City, University of London

**The Photobook in the face of Pervasive Digital Resources:**
**Is there an enduring need for the physical book amongst students of photography?**

By

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January, 2018

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MSc in Library Science

**Abstract**

Photography students and the specific information resources they use represent a relatively unexplored area in the Library and Information Science (LIS) literature. The intention of this study is to explore the relevance of the physical photobook and digital resources to this specific audience.

A review of literature both within LIS and critical photographic discourses is intended to construct a conceptual and theoretical framework upon which both qualitative and quantitative research can be undertaken.

A mixed method, pragmatic approach was deemed the most appropriate means by which to establish an initial understanding of the research issues upon which further research may be based. Interviews were conducted with subject librarians, a higher education photography lecturer and photography programme graduates in order to form a holistic understanding of the relevance of and issues associated with the photobook and photography resources within the digital information ecology. The findings of these interviews inform the design and content of a web-based survey instrument which was administered to current photography students and graduates from higher education photography courses in the UK.

The findings provide insight into a previous unexplored area. Despite the small sample size, the findings of this study indicate that the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography, especially with relation to inspiration and insight into the work and practice of photographers. The surveyed students indicated a preference for the photobook when engaging with the work of photographers which is rooted in the physical properties of the book and its role as a medium for presenting photographs in which aspects such as sequencing and narrative were deemed to be of importance. Various correlations are apparent between critical perspectives in both the photography related and LIS literature consulted.

The findings reveal the surveyed students to be users of the libraries at their respective institutions and that the overall primary motivation for their visits was to view photobooks. This finding is of significance to academic libraries in that the circulation records of photobooks do not always reflect their usage.

This study provides a fruitful base for future research and serves to dissolve some of the ambiguity surrounding photography students use of the physical photobook and provides insight into their use of digital resources. These findings could reasonably be considered to be of use to academic libraries that serve photography students, particularly with regards to acquisitions and deaccessioning decisions.

# Contents

**Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Lyn Robinson for her unwavering support throughout the dissertation process and during my time on the programme at City in general. Lyn's prompt responses, advice and reassurance have been instrumental in the completion of this work and my education on the Library Science programme.

I would also like to thank Professor David Bawden, Dr Ernesto Priego, David Haynes and Ludi Price for making my time on the programme so enjoyable and enlightening.

I'd like to thank both of my parents for their love, support and words of encouragement, both in my academic pursuits and in my personal endeavours.

Finally, I'd like to thank my girlfriend Katie for her insight, encouragement and patience. Without her, I would surely be a lesser person

**Introduction**

Insight into the resources used by academic communities is of great use to university libraries striving to ensure that their collections are current, comprehensive, and above all, relevant. Different academic disciplines engage in unique discourses and rely upon certain resources particular to their activities and concerns (Bawden & Robinson, 2012, Hjorland & Albrechtsen, 1995). Whilst there do exist a number of studies around the information behaviours and needs of artists and art students, there is a distinct lack of Library and Information Science (LIS) research concerning students or practitioners of specific artistic disciplines. One such discipline is photography.

It could be suggested that photography represents a perfect example of the dichotomy between analogue and digital. Technological developments have had a pivotal effect on every aspect of photography from the means of production and dissemination to debates around its validity as a means of recording and representing reality (Edwards, 2006).

Photography has made the transition from printed images on paper to a dematerialized (Bull, 2010) and incredibly versatile means of visual communication and expression. The process through which photographs can be made has become faster and easier and as consequence the number of photographs proliferated. Today, photographs can be found in magazines, on gallery walls, in advertisements and are circulated in droves on the World Wide Web. Major contemporary photographers now publish their bodies of work online via personal or gallery websites. International photography magazines are available in entirety online and Web 2.0 technologies such as the blog have become synonymous with photographic practice, project development and promotion (Mckay & Plouviez, 2015; Fox & Caruana, 2012). Added to this is the prolific dissemination of photographs via social media sites such as Flickr or Instagram. There exists today a rich and diverse patchwork of avenues through which to seek and view photographs.

However, whilst the impact of digital technologies upon photography has been massive, one resource that has been the subject of recent critical attention and debate around contemporary photography is the photobook; a document that predates the Internet by many years and is intrinsically connected to the history of the medium itself (Parr & Badger, 2004).

As we will see, numerous definitions of the photobook exist, ranging from the complex to the very simplistic. Colberg (2016, p.1) asserts 'a photobook is a book that is being viewed because of the photographs inside'. Indeed, whilst there may be a number of motivations behind an individual's decision to consult a photobook, it seems reasonable to suggest that a primary impetus for looking at photobooks would be to view the photographs printed on their pages.

A great many perspectives point to the significant role the photobook has played in the history of photography. In an increasingly digitised information ecology, however, the question of the photobooks continued relevance seems especially pertinent, particularly when considered with relation to the innumerable sources of images available online.

This dissertation considers a specific demographic to whom photographic images are likely a key area of interest and seeks to explore the significance of the physical photobook and digital resources to their research needs. Through UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, a search for the subject area, 'photography', reveals 338 undergraduate courses and 73 postgraduate courses in the UK. There are a wide ranges of programmes on offer for those who wish to study photography at higher education level, including course titles such as Photography in the Arts, Commercial Photography, Documentary Photography and Photojournalism (2017, https://www.ucas.com). Like any other academic discipline, photography has its own discourse, vocabulary and information resources. Photography students represent a specific demographic the information needs and behaviours of which are little known.

## Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to form a better understanding of the resources used by students of photography – a user demographic that has not, to date, been the sole focus of a published academic study.

This study seeks to examine to what degree students of photography are consulting photobooks and digital resources in order to engage with contemporary photography.

The researcher asserts that the findings of a study such as this could be of value to academic libraries that seek to serve this particular user demographic, particularly with regards to collection acquisition and deaccessioning decisions.

Through a mixed method research approach this study aims to build a rich base of knowledge upon which further research into this demographic can be conducted.

## Scope and Definition

The user group of interest for this study is students studying photography at higher education level. The survey population will comprise undergraduate students, postgraduate students and graduates from various UK Higher Education Institutions. Graduates must have graduated within the past 10 years.

There are a great many photography-related courses on offer throughout the UK operating under various titles with varying curricula. This study defines a photography course as being a programme of study in which photography is the primary discipline. This definition encompasses variants such as documentary photography, photographic art, photojournalism, advertising and fashion photography.

One of the resources of interest for this study is the photobook. This term has been used variously to describe a range of different publications, this study adopts the definition set out by Parr & Badger (2004, p.6), 'the photobook is a book with or without text, where the work's primary message is carried by photographs'. An additional caveat specifies that the book needs to be 'authored by a photographer or by someone editing and sequencing the work of a photographer, or even a number of photographers' (Parr & Badger, 2004, p.6). Further discussion of the various definitions attached to the photobook is carried out in the literature review section.

The other resources of interest can be broadly described as digital resources. These include resources through which photographs are circulated and available to view. These include websites, social media platforms, e-publications and databases.

**Research Context**

Whilst representing an 'under-surveyed' (Gregory, 2007 p.57) user population, the number of Library & Information Science (LIS) studies relating to artists and art students has steadily grown over the years. Studies relating to students of specific creative disciplines, however, are still relatively few in number. The lack of such studies represents a significant gap in LIS research as students studying different disciplines likely have different information needs and exhibit varying information behaviours. To date, there are no published studies focusing solely on the information needs of photography students as a specific demographic, although photographers and students of photography have featured in broader studies in the past (Brett, 2013, Hemmig, 2009,). Studies by Cox (2013), Cox & Blake (2011), Cox et al (2008) and Cox (2008) appear to be the only published LIS studies concerned solely with the information-related behaviours of photographers, although the subjects of the study are described as amateur, hobbyist photographers as opposed to students studying photography at higher education level.

Insight into the relevance of photobooks for students of photography could play a key role in library acquisitions and deaccessioning decisions. An understanding of photography students' wider information behaviours could also help inform a more appropriate and useful library service for this unique audience.

**<u>Literature Reviews - Introduction</u>**

The apparent lack of scholarly research within LIS discourse pertaining to the specific issues raised by the research question has necessitated the consideration of literature outside of the LIS literature. The aim of the following literature reviews is to provide a contextual and conceptual framework through which the issues can be considered. Certain perspectives point to the value of conducting research outside of the realm of the LIS literature in order to better understand specific user demographics and areas that have not received much attention within LIS discourse. Sturges (2012, p.19) specifically advocates for research that considers 'useful material from outside the LIS literature'. Pickard (2013, p.25), too, recognises the importance of considering literature beyond the parameters of LIS discipline, stating 'It is the topic that drives the investigation and that means sometimes having to look outside the obvious to determine the state of knowledge'.

The ethos of these literature reviews is rooted in what Sturges (2012, p.19) describes as a 'willingness to read unconventionally' and duly considers literature not only concerned with LIS research, but also perspectives from contemporary photographic discourse and the wider art world, together with a range of other critical perspectives.

Each literature review seeks to identify themes that are pertinent to the research question, critically analysing varying viewpoints around the photobook as a resource, photography within the digital

information ecology and the information needs and behaviours of artists and art students respectively.

**Literature Review I – The Photobook**

**Introduction**

In order to approach an examination of the relevance of the photobook for students of photography, it is necessary to examine critical perspectives concerning the photobook as a particular resource, considering its origins, functions, and position within wider photographic discourse.

From a Library and Information Science perspective, an involved analysis of a specific document type, in this case the photobook, is a relevant line of enquiry. Hjorland (2002, p.437) emphasizes the importance of understanding documents in terms of their 'communicative purposes and functions, their elements and composition and their particular values in information retrieval'. It is recognised that different subjects, or domains, have 'forms of documents and content very closely associated with them' (Bawden & Robinson, 2012, 97, 8) and develop and use 'special kinds of documents as adaptions to their specific needs' (Hjorland, 2002, p.437).

Whilst there does exist a number of published journal articles concerning the photobook, the vast majority of the literature is found in monographs, with a small number of entire books (Parr & Badger, 2004, 2006, 2014, Di Bello, Wilson & Zamir, 2012) dedicated to analysing the photobook through analysis of its origins and showcasing key historical examples. Thorough searches of multiple resources, including journals and databases revealed no published Library and Information Science studies dedicated to the photobook as a resource.

Another key gap apparent in the literature is reference to the photobook's specific value to students of photography, although as we will see, the generalised qualities associated with the resource provide fruitful grounds for speculation as to its potential research value.

Critical analysis of the photobook as a resource in general is still a relatively sparse area of study according to a number of key writers on the topic (Parr & Badger, 2004, Miles, 2010, Campany, 2014). Despite the recent surge in popularity of both the term and the format, Parr & Badger (2004) note a neglect of the photobook within photographic criticism whilst Miles (2010, p.52) observes that contemporary critics have tended to 'focus on the books' formal characteristics such as design, paper stock and reproduction quality, or the historical importance of the photographs that are reproduced in the books, rather than their particular epistemological or ontological implications.'

The following literature review is by no means systematic in nature in that it does not attempt to dissect every resource, or indeed every perspective associated with the purported complexities of the photobook. Instead this review aims to highlight areas of discourse which are potentially relevant to the research question with the aim of establishing an understanding of the photobook and why it may appeal to students of photography. This review serves to establish an understanding of what the photobook is, its status within contemporary photographic practice, and its specific qualities and features. Perspectives on a number of seminal photobooks are discussed in order to provide a contextualised overview of some of the characteristics associated with the document type.

**History and Definition of the Photobook**

Despite the recent, albeit modest, spate of critical discussion around the photobook, multiple sources posit that the relationship between photography and the book is a very old one (Parr & Badger, 2004, Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Suchma, 2013, Shannon, 2010). According to Parr & Badger (2004, p10), 'From the very beginnings of the photographic medium, photography and publishing have gone hand in

hand'. In fact, the history of the photobook can be linked to milestones in the evolution of publishing technologies, in particular halftone printing, and 'the development of a mass media culture' (Suchma, 2013, p.20). The historical relationship between the photographic image and the book is such a significant one that Di Bello & Zamir (2012, p.1) describe the book as 'the first and proper home of the photographic image', acting as precursor to its eventual transition to 'the fine art gallery and the modern museum in the early twentieth century'. Similarly, Parr & Badger (2004, p.11) assert that the photobook is the '"natural"' home of the photograph.

According to Campany (2014), whilst the photographic book has existed since the 1840's, the term "photobook" is relatively recent and barely featured in photographic discourse prior to the twenty-first century. Shannon (2010, p.56) states that the term 'is a literal contraction of "photographic book"', however despite the apparent simplicity in the term's etymology, the difficulties in defining what a photobook actually is represents a recurring theme across the literature on the topic (DiBello & Zamir, 2012, Parr & Badger, 2004, Shannon, 2010, Suchma, 2013). A popular definition which appears in a number of analyses (Parr & Badger, 2004, Shannon, 2010, Manghani, 2012) of the photobook is from Dutch critic, Ralph Prins who described the photobook as 'an autonomous art form', stating that the photobook is 'comparable with a piece of sculpture, a play or a film' with the photographs acting as parts, contributing to what he describes as 'a dramatic event called a book' (In Boom & Suermondt, 1989, p.12). Elsewhere, Suchma's (2013, p.25) interpretation of the photobook is that of 'a book in which photographs play a prominent role in the book's composition, one that enhances or expands the problem, argument and message of the book's subject matter'. Possibly the best known definition, however, is from Parr & Badger (2004) in the first volume of *The Photobook: A History*;

> A photobook is a book – with or without text – where the work's primary
>
> message is carried by photographs. It is authored by a photographer or by

someone editing and sequencing the work of a photographer, or even a

number of photographers. It has a specific character, distinct from the

photographic print, be it simply the functional work print, or the fine art

'exhibition print'.

<div align="right">Parr & Badger (2004, p.6)</div>

This definition has drawn criticism from certain writers in part due to its vagueness (Suchma, 2013) and lack of emphasis on text as being a potential key feature (Shannon, 2010). However, despite these criticisms, Parr & Badger's (2004) definition still represents the most frequently cited across the literature consulted here (Wells, 2015, Spunta, 2015, Suchma, 2013, Manghani, 2012, Bello & Zamir, 2012, Shannon, 2010, Padget, 2008) and is the definition adopted for the purposes of this study.

**Renewed Interest in the Photobook**

A persistent observation throughout much of the literature describes a resurgence in the photobook's popularity (Neumuller, 2017, Campany, Shannon, Fox & Caruna, 2012 MORE). According to Fox & Caruna (2012 p.136), 'Today, more photobooks than ever are being published and both photographers and artists have engaged with the possibilities of designing and producing their own books'. Parr & Badger (2004, p.9, 2006, P.7) note that regardless of their area of photographic practice, almost every photographer's ambition is to make a book and regard this endeavour as 'an astute career move'. The centrality of the photobook to the 'photographer's oeuvre' is observed by Renshaw (Parr, Baker & Renshaw, 2012, p.80).

Interestingly, this increase in popularity is often cited as being a reaction to prevalence of digital resources (Campany, 2014). Soth (Martin, 2014, https://aperture.org/blog/hold-em-fold-em-conversation-alec-soth/) references the 'streaming flow' of information spawned from social media, positing that it is this digital experience of information that seems to make 'more physical, tactile

experiences all the more important'. Similarly, Neumuller (2017, p.6) speculates as to whether the enthusiasm for the 'multisensory experience' offered by the book is 'a reaction to the rampant virtualisation of our world'.

The heightened popularity, and consequent increase in production of photobooks, is referenced by some in a slightly more negative light. The ease of publishing afforded by low cost and efficient 'print-on-demand' services, has created an entire ecosystem of 'fairs, festivals, exhibitions, screenings, and contests' (Neumuller, 2017, pp.3 & 5), but simultaneously has resulted in a purported deluge of poor examples of the medium (Colberg, 2016, Parr & Badger, 2004).

**The Photobook as an Art Object**

A key theme apparent in the literature emphasises the concept of the photobook as an art object, thus perhaps implying a distinction from the typical book as a document. For Parr & Badger (2004, p.10), the photobook occupies a position 'somewhere between the mass medium and the hermetic art form' whilst according to Fontcuberta (2012, p.2), 'the photobook increasingly transcends the function of a mere repository of iconic information – the book as catalog – to become a work in its own right, the book as art experience'. Both Miles (2010) and Reverté (2014) assert that the growing recognition of the photobook as an art object or, indeed, as a work of art, is reflected in collecting and curatorial practices within the art world and in the associated monetary values attached to photobooks. Colberg (2014) asserts that despite being mass produced items, photobooks possess what Benjamin (2010) famously called aura, stating that electronic reproductions of photobooks lose a certain quality found in their physical counterparts. The photobook, in Colberg's (2014, http://cphmag.com/sequester/) view, 'gives photography a very specific presence, a presence that is both physical and psychological.'

Comparisons are often made in the literature between the photobook and the photographic exhibition (Villatoro, 2017, Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Cartagena, Miles, 2010). According to Di Bello & Zamir (2012, p.10), 'Photobooks speak of a tactile engagement with images beyond the visual, for which there is no equivalent in the gallery space.' This is a potentially significant point in that exhibitions likely represent a prime means through which to engage with contemporary photography in its physical print form, though rather than considering the photobook to be a substitute for the exhibition, these perspectives point to the photobook being a valid alternative, exhibiting its own specific qualities. In fact, Parr & Badger (2004, p.11) consider one of the basic questions for contemporary photographers is whether to 'make one's photographic statement through the medium of the page or the original print', implying a certain parity in regards to the modes of expression.

Perspectives that point to the photobook's status as an art object are relevant to this research question as they are perhaps indicative of the photobook as a resource of particular utility to an academic demographic such as students of photography. Numerous perspectives suggest that the photobook represents a resource with qualities that distinguish it from other books, instead positing that it represents a specific means through which to display and view photographs (Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Fox & Caruana, 2012, Parr & Badger, 2004). This apparent specificity could indicate the potential value of the photobook as a source of primary research for students of photography.

Bainbridge (2014, https://aperture.org/pbr/case-digital/), whilst acknowledging the qualities of the physical photobook, suggests that the enthusiasm for the 'printed book also plays to the conservative tendencies running deep within the photographic community'. Bainbridge (2014, https://aperture.org/pbr/case-digital/) notes 'a general sense of apathy toward digital publishing' within the photographic community and asserts that there is an obsession with the 'limited edition object' based largely on market demand for 'artwork that is collectable' and therefore, by definition, 'both scarce and tangible'.   The significant cost, or market value, associated with the photobook is

referenced by a number of commentators (Reverte, 2014; Fox & Caruana, 2012; Miles, 2010; Shannon, 2010), representing a factor that could feasibly be of concern to libraries in terms of the acquisition of such items, especially to those with limited budgets.

**The Photobook within Contemporary Photography Discourse**

In Parr's & Badger's (2004, p.11) view, 'Photobooks reflect the preoccupations of the contemporary photography world at large'. Indeed, discussions around the nature and impact of the photobook frequently situate the resource as a key feature within contemporary history and subject discourse. Parr & Badger (2004, p.10) assert that it is the photobook, more so than the photographic exhibition, that has contributed to the 'globalization of creative photography'. Similarly, a number of perspectives point the photobook as an instrumental means of distribution. Shannon (2010, p.56) suggests that the book is perhaps 'the most effective vehicle through which to present and disseminate a body of photographic work' and asserts that photobooks 'have significantly aided the acceptance of photography as an art form'.

Critical perspectives such as we have seen represent instances of where value has been ascribed to the photobook as a specific object and means of photographic expression by commentators within contemporary photographic discourse. This is a salient factor as such opinions and attitudes can contribute to a 'social construction of meaning' associated with photobooks within a community of discourse, in this case photographic criticism, and this has implications for a potential audience's 'perception of the significance and evidential character of documents' (Buckland, 1997, p.807). This is relevant in considering photography students' attitudes towards photobooks because endorsements within the subject discourse may influence research practices and value judgements. This is particularly relevant to the perceived value of art objects, a status which is attached to photobooks by many (Reverte, 2014; Fontcuberta, 2012; Miles, 2010; Parr & Badger, 2004; Prins in: Boom and

Suermondt, 1989). Maihoub (2015, p.1) likens art objects to 'live social beings' and states that their 'aesthetic value, significance, and emotional efficacy are subject to change in the course of their mobility through time and space'.

Neumuller (2017, p.3) contends that photobooks 'occupy a central place in contemporary photography', whilst Parr & Badger (2004, p.9) suggest that for contemporary photographers, the photobook is 'a basic source of information about photography – what's happening, who's doing what, what's "cutting edge"' and that by engaging with photobooks, 'photographers discover the medium's traditions and generate their own ideas'. Perspectives such as these perhaps highlight the photobook's utility as a resource for research, or indeed inspiration – a key information concern for students of art as we will see in the review of the LIS literature. Parr & Badger (2004, p.9) make reference to young photographers discovering and being inspired by seminal photobooks, books of such status that they 'remain perpetually in print like the classics of literature'.

**Properties of the Photobook**

A dominant theme apparent across the literature consulted is the discussion of the photobook's unique properties as a document in terms of its physicality, design and as a specific context for displaying photographs. Di Bello & Zamir (2012, p.12) assert that the experience of viewing a photobook, 'must be grasped not just in its mental but also in its sensuous and haptic dimensions'. Indeed, a number of perspectives point to the multi-faceted nature of photobooks and the various ways in which they influence an audience's interaction with photographic images and, in turn, how this can affect the reading or understanding of a photographic work (Barral, 2013; Di Bello & Zamir, 2012; Fox & Caruana, 2012; Parr & Badger, 2004).

In Fox & Caruana's (2012, p.136) view the physical photobook 'possesses a very special quality in the way images are read and received'; they describe the photobook as an 'intimate format'. The

interaction between reader and book is described as 'direct and private', with books only coming alive 'when they are used, touched, handled, manipulated' (Buchler in Bello & Zamir, 2012, p.11).

The physicality of the book appears to be a salient theme throughout the literature consulted. McDermott & Dunigan (p.243) state that 'The spatial organisation and unique physical attributes of the art book are central to the reader's experience'. The tactile qualities of books in general are the subject of extensive critical debate amongst many writers (Bello & Zamir, 2012; Pozzi, 2011; Soussloff, 2006; Classen, 2005). Classen (2005, p.7) describes books as 'eminently tactile objects' whereas Pozzi (2011, p.43) contemplates the notion of the book as fetish, arguing that the 'medium' of the book allows it to transcend that of a neutral object and become a fetishized object. Pozzi (2011, p.43) contends that it is through the stimulation of touch, smell, and hearing that an 'intimate relationship' is formed with the book object, a relationship she argues cannot be formed in the same way with new media. Bello & Zamir (2012, p.12) claim the photobook is defined as much by 'how it is experienced as by how it is made' while similarly, Barral (no date, https://aperture.org/pbr/fine-art-making-things-1/) states that the success of the photobook lies in the 'reaction it provokes when, taken together, the subject, materials (primarily paper and ink), and binding bring sensuality, accuracy, and strangeness to the object'. These perspectives allude to the idea of the book not only as an object, but as an experience, and are reminiscent of what Soussloff & Tronzo (2008, p12) describe as '"a dream of art"', a unity or totality of shape, form and content, and of the 'pleasure', 'beauty', and 'sensory perceptions' associated with the art book construct.

**Sequencing & Narrative**

The sequencing and narrative structure, often cited as being a key characteristic of the photobook form, represents a common focus across the literature consulted. Bright (2005, https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/print/20050926/30524-photo-book-art.html) describes photobooks as having, 'a rhythm and flow not dissimilar to a film, and a narrative that the reader can

follow, although it might not necessarily be a linear one'. Eskildsen (2004, p.22) describes the photobook as providing a 'visual space' that makes possible 'juxtapositions, contrasts, constructed sequences, extreme fragments and blurred images'. Parr & Badger (2004, p.7) liken the individual photographs in photobooks to sentences or paragraphs and state that the sequence of images as whole can be considered as 'the complete text' leading them to conclude that in the photobook, 'the sum, by definition, is greater than the parts'.

Multiple perspectives allude to the photobook as a medium through which to explore the possibilities of photographic narrative (Cartagena, 2017; Miles, 2010). This particular characteristic is sometimes linked to specific photographic disciplines and movements, particularly straight, autobiographical, and conceptual documentary photography practices (Cartagena, 2017; Miles, 2010; Eskilsden, 2004).

### *The Americans* – Robert Frank

Examples of photobooks known for their use of narrative are far too numerous to comprehensively detail here, however one book that frequently warrants mention in critical discussions of the photobook is Robert Frank's *The Americans* (see Figure 1)*,* a book that is cited by Eskildsen (2004, p.20) as 'prompting a paradigm shift within contemporary photography'. Various writers (Rubinfien, 2009, Sass, 2015) have commented on the range of strategies employed by Frank in *The Americans* in terms of sequencing and the reoccurring motifs apparent in many of the photographs; flags, crosses, automobiles and jukeboxes, to name a few, and how these imply something of the American condition during the 1950s. The pairing, or juxtaposition, of *Covered Car – Long Beach, California* (see Figure 2) and *Car Accident – U.S. 66, between Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona,* (see Figure 3) photographs with compositional similarities which appear in sequence as one turns the pages of the book, is referenced by some as being imbued with meaning – commenting on anything from the cost of mass transit and consumerism to Capitalism and death (Campany, 2014, Day, 2013). The apparent messages in Frank's book are not explicitly communicated through the use of text or the captions, which are short and

denotative, any meanings which can be inferred are done so through the photographs and their arrangement, as Rubinfien (2009, p.144) notes, 'In truth, the pictures don't teach, they merely suggest. *The Americans* is not a book of determinations but of intimations'.
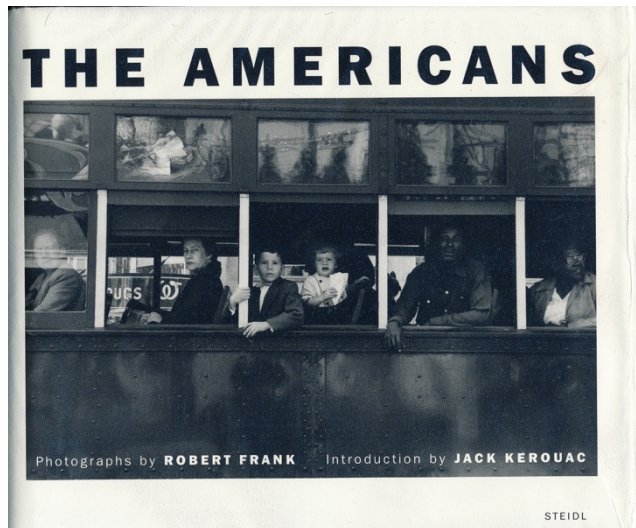


Figure 1: The Americans – Robert Frank (Front Cover – Scan)



Figure 2: *Covered Car – Long Beach* from The Americans – Robert Frank (Scan)



Figure 3: *Car Accident – U.S. 66, between Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona* from The Americans – Robert Frank (Scan)

**The Ballad of Sexual Dependency – Nan Goldin**

Photographers are frequently discussed in contemporary photographic criticism with relation to bodies of work published in book form. Nan Goldin, an American photographer famous for her use of colour photography and vernacular aesthetic, produced *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (see Figure 4)*,* a book of almost 130 photographs described by Rice (2001, p.30) as 'alternatively narcissistic and voyeuristic, exploitive and deeply compassionate'. The book is divided into sections, the arrangement of which alludes to the divisions between men and women – a theme perceived as being central to the work (Parr & Badger, 2006). Whilst *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* was originally conceived as a slide show composed of a great many more photographs and displayed accompanied with music (Johnson, 2016), the book, published in 1986, is what Goldin is best known for (Als, 2016) and is for many, 'their only experience of the work' (Ryder, 2015, https://www.americanphotomag.com/nan-goldins-ballad-turns-30 ); a factor that could be, in one sense, indicative of the greater reach afforded through the distributable book format. However perhaps more relevantly, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency,* is frequently referenced in terms of being analogous to a 'diary' (Parr & Badger, 2006, p.39) 'family album' or 'autobiography' (Rice, 2001, p.30). This perhaps indicates the centrality of the book form to the arrangement and consequent reception of the work as well as the sense of the photographer, as a person and as an author, being irrevocably connected to the work (Parr & Badger, 2006).
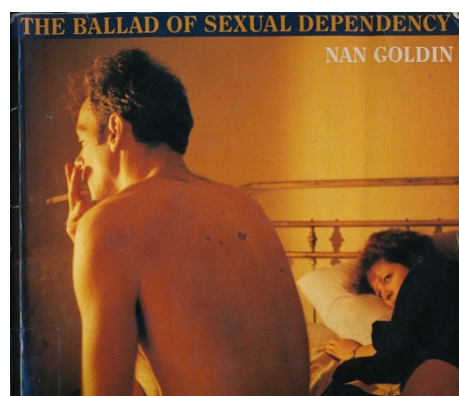


Figure 4: The Ballad of Sexual
Dependency – Nan Goldin
(Front Cover – Scan)

Figure 5: *Edwige behind the bar at Evelyne's New York City 1985*
The Ballad of Sexual Dependency – Nan Goldin
(Scan)
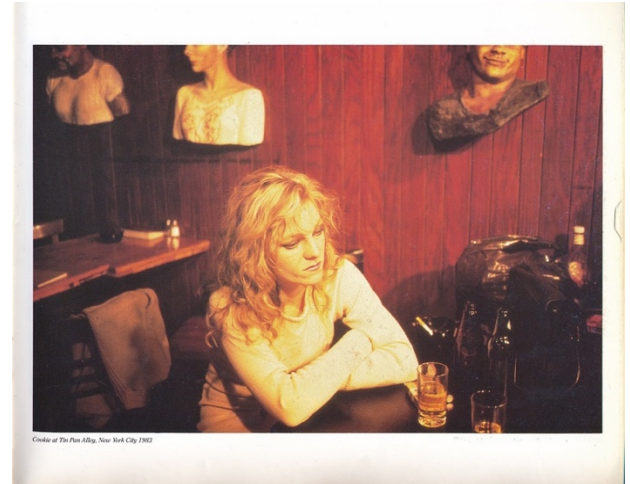


Figure 6: *Cookie at Tin Pan Alley, New York City 1983*
The Ballad of Sexual Dependency – Nan Goldin
(Scan)

**The Photographer as Author**

The photographer as an author or *auteur* is a concept discussed by Parr and Badger (2004, pp.6-7) in their examination of the photobook. Decisions relating to aspects such as the aforementioned sequencing and editing of pictures are seen as central to communicating a message that the photographer wishes to convey. The photobook is seen by many (Cartagena, 2017, Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Eskildsen, 2004, Parr & Badger, 2004) as providing a medium through which photographers can present their work in a specific way offering an additional means of creative control over their work subsequent to the making of the actual photographs. For Cartagena (2017, p.4), the 'arrangements of form and content' made possible through the photobook can 'create or, more precisely, extend the meaning of the original single images'.

If the photobook represents the medium of expression specifically chosen by photographers and thus constitutes a particular means by which to view and understand a body of work, this factor perhaps indicates the relevance of the physical book for research.

**<u>Literature Review II – Photography in the digital information ecology</u>**

**Introduction**

The development of information communication technologies and the digitisation of photography has had an acute effect on many facets of photographic research and practice. The status of photography within the digital information ecology represents a sprawling topic, far too multi-faceted and complex to adequately dissect here. This literature review instead seeks to explore pertinent areas of photographic debate around the existence of photography in digital forms and in doing so examines factors that could contribute to its role as an equivalent or alternative research resource for students of photography when compared to print resources.

**Impact of Digital Technologies and the Internet upon Photography**

A consensus is apparent across much of the literature consulted that acknowledges the pivotal, fundamental effect that digital technology has had upon photography (Smith & Lefley, 2016; Moschovi, McKay & Plouviez; 2013; Bate, 2013; Hack, 2011; Ritchen, 2009 Edwards, 2006). Edwards (2006, p.129) describes the 'enormous impact' on photography, noting that digital technologies have 'changed the ways that images are made, stored, circulated, and used'. The digitisation and consequent dematerialisation (Bate, 2013, Bull, 2010) of photography represents, according to Bate (2013, p.41), a departure from a certain experience of photography, one that was traditionally associated with celluloid film. The evolution from photography as a 'print based medium' (Hack in: Foam Gallery, 2011, p.88) to 'the digital and computerized coding of images' (Bate, 2013, p.41) is a central theme in many discussions around the status of contemporary photography (Bate, 2013, Ritchin, 2009, Edwards, 2006). The ease with which photographs can be produced, disseminated and circulated in the digital age has contributed to the photograph's ubiquity creating a complex, 'hypervisual universe' (Moschovi et al, 2013, p.13). Bull (2010, p.27) makes reference to the properties of the digital photographs as they exist on the Internet likening their highly reproducible nature and

lack of a physical original to Baudrillard's concept of simulacra; a world composed of copies. Bull (2010, p.27) observes that the dematerialised digital image 'has no definitive original version, but can go anywhere'.

Images are available in abundance online and the potential value of the Internet as a research resource is noted in a number of texts relating to art and photography. Wilks et al (2012, p.56) note, 'Databases on artists, including full catalogues of their work, critical responses and contextual information are immediately accessible on the web'. Elsewhere, Fox & Caruana (2012, p.110) describe the Internet as a 'wonderfully liberating research resource', observing that, 'Today, many emerging photographers and writers depend on gathering a large percentage of their research on the World Wide Web. The Web has democratized knowledge in a way that was previously unimaginable'.

### Social Media

Discussions concerning photography and the Internet frequently point to social media as a key agent in the pervasiveness and accessibility of images in contemporary society (Moschovi et al, 2013, Bull, 2010). The widespread proliferation of 'online micro publishing, user led platforms and social networking media' have, according to Moschovi et al (2013, p.11), contributed to 'a whole different culture of producing and consuming photographs'.

### Blogs

The blog, in particular, has received attention from numerous writers. Risch (2011, p.32) describes the utility of the blogging platform *Tumblr* for photographers, stating that the blog is 'highly visual, and easy to use and customize', furthermore Risch (ibid.) considers the dissemination possibilities of the platform, commenting on the ease with which photographers can share work with followers the number of which can potentially 'grow exponentially within months'. In addition to independent photographers, Fox & Caruana (2012) observe that magazines, galleries and agents also maintain

online blogs. In contrast to the 'slow publishing' (Bainbridge, 2014, https://aperture.org/pbr/case-digital/ ) typified in the production of photobooks, 'the photoblog as a technology, when paired with that of the digital camera draws photographic acts, photographic images and the display of those images into closer conjunction' (Cohen, 2005, p.893) thus rendering photography 'ubiquitous, connected and potentially immediate' (Mckay & Plouvez, 2013, p.31).

Fox & Caruana (2012, p.40) regard the blog as a potential new avenue through which to research the work of photographic practitioners. They recognise the utility of the blog in terms of documenting research and state that for this reason blogs provide the means to 'gain insight into a particular photographer's creative process.' As a result they recognise that viewing the blogs of photographers can be both 'inspiring and insightful' and that the information contained in blogs can be 'harnessed' and used to nurture ideas (ibid.). Such a perspective indicates the potential inspirational value of the blog as well as highlighting the unique possibility for developing insight into the working processes of photographers; both of these factors could arguably motivate photography students to consult blogs during the course of their research.

Furthermore, Smith & Lefley (2016, p.284) note photography students' use of the personal blog as 'a virtual sketchbook', stating that 'student coursework may now sit on a public blog instead of the traditional method of using a paper-based sketchbook to collect research'. Such a perspective is relevant as photography students' interaction and use of blogging platforms perhaps supports the notion of students engaging with photography in digital, rather than, print forms.

**Flickr & Instagram**

Two key platforms centred around the photographic image, Flickr and Instagram, receive a great deal of attention in discussions around photography in the digital age. According to Burgess (2007, p.127), at the most simplistic level, Flickr is a platform for uploading and sharing photographs, however a

more involved consideration of Flickr's 'architecture' reveals that its potential uses go beyond basic photo-sharing functionality and 'extend to a number of levels of social and aesthetic engagement'. Furthermore, Burgess' (2007) study highlighted the potential utility of Flickr as a learning resource, offering possibilities for visual literacy and technical knowledge acquisition. This perspective aligns with the views of Castro (2012, p.153) who sees social media practices as 'increasingly woven into the everyday lives of teens and adults, becoming a significant part of how they relate, know, and learn'. Smith & Lefley (2016, p.284) note the use of social media by photography students, stating;

> Photography students are using external social networking and
> blogging sites to communicate with each other and share work.
> These forums like Facebook, Flickr and Twitter, are moderated
> by students, student-led and a place to share views, work in
> progress, triumphs and disasters.

Smith & Lefley's observations imply the existence of online communities of photography students sharing their work and exchanging ideas in a format akin to what Herrema (2011, p.135) likens to a 'community of practice'. Wenger's (2000) concept of a 'community of practice' is rooted in social learning; according to Wenger-Trayner (2015, p.1), 'Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly'. Whilst it is perfectly feasible for communities of practice to exist in the physical world, the existence of online communities is particularly relevant when considering that, according to Jackson (2009, p.170), student encounters with photography in contemporary society, as both producers and consumers, are largely 'mediated through digital forms'. These perspectives are relevant in the consideration of social media as a research resource by students of photography in that they highlight the potential uses of the platforms beyond solely hosting images and indicate the participatory nature characteristic of Web 2.0 technologies (Deodato, 2014) – an additional dimension that might make

such resources attractive to students and which perhaps is not generally associated with print resources.

Whilst much of the literature consulted makes frequent reference to the abundance of vernacular photography on social media, Instagram is a platform that is seeing increasing use amongst established, professional photographers. Smith & Lefley (2016, p.346) observe that contemporary photographers are today complementing their '"slow" analogue workflow' by uploading '"out-takes" or sneak previews of their current work' to Instagram. Specifically, they reference the practice of documentary photographer, Anastasia Taylor-Lind, who regularly uploads images to her Instagram account (see Figure 7) which has attracted some 80,000 followers at the time writing and provides 'an instant market for her future publications and prints' (Smith & Lefley, 2016, p.346). The potential for social media as 'a basic self-promotion tool' (Fox & Caruana, 2012, p.40) for established photographers is relevant as this provides impetus for the publication of work via online publications and therefore has the potential to establish these platforms as resources through which to view the most recent work of highly regarded practitioners. Fox & Caruana (2012, p.40) suggest that social media represents 'a new avenue for researching the work of other practitioners'.
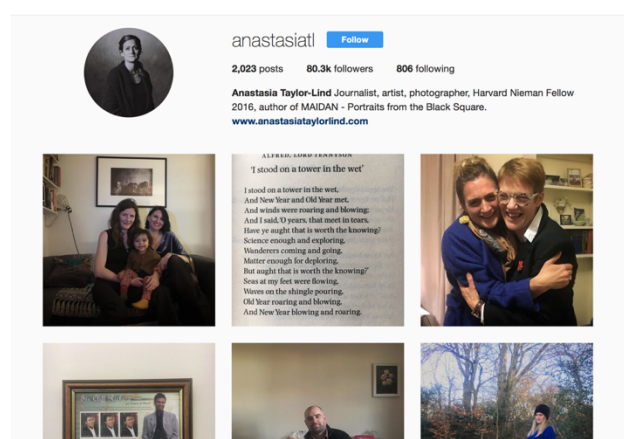


Figure 7: Anastasia
Taylor-Lind, Instagram
(screengrab)

**Democratisation vs. Over-bombardment**

Whilst certain perspectives speak of the democratisation or emancipation (Bate, 2013) of photography achieved through digital technologies, most notably social media, some adopt a far more pessimistic view, expressing concern over the 'over-bombardment' and 'over-accessibility' of images resulting in 'a kind of visual junkyard' (Hack in Foam Gallery, 2011, P.89). On the one hand, photography is infinitely more available (Bate, 2013), but paradoxically this availability can also be seen as an overabundance (Hack in Foam Gallery, 2011). This area of debate represents a potentially salient dichotomy when considering the Internet as a potential resource through which students of photography can seek out photographic work. While the Internet provides access to huge numbers of photographs, it is perhaps the antithesis of the 'curated' (Bainbridge, 2014, https://aperture.org/pbr/case-digital/ ) print publication. The abundance of photographs can be at once a positive factor in research and a hindrance resulting in a kind of 'information overload' (Bawden & Robinson, 2009, p.180).

**Photography Education in the Digital Era**

The significance of photography's migration to the digital information ecology has also been referenced in literature concerning contemporary photographic education.

In a study concerning theory and practice in photographic education, Grove-White (2003 p.57) observed, 'Degree levels of study in art, media and design aim to emphasize the value of theory and academic study as well as developing skill-based competencies'. Similarly, Abrahmov & Ronen (2008), state that the ultimate aim of photography education is to teach not only practical skills, but also photographic theory. Certain perspectives indicate changes in the teaching of both photographic practice and theory as a result of digital technologies and the Internet. Digital technologies have purportedly led to a transition in focus from the traditional wet darkroom to 'air-conditioned banks of calibrated computer screens' (Cotton, 2011, p.171). Technology has seen changes in both the

delivery of photography programmes and the working practices of students. Smith & Lefley (2016, p.284) note the increased use of 'virtual learning environments' by academic departments as well as the increasing tendency of students to make digital photographs and view their work on a home computer, essentially working in 'a kind of closed feedback loop until they submit an assignment'. Furthermore, a number of commentators (Smith & Lefley, 2016; Moschovi et al; 2013, Wilks et al, 2012; Jackson, 2009) observe that the development of technologies and the consequent implications on the state of photography and art in general suggest shifts in the focus of theory as it taught to students.

If we consider that the delivery of photography courses, and students' consequent interactions with photography, are mediated through digital means, this could feasibly predispose them to the use of digital photography resources, ultimately having an influence on their personal research choices.

**Digitisation of Museum & Gallery Collections and Exhibitions**

Bautista (2014, p.xxvi) observes that as a result of technological advancement, we now live in a more mobile society, a society that is 'no longer dependent on physical, static places'. Dziekan (2005, p.12) recognises the need for museums, which he describes as art's 'primary physical space', to maintain relevance becoming more dynamic in the 'increasingly digitized' present day.

Gooding (2013) notes the efforts taken by institutions such as museums and galleries in remaining relevant to their audiences and reaching them in new ways through the use of technology. Whereas the book perhaps represented a more accessible means of viewing the work of photographers beyond physically visiting an exhibition for example, or indeed beyond the life of an exhibition, the Internet offers an arguably even easier means by which to view photographs – the potential opportunities to reach and interact with audiences are now being recognised by art institutions (Gooding, 2013). McKay & Plouviez (2013) discuss the utilisation of the Internet by major photography institutions such

as *The Photographers Gallery* in London and photography festivals such as FORMAT International

Photography Festival in Derby. In particular, both *The Photographers Gallery* and FORMAT have used

social media platforms such as Flickr and the blogging site Wordpress  (see Figure 8) to interact with

their audiences in new ways.
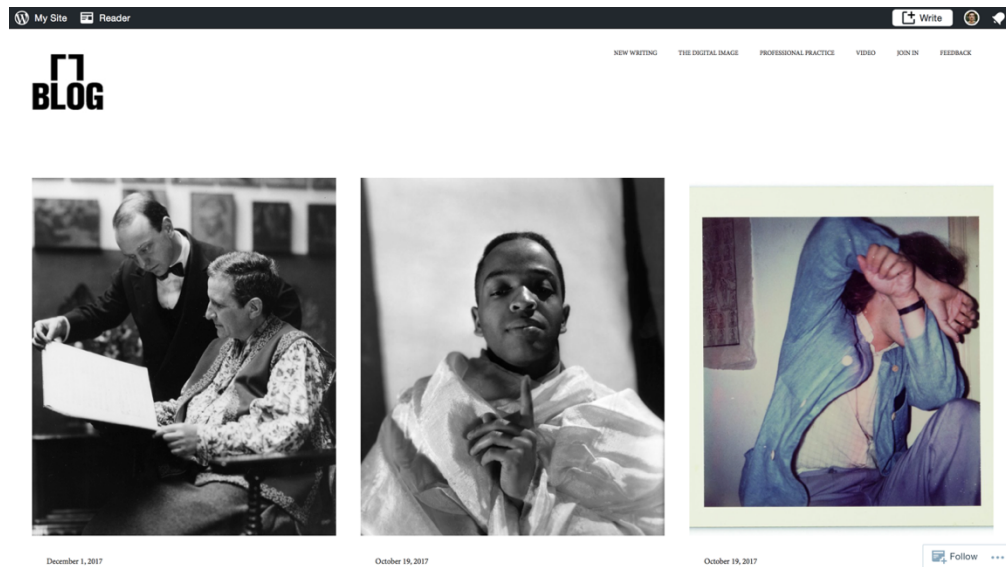


Figure 8: *The Photographer's Gallery* blog (Screengrab)

The digitization of gallery and museum collections represents a potentially significant research

resource for students of photography that extends the traditional physical exhibition in terms of both

'accessibility and temporality' (Dziekan, 2005, p.12).

**Vernacular Photography/Appropriation Trend**

The swathes of vernacular, everyday photography so prevalent on social media sites such as Facebook,

Twitter and Flickr, are frequently cited as a pivotal component of contemporary photographic practice

and research.

McKay & Plouviez (2013, p.133) make reference to William Ewing's 2007 exhibition, *We are all*

*Photographers Now* as an example of a curated effort which seeks to explore the 'new vernacular and

its relationship to established professional and creative practices'. This exhibition invited submissions from anyone via the host museum's website and through random computerized selection generated a different exhibition each week between February and May, 2007. This approach represented an intentional departure from established curatorial practices opting instead to perpetuate the sense of democratization characteristic of photography as it exists within Web 2.0.

A number of perspectives indicate that photographers are actively engaging with vernacular, everyday photography as it exists in the digital information ecology. McKay & Plouviez (2013, p.134) make reference to the work of Ekke Vasli, whose work describing it as directly addressing the 'shared and distributed nature' of photography and in doing so 'actively embrac[ing] photography's new democratization'. Furthermore, Wells (2013) examines the work of well known photographer, Thomas Ruff, who, for certain projects, appropriates images from the Internet. Specifically, Wells (2013) makes reference to Ruff's 2004 *jpegs* series (see Figure 9), a body of work that references not only the ubiquity of digital images, but also the nature of the digital photo format. These examples of works by established photographic practitioners perhaps may suggest a growing interest and engagement with photography as it exists in digital forms.



Figure 9: *jpeg ny02* – Thomas Ruff

The appropriation of virtually infinite numbers of photographic images available as a result of this apparent 'emancipation' of photography through technology represents a key area of interest in much of the literature and has spawned innovation in the photographic pursuits of many key practitioners working with the 'found image' (McKay & Plouviez, 2013; Bate, 2013; Wells, 2013). These trends could perhaps identify as an area of interest for budding photographers and students who feasibly look to the work of established photographers for inspiration.

**Unique properties and possibilities of the 'networked' image**

An interesting parallel to much of the literature that cites narrative as a key device associated with the photobook is evident in discussions around the unique qualities associated with the photograph as the possibilities of its presentation afforded by digital technologies. Jackson (2009, p.175) describes evolving practices occurring as a result of digital presentation that 'redefine narrative production and perception'. Edwards (2006, p.132), too, discusses the possibilities of constructing 'complex narratives' in which photographs 'appear in sequence', or dissolves, accompanied by sound tracks or overlays. The multi-faceted digital information ecology provides innumerable viewing contexts for photographs and in turn, possibilities for the way a photograph can be 'read' or understood. These perspectives point to the recognition of the information communication technologies as providing a unique means by which to engage with photography.

**Literature Review – Library and Information Science Studies Concerning Artists and Art Students**

**Introduction**

The number of studies focused upon artists and art students are relatively few when compared to the swathes of information studies based on audiences engaged in other disciplines. Multiple studies reference the lack of attention afforded to this specific audience and their information related behaviours and needs (Lo & Chu, 2015; Mason & Robinson, 2012; Hemmig, 2009; Cowan, 2004; Frank, 1999; Cobbledick, 1996). Despite the relative lack of studies, however, those that do exist incorporate a range of different survey methods and present a relatively coherent (Hemmig, 2009) model of the user group's behaviours and needs. Toyne's (1975) initial study of students studying at the Falmouth College of Art, Cornwall is considered to be the earliest published study focused on the information behaviour of individuals engaged in creative disciplines. Toyne's study (1975) is based around statistical data gathered through recording library users' requests and reveals the diverse range of materials and resources sought, a feature that would become a key characteristic of this particular user group across the majority of later studies. Subsequent studies showcase a plethora of research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, including interviews (Cowan, 2004; Litrell, 2001; Cobbledick, 1996), focus groups  (Gatten & Bryant, 2010; Frank, 1996), observation (LeClerc, 2010) and surveys (Mason & Robsinson, 2012; Gatten & Bryant , 2010; Hemmig, 2009).

**LIS Studies and Photography**

Whilst students of photography are not the sole focus of any published study within the LIS literature, they do do feature in a number of studies (Brett, 2013, Mason & Robinson, 2011, Whiteside, 2010, Hemmig, 2009, Frank, 1999) as interviewees or questionnaire respondents, though only ever in modest numbers. Photography programme faculty is also referenced in a number of studies (Bennett, 2006, Reed & Tanner, 2001).

Four of the respondents to Hemmig's (2009) empirical study work with photographic media. Hemmig (2009) makes a number of observations concerning the photographers based on his finidngs, however due to the small number of respondents these are fairly inconclusive and, by Hemmig's (2009, p.692) own admission, 'tentative'. Comparisons are made between the photographers and watercolourists, who total 10 in number, where in one instance Hemmig observes that the photographers are more inspired by 'print and electronic media' whereas the watercolourists draw more inspiration from 'non-two dimensional sources' such as 'life experience' and 'music'.

Brett's (2013) thesis states that the participating foundation students are sourced from a range of disciplines including photography, graphic design, fashion, textiles, fine art and printmaking. There are multiple references to photographs and photographers, however owing to the research design and identifying information provided, it is not possible to conclusively identify which students are studying photography.

Frank's (1999, p.448) study of art students in academic libraries, referenced photography students stating that they frequently 'brought up the importance of studying photographs while learning about the technical processes involved in creating the artwork'. Other brief references were made to photographer students' use of periodicals and video resources, particularly for technical information.

The only LIS studies found in the course of this research which feature photography as a central element are by Cox (2013), Cox & Blake (2011), Cox et al (2008) and Cox (2008). However, none of these studies concern students studying photography at higher education level, but instead focus on amateur photography as a leisure activity, including areas such as family photography, food blogging or mobile blogging.

Owing to the general lack of coverage concerning photography students in the LIS literature,

specifically with relation to their use of and attitudes towards particular resources, it was decided that the scope of literature consulted here would be expanded to incorporate information studies concerning art students and artists.

**Sources of Inspiration**

Arguably, the most prevalent observation apparent across the LIS literature concerning art students and artists is a requirement for resources for inspiration. Multiple studies have revealed the range of resources sought and utilized to satisfy this highly subjective and unpredictable information need to be extremely diverse. Hemmig's (2009, p.689) empirical study of practicing visual artists finds that practically anything within the artists' environments could be considered 'a potential catalyst for inspiration'. Similarly, Robinson & Mason (2011, p.176) observe 'an almost unlimited range of inspirations' extending far beyond the reasonable remit of the information provision typical of library and information services.

**Internet Usage**

The vast majority of studies do not explore the use of the Internet by this particular group in particular detail, this is perhaps not due to a lack of interest on the part of artists and art students, but instead, as Robinson and Mason (2011, p.163) observe is likely due to the fact that most of the existing studies 'predate wide use of the Web'. Based on the findings of their survey, Robinson and Mason (2011, p.177) asserted that the Internet was 'integral' to artists' 'information access and communication' and observed that it was often the first resource consulted for research purposes, an observation echoed in studies by Brett (2013) as well as Lo and Chu (2015 p.114, 5) who found that the Internet represented the first option for art and design students 'when searching for either information or inspiration'. In fact, Lo and Chu's study found that the Internet was the most widely used resource for students searching for inspiration leading to an assertion that the Internet was of 'huge importance' to the surveyed students (Lo & Chu, 2015, p.107). The literature points to various uses of the Internet

by this particular user group. Despite a lack of general admission concerning the Internet, Frank (1999, p.450) finds that students who took part in her focus groups searched the Web for 'art newsgroups, clip art, artists' portfolios, and recent exhibitions'. Gregory (2007, p.62) discusses artists' need for images, stating that in the past this need was satisfied through slides and monographs, but noting that today there has been a shift, observing that 'online image resources are commonplace with artists'.

Social media usage by artists and art students, for networking and information purposes, is also identified in some of the literature (Lo & Chu, 2015; Mason & Robinson, 2011). Specific references are made by Lo & Chu (2015, p.105) to the use of social media by art students for 'a variety of learning, as well as information-/experience –sharing purposes'. There is evident correlation between these perspectives and those discussed in the previous literature review that detailed the multi-faceted use of social media by photography students, particularly by Smith and Lefley (2015).

Whilst a number of the more recent studies indicate that this particular user group are actively engaged with the Internet, Brett (2013, p.36) found that art students sometimes viewed the Internet as 'a daunting prospect, with more information than could be easily processed.' Furthermore, a number of studies (Brett, 2013; Mason & Robinson, 2012) indicated that the Internet, whilst often being the first resource to be consulted, often acted as a precursor to engagement with physical resources. Brett's (2013) study found that the majority of interviewees started their initial search for visual material by using Google Images. However, her findings indicated that the use of the Internet was largely preliminary and led to interviewees visiting the library to consult physical materials.

**Use of Print Resources**

A persistent theme across the literature relates to artists and art students use of print resources. In their discussion of contemporary art and design library services, Carpenter et al (2010, p.26) note a 'decreased support for conventional print collections in many disciplines' as a result of the digital

revolution, but suggest that within the creative disciplines that print collections are likely to endure due to the 'primacy of the images for research'. Wilson and McCarthy (2010, p.184) discuss art and design students as 'visual and kinesthetic learners', their observations of the students studying at their institution describe a unique approach to learning and absorbing information, largely contingent on 'physically touching, seeing and engaging with it'.  The significance of tactile resources for students of art and design is also discussed by Brett;

> There was a sense of enjoying the use of books and journal resources for their physical
>
> qualities as well as their content. The ability to hold the book or journal and take it
>
> home and flick through it for inspiration was seen as a positive experience and one
>
> not easily replicated using internet resources.                    (Brett, 2013, p.35)

Brett's observations align with some of the critical perspectives concerning the photobook discussed previously and perpetuate the idea of the tactile quality of the book as a defining factor when compared with dematerialized or virtual resources typical of the digital ecology. The findings of a number of studies indicated the significance of printed, physical materials to artists and art students. Mason and Robinson (2011) observed that all of the respondents to their survey used books to find information related to aspects their artistic practice, satisfying needs for inspiration, specific images and visual references and general information concerning artists and creative techniques. Whiteside's (2010, p.25) analysis of studio art theses noted the importance for students to learn about other artists' work and an analysis of citations led them to assert that this was achieved 'primarily through print sources'.

**Approaches to searching for information**

A key information behaviour associated with artists and art students is a propensity for browsing. Multiple studies suggest that browsing represents the primary means by which users engaged in

artistic practice search for information (Lo & Chu, 2015; Clarke, 2010; King, 2010; Wilson & McCarthy, 2010; Dirker, 2009; Frank, 1999). Litrell (2001) notes the relevance of browsing for artists who 'place great value in discovery' whereas the participants in Franks (1999) study reported browsing for 'creative stimuli' and generally favoured this approach over traditional searching strategies. The primacy of browsing as an information behaviour is not a constant across all the studies consulted however, Mason & Robinson (2011) found that the emerging artists that were the subject of their study in fact employed the use of bibliographic technologies and were far more 'library-literate' than previously acknowledged.

Interestingly, certain studies (Pacey, 1982, King, 2010) note that whilst artists and art students do indeed make use of library collections, particularly for browsing large quantities of books and journals as mentioned above, they may not necessarily always borrow physical items from the library. Multiple (Brett, 2013; Cobbledick, 1996; Stam, 1995) studies make reference to students browsing collections, searching for visual material and photocopying from books in order to retain physical copies for use in studio classes or sketchbooks. This factor, for Pacey (1982), is indicative of a need to instant gratification typical of this particular user demographic meaning that, in his view, they are more likely to search for, locate and record information within the library rather than borrowing items to refer to them later.

These assertions regarding the information behaviours of artists and art students may or may not be applicable to those of photography students, but they are important to consider because should the behaviours be shared, there are certain possible implications arising from these tendencies.

Firstly, it is important to acknowledge the fact that if resources are not borrowed from collections and reflected in circulation records then this leads to ambiguity around the usage, and ultimately the perceived value, of resources within a library – a factor that can influence acquisitioning and

deaccessioning decisions. Zanin Yost and Ginanni (p.4) discuss decision making around resource weeding, stating that 'Circulation of an item can be telling. If a book has been sitting on the shelf for over ten years and has never been circulated, it is probably a good candidate to be weeded'. However, King (2010, p.63, 4) observes the distinction between art and design collections and other academic collections, stating that circulation can be 'difficult to track' within art collections and 'conventional wisdom about weeding criteria often does not apply'. King (2010, p.64) elaborates on a number of reasons for this, some of which may or may not be applicable to a photobook collection. One is that the age of art related resources 'is a less-reliable determinant of usefulness' and another is concerned with the difficulties of evaluating usage statistics, particularly when resources 'do not leave the library because they are being browsed for images rather than borrowed'. King's (2010) observations could pertinent to discussion around the use of photobook collections, if photography students do indeed engage with these collections in this fashion, and they especially highlight the importance of a study which seeks to gain insight into a particular user demographics' use of library resources outside of simply consulting circulation records.

Secondly, if we consider Pacey's (1982) assertions with relation to art students' desire for instant gratification when searching for information, the utility of and defining characteristics associated with the Internet are brought to the fore. This is perhaps particularly relevant when we consider studies (Brett , 2013; Mason & Robinson, 2012) that observe that the Internet often represents the first resource that artists and art students consult. Although, as previously mentioned, Brett (2013) finds that the Internet is often a precursor to engagement with physical materials, these findings do not necessarily apply to students seeking photographic images online.

Another observation that appears across multiple studies is that of artists and art students maintaining personal collections of books in support of their creative practice. Hemmig's (2009) and Cobbledicks (1996) studies in particular make reference to this aspect.

## Overall Methodology & Rationale for Approach

Ford (2015, p.172) states that research is 'all about creating new understanding'. The research question for this dissertation represents an unexplored area within the LIS literature. With this in mind, it was decided that this study would combine both qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to provide precious insight and a rich foundation for future studies.

A combination of semi-structured interviews and a subsequent survey instrument was deemed an appropriate approach due to the unexplored nature of the research subject matter. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods is sometimes referred to as mixed methods research (Fidel, 2008), which Ford (2015, p.178) describes as seeking 'to take advantage of the strengths of different methods whilst attempting to minimize their weaknesses by combining the perspectives they afford.' The methodology for this study very much employed this thinking in an approach that was pragmatic in its fundamental aim to develop insight into a previously unexplored area and build a holistic picture of the user group and their information related preferences and behaviours (Ford, 2015).

According to Bawden & Robinson (2012, p.309), interviews are generally regarded as appropriate 'for getting a greater, and richer, amount of information from a smaller number of participants'. It was decided that interviews with a small number of individuals who could offer different perspectives on the issues would be advantageous. The decision was made to interview individuals from academic, library and student backgrounds. The detailed information gathered through the interviews was intended to not only provide precious insight, but also inform the content and design of the subsequent survey instrument.

Whilst the interviews provide the foundation for speculation over what variables could be involved in photography students' preferences for either photobooks or digital resources, the purpose of this study is to primarily explore the research question in rich detail. Considering the research situation and the fact that variables cannot be reasonably established, the focus of this study is more concerned with providing initial insight into the issues, as Pickard (p.45) states, 'exploration becomes the focus of the investigation, not testing or measuring'. If any correlations are discovered through the course of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study, then these will provide grounds for future lines of enquiry and hypotheses to be tested in future studies.

Specific methodologies for the interviews and survey instrument are detailed in their respective sections (pages 40 and 60)

**Interviews**

**Ethics & Confidentiality**

The interviews were conducted by the researcher and no personal details were recorded or published unless permission is explicitly given by the participants. All participants received an Information Letter and Consent Form (reproduced in Appendix IV) in which they consented to their involvement and confirm which details they agree to submit for inclusion in the study. Any identifying information acquired during the planning or recruitment stage in the form of emails was stored securely on the researcher's computer and deleted as necessary.

**Methodology**

Following literature reviews aimed at exploring each of the main aspects of the research question, semi-structured interviews were conducted with certain peripheral, but key, figures in addition to two photography graduates. The interviews were intended to gather qualitative data that would not only provide insight and contribute to the formation of a conceptual framework, but also provide information and themes that could be utilised in the design and content of a subsequent survey instrument.

A number of interview questions were prepared for each set of interviews, with different questions being employed for the subject librarians, photography graduates and the photography lecturer. The interviews were intended to gather different perspectives on the research issues.

The questions for each of the interviews are reproduced in Appendix III.

The questions posed to the Subject Librarians were intended to gather information from collection and service provision perspectives whilst eliciting perspectives on the photobook as a specific resource. The questions posed to the photography lecturer were intended to gather perspectives on

the photobook and online photographic resources from an academic point of view in addition to examining the photobooks place within course curriculum and the eliciting the lecturer's personal perspective on the photobook as a resource. The interviews with the photography graduates were intended to elicit response around their feelings, experiences and preferences with regards to photobooks and online resources, in addition to details concerning their library usage and sources of inspiration.

The interviews were semi-structured allowing for deviation from the questions and the potential for unexpected discoveries and insight.

**Limitations**

It is important to note the potential for bias made possible through interviews, particularly those that do not adhere strictly to a predefined structure (Ford, 2015, Pickard, 2007). The two photography graduates chosen for interview are known personally to the researcher which in one sense could contribute to an open, fruitful exchange, but simultaneously could feasibly lead to responses that might be coloured by perceived shared perceptions on the issues in question. The other interviewees are known to the researcher on a largely professional basis, however this does not discount the possibility for bias characteristic of most interviews.

**Interviews Analysis and Discussion – Subject Librarians**

Librarians were deemed to be relevant interview subjects contributing to the formation of a holistic perspective on issues pertaining to the research question. Through engaging librarians in discussion around photography students and information resources pertaining to the discipline, it was hoped that insight would be gained into the nature, relevance, and use of both print and digital resources as well as the information behaviours of photography students as a user group.

Two subject librarians were interviewed, both of whom currently work at Goldsmiths, University of London, a well known institution based in New Cross, South London. Antonia Lewis is the Subject Librarian for Art, Design and Visual Cultures. Within her role, Antonia doe not liaise directly with the photography department at Goldsmiths, but she does often deal with the photobook collection owing to the crossover with other art subjects. Eve Jamieson is the Subject Librarian for Computing, Music and Psychology, but previously worked as an Academic Support Librarian for the School of Film, Media and Design at the University of West London where she played a key role in the creation of the existing photography collection.

The approach to analysing these interviews is, by intention, not overly rigorous. Instead, this analysis aims to highlight themes and points of correlation between the two interviews which could be relevant to the research question. Following an examination of the main points arising from the two interviews, the findings are discussed through comparison with a number the perspectives discussed in the literature reviews.

**E-resources – journals, databases and e-books**

When asked about electronic resources pertaining to photography, Antonia mentioned that Goldsmiths subscribed to a number of photography e-journals as well as art databases although she

did not think these databases were aimed exclusively at photography. Likewise, Eve, confirmed that during her time at UWL they subscribed to a number of databases which provided access to arts resource, but stated that these more generic resources as opposed to specific photography resources. Both librarians confirmed the existence of electronic books pertaining to photography at their respective libraries, but both stated that these were more theory orientated as opposed to being digital incarnations of photobooks.

**Acquisition and collection management challenges related to Photobooks**

When discussing the challenges relating to photobooks from a collection management perspective, various factors were indicated. The high cost associated with photobook acquisitions was an issue referred to by both librarians particularly in the event that a book gets lost and needs to be replaced. The high cost of replacement copies is perhaps, in part, a result of what Antonia speculated were 'small print runs' by photobook publishers. The challenges associated with building and maintaining a broad, diverse collection were also noted by both librarians. Eve specifically drew a comparison between photobook collections and collections for other disciplines which are typically built based on reading lists supplied by academic staff. She described the photobook collection as 'a broader collection' comprised of single copies of lots of different publications as opposed to just reading list books. Furthermore, she alluded to a difference in approach when building such a collection, stating that 'it's more of a long-term building of a collection over a number of years rather than just ordering everything on a reading list'. Antonia observed that photobooks were often oversize books and stated that this presented challenges, not only in terms of both keeping a 'representative collection' and having enough room to update, but also in terms of the implications book size can potentially have on loan records, a factor involved in decision making around collection weeding. Similarly, Eve referenced book withdrawal decisions which are based on the number of times a book is borrowed, stating that when compared to a text book, for example, the loan figures for a photobook may be 'substantially lower'.

**Loan records for photobooks**

Interestingly, both librarians indicated that the loan records for photobooks may not be the best indication of their actual usage by students. Antonia mentioned that it is quite difficult to get an overview of how the photobook collections were being used and, similarly, Eve indicated that a photobook collection is perhaps used in a different way to other book collections. Both librarians referenced the often large and heavy nature physicality of photobooks. Antonia stated that photobooks 'are usually oversize books' and observed that if the book is 'particularly big, people don't take them home, but they might be using them in the library'.

**Requests for Photobooks by Academic Staff and Students**

Antonia stated that she did not receive many requests for 'classic photobooks', but rather received requests for books for artists working with photography. Antonia also mentioned requests from faculty with relation to their research interests. Eve indicated that there had been a lot of encouragement from photography lecturers and herself in terms of making their students use the 'Love Books' book suggestion scheme. Academic staff also reportedly made suggestions during the rejuvenation of the photography collection for various 'seminal' photobooks. Eve could not state conclusively how many requests she had received from photography students specifically, but she noted a quite a lot of suggestions from the School of Art, Design, Media which the photography department was a part of for a time.

**Physicality of the Photobook**

When discussing e-publishing within the arts and other disciplines, Eve stated, 'for art and photography it seems like e-books are not an option for the more visual artist books, exhibition books, because it's more of an important object rather than a digital representation.' The interview moved

to discuss the relevance of the book as a physical object and Eve referenced the quality of the paper and reproduction in photobooks, mentioning that these aspects cannot really be replicated digitally.

When asked as to whether she felt it was likely that photobooks would continue to be relevant despite the increasing availability of digital resources, Antonia replied;

> Some of the books are very nice desirable objects, so I think there'll always be that relationship between art publishing and the beautiful book that people want to hold, specialist items that will carry on being in print or exhibitions catalogues the won't be published online

**Browsing as an Information Behaviour**

Further correlation between the two interviews was apparent in the librarians' descriptions of photography students' information behaviour. Both referenced a tendency amongst the students for browsing collections rather than searching. Eve mentioned a propensity of the students for browsing books for images for their creative work and taking pictures of these images. She referenced challenges in encouraging students to keep records of where they had sourced images for referencing purposes. Antonia also made reference to students' browsing behaviours, but observed a shift in behaviours, stating, 'I think it is gradually changing with people, if a tutor says look up this artist instead of coming to the library to browse, they'll just google it'.

Antonia also noted students' browsing behaviours, but indicated a shift in behaviours stating that when following up on lecturer recommendations, students are likely to search on Google in the first instance rather than coming to the library to browse. It was subsequently noted, however, that due to the general lack of art books in electronic formats, students would likely need to make subsequent visits to the library that would result in them browsing the collection.

**Discussion**

The subject librarians' perspectives around the physical properties of the photobook and their inherent significance in its nature as an information resource align with a number of the perspectives in the literature. The dichotomy between physical and digital representations is a recurring theme alluded to by many (Neumuller, 2017; Colberg, 2016; DiBello & Zamir, 2012; Parr & Badger, 2004). Certainly, Eve's comments around the importance of the visual book as an object, particularly when compared with digital representations, could be compared with these perspectives. Antonia's observations regarding the 'relationship between art publishing and the beautiful book' are reminiscent of those put forward by Soussloff & Tronto (2008). Both librarians also made reference to the expense associated with photobooks which was another aspect raised in the literature consulted (Reverte, 2014; Fox & Caruana, 2012; Miles, 2010; Shannon, 2010). Their comments alluded to this factor with relation to collection concerns.

The observations of both librarians which highlight browsing as a key information behaviour are in keeping with much of the literature relating to artists and art students, this could perhaps indicate that browsing is also a key behaviour typical of photography students. Browsing is often hailed to be the primary means by which artists and art students search for information to satisfy their needs. That being said, Eve's comments around photography students' interactions with library collections indicate that students may come to the library searching for work by a particular artist – this perhaps indicate a more active approach to information seeking rather than the more passive approach to browsing posited in other information behaviour studies. This is perhaps more consistent with the findings of Mason & Robinson (2011) who found that browsing was not the primary means of information seeking in their study of emerging artists.

A potentially salient point is the correlation between the perspectives in the literature and observations made by the subject librarians with regards to the way that photography students engage with library photobook collections. Both librarians indicated that loan records were not necessarily representative of the degree to which photobooks were consulted by students and this is very much in keeping with the perspectives of Pacey (1982) King (2010) who posited that art students were, in fact, consulting books within the library rather than borrowing them.

Antonia's comments concerning what she perceived to be an increasing tendency among students to initially utilize Google when researching artists' work are in a similar vein to some of the viewpoints present in the studies around the information behaviour of artists and art students. Antonia suggested that many students now follow up on suggestions of artists from academic staff by searching online, but noted that due to the lack of digital publishing in the arts, students often needed to follow up these initial searches by visiting the library to consult print materials. This anecdotal account of students' search processes is consistent with studies that indicate that whilst students involved in creative disciplines engage with online platforms, interactions with digital resources are often followed by subsequent interactions with print materials (Brett, 2013).

**Interview Analysis & Discussion – Photography Lecturer**

Oliver Udy is a lecturer in photography and the programme leader for BA(Hons) Photography at the University of Plymouth.

Due to scheduling constraints, it was deemed impractical to arrange a face to face or Skype interview, so following a brief communication, written responses to questions communicated over email were deemed sufficient for the purposes of this study. The interview questions, which are reproduced in Appendix III, address three main areas; digital resources, the photobook and the library at his institution.

**Digital Resources**

Oliver referenced a number of digital resources that he recommends to students including websites such as Fotoroom.org, Lens Culture, blogs from writers and photographers such as Jorg Colberg and Lewis Bush, and the sites of major photo-agencies such as Getty and Reuters. He also referenced digital resources from major institutions such as MOMA and TATE as key online photographic resources.

He stated that a range of module specific resources were used in the delivery of the course and that 'each module has a Digital Learning Environment' through which resources such as videos and texts are placed and reading lists are posted.

When asked about about his awareness of any photographers with active online presences or who use social media extensively, he wrote,

I can't think of any key contemporary practitioners who are not using this. It is a

core part of our teaching now, as it is such a crucial aspect of professional practice.

I think the only people who are not using this are those with a very established

practice, who are perhaps purposefully cut off from this aspect of the medium.

With regards to his feelings around the computer screen as a means for viewing photographs, he indicated that the screen was 'obviously inferior to print', but noted the need for acceptance of the viewing medium, emphasizing the ease with which ideas are disseminated on a screen.

**The Photobook**

Oliver defined the photobook as 'a publication that predominantly communicates with the use of photographs'. When asked about whether he viewed the photobook as a resource of particular significance for students of photography, he responded stating,

I think that the photobook is the best way for students to engage with a larger body

of work from a photographer. It allows them to see the images printed in a way

that the photographer is happy with, along with (often) some contextual material.

Comparing the photobook to seeing photography online, he noted the difficulties associated with viewing 'a set of images, at a proper resolution, and in an order/context that makes sense' and stated that the online experience should often be 'followed up with the book'. When asked for his views on the reasons for the apparent increase in the popularity of the photobook, he cited three specific factors, 'ease of production', an increase in photographers equating to more customers for books, and 'a reaction to digital imagery', describing the photobook as 'something tangible to look at'.

Oliver's answers indicated an involved and healthy relationship with the subject librarian at his institution who he described as 'fantastic'. He stated that he was is regular contact with her for the purposes of ordering books and arranging workshops for students. When asked what influence he had over the development of the library collection, he stated, 'I can regularly suggest books and collections that should be added'.

When asked to speculate about where his students look for inspiration, Oliver answered, 'a combination of online, magazines and books', but indicated that he would prefer that they consulted more books and magazines.

**Discussion**

Oliver's answers implied a wide knowledge and experience of online photography resources. He referenced a number of different websites and blogs that he recommends to students on his programme, thus potentially confirming the research utility of such resources as posited by Fox & Caruana (2012). The mention of a Digital Learning Environment through which resources and reading lists are made available to students echoed the assertions by Jackson around the delivery of modern photography courses and the use of such platforms for faculty communication perhaps perpetuates engagement with photographic resources in digital forms.

Oliver acknowledged the prevalent use of the Internet and social media by contemporary photographers and stated that it had become a core component of their teaching owing to it's crucial role in professional practice. His answer not only confirmed the central role the Internet and social media have assumed within contemporary photographic practice as detailed in much of the literature (Moschovi et al, 2013; Mckay & Plouviez, 2013 Fox & Caruana, 2012), but also gave credence to the notion that students were engaging with photography via such platforms.

Multiple perspectives in the literature reference the significance of the arrangement of multiple photographs made possible through the book form. Oliver's perspectives on the photobook as a resource indicated that he saw the book form as providing the best means by which students can engage with a large body of work. His comparison with the experience of viewing photographs on a screen highlighted the difficulties in viewing images in an 'order/context that makes sense'. These responses seem to allude to the specificity of the book form and the role this plays in the experience of a set of photographs. His comment around the photobook representing a format in which photographs are printed in 'a way the photographer is happy with' is in keeping with descriptions of the photobook as an authored work (Cartagena, 2017, Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Eskildsen, 2004, Parr & Badger, 2004) – something which represents a photographer's vision (Cartagena, 2017, Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Eskildsen, 2004, Parr & Badger, 2004). Furthermore, whilst no further detail is given, Oliver's reference to 'contextual information' in his answer confirming the photobook's relevance as a resource could be linked to the totality of the book described by Parr & Badger (2004).

Oliver's assertions concerning the reasons behind the photobooks current popularity corroborate a number of the perspectives prevalent in the literature. The increase in accessible self-publishing services mentioned Neumuller (2017) could be linked to what Oliver describes as 'ease of production'. Equally, Oliver's perspective concerning the photobook's popularity being a reaction to 'digital imagery' mirrors the ideas put across by (Campany, 2014).

**Interviews Analysis & Discussion - Photography Graduates**

Two graduates from higher education photography courses were interviewed, both of whom were known personally by the researcher. Kate Nolan graduated with a BA (Hons) in Documentary Photography from the University of Wales, Newport in 2010 and is currently considering embarking on a PhD in Photography. Her work has been exhibited internationally and a major solo exhibition of her work was recently held at the Gallery of Photography in Dublin, Ireland. She has published one photobook to date, entitled *Neither.* The second interviewee, who wished to remain anonymous, is a graduate with a BA (Hons) in Photographic Art from the University of Wales, Newport and an MA in Photography from London College of Communication, University of Arts, London.

**Inspiration**

When asked about where she looks for inspiration, Kate's response indicated a wide range of resources spanning everything from exhibitions, literature and TV to her neighbour's cat. She emphasized the frequency with which she attended exhibitions, but also mentioned photobooks as a source of inspiration. Her response indicated that the sources she consulted were generally dependent on what she was working on at that point in time.

The MA photography graduate also indicated a range of inspiration sources including exhibitions and books, but placed the most emphasis on the significance of following the progress of her friends over social media, stating 'just going online and seeing that everyone else is making work just inspires me to make work'. They expressed some reservations saying 'social media can just take over your life' and stated that they try not to let it, but their answers indicated the central role that the Internet, and social media sites such as Facebook in particular, play in providing inspiration.

**Use of the Internet and Digital Resources / Printed or Digital**

The responses to this particular line of enquiry represented quite a distinction between the two photography graduates.

A real distinction was apparent between the two graduates with relation to how they interacted with photography whether it be their own photography or the photographic work of others. Kate was very emphatic of her preference for physical, printed photographic matter. She was positive about digital technology providing what she saw as an opportunity for wider audiences to view photobooks they would otherwise have little chance of encountering, but insisted upon her preference for the tactile over the digital.

When asked about online photography resources she liked to use, Kate responded stating that she used the Internet predominantly to read about photography in the form of exhibition and book reviews rather than to view images. She stated that, for her, photographs did not 'translate well' online and insisted that she liked the physical manifestation of the printed photograph.

In response to a question about whether she maintained an active online presence, Kate responded stating, 'I guess I do what I have to do. Like Instagram. And Facebook, but that's it. I'm not so active. I'm as active as I feel I have to be to promote my work'.

When asked if she knew of any photographers who were utilising online platforms for disseminating their work, Kate responded mentioning a number of 'friends' who used Facebook and Instagram.

The MA photography graduate's answers implied quite a different attitude and interaction with digital photographic resources. They stated that they rarely, in fact, print their own photographic work, and instead view their images primarily on a computer. They stated that they liked prints, but due to space

constraints and the volume of work they produced, viewing images in digital rather than print forms made more sense.

When asked about the online photography resources they liked to use, they mentioned a number of different websites that they used for reading text and looking at images. In addition, they mentioned consulting archives from the Tate and the Museum of Modern Art. Despite professing to having a lack of time for information seeking in general, the MA photography graduate seemed to be fairly engaged in their use of social media mentioning their use of various platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

When asked if they knew of any photographers who maintained an active online presence or who utilised social media, their initial response was 'Everyone'. In a similar fashion to Kate, they subsequently named a number of photographers who were revealed to be personally known to them who utilised online platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, in disseminating their work.

**Library Use**

The responses from both graduates revealed them to have been keen users of libraries within their respective institutions and beyond.

The MA photography graduate's answers indicated a tendency to visit a number of different libraries in order to utilise a variety of collections and make use of library spaces for quiet study especially when writing essays as they would generally get distracted at home. Their decisions to visit different libraries were generally driven by convenience in terms of location or by the type of resource they wished to consult generally with relation to a particular project they were working on at that point in time.

Kate's answers suggested that the primary motivation behind her visits to libraries was to look at books. She made reference to using a number of libraries and specifically recounted visits to the library of the institution at which she first studied photography which was located close to her home. Despite only being able to use the library on a reference basis, she stated 'I was in there all the time to go through books. All the time. It's great. Just to look at things. Just to have my eyes, kind of saturated with, kind of, you know, images.' Similarly, her answers indicated frequent use of the library at the university where she completed her undergraduate degree. Kate also provided some anecdotal accounts which suggested similar library usage amongst a number of her peers explaining that for a short period, they formed a book club of sorts where they would each borrow a number of books from the library and meet to discuss them. Kate also stated that she had received book recommendations from academic staff whilst studying for her undergraduate degree.

**Photobooks**

Both photography graduates were asked for their personal perspectives on the definition of the photobook as a resource. The MA photography graduate stated that the answer would depend on the photobook, they stated that they generally bought retrospectives, but stated that some books were like a mini exhibition or a portfolio. Kate was very clear in stating the distinction between the photobook and the exhibition catalogue, stating 'a photobook is something the artist, the photographer, has created specifically as a final outcome of their project. That's what I think a photobook is.'

There was affirmation from both graduates with regards to the photobook's relevance as a resource for photography students. The MA photography graduate advocated the value of the photobook for photography students embarking on their photographic careers, in terms of its availability, stating 'when you're first starting out you just look at as much photography as possible and a lot of these

exhibitions you're never going to see'. She asserted the value of the photobook as a 'really good source of inspiration or research'.

Kate stated that the photobook was a resource of 'huge importance' for photography students stating that Jim Goldberg's *Raised by Wolves* was 'the book that made me understand what you could with photography'. She went on to describe the utility for people 'just starting photography' highlighting the intimate qualities of the photobook stating 'you have that opportunity to bring it home and, whatever, sit on your bed with a cup of coffee and just take time over it and look back and reflect and you're not in a gallery when you're a bit, maybe nervous or uncomfortable, especially if you're just starting photography or just starting art, so you have that time'.

**Resurgence of Photobooks**

When asked about the possible reasons for the photobooks apparent increase in popularity, both graduates gave answers that acknowledged the lower cost associated with self-publishing as well as the possibilities for dissemination and self-promotion made possible by the format.

The MA Photography graduate stated that now there are cheaper options available for publishing books and suggested that people are 'realising that exhibitions are just really expensive and don't necessarily lead to anything'. They noted the possibilities of photographer being able to send photobooks to magazines for reviews or to photo-festivals.

Kate stated that when compared to exhibiting work or publishing a photobook through the traditional routes with major publishers, self-publishing a photobook was a financially feasible way to 'get your work out there into the world'. However, Kate did also reference reservations held by many with regards to the increase in photobooks in essence saturating the market and making it more challenging to find quality examples.

**Discussion**

In response to the question regarding inspiration, Kate's answer, especially, seemed to align with the dominant findings in studies around the information behaviour of artists and art students. She mentioned a range of different sources indicating that the resources she chose to consult could change depending on the nature of the work she was engaged in. The MA photography graduates answer was interesting as it implied a certain significance on the part of the activities of the graduate's peers. Whilst this graduate mentioned traditional information sources associated with art students and artists such as exhibitions and books, the emphasis in their responses appeared to be centred more on drawing inspiration from what their contemporaries were doing (as manifested in their) through their monitoring their social media activity. Parallels can be drawn between this type of activity and certain perspectives that liken certain social media networks to communities of practice in which ideas and work is exchanged by groups engaged in similar practices or disciplines. In the case of the MA photography graduate, it is the activities of her contemporaries, as evidenced through their social media updates, that provides one their primary sources of inspiration. Both interviewees indicated that they were users of libraries, with the MA graduate reporting the use of different collections depending on their information needs and Kate's answers indicating that whilst at university her use of libraries was primarily concerned with viewing and borrowing photobooks.

Interestingly, the attitudes and usage of online photographic resources represented a point of contrast in the answers from the two graduates. Kate's answers suggested that she saw the utility of the Internet in terms of information dissemination and making work available to wider audiences and used it to perform a function in terms of promoting her own work – an activity she saw as necessary. She was, however, very specific in her preference for a physical, tactile interaction with photography. Conversely, whilst the MA photography graduate repeatedly mentioned a lack of time for reading and searching, when asked about photographic resources online they responded referencing a

comparatively extensive range of online resources and their answers also indicated that social media represented not only a source of inspiration for their own work, but a source of information for reviews and exhibitions. Interestingly, the MA graduate, whose answers perhaps indicated a greater degree of engagement with online resources, also reported that they seldom printed their own photographic work, engaging with it in a digital rather physical form.

Both graduates are users of social media and mentioned following photographers on different sites including Facebook and Instagram. An evident point of correlation was apparent in their answers to a question about whether they knew of any photographers using social media platforms to show work in interesting ways. Both graduates' answers detailed the activities of photographers known to them personally. Whilst this could represent a simple coincidence and conclusions should not be drawn solely from these two interviews, it is interesting that both graduates chose to discuss photographers from their immediate circles perhaps indicating once again the importance placed in online communities of practice as a potential resource for communication, information and inspiration.

Library usage by the two graduates, certainly whilst they were studying, seemed very much to be in keeping with the findings of previous information studies concerning art students and artists indicating that they were active visitors who utilised library resources to satisfy their information needs.

A salient point of interest arising from the interviews is the difference in perspective apparent between individuals practising different approaches to photography. Kate Nolan, a practising photographer, who previously studied and is currently engaged in documentary practice advocated the importance of the photobook as a medium for photographic expression. When asked what she considered the definition of the photobook to be, she equated the photobook to 'the final outcome of a photographer's work', whereas the MA photography graduate interviewed, who studied

photographic art at undergraduate level, generally referred to the photobook in terms of the retrospective form, as in that of a collection of photographer's work over the course of their career. These two forms of publication are exclusive in terms of their intention in that the latter constitutes a record of a photographer's work compiled into book form and the other represents the realisation of a photographic work as represented through the form of a book. This distinction is perhaps indicative of a certain disparity evident in photographic working practices. This is perhaps in keeping with perspectives in the literature (Cartagena, 2017; Miles, 2010) which equate the documentary practice as more applicable to the book format. Interestingly, the MA photography graduate described the photobook as a 'mini exhibition' or 'portfolio' whereas Kate was clear in expressing a distinction between the photobook and the exhibition catalogue; a resource which could be described as documenting the contents of an exhibition and her answers concerning the photobook alluded to the importance of narrative and other devices specific to the book format. Whilst definitive conclusions cannot be reasonably drawn fro the interviews conducted, one can speculate that different approaches to photographic practices necessitate differing attitudes toward the utility and relevance of the photobook within photographic practice, thus influencing the inherent research concerns of those researching within those practices.

Both graduates stated that they saw the photobook as a significant resource for students of photography mentioning the various qualities of the photobook especially for people entering photographic practice. The MA graduate asserted the value of the photobook for both research and inspiration whilst Kate's answer implied that the photobook had personally taught her a lot about what was possible with the medium of photography and alluded to the privacy and time for contemplation afforded by the book form.

**Survey Instrument – Questionnaire**

**Introduction**

The survey instrument would also attempt to elicit qualitative information through the inclusion of open-ended questions, but would also incorporate Lickert style questions to provide data to allow for statistical, quantitative comparison and analysis across a sample population.

It was hoped that the formation of a theoretical and conceptual framework achieved through the literature reviews and the interviews would go some way towards helping to ensure that the researcher had 'understood all the relevant factors, and expressed them in a way which the participants can understand' (Bawden & Robinson, 2012, P.309) thus contributing to the design of a survey that is worded and arranged in a way that is is relevant to the target audience.

**Survey Design & Methodology**

The design and content of the survey drew upon a number of different influences. The decision to utilise Lickert scale style questions for the survey instrument was adopted from Hemmig's (2009) approach in his empirical study on the information behaviour of practising visual artists. This provided a weighted and more detailed means by which to compare the significance of different information resources and behaviours. The decision was made to include optional free text response fields for each of the Lickert scale questions in an effort to avoid restricting the respondents to the listed options should they consider any other factors to be especially relevant or significant.

The questions concerning inspiration adopted a number of the same categories as were used in Hemmig's (2009) aforementioned study, but based upon Hemmig's (2009) suggestions for future research, the list was updated to include various contemporary resources such as social media platorms. The social media sites, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were included specifically because of their prevalence within the literature concerning photography and the digital information ecology.

The interviews also featured frequent mention of these platforms in the form of comments which implied a certain utility in their community aspects and specifically for the MA photography graduate as a primary source of inspiration. The blog also featured as an option due its apparent utility as expressed by Fox & Caruana and because a number of blogs garnered mention in the interview with the HE photography lecturer, Oliver Udy.

The decision to include a question enquiring as to what programme of study the respondents were studying or had studied was based, at least partly, upon the potential for a correlation between the area of photographic study and the perceived significance of the photobook – a factor which was considered following analysis of the interviews with the two photography graduates. Considering the fact valid conclusions could not sensibly be drawn from just two subjects, it was deemed a pertinent line of enquiry for exploration through the survey instrument.

Photography students had only featured as a minority within the surveyed audiences of previous studies into the information behaviour and needs of art students and art students, so the inclusion of a question concerning their use of the library was deemed to be a relevant point of investigation. The inclusion of such a question is also hoped to provide insight into the rather ambiguous area of photobook usage within libraries – a salient point arising from the interviews with the subject librarians in which it was noted that loan records perhaps did not represent a relevant means by which to measure collection usage, or indeed library usage by this particular user group. A question enquiring about the purposes was included in order to ascertain whether there existed any other key resources which proved useful to photography students. This was deemed a pertinent line of enquiry due to the lack of studies concerning the library usage of photography students as a specific demographic.

The inclusion of a question around how students view the work of other photographers was intended to provide a holistic overview of how students source the visual information they need/how students

view contemporary photography in an information ecology that provides increasingly diverse means through which to do this. The options were amassed based on themes emerging from the literature as well as mention of various resources from the interviews.

The seventh question asked students whether any aspect of their course curriculum related to photobooks. Following the interview with photographer lecturer, Oliver Udy it was decided that a potential link between curriculum and photobook usage could be a relevant line of enquiry. A particular theme apparent in the literature was around the photobooks place in contemporary photographic discourse. This question also sought to explore the significance of the photobook within photographic discourse as expressed through photographic education.

Following a number of questions designed to collect purely quantitative data, the latter section of the survey incorporated closed questions, but asked that respondents provided free-text responses with the intention of gaining deeper insight into the reasoning behind their preferences.

The first of these questions; 'Do you consider the photobook to be an important resource for students of photography? If so, why?' was included in the hope that respondents would offer their personal perspectives and interpretations around the photobook as a resource. The following question was intended to do the same, but conversely enquired about online resources.

A number of the perspectives examined in the literature review section made mention of personal photobook collections. Similarly, the interviews with the two photography graduates found that they both had their own collections of photobooks. A decision was made to enquire further as to the prevalence of personal collections due to the possibility that such collections may represent a means of accessing photobooks outside of the library, especially amongst students of photography who could

feasibly share books with their peers. The findings elicited through this question could also potentially highlight the necessity for photobooks featuring in library collections.

The final question sought to elicit responses to a direct comparison between the photobook and online resources, asking through which format did the respondents prefer when searching for and viewing photographs. The inclusion of the two activities, namely searching and viewing, was intended to enquire about two aspects which were raised in the literature as possible advantages arising from each approach: the convenience associated with searching for and viewing photographs online and the physicality of the book lending itself to browsing activities and offering a particular viewing experience.

**Pilot Study**

The pilot of the survey instrument was conducted with two individuals known to the researcher who provided feedback on the clarity of the introductory statement, questions and survey design. These were then taken into consideration and subsequent amendments were made prior to wider dissemination of the instrument. It was noted that in Hemmig's (2009) empirical study of practicing artists, apparent confusion had occurred with respondents not understanding the distinction between two questions. Pickard (2007) observes, a survey should be a be easily understood by those being surveyed, so the distribution of a pilot study was deemed to be of great importance in ensuring that this was the case.

**Distribution**

The survey was created using SurveyMonkey, an online survey platform. Links to the survey were then disseminated using a range of methods aimed at maximising the probability of response whilst maintaining a targeted focus designed to address the relevant demographic only. The survey links were posted on two private Facebook group pages for two higher education photography

programmes within the UK open by invitation only to current students and alumni of the respective courses. Links to the surveys were also disseminated via email by Oliver Udy, the interviewee photography lecturer, to students on his programme and via the private networks of the researcher and MA photography graduate interviewee.

The intention was to elicit responses from students studying on a range of different photography programmes at a number of different institutions comprising what could be described as a representative survey sample. The hope was that the findings would provide input from individuals engaged in different curricula and photographic disciplines regardless of what could feasibly be a modest number of participants.

The survey included an introductory statement, reproduced in Appendix X, intended to inform participants about the nature of the study. The only identifying information requested was the respondents' current or most recent programme of study and their year of graduation. The survey responses were otherwise completely anonymised. As a small incentive, the chance to enter a draw to win a £25 Amazon voucher was offered. This was entirely optional. If respondents wished to enter the draw, they could either submit their email address via a separate SurveyMonkey page, the link to which was included at the end of the survey or they could email the word 'Survey' to the researcher's email address. The two options were provided because it became apparent during the pilot study that certain browsers prevented the relevant hyperlink from being copied from the final survey section.

**Limitations**

It is important to note that the use of an online survey does have inherent disadvantages including a certain ambiguity with regards to the nature of those responding (Bawden & Robinson, 2012, p.309). Outside of a relation to the place of advertisement or mode of delivery for the survey, and, of course, the identifying information they provide in response to certain survey questions, not much can be

known about those who are responding. These disadvantages represent the cost of a survey method which offers a possibility for maximum dissemination. In addition, the fact that the survey relied upon the Internet as a means of distribution does limit the respondents to those with access to the Internet, however owing to the nature of the research question in comparing the use of print and digital resources and in terms of ensuring convenience and maximum reach, the method was deemed appropriate.

**Analysis**

**Programme of Study & Year of Graduation**

A total of 33 survey responses were collected with all respondents completing the questionnaire in full. The responses to the question asking the respondents' current or most recent programme of study are shown in Table 1 below. The vast majority of respondents indicated that they were studying or had studied at undergraduate level. A total of 29 respondents (88%) indicated that they were currently studying or had studied for a BA(Hons) degree. The majority of these respondents, a total of 23 (70%), were currently enrolled in a programme with projected graduation dates ranging from 2018 to 2020. The six (18%) other respondents indicating BA(Hons) for the level of study had graduated between 2010 and 2014. Two (6%) respondents had studied photography at postgraduate level and had graduated in 2014. One respondent had studied for a PhD in photography, but answered '2015 – non completed' to the question about the year of graduation. One respondent simply entered an answer of 'Photography', so no assumptions can be made about their level of study.

The programme names given by respondents consisted of Photography, Documentary Photography, Photojournalism and Documentary Photography, and Photographic Art. One respondent stated only BA(Hons) and did not include the programme name. The majority of respondents, a total of 21 (64%), are currently studying programmes operating under the title 'Photography' at either undergraduate of postgraduate level. Eight (24%) respondents are studying or have studied programmes with the

title Documentary Photography. One respondent is/was studying Photojournalism and Documentary Photography and one respondent studied Photographic Art.

**Table 1**



BA (Hons) Documentary Photography, 7

BA (Hons) Photojournalism and Documentary Photography, 1

PhD Documentary Photography, 1

MA Photography, 2

BA (Hons), 2

Photography, 1

BA (Hons) Photographic Art , 1

BA (Hons) Photography, 18
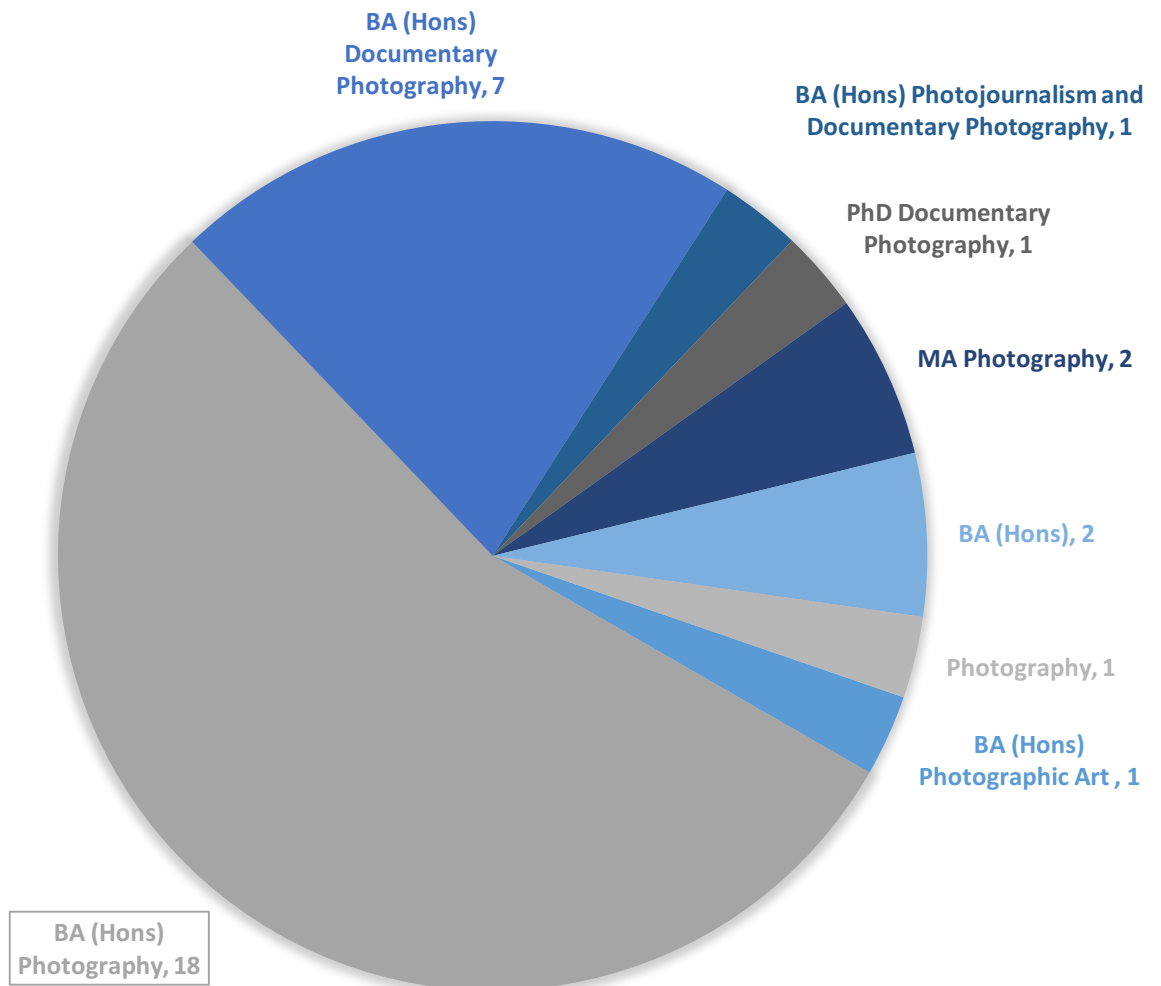
**Sources of Inspiration**

Data from the responses given to the third section of the survey in which respondents were asked to rank sources of inspiration for their work can be seen in Table 2 below. This question yielded a wide range of responses with respondents indicating various resources as highly significant in terms of their value as sources of inspiration. The only resources that were not considered to be highly significant by any of the respondents were 'Twitter', 'Newspapers' and 'Flickr'. Personal life experience was the only category that was considered to be a source of inspiration by all respondents with no one indicating that it was not a factor. With the exception of 'Twitter', 'Newspapers' and 'Flickr', every other option received scores at either extreme of the scale.

Through a consideration of the weighted averages, it is apparent that the the option considered the least significant in terms of its inspiration value was 'Twitter' for which 24 (73%) of the 33 respondents indicated was not a factor and had a weighted average of 1.55. The option considered to be very significant by the most respondents was 'Photobooks' for which 15 (45%) respondents indicated the highest score and for which the weighted average was 4.06. Other notably popular sources of inspiration are 'Personal Life Experience', 'Photographers' Websites' and 'Exhibitions (Photography)', the weighted averages for which are 3.97, 3.91 and 3.55 respectively. Other than Twitter, the 3 least popular sources of inspiration are 'Flickr', 'Facebook' and 'Magazines (Online)', the weighted averages for which are 1.61, 1.62 and 2.61 respectively.

Two respondents (6%) offered free text response to this section indicating the significance of natural and man-made aspects and media and publications, these responses feature in Appendix VII.

## Table 2

| Answer Choices | 1: Not at a factor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5: Very significant | Total | Weighted Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Personal life experience | 0 | 2 | 6 | 16 | 9 | 33 | 3.97 |
| Nature | 3 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 33 | 3.48 |
| Literature (Novels, Plays, Poetry) | 3 | 12 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 33 | 2.79 |
| Man-made objects/structures | 2 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 33 | 3.3 |
| Websites | 4 | 3 | 12 | 11 | 3 | 33 | 3.18 |
| Exhibitions (Photography) | 1 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 33 | 3.55 |
| Television (News) | 4 | 6 | 13 | 8 | 2 | 33 | 2.94 |
| Photobooks | 3 | 0 | 4 | 11 | 15 | 33 | 4.06 |
| Zines | 7 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 33 | 2.73 |
| Blogs | 5 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 33 | 2.42 |
| Exhibitions (other art media) | 2 | 5 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 33 | 3.3 |
| Photographers' websites | 3 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 13 | 33 | 3.91 |
| Television (Entertainment) | 9 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 33 | 2.61 |
| Twitter | 24 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 33 | 1.55 |
| Magazines (Print) | 6 | 7 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 33 | 2.76 |
| Music | 7 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 33 | 2.48 |
| Books (Other art media) | 3 | 6 | 15 | 4 | 5 | 33 | 3.06 |
| Flickr | 21 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 33 | 1.61 |
| Television (Documentary) | 6 | 3 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 33 | 2.97 |
| Instagram | 7 | 3 | 6 | 14 | 3 | 33 | 3.09 |
| Newspapers | 6 | 15 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 33 | 2.24 |
| Facebook | 16 | 7 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 1.82 |
| Magazines (Online) | 10 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 33 | 2.61 |
| Film | 4 | 3 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 33 | 3.18 |
| Optional Free Text Response | | | | | | 2 | |

**Means by which to view Photographer's Work**

Question 4 also saw a wide range of responses, the data for which can be seen in Table 3. The only sources which were not rated as highly significant in terms of means through which to view the work of photographers were 'Blogs' and 'Facebook'. The only resource which was used by every respondent to view photographers' work was 'Photographers' Websites' for which no one entered a rating of 'Not a factor'. With the exception of 'Photographers' Websites', every other option received ratings at either extreme of the scale.

The options with the joint lowest ratings are 'Twitter' and 'Flickr' for which 21 (64%) respondents posted a rank of 'Not a Factor' and for which both have a weighted average of 1.64. The option with the highest rating is 'Photobooks' for which a total of 19 (58%) respondents selected a rating of 'Highly Significant' and for which the weighted average was 4.39. Other popular resources are 'Photographers' Websites', which was very marginally lower than 'Photobooks' with a weighted average of 4.36, 'Exhibitions and Gallery Websites' which have weighted averages of 4.00 and 3.52. Other than 'Twitter', the three least popular resources for viewing the work of photographers are 'Facebook', 'Zines' and 'Websites (Other)', the weighted averages for which are 1.67, 2.18 and 2.97. One respondent gave a free text response to this section indicating that online resources were 'easily accessible', but stating that absorbing information was easier through magazines although it's not clear if they were referring to print or online magazines. The mention of 'thumbs and eyes' would imply that they were referring to physical, rather than digital, publications.

**Table 3**

| Answer Choices | 1 = Not a factor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Highly Significant | Total | Weighted Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Photographers' websites | 0 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 18 | 33 | 4.36 |
| Magazines (Print) | 2 | 3 | 14 | 8 | 6 | 33 | 3.39 |
| Twitter | 21 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 33 | 1.64 |
| Zines | 13 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 33 | 2.18 |
| Exhibitions | 1 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 15 | 33 | 4 |
| Flickr | 21 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 33 | 1.64 |
| Gallery Websites | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 33 | 3.52 |
| Instagram | 5 | 3 | 4 | 14 | 7 | 33 | 3.45 |
| Photobooks | 1 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 19 | 33 | 4.39 |
| Blogs | 5 | 9 | 12 | 7 | 0 | 33 | 2.64 |
| Facebook | 18 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 33 | 1.67 |
| Exhibition Catalogues | 6 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 7 | 33 | 3.09 |
| Websites (Other) | 4 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 4 | 33 | 2.97 |
| Magazines (Online) | 5 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 33 | 3.03 |
| Optional Free Text Response | | | | | | 1 | |

Reponses to the question enquiring as to how frequently the students visited the libraries at their institutions revealed that on the whole, the surveyed photography students do use the libraries at their universities. As shown in Table 4, 13 (39%) of the 33 respondents indicated that they visited their university library 'Often', 12 (36%) indicated that they visited sometimes, 7 (21%) indicated that they visited frequently and 1 indicated that they never visited the library at their university.

**Table 4**

| | Never | Very Occasionally | Sometimes | Often | Frequently | Total | Weighted Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Star Rating | 1 | 0 | 12 | 13 | 7 | 33 | 3.76 |

The respondents indicated that they visit libraries for a variety of purposes (see Table 5) with all but two options being rated as highly significant. The polarity of responses is immediately apparent with a wide range of resources receiving the full range of ratings. The photobook received the most ratings of 'Highly Significant' with a total of 26 (79%) respondents rating it as such. The photobook has by far the highest weighted average achieving 4.67. The next most popular options are 'Journals (Periodicals)', 'Books (Non Fiction)' and 'Study Space'. The least popular options are 'CDs', 'DVDs' and 'Socialising'.

Table 5

| | 1 = Not significant | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Highly Significant | Total | Weighted Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Internet Access | 16 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 33 | 2.03 |
| Photobooks | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 26 | 33 | 4.67 |
| Magazines | 8 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 33 | 3.06 |
| Journals (Periodicals) | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 13 | 33 | 3.45 |
| Study Space | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 33 | 3.12 |
| Newspapers | 17 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 33 | 1.79 |
| DVDs | 22 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 33 | 1.67 |
| Books (Fiction) | 20 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 33 | 2 |
| Books (Non-fiction) | 8 | 0 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 33 | 3.27 |
| CDs | 26 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 33 | 1.39 |
| Research Support | 10 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 33 | 2.94 |
| Socialising | 20 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 33 | 1.73 |
| Optional Free Text Response | | | | | | 1 | |

**The Photobook and Photography Education**

Only three respondents answered stating that their programme of study involved no aspects relating the photobook, this is perhaps not surprising considering the narrow focus in terms of survey dissemination. The results do, however, indicate that the institutions surveyed in the course of this study do examine photobooks through the course of their respective curriculums. A closer analysis of the three individuals that indicated photobooks did not feature in their programme curriculums revealed a variety of ratings with regards to the photobook in terms of its inspirational value, means for viewing the work of photographers work and its consultation through library services.

**Responses to Free Text Questions**

The latter part of the questionnaire consisted of questions designed to elicit free text responses from the respondents around their perspectives on both photobooks and online resources. As stated in the

methodology section, a preliminary coding of the responses was undertaken in order to highlight themes in the responses. The first of the free text questions asked the respondents to comment on whether they considered the photobook to be a resource of particular significance for students of photography – the responses to this question can be seen in Figure X.

**The Photobook as an Important Resource for Students of Photography**

22 (67%) of the respondents explicitly answered 'Yes' to this question, whilst the majority of other answers, with the exception of one, were affirmative in nature.

Some of the most prominent themes apparent across the responses concerned the physicality of the photobook and its value as a source of inspiration. Five (15%) respondents gave answers that incorporated terms such as 'physical', 'physicality' and 'in the flesh'. The terms 'print or 'printed' were submitted by three (9%) respondents. The terms 'inspiration' and 'inspirational' were submitted by five (15%) respondents whereas the term 'insight' was mentioned by two (6%) respondents and the word 'influence' was used by one respondent.

The arrangement of photographs through the book format was another recurring theme. Three (9%) respondents mentioned the term 'layout' in their answers to this question. Two respondents (6%) referenced 'sequencing' and one respondent also stated 'it's great to see different series of work and how other photographers organise and collate their work'.

A number of responses (27%) alluded to the idea that the photobook represented the way in which the photographer had chosen to present their work. Responses included statements indicating that the photobook 'shows the photographers work, in the order and style that it was meant to be seen' and 'allows artists the opportunity to express themselves in, what I feel, is a more personal manner'.

Another respondent answered stating that the photobook was a relevant resource because it provided 'insight into the photographer's unique vision'.

In their answers to this question, six (18%) respondents made comparisons between the photobook and other means by which to view photographs. Three respondents (9%) compared the photobook to viewing images on a screen with one respondent stating 'seeing a photograph and the work in print is vastly different to seeing it on a 'screen'. It gives the work physicality and you can hold and touch it'. Two respondents (6%) compared the photobook to viewing photographs 'online'. One respondent answered stating the photobook provided 'access to their decisions intros etc, that you may not get online'. The other respondent stated 'the photobook adds elements to a body of work that just cannot be replicated in the same way online'.

Three (9%) respondents gave answers to this question that alluded to the utility of photobooks in providing inspiration and information for making their own photobooks.

**The Internet as an Important Resource for Students of Photography**

18 (55%) respondents explicitly answered 'Yes' to this question and all of the other respondents offered affirmative responses. Eleven (33%) respondents used the term 'research' or 'researching' in their answers. Accessibility was a theme apparent across a number of responses. Eight (24%) respondents used the terms 'access' or 'accessible' in their answers.  Responses included phrases such as 'I think the internet is a really easy accessible way of viewing endless photographers/photography works' and 'I feel the internet is a hugely important resource, in the sense that you can access work that may not be in the library'.

Other themes related to the apparent convenience associated with the Internet as a resource. Seven (21%) respondents used the terms 'easy', 'easily' and 'easier', whilst four (12%) responses included

references to the speed associated with using the Internet, with terms including 'fast' and 'quickly' being used. Responses included phrases such as 'it is a fast and current means of researching photographers, techniques and news which could influence or support work' and 'It makes it easier to research or browse anywhere/anytime'.

Six (18%) respondents gave answers that indicated the Internet's utility in terms of discovering new work and accessing photography that otherwise would not have been accessible. One respondent stated, 'The internet allows access to photographers worldwide including ones that may not be accessible through the library' whilst another respondent stated 'you can learn so much from it and see the work of many artists that you would not see otherwise'. Two (6%) respondents gave answers that indicate that the Internet enables the viewing of exhibitions that they would otherwise be unable to see.

Social media was referenced directly and indirectly four (12%) times. Two (6%) respondents mentioned specific Social Media platforms including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Blogs were mentioned once. One respondent mentioned the term hashtag, a term frequently associated with platforms such as Twitter and Instagram, and one respondent perhaps alluded to social media when they stated that it's 'so easy to find and connect with people everywhere'. Two (6%) respondents gave responses that appeared to indicate the utility of the Internet in terms of the potential for the promotion of their own work.

Whilst all the responses appeared to acknowledge the importance of the Internet for students of photography, some responses express reservations. One respondent answered 'it can be overwhelming, paralysing even. Too much, too often, they who hashtag/shout loudest', another stated '"the internet" is unavoidable as a method to search for information', but stated that in terms of the 'direct publication of images' via social media platforms, they considered it 'not relevant'.

**Personal Collections of Photobooks**

28 (85%) respondents responded confirming that have personal collections of photobooks or in one case, had previously owned a collection. Five (15%) respondents stated that they did not own a collection of photobooks. The size of the collections varied a great deal. The vast majority of respondents, 17 (52%) in total, answered indicating that they have collections of between 5 and 20 photobooks. Six (18%) respondents indicated that they own under 5 photobooks. One indicated they own over 20 photobooks and one indicated that they own over 50. Two respondents did not mention quantity in their answers. A number of respondents mentioned the costs associated with photobooks in their answers. One respondent stated that due to the cost of photobooks, their collection was made up of books that had been given to them as gifts. They went to state 'If there is no access to a library then actually this is where the internet is magical because it makes photography more accessible'.

**Preference for Photobooks or the Internet when Searching for and Viewing Photographs**

The eleventh and final question of the questionnaire asked respondents to comment as to what their preferred method of searching for and viewing photographs is, photobooks or the Internet. A total of 18 (55%) respondents stated that they preferred the photobook, three respondents stated that they preferred the Internet, 11 (33%) respondents gave answers indicated that they like to use both and one respondent answered 'neither' explaining that they preferred to see photographs 'on the wall'.

The physicality of the photobook appeared again to be recurring theme in the answers. The terms 'physical' or 'physically' are mentioned by four (12%) respondents. References to holding or feeling photobooks are also made by five (15%) respondents. Five (15%) of the respondents' also referred to the 'experience' associated with the photobook. One respondent answered 'I tend to find out about photographers online but ideally, I like to be able to look through their work in photobooks if available as they offer a more intimate experience'. Other respondents used phrases like 'real experience' or 'a better experience'.

Four (12%) respondents referred to the structural elements of the photobook, using terms such as 'structure', 'layout', 'sequence', and 'composition'. Four (12%) respondents also referred to the photobook as presenting photographs in the way that the photographer intended. One respondent described the photobook as being 'layed out and sequenced just as the photographer wanted it to be so i feel that i can gain a greater understanding of their motives and viewpoint', whereas another stated that the photobook 'is how the photographer intended their photographs to be seen'.

The respondents who answered indicating a preference for the Internet offered a number of different reasons. One respondent stated that it was 'easier' and that they could use it 'anywhere, anytime'. Another respondent stated that the Internet 'is always up to date'.

A fairly significant percentage of the respondents gave answers indicating that they liked to use both the Internet and the photobook. Numerous reasons were given; two respondents referred to the Internet in terms of its uses for 'initial research' and indicated that this could be followed up with photobooks. Other answers related to websites providing information on photographers as well as interviews and the availability of work online from a photographer who had perhaps not published a photobook.

**<u>Discussion</u>**

Whilst the survey results do yield some quite definitive and notable findings, a precursor to any discussion must emphasize the small sample size involved in this study. Pickard (2013, p.60) advises that researchers 'be wary of making exaggerated claims or extended generalisations based on relatively small samples'. With this in mind, this discussion of results, whilst speculating over possible themes and correlations, does so only tentatively. A total of 33 respondents took part in the survey and these were either current students or graduates from a total of three separate higher education institutions. Photography education is delivered in various programmes of varying nature at higher education institutions across the United Kingdom and beyond. One cannot ignore the role that differences in course content, curriculum focus and delivery or academic teaching staff could play in influencing students' potential attitudes towards information resources. The number of HE institutions involved in this study was modest and when one considers the plethora of courses on offer, it is not difficult to imagine that the inclusion of other programmes could have, at least hypothetically, led to very different results.

That being said, this study serves an important purpose in contributing to the formation of a conceptual framework around photography resources and provides key insight into the resources used by photography students and their motivations for using them whilst providing a foundation from which future research can be conducted.

**Sources of Inspiration**

The wide range of sources of inspiration indicated by the participants is in keeping with the similar polarity of results apparent in key information behaviour studies concerning emerging artistic practitioners and practising artists by Mason and Robinson (2012), Hemmig (2009), Cobbledick (1996). Furthermore, the answers given by graduate photographer, Kate Nolan, in the interview stage also expressed a similar spectrum of potential inspiration sources. This does perhaps indicate that

inspiration for the surveyed photography students is drawn from as diverse a range of sources as for artists working in other mediums. This finding could potentially be indicative of sources of inspiration for photography students in general, however due to the small sample size and the subjective nature of inspiration (Mason & Robinson, 2012; Hemmig, 2009; Cobbledick, 1996), this point can only be speculated upon.

As previously mentioned, a number of the resource types and the overall design of the Lickert scale was largely derived from Hemmig's (2009) empirical study. Hemmig's study (2009) findings indicate that 'Personal life experience' was a significant source of inspiration for the surveyed 'practising artists'. Similarly, Mason & Robinson (2012, p.176) observe that a common theme apparent in responses of the participants in their study, regardless of their respective disciplines, was 'the importance of human interaction, conversation and contemplation as a stimulant to their creative work' – a series of activities that could certainly constitute life experience. The surveyed photography students also indicated the significance of 'Personal life experience', its overall rating being the second highest rated source of inspiration, in turn perhaps indicating that certain sources of inspiration are consistent regardless of practice or artistic medium.

The most popular source of inspiration as apparent from the findings is the photobook. 58% of respondents rated it as highly significant. In addition, eight respondents made reference to the photobook as a source of inspiration in their free text answers. These references together with the high rating that the photobook achieved for the inspiration question supports both perspectives from the literature consulted and findings from the interviews with the photography graduates and the photography lecturer. Inspiration is frequently cited as a primary information concern amongst students studying creative subjects and based on the findings of this study we can conclude that photobooks are a primary resource utilised by the surveyed photography students to satisfy this information need.

Interestingly, four of the free text responses offered by the participants made reference to the role the photobook plays in helping them to make decisions around producing their own books or relate to aspirations for wanting to make their own photobooks. Parallels could possibly be drawn between these participants' voluntary admissions and the assertions made by Parr & Badger (2004, p.9, 2006, P.7) who state that an ambition shared by many photographers is the desire to produce their own photobook. This also perhaps substantiates the perspectives from Renshaw (Parr, Baker & Renshaw, 2012) and Parr & Badger (2004) which posited the centrality of the Photobook in a photographer's practice.

**Digital Resources**

In consideration of Hemmig's (2009) suggestions for future study as well as the perspectives considered in the literature review around photography resources and the digital information ecology, the decision was made to include specific online resources rather than combining them into a single category. The digital resources listed in the inspiration section saw a broad scope of ratings ranging from those achieving ratings in the upper percentile to those in the lower range. 'Photographer websites', in particular, proved to be a very popular as both a source of inspiration and a means by which to view the work of photographers. Scoring just slightly lower than 'Photobooks' in both categories, the results indicated that 'Photographer Websites' are a key information resource amongst the surveyed students and graduates.

The free text responses indicated that a fair proportion of the surveyed students considered the Internet to be an efficient, and up-to-date, source of information. A small number of responses referenced the Internet as a source through which primary research could be carried out. Though only representing a minor correlation within the survey findings, this factor is consistent with the findings

in a number of LIS studies consulted in the third literature review (Brett, 2013; Mason & Robinson, 2012).

These results indicate the significance of certain online resources to the surveyed students of photography. Whether the results are representative of the use of certain digital resources by photography students in general cannot reasonably be posited due to the sample size, however the relative popularity of the platform Instagram is perhaps consistent with mention of its growing popularity in the literature (Smith & Lefley, 2016).  The popularity of certain digital resources, such as websites and Instagram, as apparent in this survey represents quite a distinction from Hemmig's (2009) study of practising artists in which the amalgamated option entitled 'Images and/or text in art-related electronic media (disk, CD-ROM, web sites)' featured in the lower range of scored resources. It is, however consistent with the popularity of digital resources apparent in more recent studies by Lo & Chu (2015) and Mason & Robinson (2011).

**Social Media**

Interestingly, with the exception of Instagram, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, did not receive particularly high scores from the surveyed photography students and graduates. In fact, Flickr and Twitter received the highest number of 'Not Significant' ratings in the Lickert scale questions.  This represented quite a distinction from the findings gathered in the interview with the MA photography graduate who referenced social media as a primary source of inspiration. The literature consulted also referenced the utility of social media platforms as potential learning resources and research sources. The findings concerning the photograph hosting site, Flickr are also somewhat at odds with the perspectives put forward in the literature by Burgess (2007) who referenced the utility of the platform and its potential in knowledge acquisition and the development of visual literacy.  Instagram was the most popular social media platform across the Lickert Scale questions and references to the platform did feature in both of the interviews with photography

graduates and in the literature consulted concerning photography and the digital information ecology. Blogs, in particular, featured within the literature consulted and were seen by some (Fox & Caruana, Soth, Smith & Lefley) as important tools for both the dissemination of work and for research purposes. The photography lecturer, Oliver Udy, also mentioned a number of blogs that he viewed as important online resources which he, in turn, recommended to the students on his programme. The results from this survey, however, indicate that for this sample of photography students, the blog does not represent an overly popular choice for inspiration or visual research purposes.

It is important to note that the questions within the survey did purely relate to inspiration and viewing the work of photographers as opposed to exploring aspects around the students' sharing of their own work or other networking purposes potentially important to their studies. The inclusion of such lines of inquiry in future research may yield quite different results. Overall, however, social media platforms, whilst garnering some usage from the surveyed photography students do not seem to receive the same degree of attention as other information resources, both print and electronic. The free text responses offered by the survey participants in response to whether they considered the Internet to be an important resource for students of photography were on the whole favourable. The respondents' answers indicated that they saw the Internet as a convenient and efficient means by which to seek information and images. Oliver Udy, the higher education photography lecturer, also indicated contemporary photographers' widespread use of and presence on the Internet – the fact that many photographers are purportedly utilising the World Wide Web to showcase their work is an indication of the potential value of the Internet as a resource for researching and viewing photography. It is also perfectly feasible that photographers who have perhaps not produced a book could be using the Internet to disseminate and promote their work. A small number of responses indicated the utility of the Internet as a resource for initial research which aligns for the perspectives offered by Brett (2013) and Mason & Robinson (2011).

Considering the responses from small proportion of participants who did not have any photobook component in their programmes at study, no link can be drawn between this and their attitudes toward the photobook.

**Library Use**

Owing to the fact that photography students had not been the sole focus of a published LIS study, it was decided that information on students' use of their institutions' libraries would be useful in better understanding the information usage patterns of the demographic. The results clearly indicate that with the exception of one participant, the surveyed students all visited the libraries at their institutions. In fact, the largest proportion of respondents, around 39%, indicated that they visited the library 'Often'. Whilst the frequency options provided by the survey don't offer us any specific measures in terms of the number of times the respondents visit their libraries, during the course of a term for example, the results do at least indicate a propensity for library usage amongst the surveyed students thus implying the potential utility of libraries for photography students in general.

The surveyed students' motivations for library visits displayed a range of different purposes, however 'Photobooks' were indicated to be the primary resource for which the respondents visited the library. 79% of respondents ranked 'Photobooks' as a highly significant purpose for which they visit their institution libraries, indicating that for the surveyed students, photobooks were the primary reason for visiting their libraries. If we consider the possibility that this finding is representative of the concerns of the wider higher education photography student population, this would certainly suggest that photobooks represent a key asset for libraries at institutions delivering photography. Insight such as this, despite only being sourced from a small sample, represents a fertile area for future research as it could serve to dissolve at least some of the ambiguity surrounding photobook usage. This was a factor described during the interviews with the subject librarians who indicated that loan records

might not be an accurate indication of usage and was also apparent in certain LIS studies around art students' information behaviours (King, 2010; Pacey, 1982).

**Properties of the Photobook**

The free text responses submitted by the participating photography students and graduates with relation to the photobook indicated a range of characteristics that contributed to its relevance as an information resource. A total of 13 references are made to the physical nature of the photobook. A number of these references appear to be concerned with the experience of engaging with the book as an object and the role the book has in the ways that photographs are viewed and perceived.

Some examples of the responses submitted include:

**Q: Overall, do you prefer searching for and viewing photographers' work online or by looking at photobooks? Please give reasons for your answer.**

I like both as you may get some different reviews of the internet but you can look into the photobook and see other things for the physical apperance of the book that may help get a better understanding of the images it's self.

Looking at photobooks. The experience as a whole has more weight as when you look you see the detail in the design, and question why, how, what does it mean, what does it add or take away.

I tend to find out about photographers online but ideally, I like to be able to look through their work in photobooks if available as they offer a more intimate experience.

**Q: Do you consider the photobook to be an important resource for students of photography? If so, why?**

Yes, the photobook adds elements to a body of work that just cannot be replicated in the same way online. For example layout, text, texture, and all over design can either make a project or totally ruin it, and this is something which is important for students to learn.

Yes, because seeing a photograph and the work in print is vastly different to seeing it on a screen. It gives the work physicality and you can hold and touch it

Responses such these indicate the possible relevance of physicality in the photobook's perceived value as an information resource by the surveyed photography students. This theme in the students' responses is very much in keeping with dominant perspectives apparent in the critical literature concerning the photobook (Di Bello & Zamir, 2012, Fox & Caruana, 2012, Parr & Badger, 2004, Barral, 2013) that allude heavily to the physical properties of the book. Specifically, a number of the responses outline various aspects relating to the book experience including, but not limited to; text, layout, texture, colours, materials and weight. This holistic appreciation of the book is very much akin to Parr and Badger's (2004, p.7) perspective of the photobook achieving something that is 'greater than the sum of its parts'.

Another parallel that can be drawn between a particular theme in the literature consulted (Eskilsden, 2004; Parr & Badger, 2004) and the survey participants' responses relates to the significance of the

sequencing and layout of photographs achieved through the book format. Some examples of the submitted responses include:

> **Q: Overall, do you prefer searching for and viewing photographers' work online or by looking at photobooks? Please give reasons for your answer.**
>
> I prefer looking at photobooks as I said before it's layed out and sequenced just as the photographer wanted it to be so i feel that i can gain a greater understanding of their motives and viewpoint.
>
> Photo books as the images are sequenced in a specific way and have a finished quality.
>
> I definately prefer looking at artists work in a photobook because I know they have had control over it's composition and placement therefore what you're looking at is exactly what the artist wants you to see.

The responses listed above and others elicited through the survey also appear to make reference to the notion of the photographer's authorship over the photobook. This factor has been referenced widely throughout the literature, particularly by Parr & Badger (2004) who noted the degree to which photographers generally exercise control over the presentation of their work in book form. Findings from the interviews conducted with both photography graduate, Kate Nolan and photography lecturer, Oliver Udy also make reference to the photobook representing a mode of expression for photographers.

A small number of free text responses alluded to the photobook being a source of primary research, this was a concept that emerged through a consideration of the literature in the first literature review,

particularly relating to the photobook's purported status as an 'art object' and the specific medium chosen by photographers to present their work.

**Preference between the Photobook and the Internet**

The respondents' answers to a question asking whether overall they preferred the photobook or the Internet for viewing the work of photographers showed a clear preference for the photobook with 18 (54%) respondents indicating as such and 3 (9%) stating they preferred the Internet. It is important to note, however, that 11 (33%) respondents indicated that they liked to utilise both the photobook and the Internet for viewing the work of photographers. This finding indicates that at least a proportion of the surveyed students are happy to engage with both physical and digital resources and recognise the merits of both.

**Personal Collections of Photobooks**

The vast majority of the surveyed photography students confirmed that they had personal collections of photobooks, although these collections varied in size significantly. Both of the interviewed photography graduates also stated that they had their own collections of photobooks. This finding is consistent with the findings of Hemmig's (2009) and Cobbledick's (1996) studies which found noted a prevalence for personal collections of books amongst art students. A potentially significant point arising from the response to this collection is concerned with the cost of photobooks. This finding is consistent with certain perspectives in the literature (Reverte, 2014; Fox & Caruana, 2012; Miles, 2010; Shannon, 2010) concerning photobooks as well as comments made by both subject librarians during their interviews. A number of respondents referred specifically to the expense associated with photobooks stating that this was part of the reason their respective collections weren't more substantial. This is a potentially significant observation when considered alongside the findings indicating that photobooks represent the primary resource for which photography students visit their institutions' libraries. The fact that photobooks are often such costly items could mean that libraries represent a vital means through which photography students can view and engage with photobooks.

**Photobook in HE Curriculum**

Whilst the number of institutions involved in the survey totaled three, the number of different identifiable courses delivered at all of the institutions totals five. 91% of the respondents confirmed that their respective programmes involved a component related to the photobook. The number of courses is far too small to suggest a conclusive finding, however the fact that the photobook is a matter of focus could suggest that the photobook's purported status within contemporary photographic discourse is reflected in course curricula. It is important to note that further research involving a wider range of programmes would need to be conducted in order to establish whether this is a feature of UK photography education in general.

**Conclusion**

Photography students and photographers only feature in modest numbers within LIS studies. The intention of this study has been to provide some insight into the information needs and preferences of this previously under-surveyed demographic. Specifically, this study sought to examine photography students' attitudes towards the physical photobook and the multitude of photography resources available online.

Photography as a practice, medium, mode of communication, and means of expression has been altered irrevocably by the development of digital technology. There is no debating the fact that photographic images exist both in physical and digital forms, with the latter likely being vastly more prevalent in today's information ecology. The photography students surveyed through the course of this study have shown themselves to be users of the Internet and print resources, in addition to being, on the whole, users of the libraries at their institutions. Interestingly, as the results of this study have shown, the surveyed photography students, modest as they are in number, display a distinct investment in the photobook. The continued relevance of the photobook is perhaps rooted in its

nature as a unique document. Certainly, the physicality of the photobook seems to be play a role in photography students' preferences, however perhaps more relevantly is its function as an art object in its own right. The literature makes numerous references to the effect of the photobook when taken as a whole. The combination of its physical properties, the layout and sequencing of individual images that communicate the message of the work; these are all aspects mentioned variously by the respondents to this study. These factors all appear to play a role in the photobooks collective relevance amongst the surveyed students.

Whilst the modest scale of this study is only too apparent and must be acknowledged in relation to its findings, it does play a role in providing some insight into a demographic of which very little was previously known within the LIS literature. It also provides a tentative indication of the photobook's value to photography students; a factor to which academic libraries serving this audience should arguably pay heed.

This study has drawn together rich qualitative data gathered through interviews from key players related to the research subject matter. Perspectives on the issues have been elicited which provide insight from academic, library and students viewpoints. The subsequent survey response, though small, has allowed for correlations to be drawn between the literature and the findings, providing numerous avenues for future exploration. This study will hopefully serve some purpose as a foundation for future research into students of photography and the resources that they use and this knowledge will surely be of use to academic libraries looking to best serve these students.

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## Appendices

## Appendix I – Reflections

The primary motivation behind the research direction for this dissertation was to provide insight into the the relevance of particular information resources for a specific user demographic that had not been the sole focus of a study within the LIS literature. On the whole, it is the researcher's opinion that this study goes some way toward achieving this aim, however the study is certainly not without its shortcomings.

In the researcher's view, the decision to combine methods designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative data was appropriate due to the unexplored nature of the subject matter. The interviews, in particular, provided a great deal of rich insight that in turn influenced the design and content of the survey instrument.

The interviews were, on the whole, a success. The choice to interview 'key players' connected to the research context was beneficial in forming a holistic understanding of the issues. Unfortunately, due to time and scheduling constraints, a decision was made to accept written responses from the HE photography lecturer, Oliver Udy. Whilst this method reduced the possibility of additional, unexpected answers and insight outside of the written question and answer format, the answers offered were sufficient for the purposes of this study and had the added benefit of being in a syntax better suited for quotations.

Whilst efforts were made to reach students from a range of institutions and a range of programmes, the potential value of the survey findings would certainly have been higher had the respondents hailed from a wider spectrum of both universities and photographic disciplines.

One potential criticism of the robustness of the survey could relate to the mention of the photobook and the Internet within the introductory statement (statement reproduced in full in Appendix X). In an effort to ensure that the purpose of the survey was transparent, the introductory text outlined the purpose of the study being an examination of 'the information resources used by photography students studying at higher education level, focusing particularly on the physical photobook and the Internet'. On reflection, it must be acknowledged that mention of these information resources in the introductory statement could feasibly have influenced responses given by participants in the Lickert Scale questions, where the resources featured alongside various other options. That being said, the general polarity and range of responses given in these questions would indicate that this is fairly unlikely to be the case.

There were certainly lines of enquiry that were omitted purely as a result of oversight on the part of the researcher. An interesting addition to the questionnaire would have been a question asking respondents about recommendations and suggestions from academic staff. Responses to a question such as this would have been useful in further exploring the role and influence of academic staff in students use of information resources – a factor that had seen preliminary exploration in the interviews. Another potentially interesting area of data might

have been the age of respondents as this may have provided interesting correlations between respondent age and the use of photobooks and digital resources.

Overall, the researcher considers this study to be a useful introduction to the information preferences of higher education photography students and a fruitful base for future research into the demographic and the resources they use.

**Appendix II – Proposal**

**Dissertation Proposal – Tristan Hooper (Library Science MSc)**

**Working Title**

The Photobook in the face of Pervasive Digital Resources: Is there an enduring need for the physical book among students of photography?

**Introduction**

Photographs can be found in magazines, on gallery walls, in advertisements and are published in droves on the World Wide Web. The photobook, however, is ubiquitous with the history of the medium itself and it has been suggested that the book is the '"natural" home' of the photograph (Badger, 2004, p.11).

Students of photography are now faced with more modes of access to photographs than ever before. Major contemporary photographers now publish their bodies of work online via personal or gallery websites. International photography magazines are available in entirety online and Web 2.0 technologies such as the blog have become synonymous with photographic practice, project development and promotion. Added to this is the prolific dissemination of photographs via social media sites such as Flickr or Instagram. There exists today a rich and diverse patchwork of avenues through which to seek and view photographs. It is against this backdrop that the enduring relevance of the photobook is questioned and examined. This line of inquiry is particularly pertinent to academic libraries who are plagued by budget and space limitations. Photobooks, after all, are an expensive investment when compared to books of other kinds and they frequently come in a plethora of large and unwieldy shapes and sizes.

This study aims to adopt a holistic approach in which the relevance of photobooks in contemporary academic libraries is discussed. Secondly, this study aims to investigate the means by which students of photography source the visual information they need for the purposes of both reference and inspiration. Such insight is invaluable to libraries seeking to provide appropriate resources to such students.

These issues are investigated initially through interviews with certain key players including academic staff, librarians and students. The rich data amassed through these interviews informs the design of a survey instrument which is disseminated to a wider population of current undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as recent graduates from photography degree programmes in the United Kingdom.

**Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to form a better understanding of the resources used by students of photography – a user demographic that has not, to date, been the sole focus of a published academic study. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to gain insight into the relevance of the photobook for students of photography and in doing so highlight any alternative means by which these students serve their visual information needs.

**Scope and Definition**

The user group of interest for this study is students studying photography at higher education level. The survey population will comprise undergraduates, postgraduates and recent graduates from various UK Higher Education Institutions. Recent graduates must have graduated within the past 24 months.

There are a great many photography-related courses on offer throughout the UK operating under various titles with varying curricula. This study defines a photography course as being a programme of study in which photography is the primary discipline. This definition encompasses variants such as documentary photography, photographic art, photojournalism, advertising and fashion photography.

The primary resource of interest for this study is the photobook. This term has been used variously to describe a range of different publications, this study adopts the definition set out by Parr & Badger (2004, p.6), 'the photobook is a book with or without text, where the work's primary message is carried by photographs'. An additional caveat specifies that the book needs to be 'authored by a photographer or by someone editing and sequencing the work of a photographer, or even a number of photographers' (Parr & Badger, 2004, p.6).

The initial interviews and focus group are intended to provide rich data which will not only provide valuable insight in its own right, but will also inform the design and content of the survey instrument which will be subsequently used to elicit feedback from a larger population. The interviews will be semi structured, utilising a set list of questions, but vitally will allow for free flowing conversation. The interviews will be conducted in person or via Skype. The proposed focus group will comprise students studying photography at Goldsmiths, University of London. Goldsmiths offer a BA in Media & Communications featuring a photography component as well as a MA in Photography: The Image & Electronic Arts. The focus group will follow a set list of questions, but will also allow for exchanges and organic conversation amongst the group.

A pilot study will be conducted prior to the wider electronic dissemination of the survey instrument. A small number of individuals matching the aforementioned criteria will receive the proposed survey. In addition to answering the questions on the survey, they will be asked to provide feedback on any parts of the survey they did not understand or felt should be changed. This interim step is intended to highlight any issues with the survey prior to wider dissemination.

The survey instrument will likely comprise a series of questions presented with a numerical scale reminiscent of the Lickert scale together with a number of questions eliciting free text responses. The survey is intended to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

**Research Context**

Whilst representing an 'under-surveyed' (Gregory, 2007 p.57) user population, the number of Library & Information Science (LIS) studies relating to artists and art students has steadily grown over the years. Studies relating to students of specific creative disciplines, however, are still relatively few in number. The lack of such studies represents a significant gap in LIS research as students studying different disciplines likely have different information needs and exhibit varying information behaviours. To date, there are no published studies focussing on the information needs of photography students as a specific demographic, although photographers and students of photography have featured in broader studies in the past (Brett, 2013, Hemmig, 2009,). A study by Cox (2012) appears to be the only published LIS research concerned solely with the information related behaviours of photographers, although the subjects of the study are described as amateur, hobbyist photographers as opposed to students studying photography at higher education level.

Insight into the relevance of photobooks for students of photography could play a key role in acquisitions and deaccessioning decisions. An understanding of photography students' wider information behaviours could also help inform a more appropriate and useful library service for this unique audience.

**Literature Review**

Numerous publications have been dedicated to discussing the photobook. The most prominent examples are likely the three volumes of Parr & Badger's (2004, 2006 & 2014) *The Photobook: A History.* These substantial books discuss the photobook's role in photographic history and practice and chronicle both well-known and obscure examples of the photobook in its various forms. Other notable books include *The Photobook: From Talbot to Rushca and Beyond* (Di Bello, Wilson & Zamir eds. 2011) and Colberg's (2016) *Understanding the Photobook: The Form and Content of the Photographic Book.* A consideration of such key texts is necessary to gain insight into the discourse concerning photography and the photobook, this aspect of the research will help to establish if or why the photobook is a resource of special significance to students of photography.

Whilst previously representing a relatively unexplored area, there now exist a number of studies which examine the information behaviour of art students, academics and practising artists. These studies provide valuable insight into the predominant information needs of such groups as well as their particular information-seeking styles. The studies encompass a wide range of survey methods, ranging from paper (Gatten & Bryant, 2010, Hemmig, 2009, Reed & Tanner, 2001) and electronic surveys (Lo & Chu, 2015, Mason & Robinson, 2011, Gregory, 2007) to observation (LeClerc, 2010), interviews (Gatten & Bryant, 2010, Cowan, 2004, Challener, 1999, Cobbledick, 1996) and focus groups (Gatten & Bryant, 2010, Frank, 1999). Whilst none of these studies focus specifically on photography students as a specific demographic, they do highlight the wide variety of resources utilised by students and

individuals engaged in creative practices, a factor that in itself indicates the relevance of the proposed research direction. Whilst a number of studies reference the importance of the physical book and the library (Mason & Robinson, 2011, Cobbledick, 1996) a definitive theme apparent in the literature is that of the diversity of resources used by individuals engaged in creative practices (Mason & Robinson, 2011, Whiteside, 2010, Hemmig, 2009, Litrell, 2001, Frank, 1999, Cobbledick, 1996, Toyne, 1975, 1977). Certain recent studies have noted the prevalence of Internet use in artists' and art students' information seeking (Lo & Chu, 2015, Mason & Robinson, 2011, Gatten & Bryant, 2010, Gregory, 2007). Notably, a significant number of studies (Lo & Chu, 2015, Mason & Robinson, 2012, Whiteside, 2010, Hemmig, 2009, McLaughlin, 2008, Gregory, 2007, Cobbledick, 1996, Stam, 1995) also make reference to the prevalence of personal libraries amongst artists and art students, this finding may well also be applicable to students of photography who could feasibly rely upon personal collections of photobooks to satisfy their personal visual needs as opposed to solely relying upon library collections.

A number of these studies examine the various motivations behind the information needs of art students and practising artists. In his review of the literature concerning the information behaviours and needs of artists and art students, Hemmig (2008) identified a number of key information needs. Hemmig (2009) later incorporated these needs into an empirical study of practising visual artists and verified them as being largely consistent with the needs of his research population. A later study by Mason & Robinson (2011) found that Hemmig's model was largely applicable to emerging artists and a study by Cox (2012) related the model to the needs and behaviours of amateur photographers. These needs are categorized as 'Inspiration, 'Specific Visual Elements', 'Knowledge of materials and techniques, 'Marketing and Career Guidance, and 'Knowledge of Current Trends in the Art World'. Certain of aforementioned information needs may be relevant to photography students' motivations in consulting photobooks, or indeed, alternative resources. An understanding of the information needs and behaviours of individuals engaged in creative practices is vital as these behaviours are frequently tied to the use of certain resources. Numerous studies (Whiteside, 2014, Mason & Robinson, 2011, Gregory, 2007, Frank, 1999, Cobbledick, 1996) point to the importance of physical, visual resources and this commonly related to browsing – a practice widely engaged in by individuals engaged in creative practices. A consideration of these studies is significant in that it helps to form an understanding of the varied means by which individuals engaged in creative practices source visual information. Other studies of potential interest for this research topic concern articles relating to attitudes amongst art students and faculty towards e-resources (Brinkman & Krivickasm, 2015, Spirn & Whiteside, 2014, Yao, 2014) and articles concerning print and electronic publishing and art books (Yao, 2014, Kam, 2014, McDermott & Dunglan, 2013, Soussloff & Tronzo, 2008).

**Methodology**

This study will employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. A review of the literature concerning the photobook, the information behaviours and information needs of art students and a discussion of critical issues arising from the literature will precede the initial interviews and focus group.

The interviews will be conducted in person and via Skype. The intention is to provide a holistic backdrop of qualitative data which will firstly provide insight into the issues and secondly help inform the design of the survey instrument. The interviews will be conducted with academic staff teaching on photography programmes, librarian(s) at higher education institutions offering photography as well as students and recent graduates of higher education photography courses.
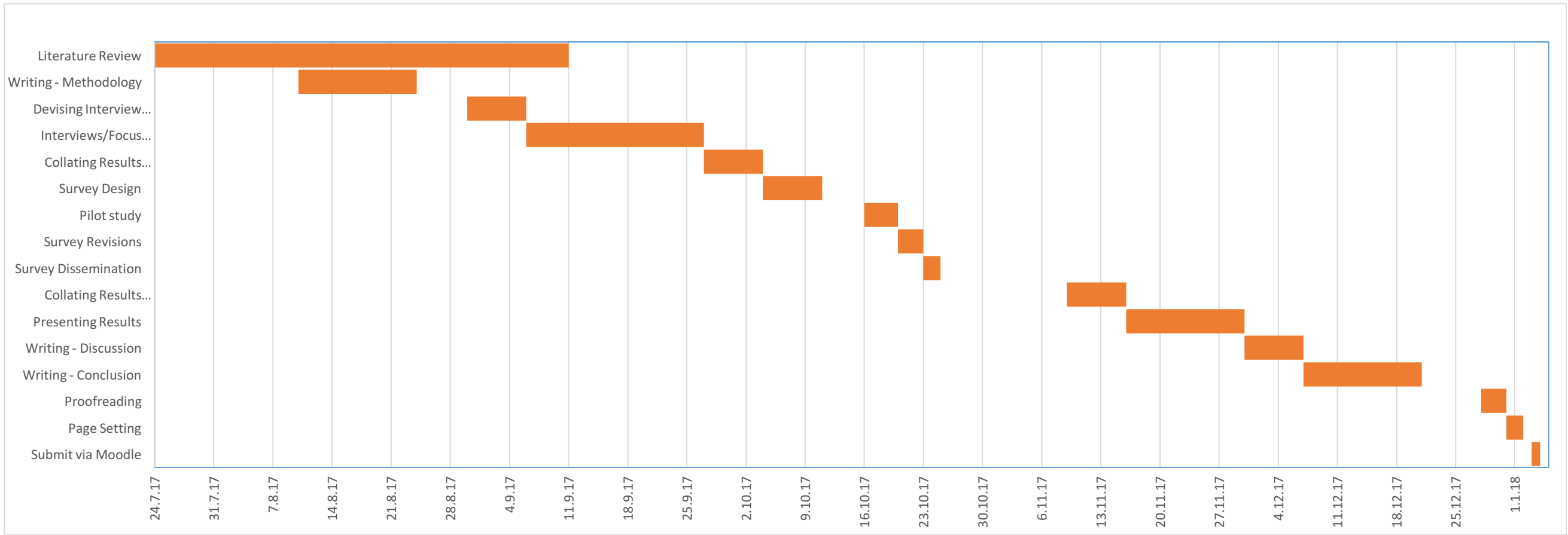
The proposed focus group will be conducted with a number of students studying photography at Goldsmiths, University of London.

The findings of the interviews and focus group will inform the content of the survey instrument. The survey instrument will be disseminated electronically via email to undergraduate, postgraduate and recent graduates from UK higher education institutions. The survey link will be disseminated by various means including the utilisation of photography lecturers as conduits, Facebook pages for specific programmes and through personal contacts known to the researcher.

The results will be collated and analysed to ascertain any patterns in the responses given.

**Work Plan**

| Task | Start Date | Duration (Days) | End Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Literature Review | 24/07/2017 | 49 | 10/09/2017 |
| Writing - Methodology | 10/08/2017 | 14 | 24/08/2017 |
| Devising Interview Questions | 30/08/2017 | 7 | 06/09/2017 |
| Interviews/Focus Group | 06/09/2017 | 21 | 27/09/2017 |
| Collating Results (Interviews) | 27/09/2017 | 7 | 04/10/2017 |
| Survey Design | 04/10/2017 | 7 | 11/10/2017 |
| Pilot study | 16/10/2017 | 4 | 20/10/2017 |
| Survey Revisions | 20/10/2017 | 3 | 23/10/2017 |
| Survey Dissemination | 23/10/2017 | 2 | 25/10/2017 |
| Collating Results (Survey) | 09/11/2017 | 7 | 16/11/2017 |
| Presenting Results | 16/11/2017 | 14 | 30/11/2017 |
| Writing - Discussion | 30/11/2017 | 7 | 07/12/2017 |
| Writing - Conclusion | 07/12/2017 | 14 | 21/12/2017 |
| Proofreading | 28/12/2017 | 3 | 31/12/2017 |
| Page Setting | 31/12/2017 | 2 | 02/12/2017 |
| Submit via Moodle | 03/01/2018 | 1 | 04/01/2018 |

Weeks

**Resources**

The initial interviews will be conducted either in person or via the free online video chat platform, Skype. Interviews will be recorded using a Dictaphone. The proposed focus group will take place at Goldsmiths, University of London. Again, a Dictaphone will be used to record the discussion.

The survey document will be produced using SurveyMonkey and will be disseminated electronically via email. The results will be collated and analysed using Excel.

Costs will be minimal due to the free nature of the software involved and the locality of Goldsmiths to the researcher's home address.

**Ethics**

**Part A: Ethics Checklist**

| If your answer to any of the following questions (1 – 3) is YES, you must apply to an appropriate external ethics committee for approval: | | *Delete as appropriate* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Does your project require approval from the National Research Ethics Service (NRES)?  (E.g. because you are recruiting current NHS patients or staff?  If you are unsure, please check at http://www.hra.nhs.uk/research-community/before-you-apply/determine-which-review-body-approvals-are-required/) | **No** |
| 2. | Will you recruit any participants who fall under the auspices of the Mental Capacity Act?  (Such research needs to be approved by an external ethics committee such as NRES or the Social Care Research Ethics Committee http://www.scie.org.uk/research/ethics-committee/) | **No** |
| 3. | Will you recruit any participants who are currently under the auspices of the Criminal Justice System, for example, but not limited to, people on remand, prisoners and those on probation? (Such research needs to be authorised by the ethics approval system of the National Offender Management Service.) | **No** |

| If your answer to any of the following questions (4 – 11) is YES, you must apply to the Senate Research Ethics Committee for approval (unless you are applying to an external ethics committee): | | *Delete as appropriate* |
|---|---|---|
| 4. | Does your project involve participants who are unable to give informed consent, for example, but not limited to, people who may have a degree of learning disability or mental health problem, that means they are unable to make an informed decision on their own behalf? | **No** |
| 5. | Is there a risk that your project might lead to disclosures from participants concerning their involvement in illegal activities? | **No** |

| 6. | Is there a risk that obscene and or illegal material may need to be accessed for your project (including online content and other material)? | **No** |
|----|----|----|
| 7. | Does your project involve participants disclosing information about sensitive subjects? | **No** |
| 8. | Does your project involve you travelling to another country outside of the UK, where the Foreign & Commonwealth Office has issued a travel warning? (http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/) | **No** |
| 9. | Does your project involve invasive or intrusive procedures?  For example, these may include, but are not limited to, electrical stimulation, heat, cold or bruising. | **No** |
| 10. | Does your project involve animals? | **No** |
| 11. | Does your project involve the administration of drugs, placebos or other substances to study participants? | **No** |

| **If your answer to any of the following questions (12 – 18) is YES, you should consult your supervisor, as you may need to apply to an ethics committee for approval.** | *Delete as appropriate* |
|----|----|
| 12. | Does your project involve participants who are under the age of 18? | **No** |
| 13. | Does your project involve adults who are vulnerable because of their social, psychological or medical circumstances (vulnerable adults)?  This includes adults with cognitive and / or learning disabilities, adults with physical disabilities and older people. | **No** |
| 14. | Does your project involve participants who are recruited because they are staff or students of City University London?  For example, students studying on a particular course or module.  (If yes, approval is also required from the Project Tutor.) | **No** |
| 15. | Does your project involve intentional deception of participants? | **No** |
| 16. | Does your project involve identifiable participants taking part without their informed consent? | **No** |
| 17. | Does your project pose a risk to participants or other individuals greater than that in normal working life? | **No** |
| 18. | Does your project pose a risk to you, the researcher, greater than that in normal working life? | **No** |

| **If your answer to the following question (19) is YES and your answer to all questions 1 – 18 is NO, you must complete part B of this form.** | |
|----|----|
| 19. | Does your project involve human participants? For example, as interviewees, respondents to a questionnaire or participants in evaluation or testing. | **Yes** |

| The following questions (20 – 24) must be answered fully. | | *Delete as appropriate* |
|---|---|---|
| 20. | Will you ensure that participants taking part in your project are fully informed about the purpose of the research? | **Yes** |
| 21. | Will you ensure that participants taking part in your project are fully informed about the procedures affecting them or affecting any information collected about them, including information about how the data will be used, to whom it will be disclosed, and how long it will be kept? | **Yes** |
| 22. | When people agree to participate in your project, will it be made clear to them that they may withdraw (i.e. not participate) at any time without any penalty? | **Yes** |
| 23. | Will consent be obtained from the participants in your project, if necessary? Consent from participants will only be necessary if you plan to gather personal data.  "Personal data" means data relating to an identifiable living person, e.g. data you collect using questionnaires, observations, interviews, computer logs.  The person might be identifiable if you record their name, username, student id, DNA, fingerprint, etc. *If YES, attach the participant information sheet(s) and consent request form(s) that you will use.  You must retain these for subsequent inspection.  Failure to provide the filled consent request forms will automatically result in withdrawal of any earlier ethical approval of your project.* | **Yes** |
| 24. | Have you made arrangements to ensure that material and/or private information obtained from or about the participating individuals will remain confidential? Provide details: **The interviews and focus group will be conducted by the researcher and no personal details will be recorded or published. Any identifying information acquired during the planning or recruitment stage in the form of emails will be deleted.** | **Yes** |


| If the answer to the following question (25) is YES, you must provide details | | *Delete as appropriate* |
|---|---|---|
| 25. | Will the research involving participants be conducted in the participant's home or other non-University location? *If **YES**, provide details of how your safety will be ensured:* **Some interviews will be conducted using Skype and interviewees will potentially communicate via a computer at their home address. Due to the nature of video chat however, there will be no direct contact.** | **Yes** |

| Attachments (these must be provided if applicable): | *Delete as appropriate* |
|---|---|
| Participant information sheet(s) | **Yes (see Appendix 1)** |
| Consent form(s) | **Yes (see Appendix 2)** |
| Questionnaire(s) – The survey instrument will informed by findings from the interviews/focus group and produced following that stage. | **Yes / No / Not applicable** |
| Topic guide(s) for interviews and focus groups | **Yes (see Appendix 3)** |
| Permission from external organisations (e.g. for recruitment of participants)** | **Yes / No / Not applicable** |

**Confidentiality**

The SurveyMonkey survey instrument will allow participants to submit answers with anonymity. The only identifying information will relate to participants' level of study/student status, i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate or recent graduate.

The interviews and focus group will be conducted by the researcher and no personal details will be recorded or published unless permission is explicitly given by the participants. Any identifying information acquired during the planning or recruitment stage in the form of emails will be deleted.

**Appendix III – Interview Questions**

**Subject Librarian – Previous manager of photography collection at University of West**

**London (UWL)**

A semi-structured interview based around a number of questions.

- Can you provide a description of UWL's photography collection/resources?

- Which resources were most commonly used by the photography students in your

  view?

- Did you hold/subscribe to any e-resources pertaining to photography (i.e. e-books, e-

  journals, databases, etc.)?

- In your view, is the number of electronic photography resources increasing?

- Are you aware of any such electronic resources?

- Did you receive many requests for photobooks from students?

- What kind of resources did the photography faculty request?

- What challenges, if any, do photography related resources present from a collection development and maintenance point of view?

- Can you comment on any notable information behaviours/needs amongst photography students?

- In your view, are photobooks a resource of particular importance to photography students?

- If so, in your view will photobooks continue you be relevant despite the increasing availability of electronic resources?

- In your view/experience, are photography students keen library users/do you receive many requests from such users?


**Photography Lecturer**

- What resources (if any) do you recommend to your students to help them in their studies?

- Is the photobook the focus of any aspect of your course curriculum?

- Do you know of any key photographic resources online?

- Do you recommend any digital resources to your students?

- Do you know of any online/digital resources that are used by your students?

- Have you encountered any photographic resources online that impressed you?

- Do you know of any photographers with an active online presence or who use social media extensively?

- Do you consider the blog to be a useful tool?

- What are your feelings about the computer as medium for viewing photographs?

- How would you define the 'photobook' as a resource/object?

- Do you feel the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography? If so, why?

- Photobooks have reportedly experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years – why do you think this is?

- Do you have a personal photobook collection?

- As far as you are aware, do your students make use of the library at your institution?

- What contact do you have with librarians at your institution?

- What influence do you have over the development of your library's collection?

- If you had to speculate, where would you say your students look to for inspiration?


**Photographer/Recent Student**

- Where do you look for inspiration?

- Do you know of any key photographic resources online?

- Did you make use of the library when you were studying?

- Have you encountered any photographic resources online that impressed you?

- Do you know of any photographers with an active online presence or who use social media extensively?

- Do you maintain an active online presence?

- Do you read any periodicals or magazines?

- Do you consider the blog to be a useful tool?

- What are your feelings about the computer as medium for viewing photographs?

- How would you define the 'photobook' as a resource/object?

- Do you feel the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography? If so, why?

- Photobooks have reportedly experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years – why do you think this is?

- Do you have a personal photobook collection?


**Appendix IV – Consent Form**

**Consent form**
Title of project: Masters Dissertation: *The Photobook in the face of Pervasive Digital Resources: Is there an enduring need for the physical book among students of photography?*

Name of researcher: Tristan Hooper
Project authority: This research project is being undertaken as part of a Masters in Library Science from City University of London.

|  | **Please circle YES/NO** |
|---|---|
| I have read and understood the information letter for the above study and a researcher has explained the study to me. | YES / NO |
| I have received enough information about what my role involves. | YES / NO |
| I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving any reason. | YES / NO |
| I agree to take part in the above study. | YES / NO |

| | |
|---|---|
| I understand that my anonymity will be respected and that my name/institution will be not be published or divulged unless I explicitly give my permission below. | YES / NO |
| I agree that the data I provide may be used by Tristan Hooper within the conditions outlined in the information letter. | YES / NO |
| In case of concern or query I have been given the contact details of the researcher and City University of London | YES / NO |
| I agree to the use of any anonymised direct quotes in the report. | YES / NO |

By providing the information below, I hereby give my consent for the following information to be used:

Name: _____

Profession/student status (e.g. Lecturer, Librarian, Undergraduate):_____

Institution:_____

| Name of participant (IN BLOCK LETTERS) | Signature | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Name of researcher (IN BLOCK LETTERS) | Signature | Date |

**Appendix V – Information Letter**

**Information letter:** *The Photobook in the face of Pervasive Digital Resources: Is there an enduring need for the physical book among students of photography?*

Thank you for taking part in this above research study. Please read this page, it contains information about the nature of the research and your rights as a participant.

**Researcher:** Tristan Hooper

**What is the research for?**

This research is for a MSc. in Library Science from City, University of London, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB

**What is the purpose of the study?**
The aim of this study is to form a better understanding of the resources used by students of photography – a user demographic that has not, to date, been the sole focus of a published academic study. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to gain insight into the relevance of the photobook for students of photography and in doing so highlight any alternative means by which these students serve their visual information needs.

**What does the research involve?**
The research will involve participation in an interview/focus group concerning the resources used by photography students. You will be asked about your views on the most relevant resources for this particular group.

**What data will be collected?**
Your answers will be recorded using a digital recorder and notes will also be taken during the interview. The audio recording will be stored on a password protected computer and will not be distributed. Once transferred to the aforementioned computer, the recording will be deleted from the recording device.

**What will happen to the data?**
Interviews will be transcribed into text files which will be stored on a password protected computer. Any notable themes emerging from the interviews will be referenced and examined and full text answers from the interviews may be included in a dissertation to be submitted to City University of London. Names will not be used unless explicit permission has been provided. The only identifying information to be included (if names are not used) will be the job title/status (librarian, lecturer, undergraduate student, postgraduate student, recent graduate) and if permission is granted, the institution to which the interviewee is associated or was recently associated with.

**Who else will see the dissertation and interview/focus group transcription?**
The dissertation and transcription will be seen by academic staff at City University of London. Under no circumstances will your personal details be published or divulged to anyone unless permission has been granted for their inclusion.

**What if you change your mind?**
Participation consent can be withdrawn at any time prior to the dissertation being submitted to City University of London by contacting the researcher. In this case, interview recordings, transcripts, and all records of your involvement in the research will be deleted.

**Who do I contact if I have any concerns or queries about the study?**
Please feel free to contact the researcher at any time on Tristan.hooper@city.ac.uk or 07702096455

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. To help me record that you are willing to take part in this study, please complete the attached **Consent Form**.

**Appendix VI – Survey Instrument -** **https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YKPWQZZ**

**Appendix VII – Free Text Responses**

| Do you consider the photobook to be an important resource for students of photography? If so, why? |
|---|
| Open-Ended Response |
| Yes, it's a physical thing can keep relating back to for information. it's better than looking at a screen. depending on quality of print can be more visually exciting. |
| Yes, it shows the photographers work, in the order and style that it was meant to be seen. This shows a story and i think its important that students can see these stories and understand about sequencing etc |
| Yes, because it was chosen by the photographer, you get to see physical copies of their work and appreciate it. You have access to their decisions intros etc, that you may not get online. You know the colours, prints etc is how it's supposed to be seen and appreciated. |
| yes, helps gain inspiration by looking at others work and stories. |
|  |
| Yes, because seeing a photograph and the work in print is vastly different to seeing it on a screen. It gives the work physicality and you can hold and touch it |
| Yes, it offers insight into photographers' careers and is an inspiration for what Photography students could aim for in their own careers. |
| I believe it to be important as some other means of accessing a photographers work to me doesn't always include all of the work or information |
| Yes, allowing students to view different types of photography in the flesh rather than on a screen; making the experience very "real" |
| Inspiration and we learn by looking |
| Informative and inspiring |
| Constant style, possibility to identify techniques and purpose of photographs. |
| yes, its a trustworthy source of photographers work |
| It's great to see different series of work and how other photographers organise and collate their work; it can be inspirational and motivational for future and current projects. |
| Yes because it's a primarily research which is coming straight from the artist |
| yes, they are visual and help to influence shoot ideas |
| Yes, the photobook is a key aspect in photography, other than exhibitions this is an ideal way to display work and allows artists the opportunity to express themselves in, what I feel, is a more personal manner. |
| Contextual information about the photographer and opportunity to be opinionated to their work |
| Yes, it's great to have the physicality of a photobook and allows you to pick apart more factors, materials, weight, text/image layout; which then deepens and strengthens research in my opinion. |
| Yes and you have the chance to view the work printed, as well as read about the work at the beginning. |

| |
|---|
| Yes, it is inspirational looking at other photographers work |
| A better visual understanding of certain people's work and methods. Visual inspiration. |
| Yes, because it is every photographers dream to have a photo book of their own |
| Learning how to make your own |
| Yeah as it shows what that specific photographer had created. But it also included things like why they have put it into a book. How doesn't he layout and the size of the images link to the work and what effect does it have on the viewer. But also it helps with research, inspiration for ideas and a lot of other things with the photography course. But also to gain more knowledge about photography that may help you alongin life. |
| Yes because one looks at photographs differently in a physically printed photo book |
| yes. inspiration for own book design, sequencing, etc |
| I view them as a method/media; artists' opinion to collect work as a book is an important methodological choice. |
| Yes, insight into the photographers unique vision. |
| Yes, the photobook adds elements to a body of work that just cannot be replicated in the same way online. For example layout, text, texture, and all over design can either make a project or totally ruin it, and this is something which is important for students to learn. |
| No |
| An artist made photo book is often the mode the photographer wanted people to view his work. It's an original source |
| Yes because it's often hard to get to a certain exhibition so you can see it in book form and learn about the project. |
| Yes. It's a way of absorbing and living with a body of work very different from wall or screen. |

| |
|---|
| Do you consider the Internet to be an important resource for students of photography? Is so, why? |
| Open-Ended Response |
| It is a good source to research but not for primary research. exhibitions are better. |
| Yes, it offers a ginormous resource of photographs to use and research, far more than a library could contain. |
| Yes, because photography is accessible to everyone. By looking online you can find current, historic, unknown photography ideas. and even get your own ideas out there. |
| most if not all information can be gained of the internet, this is useful for research. |
| |
| Yes, as sometimes some documents and resources are only available online and sometimes the book you may want may not be available |
| Yes, it is a fast and current means of researching photographers, techniques and news which could influence or support work. |
| The internet allows access to photographers worldwide including ones that may not be accessible through the library |
| Yes, it allows students to research and find other related photographers and information/interviews easier |
| It he because of time - reading books is more long winded |
| wide range of influences and research |

| |
|---|
| It's mostly up to date. Researching contemporary artists is important to know whats "trending". |
| yes |
| I think the internet is a really easy accessible way of viewing endless photographers/photography works- as well as background knowledge information for bodies of work. It makes it easier to research or browse anywhere/anytime. |
| It can be to find out other research but to also compare against what you have found In books |
| yes, as you can view exhibitions online which you may not be able to visit in person |
| I think photography is an ever changing subject and the internet is very fast in keeping up with that. Instagram, for example, is the main way to showcase work to employers and easily locate photographers. Blogs are also a key resource as it allows you to easily gather critical responses to work you may be researching |
| Photographwrite websites |
| Yes, it's easy, accessible and is a creative way to find new artists quickly with the help of multiple different websites associated with photography or just allows you to search a word which 8/10 gives you new leads to something. |
| Yes as students have access the many photographers work and essays, journals, magazines etc. |
| Yes, it is easy to access at the click of a button |
| Yes. Some amateur photographers also do incredible work but have not yet been published, the internet is a fantastic tool to find those artists. |
| Yes, because it has a vast archive and can find any photographer/ohh ever |
| Seeing exhibitions that you can't get too; researching older photographers |
| Yes and now, I mean it useful and it has easy access to be able to research and fine images for photography but some of the sites may not be reliable inwhich people have to be careful off when doing research. But also I think books are the better option. |
| Yes because so much out there so easy to find and connect with people everywhere |
| I find internet based scholar texts databases important. |
| "the internet" is unavoidable as a method to search for information, but in terms direct publication of images (twitter, facebook, instragram), i find it not relevant. |
| Yes, endless democratic resource. |
| I feel the internet is a hugely important resource, in the sense that you can access work that may not be in the library. However I would strongly suggest that if the book of that photographer is in the library, then that should take priority over their website. |
| Yes |
| Discover new work |
| Yes because you can learn so much from it and see the work of many artists that you would not see otherwise. It's also important for starting to get your name out there |
| Yes, but it can be overwhelming, paralysing even. Too much, too often, they who hashtag/shout loudest |

| Do you have a personal collection of photobooks? If so, approximately how many? |
| --- |
| Open-Ended Response |
| |
| Yes, about 50 or more |
| I only have a couple (3-4) but I am trying to expand it. |
| 10 |
| I do not. |
| |
| Yes, 3 I think but they can be expensive |
| Yes, I have around 6. |
| |
| I unfortunately do not due to financial difficulties |
| Yes, 10. |
| No |
| 10 |
| I don't. |
| 5 |
| I have around 5/6 photo books, although I'd like more as a student I can't afford to have more currently however I'd like to collect more in future! |
| I do I have about 8 so far |
| about 5 |
| Yes, i'd Say around 5. I wish I could say more! |
| 2 |
| I only have about 4 photobooks (would love more, but expenses!) |
| Yes and around 4 books |
| About 20 |
| Around 15 |
| Yes, and 3 |
| 12 |
| 6 |
| 20?+ not sure |
| I used to have many,more than 100. I sold all of them. |
| 20 |
| 5 |
| Yes approximately 15. Sadly they are so expensive I have only been able to get them as presents. If there is no access to a library then actually this is where the internet is magical because it makes photography more accessible. |
| No |
| 20 |
| Yes |

| |
|---|
| Would be more significant but for perpetual lack of funds |
| Overall, do you prefer searching for and viewing photographers' work online or by looking at photobooks? Please give reasons for your answer. |
| Open-Ended Response |
| photo books. If printed well looks good and prefer having the physical format. |
| I prefer looking at photobooks as I said before it's layed out and sequenced just as the photographer wanted it to be so i feel that i can gain a greater understanding of their motives and viewpoint. |
| Photo books, to be able to hold and see a photography is more engaging and powerful. books can be vast, whereas some online photographs are cropped or edited without your knowledge. it is how the photographer intended their photographs to be seen. |
| It is easier online, but nothing quite compares to holding a photobook and seeing the work first hand. |
| |
| Whichever is easier. Sometimes photographers don't have a book, or sometimes they do not have anything online. Both have their pros and cons. |
| I tend to find out about photographers online but ideally, I like to be able to look through their work in photobooks if available as they offer a more intimate experience. |
| I prefer photobooks, it's more of an experience and I feel that you can get more information from them in most cases |
| Photo books, less confusing and makes a better experience |
| Both equally but books are nicer as you hava real experience with books |
| online, easier and can do it anywhere and anytime |
| Both. Photobooks are easy to navigate, internet have many contemporary sources. |
| books as you can trust the information more |
| I think I enjoy looking at both equally, one is more accessible personally however the feel of a book can't really compare. |
| I prefer both to be honest because you get to see a different look on the artists work |
| phonebooks - its nicer to actually feel the prints and you know that the work you are looking at is actually theirs. |
| I definately prefer looking at artists work in a photobook because I know they have had control over it's composition and placement therefore what you're looking at is exactly what the artist wants you to see. |
| Bothe because physically holding a photobook makes my initial thoughts flow easier by physically seeing the structure of a book and websites are useful for information about Photographer and interviews |
| Depends how long I have for a project and how quickly I come up with ideas, internet is a good foundation to begin initial research, photobooks are much more critical when it comes to final outcomes (such as the making of my own books), and are just intriguing to look at when in the development period. Books are very easy to pick up whenever, they're there to be looked at and forces you to take the time to focus on small details. |
| Photo books as the images are sequenced in a specific way and have a finished quality. |
| A mix of both but you cannot beat a printed book |
| I personally prefer photo books. Despite the price of some which make them harder to access, they are more enjoyable to flick through and study. Less strain on the eyes too. |
| Online |
| Online then photo books. Initial research |
| I like both as you may get some different reviews of the internet but you can look into the photobook and see other things for the physical apperance of the book that may help get a better understanding of the images it's self. |
| Photobooks because I prefer to study books and the work of other photographers |
| neither. I prefer to look at work on the wall. |

| |
|---|
| books, when available. printing quality and presentation in a book is specific to the artists/publishers desire. online is up to my computer, my work-space and my setup. |
| Both. |
| Looking at photobooks. The experience as a whole has more weight as when you look you see the detail in the design, and question why, how, what does it mean, what does it add or take away. |
| Photobooks |
| Photobooks, same as my previous answer |
| Currently by Internet because I don't have many photobooks and the Internet is always up to date |
| Books. I just prefer the information media in this way. It has less of the connotations of distraction which arise from the screen and keyboard. |

## Appendix VIII – Interview Transcripts

<u>**Subject Librarian - Antonia Lewis**</u>

**Tristan: First of all, Goldsmiths, the library photography collection here, can you give me any information, is it a substantial collection?**

Antonia: I wouldn't say it's a substantial collection, it's relative, isn't it really? I would say having worked… so in comparison to the Royal College of Art**,** it's smaller than that collection, even though that library is smaller. So as a percentage of the art books, it isn't... I wouldn't say it is a really big collection. I don't think it's been collected, so I've been in the job since 2009 and so obviously, I've done collecting for that, I don't think it's collected in a systematic way, so if a suggestion comes in or we like the look of a book, it's bought. Whereas I would say the actual kind of art books, so fine art painting or you know artists exhibitions are collected in a more systematic way than the photography.

**Tristan: Sure**

Antonia: It tends to be the photography that you would define in a fine art way, although there is a bit of fashion photography in there as well. But I wouldn't say you could look at it and think that it was collected systematically.

**Tristan: Kind of ad hoc, organically. OK, so I guess it's interesting with photography because there is that granularity; there's fine art, there's fashion and then there's documentary and all that other stuff.**

**In terms of other photography resources, do you guys keep slides?**

Antonia: There was a slide collection, which we, about two years ago, we got rid of it. There are some slides in special collections, some of the slides went to special collections, some slides about women's art. So, yes, we did have slides but they were deemed out of date and obsolete so, we got rid of those. It was a big collection actually. Actually, I think a PhD student took a lot of it within the art department. It was a big collection.

**Tristan: I guess that's the way it goes with formats and deaccessioning…**

Antonia: Yes, you have to make difficult decisions sometimes.

**Tristan: Do you know whether you [Goldsmiths Library] subscribe to or hold any e-resources pertaining to photography - are there any e-journals?**

Antonia: Yes, we do have photography journals as e-journals. I don't think there's one specific database for photography, but we have Art and Architecture Source which is one of the main art databases - that obviously does contain some photography resources. There are some books on photography on the catalogue if you search, we have some image databases or things like Oxford Photography Online, there's some photography on there, but it would more be about the overlap with art.

**Tristan: You mentioned e-books there - Is there a significant number of photography e-books, or are they increasing in popularity?**

Antonia: I suppose a lot of the e-books would more be the theory side of it; they are always very

popular.

**Tristan: Like critical theory? Like Roland Barthes?**

Antonia: Yes, those are some of the most borrowed books.

**Tristan: Yes, I remember reading Susan Sontag.**

Antonia: Yes, you can never have enough copies. And the things like, there's a book called Family Frames, it's older now, but it is very popular, looking at family photography, and Anette Hirsh. We've definitely got that kind of thing. I think the concept of photography and theory around it are the popular texts.

**Tristan: Sure, but maybe not so much books like Robert Frank, The Americans.**

Antonia: Yes, we have a bit of that, but that's not the main focus, it's sort of I suppose more philosophical look at photography.

**Tristan: Would you - this harks back to the third question - acquisitions - would you say acquisitions have increased or decreased since you've been here?**

Antonia: I did have a look when I first started and I did think it needed padding out. There weren't sort of much good photobooks, just a few examples of photography, individual photographers work, it was quite out of date, so it's possible that I buy more - I've been doing it 7/8 years, so it's possible I buy more than the people who were in my job previously. As I said, with some of the other parts of the Art collection, we will have standing orders from the galleries, so it's quite an overview, and there are particular people we always buy the next, you know, whereas with photography we don't really have those processes set up.

I bought this [shows book] - we buy a lot of books from Arts Bib. They usually have a photography selection which I look through. So, if I think it's topical, for example a photography book about refugees, a thing that's relevant, something the students would be searching and they might find useful to supplement their work if they see it on the catalogue. I try to get an overview of new photographers if somebody wanted to know, and then the *Intersection of Art and Technology*. It depends, I might buy more around the subject area if it jumps out at me.

**Tristan: So, there are different motivations behind your acquisition choices.**

Antonia: Yes, just to get an overview of new photographers, so if somebody was interested in doing a bit of research and wanted a few names to go on, they could always request more detail. That tends to be my thinking.

**Tristan: Do you receive many requests for photobooks from students? I know you have a "suggest a book" here.**

Antonia: I don't receive a lot, more if it's a cross-over, if somebody classes themselves as an artist. No, I don't get a lot of requests for classic photobooks, a few here and there, but it's not…

**Tristan: Obviously you cover art design and visual cultures, is it feasible the requests might come from the students doing the media and communications courses?**

Antonia: I think, possibly, I know that Kevin who's just left wasn't getting a lot of requests from the departments this year. He wasn't sure exactly why this was - he didn't spend all his budget.

**Tristan: Yeah, I guess part of the idea behind this research is - for me as a student, I went to quite a small university on Wales and they had a small, but relative to the rest of the library collection, quite a big collection of photobooks. There were stacks of photobooks. Whereas now there is an increase in the digital - a lot of photographers publish their full bodies of work online now, like Alec Soth, I wonder where people are feeding their image needs, if indeed they have any for photography because my primary means certainly as a student was the book. But maybe now it's different. Do you receive any requests from art faculty for photobooks?**

Antonia: Again, it's here and there. There is one member of staff whose main research area is animals and their relationship to humans, she used to teach at the RCA, Jo Longhurst - takes photos of dogs -

**Tristan: Yes, animal photography is quite big.**

Antonia: That's one I remember off hand, but again, it's not a lot. Maybe some of the fashion photography occasionally - but more for the subject matter than the photography.

**Tristan: In your opinion, what challenges, if any, do photography resources and the photobook present from a collection development stroke maintenance point of view? Such as space?**

Antonia: They are usually oversize books, so that is probably one of the main ones. Especially at the moment, we are trying to do quite a bit of weeding, and it's difficult to get an overview of how much they are actually used. If they are particularly big, people don't take them home, but they might be using them within the library. So, the way that we do the weeding, is to look at if they have been loaned in the past five years but if you see a big book, you think, would they have loaned that? It's often difficult in a way to know how much the collection is being used. Also, decisions around do you try to keep up to date with a particular photographer's work, if you buy one, do you, I suppose it's the same with all the other collections as well but it's justifying that kind of purchase, especially because they're quite expensive. You might buy one and then your collection goes out of date because you're not keeping it current, but then if it costs £50 a book.

**Tristan: They're really expensive, and they increase in value really quickly, some in my personal collection which I bought for about £30 are now worth well over a hundred pounds, you know?**

Antonia: That is true, when we have something that gets lost and we have to replace it, it can cost well over £100. I guess they do small print runs.

**Tristan: Yes, and independent publishers, such as Faden, and then Mac Books, you tend to get a first edition and then there won't even be a second. And I guess with science books there is a responsibility to weed the book, to get rid of it, otherwise there'd be trouble. Arguably so does the book, it's still the person's work. I guess you could new editions of the same book, or a book containing the person's work, that could supersede it.**

Antonia: Yes, and wanting to keep a representative collection, but also have enough space to update.

**Tristan: I see what you mean with the oversized collections here, they are often left in the aisle and they seem used but not necessarily borrowed, as you said, a physical size thing.**

Antonia: Yes, especially the folios rather than just the oversized. There are quite a few photography

books in that section.

**Tristan: Are photobooks borrowed a lot by students? In terms of the weeding, have a lot of photobooks been weeded do you know? Obviously with the criteria of being borrowed in the past five years…**

Antonia: There are a few on there. The thing about the photobooks is that they are more recent. We have some books which haven't been borrowed for seventeen years, some old-fashioned volumes with plates. In some ways, the books which are more recent than that anyway and there aren't as many of those in our collection, they don't jump out on a list of weeding as we have so much of this old stuff, from more in the seven hundreds sort of stuff. But there are photography books which do come up in that and I wonder, why hasn't that been borrowed, because they are such nice books. But I think it is being used, it's just not necessarily being taken home. So, I do make decisions about whether keeping material would be a good idea. The art books do tend to have a special consideration, or the art collections within this drive to get everything online, the art resources do tend to resist that a little bit more, so we have quite a lot of print journals and things like that, which probably will go at some point, but it's always come from our recognising that they are being used. I think there is around art resources more desire to keep the physical copies rather than just to get everything online. I don't know if that will eventually change, probably, but at the moment there's still a resistance to getting rid of everything, like just moving to e-journals, whereas in the other subject areas there's no problem, such as psychology, whereas if you said to the art department getting rid of all their journals, they're not going to go for that.

**Tristan: Why do you think that is? Do you think art students prefer print resources over e-resources, obviously, we can't say for sure, but in your view?**

Antonia: I think it's a different information need. It's more of a, almost like a browsing, that you can't really get online so much. I think it is gradually changing with people, if a tutor says look up this artist instead of coming to the library to browse, they'll just google it. But also, a lot of art books just aren't available online, so the only option is to see exhibition catalogues to see the print version of the art. So, when they come over to the library anyway, they just end up browsing stuff. The art department have said that they would like students to get an overview of current journals, so they can see them all displayed together and pick stuff up so they can flick through the context of them rather than just the individual article, so they can have the whole thing together to flick through. That seems to be the argument to put forward.

**Tristan: Yes, I think how you encounter something makes a difference, that context. In your opinion, do you feel that photobooks, the archetypal photobook such as *The Americans* by Robert Frank or *Raised by Wolves* by Jim Goldberg, these really famous photobooks; a body of work which is supposed to be looked at in the form of a book. Do you feel that photobooks differ from other art books in any way? Say if you had a book of collected work of Leonardo Da'Vinci.**

Antonia: I suppose there tends to be a little less analysis in them, they tend to be more, there might be a short bit of text and then there's just the photographs whereas most art books would have a few essays in them and a bit of content in that way that… When I've looked at photobooks it's literally been the images and you are left to your interpretation, whereas books on exhibitions tend to, you known you'll have well known theorists who've written big long essays or done interviews on it and things like that.

**Tristan: In your opinion, will photobooks or art books in general continue to be relevant despite increasing availability of electronic resources? Similar to the e-journals, but less periodicals but**

**more the big oversized books on the shelves.**

Antonia: I think where… some of the books are very nice desirable objects, so I think there'll always be that relationship between art publishing and the beautiful book that people want to hold, specialist items that will carry on being in print or exhibitions catalogues the aren't going to be published online. I think more and more text based art history and art resources will move online I think, especially in academic libraries because of space and providing items on reading lists and things like that. We are moving reading list systems to provide online texts. i think there will always be an element of a certain amount of print materials always being important in art research but probably it will get less and less over time.

**Tristan: Great, thank you very much. that's very useful and food for thought.**

<u>Subject Librarian - Eve Jamieson</u>

**Tristan: I have some questions for you based on your time at <u>UWL</u> where for two years you managed a photography collection.**

Eve: Yes.

**Tristan: And what photography courses do they offer there?**

Eve: They had a straight BA Photography and also a Commercial Photography which had some of the same modules but some different modules which focussed on the commercial aspect of it.

**Tristan: Can you provide me with a generalised description of the photography resources provided at the library?**

Eve: They had a small collection of photography resources, partly because the library hadn't had great funding in the past and partly because they'd had to do some weeding before I'd arrived and I think maybe some of the photography collection went with that and also they were partnered with another institution which did some of the more art-based courses and that partnership had ended and the library collection got divided at that point, so some of the older collection was out as it went with that institution. So, it wasn't a very big collection and some of the lecturers were a little bit unhappy with it. I think that impacted the students because their perception of it was that the lecturers had said it wasn't a very good collection so they didn't use it at all, really, I didn't see students using it very much. When I started and then, they had a little bit of a staffing change in the department and then the new staff came who were much more interested in reinvigorating the collection, so we worked with them quite a lot and then we got allocated more funding so it stared to grow again.

**Tristan: What would you say the collection was like when you left?**

Eve: I don't know the exact numbers, but we had spent quite a lot of money on it so we had filled in quite a lot of the gaps and tried to retrospectively go back and find some of the photobooks that they said that we should have and that we didn't stock and were out of print, we tried to find a few of them but that was quite tricky. We spent more time looking at new publications because that's a lot easier and picking stuff for that. So, by the time I left it was a better collection and we did some workshops with some students, I think they were more engaged with it. I think the new academic was bringing the new cohort in to see the book collection at the beginning of term. It was much healthier a collection, I just don't know the numbers.

**Tristan: And in terms of journals, did you keep any photography journals?**

Eve: We did, I can't remember them though. You might find some of them on the subject guides on the UWL page, I think there's a separate graphic design, photography page which might have some of the key journals listed.

**Tristan: Did you hold any older analogue resources like slides for example?**

Eve: No, we didn't have any specialist resources really. I think a couple of the academics from photography and graphic design were interested in starting to collect some artist books but because the library wasn't really set up for any special collection, there was no closed access space, it was quite hard to work out if that would be feasible. They weren't averse to the idea, it's just that it's not like here [Goldsmiths] where you have a reserved stack and a special collections room. So, it might be that since I left they've explored the more or it's been decided that it's not feasible, but the current subject librarian, if you contacted her, she might be able to give you some information.

**Tristan: Did you hold or subscribe to any e-resources pertaining to photography?**

Eve: We subscribed to, I think an EBSCO *(check 4:50)* database that I think was more of the generic, I think it was the artsource, of the other one, Artsful Text *(CHECK 4:56)* which I think is the smaller one, but there wasn't a specific photography package, it was more part of the art's ones.

**Tristan: In your view, during your time at UWL (*CHECK*), was the number of electronic resources related to photography increasing, was this something you were aware of?**

**Other than for a few key textbooks that they wanted everyone to read…**

**Like Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag…**

Eve: Yeah, I don't know if that even got on as an e-book. They had a couple of photography kind of more practical textbooks, ever the theoretical that they had as required reading, so we tried to buy e-books for those and generally, as a library, they had more e-books than they used to but for photography it wasn't as straight-forward because the artists' photobooks and books on exhibitions etc weren't available as e-books, so there wasn't a substantial increase. And in terms of packages, we didn't get anything too substantially, new packages or anything. I think we might have got the Vogue archive at one point, I think we have that here [Goldsmiths], which is a back-archive book, but because of the commercial aspect of the course, that was quite relevant to have that as a back archive, so maybe that was then only thing but that was because of a JSIC deal where they made it much more affordable so it wasn't such a big expense. But other than that, I wouldn't say there was a substantial increase because the academic, or a few academics, were keen to improve the physical collection so that's where the money went.

**Tristan: Did UWL operate a suggest a book kind of service, you know how most academic libraries seem to kind of operate this, students go in…**

Eve: They had what they called Love Books, so there was a separate fund that was allocated to the Love Books fund and students that request, pretty much any student request was purchased. But there wasn't like, it was quite a low take up but because the photography collection had a like more of a reputation of not being good enough for the students, they really pushed it to the students, I did, the academics did, so that they made suggestions. So actually, that department, it was part of larger School of Art, Design, Media, but it changed its name half way through, students from that department

did suggest quite a lot, so there might've been quite a few photography suggestions from that. The other initiative we did to try and improve the collection and also to promote a more positive image of it and engagement with the students was we had the ArtsBib van, they come one a month or one every two months, and they have a list of publications in the arts subjects including photography, and they also visit in a van and you can get into the back of the van and you can browse the books; they're like on a make shift shop in the back of this van. It's better than it sounds! So, for that I invited the academics from Graphic Design, Photography, and Advertising, so it's more Creative Advertising and student reps, so they had, I think they had it for each year group, so maybe student reps for first year Photography, student reps for second year, sudden reps for third year, erm, and I should have said earlier there was also foundation photography, I forgot about that. So, they were all invited, they didn't all always attend, it was just a handful, but the photography students were very engaged, well, not specifically with the library, but they were quite proactive so they did come, I sent them the lists in advance so they could just me if they wanted any of them, and I also invited them to come to browse, so if they wanted any of the stuff, it was the other way that students could suggest stuff that would come out of the photography book budget.

**Tristan: That's interesting that you mentioned about the academics kind of pushing this Love Book service and hat rustle in an up taking in student interest I suppose. Ok, and what kind of resources did the photography faculty request, so when we say photobook, I guess hat it's quite a loose definition really. Would you say predominantly that they requested books by photographers, so like, I don't know how interested you are, but like Robert Frank, *The Americans*, a seminal book by the photographer, a book of work…**

Eve: They literally requested that book…Yeah, they were looking at the collection quite critically and saying, "I can't believe you don't have this", so they did go back and suggest things like that photobook, seminal ones and I think quite a few of them were reissued, so I could get hold of the later editions…

**Tristan: For reasonable prices…**

Eve: Yeah, it wasn't so hard, but there were some that were hard to find and we just had to say, well it's too expensive and they were fine with that, but there was also a mix of them, looking at current exhibitions and things as well. I can't remember any of them specifically, but that was covered by the ArtsBib list, so they would send me requests that were more historic, trying to find seminal photobooks etch and then we use ArtsBib for keeping up with the contemporary… Does that answer that question?

**Tristan: It does, it does. It's erm… that's a good answer. So, in your view, what challenges, if any, do photography-related resources present from a collection development and maintenance point of view. So, think about photobooks, what challenges if any, do you feel they represent?**

Eve: I think maybe if you're not at an arts-based institution - so I think Goldsmiths is a little bit different because it's always had a big focus on art collections, I think it's quite hard for some library management to appreciate it's a slightly different collection type that you need, so it's a broader collection of just having one of a lot of different things rather than having reading list books. So, a lot of collection list management is now moving towards reading list items, which is great if you have good reading lists, but a lot of academics will say, well we don't have reading lists for..you know, they do, but they are slightly different, so it's more expected that you'll have a broad collection of important resist, photographers, etc, without getting their requests necessarily, you need to make that happen. So, it's more of a long-term building of a collection over a number of years rather than just ordering everything on reading list.

**Tristan: What about, you mentioned weeding earlier, you said when you first got there there had been some pretty brutal weeding…**

So, there had been weeding based on the number of borrows, and if you do withdrawals based on how many times a book has been borrowed in the last ten years, you might find that's substantially lower than a textbook might be.

**Tristan: Why is that?**

Eve: Partly based on the size and weight of these books, which you can't really take into account about statistics about borrowing, and also because they want a broader collection. so, it might be that students don't borrow those books for a few years, but then someone does one year, three people look at the same artist because maybe they've got a new exhibition, so maybe they go and look at their back catalogue, so it's quite a different way of using a collection. And you might want to weed something by accident that's irreplaceable, even though perhaps that doesn't mean you shouldn't have weeded it because if its not being borrowed, you could argue you should get rid of it. But it's quite hard sometimes to get to place things that are out of print, especially if they're going for silly prices online. So, it is a bit more of a challenge and also knowing for collection management purposes as a librarian knowing what you should d shouldn't weed is quite difficult. Unless you've got, it's quite a challenge to have an amazing subject knowledge of every subject. So, you're relying on your experience but also talking to the academics and when they're busy, its not always possible, depending on who you work with.

**Tristan: Yeah, and I suppose there's going to be an element of bias with them as well…**

Eve: Yeah, definitely…

**Tristan: They're not going to be too objective about…**

Eve: Yeah, their research interests might not always be the same across the department.

**Tristan: This one might be tricky, any insight you can offer, fantastic, if you can't comment, then again, totally fair enough. Can you comment on any notable information behaviours amongst photography students? So perhaps this is something you encountered in perhaps, introduction to the library or just kind of anecdotal observation, it's really, it's a tricky one.**

Eve: Did you say information behaviours?

**Tristan: Yeah.**

Eve: I think that there's a few different little things, probably nothing too substantial, but obviously, they were more, browsing than searching sometimes. So, getting them engaged enough to come into the library to start with was how to get them to use the collections, cause then they would just browse the shelves. Quite a few of the, probably more of the fashion students, but quite a few of the photography were people who would just browse the images in the books and take photos of the images, just for their own creative work, so getting them into the habit of recording what book you got this from, and actually knowing how to reference it, maybe to reference images was quite tricky for them and obviously the output they  had for their work was very creative, so the rigid Harvard Referencing style that you'd expect of a written assignment, suggesting that they incorporate that into creative work was a bit trickier. I think sometimes there was a biota a presumption that we would

have a book on every photographer, was our understanding that some of the other books we have on twentieth century photography or a particular theme might have something on that photography might have to be a bit more creative using the index to see, so I think maybe if they put a search term in for the photographer and they didn't come up, that would be a bit off-putting for them. Sometimes it was that there wasn't even that many texts written about the photographer, especially with more contemporary ones, perhaps. And we had things like, I forget what it's called, the Art Encyclopaedia, I've forgotten what it's called, where you could, I think its called Oxford Art Online… We've got it here and we've got the music equivalent which is what I'm remembering, but it has a Wikipedia kind of encyclopaedia that had entries so sometimes I'd direct them towards that if we didn't have the resources, so they could see if anything was published on them, so that was the resource we directed them towards. But I think perhaps because they were relying quite a lot on art books, redirecting them journal articles was not that obvious for them so they had to be shown. This is like a memory test for me.

**Tristan: t's very useful, thank you. This is kind of a tricky question, just try and take it as it is I suppose and answer however you feel you should answer. In your view are photobooks a resource of particular importance to photography students?**

Eve: Yes.

**Tristan: Why? It's a rather expansive question, but…**

Eve: Erm, because the academics said they were. I don't think I have enough knowledge of photography to have an answer based on any other than what the academics told me were important to the students. But for them it was really important, and not only important that we stocked it but also that the students were engaged with it as well. So, they wanted to improve the collection but also to ensure the students were using it. But it may have been just certain academics were more preoccupied with print than others.

**Tristan: And in your view, do you feel photobooks will continue to be relevant despite, you know, the very evident increase in digital resources and the internet?**

Eve: I think for any of the visual arts, I think its not going to move away from print very quickly, because its all about the production of the book and the print quality, so I don't quite know fully, but don't think, especially as their learning even the commercial photography students were earning about print production and print quality and how you prepare your work for the commercial world, seeing how this translates into a book was an important part of that. And in terms of artists' books, the academics were interested in us starting to collect, you know like I don't know what the technical terms are, but the small runs of self-published artist books, because it was a way of getting yourself known as a photographer, as an artist, so it made sense that we would also have that as examples for the students to start to emulate I guess.

**Tristan: And so, you mentioned publishing there, do you think compared to other disciplines there is less e-publishing within the arts?**

Eve: Yes.

**Tristan: Compared to which disciplines would you say?**

Eve: Compared to any discipline or?

**Tristan: So, could you give me an example of a discipline where perhaps e-publishing is actually out pacing print publishing? Or approaching?**

Eve: I don't think outpacing. In terms of libraries, outpacing doesn't really work. Disciplines such as the humanities would have affordable e-books and they would have the print available as an e-book, so for maybe most things that are published, erm, in a year, but other disciplines will have unaffordable e-books. So, the idea that for libraries they would outpace is not really possible, because we couldn't afford the e-books based on user models, you know the single user models, so only one student can borrow it, can use an e-book at a time, becomes too expensive if you've got a cohort of 200 students. So, they have the other ones, I couldn't say there's a discipline, so for example, psychology is one where the single user e-books might be a problem, or business studies, because of the publishers who rely on making money from the e-books. But for art and photography it seems like e-books are not an option for the more visual artist books, exhibition books, because it's more of an important object rather than a digital representation.

**Tristan: Right, so the physical object is more relevant?**

Eve: Yes, the quality of the paper, of the reproduction, the images, there's more importance, it can't be replicated digitally very easily. But anything that's more practical, like practical photography books, I could find as e-books, but, I doubt that there's a *The Americans* as an e-book. I'm not even sure ways of seeing them as an e-book.

**Tristan: Yeah, certainly, from my own research I've not really found many. I guess the biggest thing for me is the fact that a lot of contemporary photographers publish full bodies of work now online, on websites, and the websites are really good now, like if it's just for reference purposes, but then I think if there's the distinction between the book, because a lot of photographers will work towards producing the book; the book more so than the exhibition, because the book is so tied to the way we look at photographs, you know the sequencing and the narrative and all that kind of stuff, it's quite a complex object really.**

Eve: Mmm, and I guess there's a bit of a gap between having your work online but not as an e-book format, it's not replicating a book format, it's different, it's more embracing a website. And the separately a print book, there isn't an in-between format.

**Tristan: That's very useful, thank you very much.**

**<u>Photography Lecturer - Oliver Udy</u>**

**Tristan: What resources (if any) do you recommend to your students to help them in their studies?**

Oliver: We use a range of resources, but mostly they are module specific. Each module has a Digital Learning Environment, where resources are either placed, or listed. This would include a reading list, which is created digitally, and can therefore be used directly in the library. We would also include any relevant videos, texts etc, for the students.

We also have some general texts and resources that we use, which include Liz Well's books (as she is a professor with us), as well as Mary Warner Marien, David Bate, Charlotte Cotton etc, all of which are good for an initial exploration of the subject.

**Tristan: Is the photobook the focus of any aspect of your course curriculum?**

Oliver: We have a year 1 module that is about making a photobook. For this we work with the students, who develop a body of work, and then translate this into a handmade photobook.

**Tristan: Do you know of any key photographic resources online?**

Oliver: There are too many to list here, but some of the larger institutions have good resources (MOMA, TATE etc...) as well as blogs and other platforms.

**Tristan: Do you recommend any digital resources to your students?**

Oliver: I have a list of good places to go, including those above, but also Fotoroom.co, Joerg Colberg, Lens Culture, World Press, NYT Photo Blog, Getty, Reuters and many more. Also, Lewis Bush's blog was fantastic, and is still a great resource now that he has stopped writing it.

**Tristan: Do you know of any online/digital resources that are used by your students?**

Oliver: Hopefully those above.

**Tristan: Have you encountered any photographic resources online that impressed you?**

Oliver: I think Fotoroom is fantastic, especially the resources lists for competitions, grants etc.

**Tristan: Do you know of any photographers with an active online presence or who use social media extensively?**

Oliver: I can't think of any key contemporary practitioners who are not using this. It is a core part of our teaching now, as it is such a crucial aspect of professional practice. I think the only people who are not using this are those with a very established practice, who are perhaps purposefully cut off from this aspect of the medium.

**Tristan: Do you consider the blog to be a useful tool?**

Oliver: Only for some. It takes a great deal of work, and for most, it will never amount to much.

**Tristan: What are your feelings about the computer as medium for viewing photographs?**

Oliver: I think that we have to accept the computer/screen. It is obviously inferior to print… which is in turn inferior to a gallery print… The dissemination of ideas is easier on a screen, and therefore for some it makes much more sense.

**Tristan: How would you define the 'photobook' as a resource/object?**

Oliver: A publication that predominantly communicates with the use of photographs.

**Tristan: Do you feel the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography? If so, why?**

Oliver: I think that the photobook is the best way for students to engage with a larger body of work from a photographer. It allows them to see the images printed in a way that the photographer is happy with, along with (often) some contextual material. Online, it is much more difficult for students to see a set of images, at a proper resolution, and in an order/context that makes sense. Often, the online experience should be followed up with the book.

**Tristan: Photobooks have reportedly experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years – why do you think this is?**

Oliver: Ease of production – allows for a much wider range of work to be accessible.
More photographers = more customers for books.
A reaction to digital imagery – something tangible to look at.

**Tristan: Do you have a personal photobook collection?**

Oliver: Yes, but not over the top.

**Tristan: As far as you are aware, do your students make use of the library at your institution?**

Oliver: Yes.

**Tristan: What contact do you have with librarians at your institution?**

Oliver: We have a subject librarian, who is fantastic. I am in regular contact with her, for the ordering of books, and for workshops with the students.

**Tristan: What influence do you have over the development of your library's collection?**

Oliver: I can regularly suggest books and collections that should be added.

**Tristan: If you had to speculate, where would you say your students look to for inspiration?**

Oliver: A combination of online, magazines and books… I'd rather more books + magazines.

**Photographer/Recent Postgraduate Student - Kate Nolan**

**Tristan: OK, so just to kick off, this is a really, really difficult question and maybe if you could think about your most recent project and kind of how you approached that. Where do you look for inspiration? Or where does inspiration find you?**

Kate: Well, I don't know, I mean, I go to a lot of exhibitions. But everything, absolutely everything. I really do look at photobooks, there's a place here called the *Library Project* – I don't know if you've heard of it?

**Tristan: I think I have.**

Kate: Well, it's the guy who runs Photo Ireland, he's a Spanish dude and he has set up this photographic, photobook library so artists submit books and then it's free to access for the public and he runs the festival and things like that as well, so that's a really good resource of information. But I just kind of go to shitloads of exhibitions - right now, because I've been working on an exhibition. When I was working on the book, I was mostly looking at photobooks and different ways people were approaching it, but not just photobooks, artist books as well. I wanted something really, really physical, but I don't know, but also from reading literature. I mean, you get inspired from everything. My neighbour's cat inspires me!

**Tristan: Yes, totally. I read a wonderful thing once – I've read numerous library science papers on students and how they use libraries and information and one person said that they get inspiration from cracks in the wall, so anything, so that's the perfect, logical answer in my view. So, slightly more specific now…**

Kate: Sorry, Twin Peaks! Sorry. TV, TV as well. The video pieces that I ended up doing for this exhibition were Lynch-esque. They really were, because I was watching the series and Twin Peaks, the original, is based on a small town and it's just trying to look at the dark side as well without it being overpoweringly ominous – too, too dark.

**Tristan: Yes, I know what you mean, his approach to portraying that town is super interesting and I think his whole visual style is incredible – have you seen his photography?**

Kate: Yes, oh my god, I know – what an asshole! He's an amazing painter as well. His music though isn't so good, so…

**Tristan: I haven't listened to it.**

Kate: Well, he can't do everything.

**Tristan: Yeah, totally, or else he'd be a total asshole, right? OK cool. So, do you know of any key photographic resources online? Do you look at anything on the Internet on a regular basis for photography?**

Kate: I look at like, Jorg Colberg. I look at a lot of writers that write about photography. I don't know if I look at photography so much online, to be honest. I might look at things quickly, to

see what things are like, but it doesn't translate well for me online. I just look at people who are writing about photography and reviews of exhibitions, reviews of books, reviews of new work, or maybe if there's videos. I can email the ones I look at because I can't think of them off the top of my head. But I find it really hard to see photography because I like the physical, the manifestation, so it doesn't, but, because we did documentary, I'm into narratives, I'm into some kind of story, some kind of formed piece of work, so if you're looking of someone's website or you know, they've picked a series of 5 images out of a project that's 100 images, it doesn't make sense.

**Tristan: Sure, I totally appreciate what you're saying.**

Kate: It doesn't show the project. And I hate it when I have, someone is writing about my work or, and I have to pick 3 images and I'm like 3 images doesn't say, it doesn't show my work, you know? It doesn't actually make any sense.

**Tristan: It's tricky, isn't it? Have you seen anyone, have you seen any exceptions to what you're saying? Have you seen any photographers who have actually used the online platform in an interesting way, in terms of showing narrative, or work?**

Kate: Well, I don't know if there on any specific projects, but I mean there's lots of photographers that really kind of engage, Shane Lynam, who actually studied in Newport, he did his Masters there. I mean he works, he's bringing a book out actually, next year, but um, most of the ways he engages with his work and shows his work is online, on his Instagram.

**Tristan: OK**

Kate: He's got a massive following. His Instagram is very curated, you know? So, you know, when his image pops up on your Instagram feed, you know it's his. And that's interesting, but he works under one style, one kind of vision, you know? And that's great because his images, he might work under a specific subject, but there isn't a real 'narrative' narrative. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if you're looking at his Instagram feed or his website, or his Facebook, or whatever. It's so strongly curated and he has a very specific way of visualising things that it all connects together, even across different projects. He's quite good. I know Dragna, she also went to Newport. Um, I'm just thinking of friends, isn't that horrible? Dragna Jurisic, she also has a very strongly curated Instagram, and, I don't know, social media vibe. But it is really engaging and she'll be talking about different things she's reading or looking at, but the way she kind of does it, is very engaging and you might want to go down as see what path, and how it connects to the process of her making work.

**Tristan: Cool. Thank you, thank you. For both your undergraduate and when you were kind of studying toward the MFA at Belfast, did you make use of the library while you were studying?**

Kate: Ah, it's a weird thing at the library in Belfast. So, you could obviously take a book out while I was studying for the Masters and you could bring it down, but I was only up there once a week and there's loads of breaks during a Masters.

**Tristan: Yeah, I totally understand.**

Kate: But they have no connection between the library there and the libraries in the south.

**Tristan: Right, OK.**

Kate: You know, you can get those kinds of cards that you can get when you're doing a Masters, for libraries. But because it's the North, it's only…

**Tristan: No kidding?**

Kate: I mean, I can get books out of the library in Bristol.

**Tristan: Yeah.**

Kate: You couldn't get one out of a library in Dublin.

**Tristan: No way.**
Kate: So, I did not use that library. I used it a bit, but not too much. But I live just across the road from where I first studied photography and the librarian, the head librarian there is a total photobook nerd.

**Tristan: OK**

Kate: I wasn't allowed to take any books out, but I was in there all the time to go through books. All the time. It's great. Just to look at things. Just to have my eyes, kind of saturated with, kind of, you know, images.

**Tristan: Cool, cool. What about Newport? Did you use the library at Newport a lot?**

Kate: Loads! Fuck loads! That library is amazing. Absolutely amazing. Yeah, I would get stacks of books. You know I lived with Chiara and Matilda?

**Tristan: Yeah.**

Kate: We're all very different kinds of photographers, we'd all get loads of books out and share them with each other and show different projects and you know when Ken or Paul or whoever would be talking about things and go and see what they had actually created and try to understand. We had like a little book club thing for a very short period of time with Luca. And Luca, Chiara and Robin and Matilda and we'd bring whatever, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* and try to understand how it was put together and why it was put together in that kind of order. Luca always thought he knew everything, knew all the answers!

**Tristan: Yeah, he was a really nice guy, a really funny dude. OK, thank you. That's really interesting. Did you find that you got a lot of book recommendations from the lecturers when you were studying photography?**

Kate: In Newport?

**Tristan: Well, anywhere really.**

Kate: I don't think I did in Belfast, I don't think they really talked about books that much because once I started, once I decided after I graduated that I was going to continue that project and then make a book out of it, I got obsessed with photobooks and that's when photobooks kind of blew up as well – you know, self-publishing. And then I kind of got obsessed with it and as I said in Belfast they were kind of traditional, they didn't really know what was happening with photobooks which I thought was quite funny and a bit odd as well. So yeah, I think I got, I think we got lots of recommendations during the BA, but they were kind of like *The Americans, The Ballad of Sexual Dependency, Raised by Wolves,* you know the traditional, kind of amazing books, but I think contemporary amazing books that I've seen have all been through friends or going to festivals or… and at those festivals there's always a gazillion independent booksellers, so many books now as well.

**Tristan: That's interesting. OK, cool. I'm going to skip the next two (questions) because we have kind of covered that. OK, do you maintain an active online presence?**

Kate: Do I? I

**Tristan: Sorry, I think I'm losing you a little bit – my signals bad….**

**Tristan: Sorry, shoot.**

Kate: Ok, yes, I guess I do what I have to do.  Like Instagram. And I Facebook and I, but that's it. I'm not so active. I'm as active as I feel like I have to be to promote my work.

**Tristan: OK, so it's kind of like a utility thing, you use it because it's kind of necessary in this day and age to do that.**

Kate: Yes, yes.

**Tristan: OK, fair enough. Cool. OK, do you read any material, physical photography magazines?**

Kate: No, no. I got the recent Source magazine, but I thought it was boring. I didn't think it was very good. I don't even know, I don't even know what I would purchase if I had all the money in the world to buy all the magazines in the world. There's just not that much out there really. I mean, I bought, let me see, hang on one second. I bought this which I though was pretty cool. Photoworks, that's it. And they had an issue that was a 'Women's Issue' which was pretty amazing.

**Tristan: It's quite a generous magazine, isn't it?**

Kate: Really generous. There was another one that I got recently called 'The Eyes' and that

was pretty good. It's all, kind of contemporary photography. But no, I don't really purchase photography magazines, just because I don't really think there's much. I mean BJP (British Journal of Photography), I don't think is very good.

**Tristan: Fair enough.**

Kate: But yeah, there's a lot of shit photobooks out there now as well.

**Tristan: Yes, I can imagine.**

Kate: I definitely agree with independent publishing, but I think photobooks became such a big thing that everyone thinks their project should be books, even if they really shouldn't be at all.

**Tristan: Yeah, totally. OK, cool. Thank you. OK, we've kind of already touched on this, but could you maybe talk a little bit, in response to this question, what are your feelings with regards to the computer as a medium for viewing photographs? In general? Because you were talking about the physicality of photographs…**

Kate: I mean, it's amazing that… [signal problems]
[cont.] Kate: The only good thing is, anyone can view it. It makes it very easy for people to view photobooks, I mean photographs and there's stuff. Talking about photobooks, there's things that have gone out of print, that people can't get access to and so they can get a PDF version and actually, I really love this, I got a PDF of *The Americans* on my iPad and I got a few, who's that American photographer that photographed petrol stations – kind of Mid-West or middle of nowhere? What's his name?

**Tristan: Did he do anything else?**

Kate: Um, he was just known – it was like early colour photography…anyway he had a book that's really hard to get and actually it was pretty cool to have them on my iPad.

**Tristan: Yeah, totally.**

Kate: And just flicking through them, you know? But I always prefer the physical.

**Tristan: OK**

Kate: I think I just like tactile stuff. The book I made was really tactile, there were loads of moving pieces in it.

**Tristan: Yeah, I've seen pictures of it.**

Kate: I kind of prefer…yeah, I'm just more of a physicality kind of person.

**Tristan: Totally, totally.**

Kate: But, but, but I think photographs can sometimes, sometimes they can translate, sometimes people make images specifically to be viewed on computers and not to be printed at all. I prefer the tactile, but I think that it's worthwhile in both in both mediums – I don't know. Are they different mediums?

**Tristan: Yeah, I don't know. It's quite a different experience I guess. Yeah, even about having a physical object. I think people have a reverence for physical objects and that's kind of shown in, you know, it's analogous, you know, the return of vinyl, do you know what I mean?**

Kate: Yeah.

**Tristan: People always bring this up, but it's true because I think people, like everything now is so dematerialised and just purely visual that people want to use their other senses too and I think there's something about being in the presence of something.**

Kate: Oh, let me show you something. That just makes me think – it's a photobook. It's a bit dirty now. So, this book, it's just a black box, but it's like there isn't really a strict narrative in it, but it's so, it moves between black and white images and colour images and then they just throw orange in the middle. It only works as a photobook. I just can't imagine it working any other way.

**Tristan: Do you think there's some kind of colour frequency thing, like there's a science behind putting in those random…**

Kate: I don't know because he also has these random texts – you can't see on it – it's embossed, so you have to feel it to see it. You have to touch it. Even the way that it's bound, so it lays totally flat – it's just a map of the area he photographed in.

**Tristan: It's just very smart.**

Kate: When you're asking about inspiration. I mean this book, I don't know even what he's trying to say really, but I feel something every time I look at it, so yeah, looking at something like this, I don't even understand, I mean, he's got little bits of text – 'little weird things are happening in the weather', 'these are all the signs' – I don't even know what he's talking about!

**Tristan: It's like Haiku! You can tell it means something but…but what?**

Kate: And he's got this picture of a guy with a really bad tattoo of a penis on his back,but it's just amazing!

**Tristan: Hahaha! Sorry, who is the photographer?**

Kate: His name is Hekiki, he's Scandinavian, Heikki Kaski. But he won the dummy award for the Unseen Photo Festival. It's just such a great book. I don't think he's made anything else actually.

**Tristan: It's interesting what you were saying about the embossed text actually. You need to touch it. It requires that interaction…It's interesting in other talks that I've had, discussions have always gone back to the retrospective, which is all well and good and I think so e retrospectives of a photographer's work can be really good and they can be laid out in a really interesting fashion, but it's not actually, I suppose, taking full advantage of what a book can do, as like a tactile, physical object, you know, as opposed to be just like an index, or you know, a receptacle for someone's work, like actually using the book to present it in an interesting way, yeah, expansive…**

Kate: That's what so many photobooks are now. You see in festivals, you see that they are actually the artist's realisation of how they want to show the work, you know.

**Tristan: Totally, totally. Like that is actually the thing, isn't it? It's not a substitute…**
Kate: It's not just like a, what do you call it? A pamphlet or something you get in exhibitions…

**Tristan: Like the catalogue?**
Kate: A catalogue. It's not a catalogue. It's the actual – this is the way they want to show their work and this is kind the exact way and working with different, with different designers, working with different ways to actually show the work. Being very, very specific. I mean I spent a long time deciding who I wanted to design my book, you've got to be very specific – you're trying to figure out what feeling you're trying to get your audience to, what's going to evoke.

**Tristan: Totally. Cool, thank you, thank you. Umm, OK. This is a tricky one. Again, just try to answer it – there is no wrong answer. How would you define the photobook as a resource stroke object – what is a photobook?**

Kate: What is a photobook? Not a catalogue.

**Tristan: OK, great.**

Kate: I think what I just said, I think a photobook is something that the artist, the photographer, has created specifically as a final outcome of their project. That's what I think a photobook is.

**Tristan: OK. Cool. Excellent. Yes, because in the literature, just from the stuff that I've read – there is a lot of debate about this, like people kind of like, Raplh Prins said 'the autonomous art form' which I think is a really great way of saying – it's like it's its own thing. Like everyone always criticizes the Parr Badger definition because it doesn't put enough emphasis on the importance of text and all of this other stuff, so there's lots of critical debate. I think your definition is good actually, so thank you.**

Kate: If you want to interview somebody else, my friend Yussay, he's a Portuguese guy, he just did his PhD about photobooks…

**Tristan: No way! Could you give me his email address?!**

Kate: Sure.

**Tristan: OK, do you feel the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography?**

Kate: Yes.

**Tristan: OK**.

Kate: Of course, of course. Like *Raised by Wolves.* I was talking about these traditional or older photobooks. *Raised by Wolves* was the book that made me understand what you could do with photography.

**Tristan: Sure.**

Kate: If I hadn't seen that book, I would never have gone to Newport.

**Tristan: OK.**

Kate: Seriously. So, yeah, hugely important. And I, that was in Griffith College where I'd studied for a year, just a technical kind of course. And I went back there two years ago to give a guest lecture, you know in a classroom and I went to the library and I got that book out and I talked to them about that book for 20 minutes because that's what got me into it, so yeah, books are, so photobooks, I think, are really, really important. And you have that opportunity to bring it home and, whatever, sit on your bed with a cup of coffee and just take time over it and look back and reflect and you're not in a gallery where you're a bit, maybe nervous or uncomfortable, especially if you're just starting photography or just starting in art, so you have that time.

**Tristan: Yeah, exhibitions can ben kind of, they're a little bit weird, some are just downright oppressive! I'm remember Katie and I, my girlfriend and I, went to a Gursky show in Tokyo and literally, of course they're just enormous, they're stupidly big, and they had lines on the floor where you couldn't pass and I remember at one point Katie lent over the line to have a closer look and one of the gallery assistants came and ushered her back and it added to the whole thing, this kind of, dystopian thing he's going for, or… but yeah, they can be quite weird experiences I suppose. And like you were saying the photobook, you can read it at home, and there's an intimacy there I suppose. It's safe and comfortable.**

Kate: And it's on your time, it's on your time.

**Tristan: Totally. Cool. OK, photobooks have reportedly experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years, why do you think this is?**

Kate: I think it's because, it's people kind of taking control over their own work, you know, I mean it's because of self publishing, traditionally if you want to get published by a big publishing house like Roulad or Dewis Lewis or something, that's like £10-15,000 and that's out of your pocket and you're paying them. To publish your book. And then obviously getting

into galleries, it's very hard to get exhibitions in galleries, it's financially quite a burden to get all of your work printed and framed and self publishing, small publishing house have popped up, so if it's actually financially a way you can get your work out there into the world.

**Tristan: Yeah, it's a great means of dissemination.**

Kate: Exactly.

**Tristan: It's perhaps more within reach, but is it a creative control thing as well, do you think?**

Kate: Yeah, I'd say so. I mean most of the people I know that have self published, that have made books over the last few years have all self published and they have all worked with designers, because I don't really know anyone that's a great graphic designer and a great photographer, so you're taking control saying this is kind of the physical book that I want, but you're working with a graphic designer to get a high quality, and get input from someone who actually knows how to make a book.

**Tristan: Totally.**

Kate: But yeah, I think so, I think so. I don't know, a lot of people are talking about the photobook world, that it's getting, kind of, overrun. That there's so many books, you can't even, it's really ahrd to find the good ones.

**Tristan: OK, OK, yeah.**

Kate: I remember Paris Photo last year, they have, I can't remember where it is, but they have all the book publishers, so small book publishers up to Dewis Lewis and Kehrer Verlag. And it's a massive room, there's probably about hundred different publishers and on each table there's probably about 20 books or 30 books and people are kind of doing it by the publisher, so I like the books they do. But it's strange that doesn't even work, like Kehrer Verlag, because I was talking to him about producing my book with him, but I would have come with a designer, so I would have given a fully designed book so they just put their stamp of approval on it.

**Tristan: That's interesting. It's almost like record labels in a way.**

Kate: Yeah!

**Tristan: Like Motown!**

[Following section omitted due to lack of relevant topicality)

**Tristan: OK, final question. Last one! Do you have a personal photobook collection?**

Kate: Yes, of course.

**Tristan: Is it substantial or…?**

Kate: I would say…maybe 100, maybe 80 to 100.

**Tristan: Wow, that's quite big. Far bigger than mine.**

Kate: Well, I've done loads of swaps as well though.

**Tristan: Ah, OK.**

Kate: That's the good thing about having a book, you can swap. I would say about 80. But I've been very specific. I was collecting when I started working on the book so that was like 2011, I think or 2012. I started buying load of books then because I actually had a wage then as well. And now I don't so much, haha.

**Tristan: Well, yeah, sure. They're expensive though, right?! And they accrue value really quickly too. Like, I don't have any disposable income on account of just being perpetually skint because of studying, because, yeah, I guess you pay the price, right?! There's been a couple of books I've look at – is it *Excerpts from Silver Meadows,* you know, by Todd Hido, the big book, it's this diary-esque, and it's a stunning book. I saw an exhibition in Tokyo and I'd seen the book and it was totally affordable – like £40 or £50, and now you can buy a copy which is like ripped and it's over £100 – bizarre! It's quite a mark-up.**

Kate: That's a strange thing, as well. I remember, I think it was in Paris Photo as well, Alec Soth put out this newspaper, and he was there and I could only afford his newspaper, I couldn't afford his book, so I asked him to sign it and he wouldn't sign it; he was like, no, I've created this so it's affordable for people, once I sign it, it changes the price on it. I guess if anybody bought a book of mine, I would sign, but some people you have to ask them specifically or it can be an extra cost, I don't like any of that. But I guess he's right, people are probably buying his books, getting them signed and then selling them on, but even I was thinking a friend of mine, he's a photographer here, but I'm not interested in his photography, but he's doing very well  and he had his book launch a couple of years and I went to it and I was like, I don't want the book, but I could buy the book, he's my friend, he could sign it for me and then keep it for a couple of years and then sell it, but it just feels really wrong. I know in a couple of years, I'll be thrilled you know.

*[Last section cut due to irrelevance]*

<u>MA Graduate - Anonymous</u>

**Tristan: Where do you look for inspiration?**

J: Generally, going on Facebook and Social Media and seeing how well my friends are doing. I mean, if a friend wins an award or something or des a really great project, you're like I need to make work. Or if I go to an exhibition and yeah, often I go to stuff and I just really want to get home and make my own work. Or even just, I don't really go to Instagram that much though, sometimes, Social Media can just take over your life. So I try not to let it, but yeah I guess just going online and see that everyone else is making work just inspires me to make work. I have some books, I means sometimes I buy books

of people I really like, so sometimes I just go through them and just feel like, it's not even the work that inspires me, but just seeing that people have made work, if that makes sense?

**Tristan: Yes, totally, just seeing that people have been productive..**

J: Yeah, it just pushes me on, so I feel like I should make some work.

**Tristan: What do you think about Instagram as a platform? People seem to use it quite a lot now.**

J: Yeah, and I hear a lot of people get a lot of good jobs and stuff from Instagram. I don't have that many followers. It's good, like the project in the Black Country that I've been doing, I found people for the project on there. And I'm just starting a new project now about Watford, I can't start till January, but I've been looking through the tags for Watford for inspiration. Which I've never really done before till last night, but actually I think it's a good place to try to find people to photograph for my project. (Not clear). I feel like it's good, it cuts out a lot of, I mean I think a lot of people do use it a lot more textually now than I do, like using effects. But yeah, I don't have time for everything. I guess I use Twitter a lot more now actually.

Next section cut – irrelevant.

**Tristan: Do you know of any key photographic resources online? So specific websites or blogs, it could be social media…**

J: Yeah, Photomonitor. Do you know Photomonitor?

**Tristan: I think I've heard of that. This is interesting actually because everyone I've asked has given me different sites I haven't heard of.**

J: Yeah. I think with most of these resources, I go on them, but I probably don't read as much as I'd like to because I just have no time, but the kind of things I look at – Photmonitor has essays, portfolios, reviews. Photoworks – they're quite good for interviews – I do like to read some of them. Photocaptionist – which is just like text and images.

**Tristan: OK, Photocaptionist? So, is it just like people uploading their work and talking about it?**

J: It's Frederica, I don't know how to say her last name, but she started it for her PhD, but now it's kind of taken on a world of it's own. Um, again it's probably another site I should go on more than I do. But I'm aware it's there, but yeah, I follow all these people on Twitter. I guess I use the Tate website sometimes and the archives, but there's some American archives – I can't think what they are – oh yeah, the Museum of Modern Art Archives. 1000 Words, again all these things …

**Tristan: What about Conscientious? Do you follow that guys stuff?**

J: Probably more on Twitter. I think I mainly just go on Twitter and click on articles to be fair. Because I think that's just, Facebook, I just follow like BJP – if you could call that a photography resource – there's lots of interviews…Photography Now is good for seeing what exhibitions are on…Yeah, I guess I mainly just go on Twitter and see what everyone else is saying about stuff….even the Guardian, I think the Guardian is good.

**Tristan:  Yeah, yeah. The Sean O'Hagan guy…they do cover some good stuff.**

J: Yeah

**Tristan: OK, did you make use of the library when you were studying at UAL?**

J: Yeah, I did. For my dissertation I did. Well, it was a critical context paper. Because I generally find writing essays I get distracted at home, even on my BA I'd just go into to uni to work on my papers because, but yeah I'd also go for inspiration – they had a lot of Sophie Calle books, I'd just go to that bit and just sit there because a lot of them you couldn't actually take out, some of the books were reference only…

**Tristan: Sure, because of the size or…?**

J: I think maybe just because they were quite expensive and people would just try to run away with them. It's fair enough. You can imagine poor students selling ripped books…Yeah that section. Yeah I used to just go and pull out random books or just…

**Tristan: Like browsing or?**

J: Or try to do research, use a computer. So I did use it a lot actually. So I could apply for membership after I left, like, a two year thing. But I never got round to it. I think at that point I was like – it felt like too much hassle.

**Tristan: Sure, totally. Was it a good library in your opinion? How did it compare to Newport for example?**

J: I quite liked it because, oh I could also use the other libraries so I used to go to King's Cross a lot because it had all the performing arts books and I used to go to, I used Goldsmiths a couple of times because that was the closest one to me. Was it Goldsmiths? What's the small one?

**Tristan: Camberwell?**

J: Yeah, Camberwell. I went to that because it was closer to where I lived at the time. I used to go there to write. I looked at a couple of books there maybe, but they didn't fit. I eman the Newport library was good because it had a lot of photography books, but I feel UAL had a lot more other art books and maybe Newport did but I wasn't really ready for that at that point – my brain was just like – photography. Now my brain thinks in broader ways.

**Tristan: Do you ever use public libraries?**

J: Yeah, I was just thinking that, I used to. When I lived in Camden I did, I had a big Pre-Raphaelite phase so I used to go to the library for those books. And then Brixton I did as well, but I think that was more for just general reading, but now I haven't signed up to my nearest library yet. I applied to, but never got round to actually going, so I need to actually go…

**Tristan: Do you know of any photographers with an active online presence or who use social media extensively?**

J: Everyone.

**Tristan: Good answer! Is there anyone in particular who has pioneered that approach or who you feel has…**

J: I don't about pioneered, but it's like, also I feel like algorithms, like for certain people – they always come up – like my friend Alma Hassar  I feel she's got a really strong following. Lewis Bush, I think he uses it really well. Abi Smith. Kajal Nisha Patel, but I think it's just like people like Abi and Kajal because they often talk about feminist issues and stuff, so it makes me think of them more as well. But I feel like you need to have an online presence, so I do, but I don't do it very well, but I think it's part of the ting. You need to have it. And I do enjoy it, but sometimes I just feel very awkward.

**Tristan: Sure, it's quite – I don't want to say exhibitionist, but by it's very definition**

J: That's the thing with Twitter, I don't always want to be me, me, me, so I try to post interesting articles as well. I feel like I need to say other stuff as well. But I know other people don't.

**Tristan: Yeah, I know people who have separate Twitter accounts for their photography work and their personal ranting, if you know what I mean?**

J: Yeah, I rant sometimes.

**Tristan: I now that sounds really cynical.**
J: It sounds like too much work!

**Tristan: Yeah, almost like a split personality! Not in the psychosis sense, but it does seem like a lot of work….**

J: I would say that I post different stuff on different things, so on my Facebook I don't really add randoms to it, but I just started to post on it again recently, but I feel like I would post stuff on there that I wouldn't post in other places.

**Tristan: It's a different tone isn't it – between Twitter and Facebook. I tend to thinking posting photographs on Facebook is a terrible idea – just because of the resolution – there is that technical side to it.**

J: Yeah, and now with Twitter, it's like they can just steal your pictures and stuff, so it makes me feel like I don't want to post my pictures on there. So I feel like that's changed it a bit.

**Tristan: Cool, so do you read any periodicals or magazines? I'm talking about physical items here.**

J: Yeah, well I had a subscription to BJP this year, but I feel like I don't have the time to read them properly, so I've cancelled my subscription. I don't really like it as a magazine, so I'm planning on moving away in a couple of years, so it's just more stuff to get rid of. So it's more for that kind of thing. That's something I used to do at the library actually, I used to read the magazines – because they had that magazine section – I did actually like doing that. There's a lot of good magazines, but I just feel like like I just end up buying them all and never had time to read them all, so it just felt like a waste of money.  So I think now, I'm trying to buy more e-books now.

**Tristan: OK, that's interesting…**

J: Because I know I'm moving away in a couple of years…

**Tristan: What? Like fiction…?**

J: Yeah, I mean art books I wouldn't buy as e-books, but I feel like fiction and biographies I'm trying to buy more as e-books now or like theory or whatever.

**Tristan: Have you got any photography or art books as ebooks?**

J: I don't think so. There's some you can download – I think like the Max Incas books – you can download as PDFs, so I think I've got them somewhere, but I don't think I've gotten around to looking at them. That's the thing, I think as a book it's easier to not lose it, because I think they just get lost on your phone. I mainly have Portuguese books and…I mainly bought, I mean you get a lot of classics for free now so I've got lots at home that I haven't read, but they're mainly free so I might as well get them.

**Tristan: Yeah, Katie is the same – she's reading Moby Dick.**

J: Yeah, I've got that on my phone, but I haven't read it yet. So yeah, I wish I read more magazines, but I don't. I read what they put online.

**Tristan:  Do you consider the blog to be a useful tool? As a photographer?**

J: I made blogs, like private ones, to help me work on projects before so I feel like it depends on what you use it for..I don't really have an active blog now – I just use the news section of my website. I guess maybe that's a blog in a way. It combines it. Maybe people read it more because it's on my website. But for my project *Neblina* I had a blog for all the information because I was writing a diary and I wrote it up onto the blog. I do have a Tumblr that I keep forgetting to use, I keep thinking I should get back into it, but I just, maybe today I'l start using it again. But I think maybe the blog has been replaced, maybe, but I think maybe it depends what you do. If you're a writer…but, I don't know. I guess some photographers do use it well as well. But it's too much time, I just put it on my website. If I want to write a blog now, I'd just put it on my website in the news section.

**Tristan: OK, lets talk a little bit about your website as well. How long have you had that website?**

J: This one is new this year. I had my other one since 2010. I felt like it was time for an update.

**Tristan: And do you spend a lot of time looking at other photographer's websites?**

J: Not really. I guess I have phases. I guess I just look at other peoples Instagrams now. And then I might have a quick look at their website.

**Tristan. Cool, cool. What are your feelings about the computer as a medium for viewing photographs? So are you particularly precious about….OK, so yeah – I don't want to lead your answer…**

J: I rarely print that much of my work to be fair. So I think I mainly use the computer.

**Tristan: Has that changed over time?**

J: Not really. I think I never really printed much. Though, I'd like to get a printer. I think I just get a bit scared of printing places and I just have a pile of work anyway. I feel I print less. I depends on the opportunities that come up, but yeah I'm not really precious about it…

**Tristan: How do you feel about the difference – is there any kind of perceivable difference, in your opinion, for you, between looking at a print and looking at an image on the screen.**

J: It's definitely different. I mean prints are nice. But, again, it's just the issue of space and money. I mean I still print a portfolio – it goes out of date. I think it's just I produce quite big projects.

**Tristan: What about the difference – I mean if you're going to look at another photographer's work, why do you go to exhibitions? I know that's an expansive question….**

J: Yeah, I think it's different, yeah that's obviously different to looking at it on the screen – especially if the pictures are massive. I mean you're not going to get the same…yeah, I guess exhibitions just make it a whole different thing. It makes it an experience. And you need to get away from the computer sometimes if you spend too much time at a computer. But yeah, I do like prints. I guess my own work….

**Tristan: Do you think there's a spatial consideration? I mean when I look at pictures on a screen, sometimes you're looking at one picture at a time and sometimes you're scrolling….**

J: Yeah, yeah. I guess in exhibitions you probably spend more time looking at something – especially if you've travelled there. Sometimes you go to an exhibition and you're done in 5 minutes.

**Tristan: Yeah, totally.**

J: Yeah, that's why I try to go to Private Views - just to make it more of an experience. Because, otherwise, you just go really far for 5 minutes.

**Tristan: Is there a social element to tat for you then? Do you chat to people?**

J: If I see someone I know, I don't just go up to random people. I wish I could do that. When I first came to London, I used to spend time just awkwardly hanging around exhibitions looking for someone to talk to and then just going home disappointed! But yeah, now generally I'll recognise someone, but sometimes I don't and I'm quite surprised if I go to an opening and don't see someone I know. It's more for an experience. To see them in a different form.

**Tristan: OK, cool. Great Answer. OK, how would you define the photobook as a resource or object?**

J: I guess it depends on the photobook. I mean, some are like retrospectives which I quite like. I mean, that's generally the kind of photobooks I buy now. How would I define it as a resource? I mean some are just like a mini exhibition; some are like a portfolio. Does that answer it?

**Tristan: Sure, sure. Have you ever wanted to make a book?**

J: I've made a book.

**Tristan: OK, another book?!**

J: Yeah, I've thought about it, I just don't have time. Once I make projects, I get bored with them quite quickly, so I feel like by the time I have time to work on it, it will already be over and I'll be on to the next project.

**Tristan: Why did you want to make a book?**

J: I think just the right opportunity came up, I mean someone who could help me – you know I met them and they were like 'lets make one'. The idea was then that I'd just keeping making them, but then I just messed up quite a lot and I have so many just sat in my cupboard so I don't know if I...I will make another photobook, but I just don't know when. I feel like maybe I'm just sitting waiting for the retrospective which probably won't happen for 20 years, but I feel that work would work better as a big book now.

**Tristan: Isn't interesting that you say that – so a retrospective being like one photographer – a lot of their work from over the span of their career….**

J: Yeah, so I just got the Roger Ballen book, I haven't looked at it yet – it was part of my birthday present, but I haven't looked at it yet.

**Tristan: What about books that, it's like a body of work that is presented as a book, like one particular project – so I guess like *The Americans,* for example, so do those books interest you?**

J: It just depends, I'm just trying to think if I have any. I guess because now I'm just trying to not get so many because I'm worried about moving and stuff – I generally just buy retrospectives – I've got both of Sophie Calles big books. I've got a book about Dwayne Michaels. Francesca Woodman, wait – do I have a book about Francesca Woodman? I feel like I do.

**Tristan: How about something like *Raised by Wolves* by Jim Goldberg*?***

J: I haven't looked at that in so many years, I don't really have an opinion. I remember at uni that was the book everyone was looking at.

**Tristan: I'm just thinking about that interaction between picture and text – which is theoretically possible in some form in an exhibition…**

J: I like captions – some people feel cheated by captions, but I quite like them. I feel like, it's alright to be like – 'I feel this', but I just want to know what it's about. What the photographer was thinking. Some people are like – 'there should be no text, you should be able to tell everything' and I feel like photography is a great medium, but I feel like it needs more sometimes. And I feel like there's no shame in needing that. I find with captions, I actually spend more time reading the captions than looking at the images, but then sometimes with images there's not that much to see. I guess I'm not really someone who looks that long at images. I'm just very, you know. I guess because we live in a society with so many images, it takes a really special image to make you look for longer.

**Next section – cut -  not relevant.**

**Tristan: So, if I said to you – exhibition or book?**

J: I think I'd probably go for exhibition. I feel like the books, I buy books, but I don't really look at them to be fair. I buy them because I like the person and I like the idea of having the book, but I never get around to looking at them.

**Tristan: OK. That's interesting**

J: Maybe I should dedicate more time to looking at them.

**Tristan: It's difficult though isn't it? Frankly, I can't remember the last time I read for pleasure – that might just be because of studying, but…**

J: I'm trying to make more time for that.

**Tristan: It's tricky. I'll skip to the last question actually. You've mentioned a few times about books you own. Is it a particularly large collection of photobooks?**

J: I wouldn't say it's large. I'd say...

**Tristan: How many?**

J: Probably 50.

**Tristan: 50? Wow, that's quite a few….**

J: Well, I have a lot of small books that my friends made and I have zines, that kind of stuff. Chris Nunn – I like his work. So I have a couple of zines by him. I also have like a collection of books I've printed – like my archive – so that makes it even more actually. So, I worked for a photographer who had like basically every magazine, a fashion photographer, and he had an archive of every magazine he'd been in. And then I already had one, but then I thought no one else is keeping a collection of the stuff I've been in, and probably no one cares anyway, so I thought it was a nice thing to have.

**Tristan: Sure, and it's nice to see your work in different contexts as well. Do you feel that photographs, kind of, behave differently – so we were talking about the screen, the exhibition and the book – do you feel that an image behaves differently depending on where it's put?**

J: I guess so. Yeah, it depends a lot on context because that can really change people's perceptions of it. I guess it depends on what the book is and it depends – if you just put it next to someone else's random image and it can totally change perception of it which I find interesting. I'm interested in design too, but I'm just not any good at it.

**Tristan: It's a separate art isn't it?**

J: Yeah, but in terms of photobooks, some people are really precious about their books and there can't be anything wrong with them, but I'm really bad at keeping things nice. I generally just buy a lot of second hand books anyway. One of my Sophie Calle books is an ex-library book because it was a lot cheaper – I mean they sell for like £120 and I got it for £40.
Tristan: I saw one of her shows in Tokyo…

J: I feel like I'd rather have the book and if it's an ex-library book I don't have to worry about keeping it super nice. Whereas if you buy a brand new book, I would never spend £120 anyway, but actually, yeah, a lot of my books are ex-library books. Unless I get a really good deal.

**Tristan: They're really expensive aren't they? So, in your opinion, do you think the photobook is a resource of particular significance to students of photography?**

J: I think definitely, especially when you're first starting out you just look at as much photography as possible and a lot of these exhibitions you're never going to see, probably. Yeah, I don't see why it wouldn't be, especially when you have a massive library – it's just a really good source of inspiration or research. Because I feel like especially when you start out, you need to research, maybe you don't,

I'm just trying to remember if I did. I always used to enjoy looking at photobooks. Especially if you want to start thinking about making your own and I know a lot of students make their own photobooks as well.

**Tristan: That's seems to be an established part of so many courses now, they have a term of making photobooks or something.**

J: Well, exhibitions are expensive and generally you know, it's a one-time thing, why not show it again. I mean if you're really bad at promoting yourself and you have a stack of pictures you've only shown once – a photobook lives a lot longer – you can use it as a portfolio – it has multiple uses. It is more expensive in the long run, but I think like if people buy the books then you make the money back. But obviously everyone makes a photobook now and it's hard to stand out but I guess if you have your own audience it doesn't really matter.

**Tristan: That's interesting. Why do you think it is that everyone makes photobooks now?**

J: Because it's cheaper than exhibitions. And you can send it around the world because there's so many photobook exhibitions now…

**Tristan: A wider means of dissemination…**

J: Yeah…it's like Arles, you know? All the books that are made in the year, people send them to Arles so then how many people go to Arles? So many people can see your book there. I mean there's so many books, they probably won't look at it, you know, I mean probably 100 people are going to look at it if not more. So you never know what comes from it, I guess.

**Tristan: OK, so this one is perhaps related – photobooks have reportedly seen a resurgence in popularity in recent years – why do you think this is?**

J: I think because now there are cheaper options – I mean the buy on demand ones – there's some debate about how good they are…

**Tristan: Like Blurb?**

J: Yeah, but you can have a photobook within a week.

**Tristan: Yeah, it's impressive.**

J: And people do like DIY, people have zines and stuff. I think people are just realising that exhibitions are just really expensive and don't necessarily lead to anything.

**Tristan: Do you reckon there's any kind of relation to the Internet in that? Do you think the Internet plays a role?**

J: Well, you can have your own shop online, so you can just sell – I guess it's just an easier way to promote your work and if you have a book, you can send it to magazines for reviews and stuff – there's like some archives – Self Publish Be Happy, Indie Photobook Archive, you can send your book to libraries all round the world... photofestivals… I just feel like it's another way to promote yourself. If you have an online store, you can make your money back or make profit. People can start investing in you, I guess.

**Tristan: Awesome. Thank you very much.**