancies in OA publishing outputs in much depth, more recent studies have.

Severin et al. synthesized several bibliometric studies on OA publishing across academic disciplines to establish prevalence and patterns.[20] The cross-disciplinary team representing medical sciences, natural and technical sciences, social sciences, humanities, and law discussed "author behaviour and attitudes," "publisher behaviour and policies," "infrastructure of scholarly communication," "structural and institutional factors," and "open access mandates and policies" for each of these areas. The humanities entry summarizes findings of several studies to assert that within the domain: prestige is the primary consideration in selecting a publication venue; concerns about OA publishing are shared by academics and learned

societies; misunderstandings and lack of information about OA publishing are common; OA models that do not rely on author payment are of particular interest; open repositories are of more importance than gold OA journals; embargo periods that acknowledge the longer shelf-life of humanities publications and short-term window for publisher profits is a challenge; hybrid and green OA are the primary means by which to comply with OA mandates; scholar-led OA journal and monograph projects are growing, as are disciplinary OA repositories; relative to science publications, those in humanities are not funded and take longer to produce.[21]

Venues for OA publishing in the humanities differ from those in other areas. Fewer humanities journals, for example, have adopted gold or hybrid OA models that rely on article processing charges (APC). Jörk and Korkeamäki conducted a cross-disciplinary study to investigate the business model of OA publishing and found "lowest share of born OA is in the arts and humanities, with 29 percent."[22] They further suggested "commercial publishers have founded fewer OA journals in the social sciences and humanities, perhaps because they rely on APC income."[23] Tenopir et al. noted that arts and humanities scholars have less funding and are less willing to pay APCs from personal funds than those in different disciplines.[24] Related to payment and funding, a recent study showed that arts and humanities scholars perceive a host of costs associated with OA publishing beyond the financial, namely opportunity, reputational, equity, and time costs.[25] Quigley conducted interviews with scholars in the humanities, arts, and social sciences and found that these scholars hold complex opinions about OA publishing based on their experiences, and sometimes lack of understanding of OA models.[26] Scholars' understanding of OA requirements has also been explored in the literature. Humanities scholars reported the lowest level of familiarity with OA requirements for research data in a recent study, but no statistically significant differences were found between disciplines.[27]

Another element of OA publishing relates to self-depositing work in repositories, whether as preprints or a more final version. The 2021 Ithaka survey shows that humanities scholars lag behind scholars in social sciences, sciences, or medicine in sharing pre-prints of their work.[28] Studies have shown that humanities scholars may be uncomfortable sharing anything besides the version of record and document considerable confusion about which version can safely be posted to which platforms at what time and with which limitations.[29] Some humanities-based societies have cautioned scholars against making their work available OA by depositing it in repositories or doing so without extensive embargoes.[30] Unlike scholars who work with large data sets or computer code, humanities scholars may not be comfortable making iterations or versions publicly available as a matter of course.[31] This may change as humanities journals embrace open peer-review processes and publish versions, reviewer feedback, or commentaries alongside the version of record.

Open Educational Resources in Humanities Teaching

Numerous studies have investigated the quality, cost savings, benefits, and labor of adopting an OER.[32] The impact of OER on student learning and student savings have been perceived as overwhelmingly positive by students and instructors alike.[33] OER have been shown to increase instructors' critical reflection and improve their teaching practices.[34] Scholars have also articulated a variety of concerns about OER or OER adoption. Typical concerns have to do with a perceived infringement on instructor intellectual freedom, the perceived quality of existing OER, or imposing additional labor on instructors to redesign courses, but more

critical authors assert that OER align "with the needs of capital" and consider OER in terms of Foucault's technologies of domination and technologies of the self.[35]

Some recent studies have focused specifically on the adoption of OER or the inclusion of OA resources in their teaching by faculty members within the humanities. Chtena investigated art history faculty to explore their motivations and practices with respect to OER.[36] Chtena summarized their motivations to use OER as: "localizing the curriculum, introducing a wide variety of perspectives, marking art history relevant to students' lives, breaking from the chronological/encyclopedic organization, bringing the museum into the classroom, drawing connections between art history and current events and/or politics, offering updated and timely content."[37] A recent study on the engagement of music scholars with affordable and open educational resources found that it was primarily passive rather than active; few faculty members created content for their classrooms, but many did seek out and incorporate freely available resources to supplement, diversify, and enrich their reading lists.[38] Mathieu et al. discuss using OER to address waning enrollments and increase student engagement and participation in world language courses.[39] A recent case study based on a collaboration between librarians and faculty in English and art history details how digital exhibitions can serve as OER as student learn, curate, and build.[40]

No studies that the authors can identify use inferential statistics to delve into disciplinary differences in OA and OER perspectives; this study aims to fill this gap. By exploring humanities-specific Ithaka 2021 data, the authors highlight reported differences in scholars' open preferences as it relates to their publishing and teaching.

Methods

The Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2021 yielded rich quantitative data on the research, teaching, and publishing practices and beliefs of faculty across disciplines. A sample of 145,099 faculty members were invited to participate in the web survey. Of those, 7,615 completed surveys for an overall response rate of 5.2 percent. The resulting data set was released for download on ICPSR, the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, March 9, 2023.[41] For librarians, these data provide insight into how faculty engage with information as scholars and teachers and how best to support faculty through the provision of resources and services.

The survey is divided into following sections: Discovery, Access, Research Practices, Research Dissemination, Teaching and Learning, and Role of the Library. Accordingly, the Ithaka data document many elements of faculty preferences and attitudes with respect to OA publishing and OER. The 2018 Ithaka survey marked the first inclusion of questions about OER, which it defined as "teaching, learning, and research materials used for educational purposes that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license, such as Creative Commons, that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation, and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions."[42] Faculty discipline, age, institution type, appointment type, and other demographic information are tracked, providing an opportunity to make inferences about these groupings and, occasionally, their intersections. The published report offers limited inferential analysis of OA- and OER-related topics along disciplinary lines, however, and only provides descriptive statistics for selected variables by discipline.

To provide concise analysis of broad differences among disciplines, the authors focused on participants readily identifiable as researchers in the fields of natural and social sciences and the humanities. Researchers working in interdisciplinary fields (e.g., Geography, Women's Stud-

ies, Asian Studies, African American Studies, Public Health, and Slavic Studies) were excluded from the study as no further information regarding their specific subdisciplines was available.

The authors conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test, which evaluates the significant differences among means, allowing for the description of complex relationships among variables. A significant difference means that the observed difference between groups is unlikely to have occurred by chance, indicating a real effect or relationship. A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of disciplinary membership on the intent to publish and use freely available research, preferences related to open access publishing models, and interest in making and using OER. The authors used SPSS version 22 for statistical analysis; the variables included in the analysis are provided in Appendix A.

Results

As seen in Table 1, there is a statistically significant difference between all groups, indicating that the broad disciplinary membership does influence scholars' view of tested variables. However, the effect sizes ($\eta 2$) were miniscule. For reference, $\eta 2$ values range from 0 to 1, and small effect size ranges from 0.001 to 0.05. Most effect size values in the current sample were significantly below this threshold with the largest at 0.042. This result indicates that although disciplinary differences are present, they are less important than other factors that could be influencing scholars' opinions regarding the studied variables. The *F*-test statistic (*F*) shows the ratio of variances between samples; higher variances occur when individual data points fall further from the mean.

Bonferroni test adjusts the significance level to reduce the likelihood of false positives when making multiple comparisons. It indicates that the mean value of the intent to use freely available research (Q6_4) was statistically significantly different between the humanities and all other disciplinary groups ($p < 0.001$). The p-value measures the probability of obtaining test results at least as extreme as the result observed, under the assumption that the null hypothesis—in

TABLE 1
Between Disciplines Differences ANOVA Results

Measure	Social Sciences	Natural Sciences	Humanities	F (4,26.297)	η2
	M	M	M		
Intent to use free research (Q6_4)	3.55	3.53	3.38	38.30*	0.011
Publication preference: journal free to read (Q13_1)	6.12	6.74	5.78	60.59*	0.019
Publication preference: journal free to publish (Q13_2)	8.20	7.59	8.11	30.33*	0.010
Preprints important for sharing research (Q14_1)	5.34	5.80	4.27	133.35*	0.042
Publishers less important due to sharing (Q14_2)	4.70	4.60	4.17	21.43*	0.007
Preference for OA only future (Q14_5)	7.72	7.69	7.33	12.99*	0.004
Prefer low/no cost course materials (Q29_1)	3.48	3.41	3.52	9.96*	0.003
Interest in using OER(Q34_5)	5.21	5.31	5.1	9.66*	0.003
Difficulty locating OER (Q34_2)	4.32	4.17	4.37	10.97*	0.003
Interest in creating OER (34_4)	3.96	4.00	4.02	0.664	n/a
*p< 0.001					

this case, that there is no relationship between disciplinary groups in terms of OA and OER perspectives—is correct. However, the mean differences were modest (< 0.2) and the effect size was small (η2 = 0.011). Although it seems that humanities faculty might be less inclined to use free research, this difference was negligible. On the face of this evidence, humanists' intent to use freely available research is similar to scholars in other disciplines. This could be a part of a trend or simply a function of how the survey question was worded. Comparable results were found among all other variables of interest with the following exceptions. Preprint importance (Q14_1) as a vehicle for research dissemination seemed much less important to humanists than social scientists (< 1.13) and natural scientists (< 1.53) with the largest mean differences. In contrast, mean differences between humanists and social scientists when it comes to preference for journals that do not charge authors to publish OA (Q13_2) were not statistically significant, indicating the possible complete absence of disciplinary differences in this area.

Given the minuscule differences in reported OA and OER preferences and practices based on discipline, the authors investigated potential differences based on age group and functional roles (i.e., participants' identification as primarily researcher or teacher). As seen in Tables 2 and 3, the mean differences and the effect sizes were similarly small, suggesting that age group and functional role also do not have an important relationship to OA and OER practices and preferences.

The Ithaka survey separates researchers into four age groups (1 = 22-44; 2 = 45-54; 3 = 55-64; 4 = 65+). Two-hundred ninety-five researchers or 3.9 percent of the total sample chose not to answer this question and were excluded from the subsequent analyses. Looking at the age groups, a pattern akin to disciplinary differences emerges. Although statistically significant, the mean differences and effect sizes across the board are small. The most significant exists among the youngest group's slightly larger preference for an OA only future (Q14_5) and their perhaps paradoxical largest propensity to report difficulties locating OERs (Q34_2). However, even these differences, while statistically significant, were small.

TABLE 2
Age Group Differences ANOVA Results

Measure	Ages 22-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55-64	Ages 65+	F (4,26.297)	η2
	M	M	M	M		
Intent to use free research (Q6_4)	3.55	3.48	3.47	3.44	7.33*	0.003
Publication preference: free to read (Q13_1)	6.01	6.03	6.14	6.63	13.59*	0.007
Publication preference: journal free to publish (Q13_2)	7.93	8.09	8.02	7.86	2.15	0.001
Preprints important for sharing research (Q14_1)	5.39	4.86	4.96	5.17	8.47*	0.004
Publishers less important due to sharing (Q14_2)	4.70	4.31	4.43	4.43	5.35*	0.003
Preference for OA only future (Q14_5)	8.18	7.63	7.40	7.18	36.96*	0.018
Prefer low/no cost course materials (Q29_1)	3.55	3.53	3.47	3.35	17.36*	0.009
Interest in using OER (Q34_5)	4.41	4.50	4.26	4.00	28.88*	0.013
Difficulty locating OER (Q34_2)	5.47	5.31	5.13	4.89	40.61*	0.018
Interest in creating OER (Q34_4)	4.29	4.04	3.96	3.70	26.88*	0.012
*p<0.001						

TABLE 3
Functional Role Continuum from Researcher (R) to Teacher (t) Differences ANOVA Results

Measure	R	R/T	Both	T/R	T	F (4,26.297)	η2
	M	M	M	M	M		
Intent to use free research (Q6_4)	3.51	3.49	3.48	3.49	3.47	0.37	0.000
Publication preference: Journal free to read (Q13_1)	6.00	5.99	6.22	6.28	6.34	2.96*	0.002
Publication preference: Journal free to publish (Q13_2)	7.18	7.76	8.22	8.23	7.95	24.87*	0.016
Preprints important for sharing research (Q14_1)	5.58	5.60	5.14	4.83	4.24	36.02*	0.022
Publishers less important due to sharing (Q14_2)	4.23	4.40	4.32	4.59	4.87	8.88*	0.006
Preference for OA only future (Q14_5)	7.33	7.30	7.63	7.64	7.81	5.93*	0.004
Prefer low/no cost course materials (Q29_1)	3.26	3.42	3.52	3.51	3.49	12.22*	0.008
Interest in using OER (Q34_5)	4.72	5.07	5.18	5.36	5.35	53.14*	0.013
Difficulty locating OER (Q34_2)	4.12	4.28	4.28	4.41	4.33	8.94*	0.002
Interest in creating OER (Q34_4)	3.49	3.89	4.02	4.19	4.04	15.11*	0.009
*p<0.001							

The Ithaka survey asks respondents to identify as a researcher versus a teacher on a spectrum, resulting in five groupings (researcher, R; researcher more than teacher, R/T; both; teacher more than researcher, T/R; teacher, T). As seen in Table 3, using these groupings as factors in ANOVA analyses produced similar results. Differences among groups were statistically significant, but the mean differences and the effect sizes were minimal, indicating that the functional role makes little difference when it comes to engaging with OA and OER.

As a final attempt to find some attribute that had a significant relationship to OA and OER preferences and practices, the authors used the professional responsibility "post-award grant/sponsorship administrative and compliance activities" as factors in the t-test analysis. Results indicate that, although all analyses except for the intent to use free research (Q 6_4) were significant, the mean differences and the effect sizes across the board were small, indicating that these factors had minor impact on the variables included in the analysis.

Limitations

Although the results were made available via ICPSR less than one year before the time this paper was submitted for review, the authors acknowledge that the scholarly communication landscape moves quickly, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The authors further acknowledge the limitation of using secondary data to pose new research questions. Finally, only selected variables were analyzed, and this study accordingly cannot claim to be a comprehensive analysis of OA and OER in the 2021 Ithaka S+R Survey.

Discussion

Research Question 1. Do humanists differ in their OA publishing preferences, relative to colleagues in other disciplines?

Although Ithaka survey results indicate that humanists make more extensive use of library collections and less use of "materials that are freely available online" (Q6_4) than all other disciplines, ANOVA results indicate that differences in the importance of freely avail-

able online materials between disciplinary groups are in fact trivial. Slight differences in this practice do not suggest an aversion to freely available materials online among humanists. Indeed, the means for all three disciplinary groups indicate that this use is somewhere between occasional and often.

Survey participants were asked about the relative importance of OA in the selection of journal venues and specifically whether the journal's articles were free to read (Q13_1) or free to publish ("The journal permits scholars to publish articles for free, without paying page or article charges" Q13_2). Whether articles are free to read was of least importance to humanists, although all three disciplinary groups were somewhat ambivalent about this issue since their means were towards the middle of the ten-point scale. Humanists' relative dependence on library collections, mentioned in the literature review, offers one explanation for this slight difference.[43]

Publishing articles for free, however, was something that both humanists and social scientists rated as highly important.[44] The finding that humanists and social scientists assigned higher importance to cost-free OA publishing than scientists aligns with previous studies.[45] ANOVA results, however, indicate that disciplinary differences are in fact quite small. Again, this result makes sense because all respondents—including natural scientists—preferred publishing in journals that do not charge authors to publish their work open access.

More meaningful differences were discovered in questions related to research dissemination outside of formal publishing systems. The question of whether sharing pre-prints "is an important way for me to communicate my research findings with my peers" (Q14_1) elicited statistically significant differences between humanities and science scholars. Although the largest effect size (at 0.042), it still falls within the category of small effect. As noted in the literature review, humanists do not share a culture of iteration that is more common in some sciences and they may be uncomfortable sharing anything other than the publisher's version of record.[46] There is less buy-in for using preprint servers in the humanities than in sciences such as physics and mathematics, for example, who have long used arXiv.org for this purpose. Additionally, the importance of rapid scholarship dissemination in natural sciences might offer another explanation for this preference.[47]

Humanists were less likely than scholars in the sciences to suggest that "scholarly publishers have been rendered less important to my process of communicating scholarly knowledge by my increasing ability to share my work directly with peers online" (Q14_2) or that they would welcome the replacement of the traditional, subscription-based publication model with an OA model (Q14_5). Indeed, with a mean of approximately four, on a scale from one to 10, on the question of traditional publishers' importance as a way to share research, the more striking discovery is that all researchers regardless of discipline showed marked reluctance to move away from the publisher model. Even more surprisingly, despite this result, with a mean of about eight, all researchers regardless of discipline were happy for OA to replace the subscription-based model. On the face of the evidence, the only conclusion that makes sense is that the researchers prefer to officially publish their studies through mechanisms that ensure they receive appropriate credit. This would align with literature that suggests that authors select journals based not on OA status but rather on the venue's prestige, readership, and impact.[48]

Research Question 2. Do humanists differ from colleagues in other disciplines with respect to their preferences for OER?

When designing undergraduate courses, humanists report giving preference to assigning course materials that are low or no cost, available through the library, and "center historically underrepresented voices" (Q29_1, 2, and 3) more than any other group. These preferences relate to the use of OER, which is investigated explicitly in Q34. Respondents are asked, among other questions, about locating OER (Q34_2) and interest in creating (Q34_4) and using OER (Q34_5). At only 0.003, the effect sizes are quite small. Indeed, disciplinary differences in interest in creating OER were not statistically different, indicating these differences among disciplines in the OER interest and identification are marginal or not present at all. Furthermore, all disciplines report strong interest in using OERs in instruction and relatively low levels of discomfort locating these sources.

More than disciplinary differences, personal and professional factors likely contribute to differences in OER engagement. As reported in the literature review, OER offers a host of benefits, including incorporating diverse perspectives, responding to timely events, making the curriculum local and relevant, and breaking from traditional presentations of text, among others.[49] Despite these broadly acknowledged benefits, however, OER adoption and creation require a considerable amount of labor for faculty who must restructure their courses and rewrite assignments and assessments.[50] Given such strong benefits and obstacles to using OER, it is not surprising that age and functional role as teacher versus researcher played such a minor role in predicting OER interest; the labor entailed in creating and adopting OER must be offset by personally meaningful incentives and rewards.

Conclusion

As the first study to explicitly interrogate the 2021 Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey for differences in OA and OER preferences among disciplines, this study provides novel results suggesting that humanists are more like their colleagues than not. Although descriptive statistics show differences in how humanists perceive and interact with OA and OER, analysis of these differences reveal them to be marginal rather than foundational. Research and teaching practices in the humanities have evolved differently than those in other fields of study, but it does not seem that disciplinarity specifically precludes OA and OER, at least not with respect to preferences.

Although the authors initially suspected that disciplinary differences would be evident in the OA and OER preferences of scholars—as is clearly documented with respect to their practices[51]—this was not supported by the data. Similarly, differences in OA and OER preferences based on age, functional role of researcher or teacher, and grant funding were not evident. Despite research demonstrating differences in OA publishing practices along disciplines, age, and grant-funding,[52] the findings outlined in this paper reiterate that preferences and practices cannot be conflated. A desire to engage with OA and OER may not translate into opportunities and decisions to do so.

As OA and OER continue to evolve, the landscape will only grow more complex. The diversification of publishing options and dissolution of traditional formats poses opportunities and challenges in all disciplines. Movements in the humanities, such as digital humanities and public humanities, have considerable implications for how scholars share their research and teach their students. If librarians wish to ensure the centrality of their support to humanistic research, they would do well to understand disciplinary trends at local and global scales. This article highlights an important consideration for librarians supporting humanities researchers: despite differences in practices, humanists hold similarly positive preferences concerning OA and OER as their colleagues and may need additional support to translate preference into practice.

Appendix A. Questions from the 2021 Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey Questionnaire included in the Analysis

Q6: When you want a scholarly monograph or journal article that you do not have immediate access to through your college or university library's physical or digital collections, how often do you use each of the following methods to seek access to that material?

- Search for a freely available version online (Q6_4): Often (4), Occasionally (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)

NEWQ7. Please indicate which, if any, of the following are among your professional responsibilities.

- Research fund-raising and grant proposal creation (Q7_7): Yes (1), No (2)
- Post-award grant/sponsorship administrative and compliance activities (e.g., research ethics and safety, Title IX, budgetary management, program reviews) (Q7_8): Yes (1), No (2)

Q13. When it comes to influencing your decisions about academic journals in which to publish an article of yours, how important to you is each of the following characteristics?

- The journal makes its articles freely available on the internet, so there is no cost to purchase or read (Q13_1): Extremely important 10 (10), 9 (9), 8 (8), 7 (7), 6 (6), 5 (5), 4 (4), 3 (3), 2 (2), Not at all important 1 (1)
- The journal permits scholars to publish articles for free, without paying page or article charges (Q13_2): Extremely important 10 (10), 9 (9), 8 (8), 7 (7), 6 (6), 5 (5), 4 (4), 3 (3), 2 (2), Not at all important 1 (1)

Q14. Please use the 10 to 1 scale below to indicate how well each statement describes your point of view.

- Circulating pre-print versions of my research outputs is an important way for me to communicate my research findings with my peers (Q14_1): Extremely well 10 (10), 9 (9), 8 (8), 7 (7), 6 (6), 5 (5), 4 (4), 3 (3), 2 (2), Not well at all 1 (1)
- Scholarly publishers have been rendered less important to my process of communicating scholarly knowledge by my increasing ability to share my work directly with peers online (Q14_2): Extremely well 10 (10), 9 (9), 8 (8), 7 (7), 6 (6), 5 (5), 4 (4), 3 (3), 2 (2), Not well at all 1 (1)
- I would be happy to see the traditional subscription-based publication model replaced entirely by an open access publication system in which all scholarly research outputs would be freely available to the public (Q14_5): Extremely well 10 (10), 9 (9), 8 (8), 7 (7), 6 (6), 5 (5), 4 (4), 3 (3), 2 (2), Not well at all 1 (1)

Q29: In general, how often do you perform each of the following when designing or structuring your undergraduate courses?

- Give preference to assigning course texts or materials that are low or no cost (Q29_1): Often (4), Occasionally (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)
- Give preference to assigning course texts or materials that are available through the library (Q29_2): Often (4), Occasionally (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)

Q34: Please read the following statements and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each.

- I find it difficult to locate open educational resources for my teaching (Q34_2): Strongly agree (7), Agree (6), Somewhat agree (5), Neither agree nor disagree (4), Somewhat dis-

agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1)

- I am interested in creating and publishing open educational resources (Q34_4): Strongly agree (7), Agree (6), Somewhat agree (5), Neither agree nor disagree (4), Somewhat disagree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1)
- I am interested in using open educational resources in my teaching (Q34_5): Strongly agree (7), Agree (6), Somewhat agree (5), Neither agree nor disagree (4), Somewhat disagree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1)

D3. Do you think of yourself primarily as a researcher, primarily as a teacher, or somewhere in between?

- Much more as a researcher than as a teacher (1), Somewhat more as a researcher than as a teacher (2), About equally as a researcher and a teacher (3), Somewhat more as a teacher than as a researcher (4), Much more as a teacher than as a researcher (5)

D5. What is your age?

- 22 to 44 (1), 45 to 54 (2), 55 to 64 (3), 65 and over (4), I prefer not to answer this question (5)

Notes

1. See, for example, Thomas Franssen and Paul Wouters, "Science and Its Significant Other: Representing the Humanities in Bibliometric Scholarship," *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 70, no. 10 (2019): 1124–37. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24206; Howard R. Pollio, "The Two Cultures of Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning in the Natural Sciences and the Humanities," *Teaching Learning Issues* 75 (1996): 4–31.

2. The report is available as Melissa Blankstein, "Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2021," *Ithaka S+R*. Last Modified 14 July 2022. https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.316896; the data are available as Melissa Blankstein and Ithaka S+R. Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey, United States, 2021. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2023-03-09. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR38593.v1.

3. Karl J. Weintraub, "The Humanistic Scholar and the Library," *Library Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (1980): 22–39. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4307181; Eugene Garfield, "Is Information Retrieval in the Arts and Sciences Inherently Different from That in Science? The Effect That ISI®'s Citation Index for the Arts and Humanities Is Expected to Have on Future Scholarship" *Library Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (1980): 40–57. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4307182; Sue Stone, "Humanities Scholars: Information Needs and Uses," *Journal of Documentation* 38, no. 4 (1982): 292–313. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb026734; Rebecca Watson-Boone, "Information Needs and Habits of Humanities Scholars," *Reference Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (1994): 203–216; Stephen E. Wiberley and William G. Jones, "Patterns of Information Seeking in the Humanities," *College and Research Libraries* 50, no. 6 (1989): 638–45. https://doi.org/10.5860/crl_50_06_638.

4. Stone, "Humanities Scholars: Information Needs and Uses," 303-4.

5. Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2021 Report, 18.

6. Peter Williams, Iain Stevenson, David Nicholas, Anthony Watkinson, and Ian Rowlands conducted seventeen interviews with academics in arts and humanities for "The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities Research," *Aslib Proceedings*, 61, no. 1 (2009): 67–82, https://doi.org/10.1108/00012530910932294.

7. Eunice Schroeder, Janet Martorana, and Chris Granatino, "Building Faculty Support for Remote Storage: A Survey of Collection Behaviors and Preferences," *Collection Management* 38, no. 4 (2013): 301–320. https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2013.841603.

8. Ana Dubnjakovic, "The Effects of Discipline Membership and Experience in the Field on Scholars' Book and Journal Format Preferences," *Collection Management*, 45, no. 2 (2020): 162–78, https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2019.1669251.

9. Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2021, 24.

10. Diane Harley, Sophia Krzys Acord, Sarah Earl-Novell, Shannon Lawrence, and C. Judson King, "Assessing the Future of Landscape of Scholarly Communication: An Exploration of Faculty Values and Needs in Seven Disciplines," (The Center for Studies in Higher Education, 2010), 545, accessed February 3, 2024, https://escholarship.org/uc/item/15x7385g#.

11. Bo-Christer Jörk and Timo Korkeamäki, "Adoption of the Open Access Business Model in Scientific Journal Publishing: A Cross-Disciplinary Study," *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 7 (2020): 1080–94, 1089. https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.81.7.1080.

12. Ellen Collins and Michael Jubb, "How Do Researchers in the Humanities Use Information Resources?" *LIBER Quarterly* 21, 2 (2012): 176–87, https://doi.org/10.18352/lq.8017.

13. Lisa M. Given and Rebekah Willson, "Information Technology and the Humanities Scholar: Documenting Digital Research Practices," *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 69, no. 6 (2018): 807–19. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24008.

14. Collins and Jubb, "How Do Researchers in the Humanities," 178.

15. Heather Piwowar, Jason Priem, Vincent Larivière, Juan Pablo Alperin, Lisa Matthias, Bree Norlander, Ashley Farley, Jevin West, and Stefanie Haustein, "The State of OA: a Large-Scale Analysis of the Prevalence and Impact of Open Access Articles," *PeerJ* 6 (2018): e4375, https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.4375.

16. Piwowar et al., "The State of OA," 10: "Analyzing results on the level of NSF disciplines, data is not shown for the Humanities (n = 1,091) and Arts (n = 164), because they are underrepresented both in the Web of Science and in terms of DOI coverage."

17. Science-Metrix, "Analytical Support for Bibliometrics Indicators. Open Access Availability of Scientific Publications. Final Report," January 2018. https://www.science-metrix.com/sites/default/files/science-metrix/publications/science-metrix_open_access_availability_scientific_publications_report.pdf, at 26.

18. Science-Metrix, "Analytical Support for Bibliometrics Indicators."

19. Science-Metrix, "Analytical Support for Bibliometrics Indicators."

20. Anna Severin, Matthia Egger, Martin Paul Eve, and Daniel Hürlimann, "Discipline-Specific Open Access Publishing Practices and Barriers to Change: An Evidence-Based Review," *F1000Research* 2020, 7:1925, https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.17328.2.

21. Severin et al., "Discipline-specific Open Access," 15–16.

22. Jörk and Korkeamäki, "Adoption of the Open Access Business Model," 1091.

23. Jörk and Korkeamäki, "Adoption of the Open Access Business Model," 1091.

24. Carol Tenopir, Elizabeth D. Dalton, Lisa Christian, Misty K. Jones, Mark McCabe, MacKenzie Smith, and Allison Fish, "Imagining a Gold Open Access Future: Attitudes, Behaviors, and Funding Scenarios among Authors of Academic Scholarship," *College & Research Libraries* 78, no. 6 (2017): 824–43, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.78.6.824.

25. Lindsey Skaggs, Rachel Scott, and Colby Cilento, "Not Just Monetary: Arts and Humanities Scholars' Perspectives on the Costs of Open Access Publishing," *College & Research Libraries* (forthcoming, May 2026), https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/fpml/268

26. Niamh Quigley, "Open Access in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences: Complex Perceptions of Researchers and Implications for Research Support," *Liber Quarterly: The Journal of European Research Libraries* 31 (2021): 1–23. https://doi.org/10.53377/lq.10937.

27. Heidi Enwald, Vincas Grigas, Jurgita Rudžionienė, and Terttu Kortelainen, "Data Sharing Practices in Open Access Mode: a Study of the Willingness to Share Data in Different Disciplines," *Information Research*, 27, no. 2 (2022), paper 932. https://doi.org/10.47989/irpaper932.

28. 2021 Ithaka survey, 39.

29. Rachel E. Scott and Anne Shelley, "Music Scholars and Open Access Publishing," *Notes* 79, no. 2 (2022): 149–78. https://doi.org/10.1353/not.2022.0093.

30. The American Historical Association, for example, notoriously recommended the embargoing of dissertations up to six years. This was because "an increasing number of university presses are reluctant to offer a publishing contract to newly minted PhDs whose dissertations have been freely available via online sources." AHA, "Statement on Policies Regarding the Embargoing of Completed History PHD Dissertations," https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2013/statement-on-policies-regarding-the-embargoing-of-completed-history-phd-dissertations.

31. Rachel E. Scott, Julie A. Murphy, Cassie Thayer-Styes, Chad E. Buckley, and Anne Shelley, "Exploring Faculty Perspectives on Open Access at a Medium-sized, American Doctoral University," *Insights: The UKSG Journal* 36, no 1 (2023): 14. https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.620.

32. Shanna Smith Jaggars, Kaity Prieto, Marcos D. Rivera, and Amanda L. Folk, "Using Affordable Course Materials: Instructors' Motivations, Approaches, and Outcomes," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 22, no. 2 (2022): 305–334. https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2022.0019; Tanya Spilovoy, Jeff Seaman, and Nate Ralph, "The Impact of OER Initiatives on Faculty Selection of Classroom Materials" (Bay View Analytics, 2020), https://www.bayviewanalytics.com/reports/impactofoerinitiatives.pdf; Troy Martin and Royce Kimmons, "Faculty Members' Lived Experiences with Choosing Open Educational Resources," *Open Praxis* 12, no. 1 (2020): 131–44, http://doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.12.1.987; Rachel Elizabeth Scott, Anne Shelley, Julie Murphy, Rachel Park, and Mallory Jallas, "Exploring Faculty Perspectives on Text Selection and Textbook Affordability," *College & Research Libraries* 84, no. 2 (2023): 180-202. https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.84.2.180.

33. John Hilton, "Open Educational Resources, Student Efficacy, and User Perceptions: a Synthesis of Research Published Between 2015 and 2018," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 68, no. 3 (2020): 853–876. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09700-4.

34. Martin Weller, Bea De los Arcos, Rob Farrow, Beck Pitt, and Patrick McAndrew, "The Impact of OER on Teaching and Learning Practice," *Open Praxis* 7, no. 4 (2015): 351–61. https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.663878263374139.

35. For example, see Jeremy Knox, "Five Critiques of the Open Educational Resources Movement," *Teaching in Higher Education* 18, no. 8 (2013):821–832. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2013.774354.

36. Natascha Chtena, ""Opening" Art History: Exploring the Motivations and Practices of Faculty using Open Educational Resources in Lower-Level and General Education Art History Courses," *Journal of Interactive Media in Education* 2021, no. 1 (2021). https://doi.org/10.5334/jime.677.

37. Chtena, ""Opening" Art History," 6.

38. Rachel E. Scott and Anne Shelley, "'Having a Textbook Locks Me into a Particular Narrative': Affordable and Open Educational Resources in Music Higher Education," *Notes* 79, no. 3 (2023): 303–34. https://doi.org/10.1353/not.2023.0000.

39. Lionel Mathieu, Kathryn Murphy-Judy, Robert Godwin-Jones, Laura Middlebrooks, and Natalia Boykova, "Learning in the Open: Integrating Language and Culture through Student Curation, Virtual Exchange, and OER" In *New Case Studies of Openness in and Beyond the Language Classroom,* ed. A. Beaven, and B. Sawhill (2019): 65–82.

40. Elizabeth Bassett, Heather Dean, Andrea Korda, Mary Elizabeth Leighton, and Vanessa Warne, "Getting Scrappy in the Classroom During COVID-19: Collaboration, Open Educational Resources, and Hands-on Learning for Humanities Students," *KULA: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1–18, http://dx.doi.org/10.18357/kula.222.

41. Melissa Blankstein and Ithaka S+R, Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey, United States, 2021 (ICPSR 38593) Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR38593.v1.

42. Ithaka, 2018 Faculty Survey, https://sr.ithaka.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SR-Report-US-Faculty-Survey-2018-04122019.pdf, 46.

43. Schroeder, Martorana, and Granatino, "Building Faculty Support for Remote Storage"; Ithaka S+R Faculty 2021 Survey Report.

44. Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey, United States, 2021, 44.

45. Severin, Egger, Eve, and Hürlimann, "Discipline-specific Open Access Publishing Practices and Barriers to Change"; Tenopir, Dalton, Christian, Jones, McCabe, Smith, and Fish, "Imagining a Gold Open Access Future."

46. Scott et al., "Exploring Faculty Perspectives on Open Access."

47. Severin et al., "Discipline-specific Open Access."

48. Severin et al., "Discipline-specific Open Access."

49. Chtena, "'Opening' Art History."

50. Scott and Shelley, "'Having a Textbook Locks Me into a Particular Narrative.'"

51. See, for example, Jörk and Korkeamäki, "Adoption of the Open Access Business Model in Scientific Journal Publishing."

52. Anthony J. Olejniczak and Molly J. Wilson, "Who's Writing Open Access (OA) Articles? Characteristics of OA Authors at Ph. D.-Granting Institutions in the United States," *Quantitative Science Studies* 1, no. 4 (2020): 1429–50. https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00091.