The Oxford Paperback Dictionary

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As the publication date approached for the paperback version of my history of the Oxford English Dictionary – now available from all good booksellers! – I found myself, perhaps inevitably for a lexicographer, thinking about the word itself. Paperback, that is. It occurred to me that it’s actually a rather odd word for what it is, since it’s not just the back of the book, but the whole cover, that’s made of…well, not paper exactly, but something more like cardboard. But of course nobody says ‘cardcover’. (Actually strictly speaking some people do say ‘card cover’ but they use it to mean a co