
CURL/SCONUL Digest of Scholarly Communication News

Fredrick J. Friend
Honorary Director, Scholarly
Communication, University College London,
JISC Consultant, OSI Information Program
Senior Consultant
Tel: 01494 563168
Email: ucylfjf@ucl.ac.uk

This is taken from the CURL/SCONUL Digest of Scholarly Communication News of February/April 2005. This online newsletter (supplied to SCONUL representatives in member libraries) is a service provided by the CURL/SCONUL Group on Scholarly Communication for internal distribution to staff of library and information services in SCONUL institutions.

The Group also encourages the use of the 'Digest' to inform academic staff within universities in the UK and Republic of Ireland of developments in scholarly publishing.

CURL/SCONUL DIGEST OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION NEWS - FEBRUARY 2005

Looking back at 2004 and forward into 2005: a personal view from the digest's editor

Most members of the library community are looking for some kind of change in scholarly communication, be it a fall in journal prices, better licensing conditions or more fundamental structural changes. How did we fare in 2004? All of our concerns received more publicity in 2004 than they have done for many years, largely through the UK Parliamentary Inquiry, which reported on a wide range of possible changes from improved purchasing arrangements through to open access. Media attention largely focused on the more radical changes, particularly open access, but library concerns in general gained a higher profile. Did this higher profile result in any real change or has the moment passed?

The UK general election seemed likely to divert the attention of Members of Parliament away from the concerns of librarians. The Government Response to the Science and Technology Committee Report has not helped to maintain the momentum for change but on the other hand there is no evidence that it has delayed changes already happening. The university repositories already established are continuing to acquire content, the number of open access journals is still rising, and organisations such as JISC are maintaining their scholarly communication programmes. The pressure to secure improvements in pricing and licensing of electronic journals is continuing, and a more determined approach in 2003 not to accept steep price rises did lead to marginally-improved offers from publishers for 2004 subscriptions. In brief, we cannot rely upon external forces to shape the future; if more is to be achieved in 2005 the power is in the hands of the library community.

On the international stage, there were significant steps during 2004 in several European countries to support open access, and authorities in continental Europe appear more ready to accept change in scholarly communication than those in the UK. The US situation was dominated by the debate over the proposal by NIH (National Institutes of Health) for deposit of journal articles in PubMed Central, and that debate demonstrated the power publishers can exercise through (probably high) expenditure on lobbying. Naively, perhaps, the UK library community underestimated the power of the lobbying machine over decisions following the parliamentary report, but that power was seen at its most naked in the debates in the US. If we want change of any form in pricing, licensing or in the structure of scholarly communication, the library community must pay more attention to advocacy and lobbying. The forces arguing for the 'status quo' or for accepting what is offered are very powerful.

Final word on the Parliamentary report?

What could be the final document on scientific publications from the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee has been published as HC249. The brief document contains responses to responses to responses, i.e. a further exchange of views between the Committee and the Government, revealing that nothing much has changed in their attitudes. Perhaps the most hopeful sign of a change in the Government attitude comes in the following paragraph: 'The action the Government has decided upon is to facilitate a level playing field... This includes working with RCUK

(Research Councils UK) on a common policy that allows scientists to publish in an author pays journal when they want to do so'. This is the first acknowledgement that a level playing field does not already exist in the current system, and if the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) is willing to work constructively with RCUK and not block developments RCUK wishes to see, the Science and Technology Committee's recommendations may yet bear fruit. The document also contains a brief and predictable note from the Office of Fair Trading delaying any comment on the market for scientific publications until the study established by the European Commission has reported. Shades of 'Yes Minister'?

National Institutes of Health publication policy

As yet no official announcement has been made about the NIH proposal to recommend or require deposit in PubMed Central of copies of articles based upon NIH-funded research. An article appeared in the Washington Post of 18 January 2005 stating that the policy had been revised following pressure from publishers. If the article is accurate, the revision takes the form of extending the deadline for authors to deposit their work from six months to twelve months after publication, a situation which will not help those who require access to the research their taxes have paid for because many learned society publishers already allow free access after twelve months. The losers from this change are the US taxpayers, particularly those who have medical conditions for which they or their doctors require access to the most up-to-date information. Nobody gains from the change because the evidence is that a six-month deadline would have presented no greater threat to publisher income than a twelve-month deadline.

JISC repositories programme

The Call for Proposals under the new JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) Repositories Programme was published on 22 February. JISC has received a review of existing repository development conducted by AHDS (Arts and Humanities Data Service) and UKOLN (UK Office for Library and Information Networking) and the recommendations in this review are helping to finalise the shape of the Call for Proposals. Neil Jacobs has been appointed as Programme Manager.

JISC grants to publishers for open access transition

Following the success of the first year of the JISC open access transition programme, the decision has been made to award five publishers funds to support open access delivery for their journals. A total of £150,000 will be awarded to some of the key scholarly publications in their fields. These journals are: The new journal of physics (published by the Institute of Physics Publishing); Nucleic acids research (Oxford University Press); Journal of medical genetics (BMJ Publishing Group Ltd); the journals of the International Union of Crystallography (IUCr); and The journal of experimental botany (The Society for Experimental Biology). JISC funding will ensure the waiving of all or part of the submission/publication fees for all UK HE authors. The new journal of physics, the IUCr and the Journal of experimental botany were successful bidders in the first round of funding, these further funds enabling them to consolidate the considerable gains made during the first year of the programme. Preliminary results from the first year of the open access programme show that JISC funding has enabled significant advances to be made by the successful publishers and their journals in terms of submissions, access, visibility and costs.

JISC-negotiated free access to IOPP archive

JISC and the Institute of Physics have announced an agreement that will make the contents of the IOPP (Institute of Physics Publishing) Journals Archive between 1874 and 1998 permanently accessible to all UK HE and FE institutions. The Archive contains over 110,000 articles with information on some of the most important developments in physics research in the past 130 years. Full details on registering to receive the archive can be found by visiting the JISC website at www.jisc.ac.uk/coll_ioparchive.html. Registration for the Institute of Physics Journal Archive requires that a licence agreement is completed and if an institution is not already registered to receive electronic access to IOP journals, registration for the service is required.

JISC usage and business models studies

The JISC Journals Working Group has received draft reports on two important studies carried out by consultants. The study on usage of electronic journals looked at usage of packages of journals from several major publishers in a wide range of libraries, while the business models study analysed the strengths and weaknesses in existing

business models as well as looking at the potential strengths and weaknesses in possible new models. Both draft reports are being looked at in detail by working parties of the Journals Working Group and will be published in some form later this year. The studies are part of an overall strategy to provide JISC and the library community with a more reliable factual basis for decision-making in enabling access to electronic content. Other studies are being commissioned by the JISC Scholarly Communication Group.

Endangered Archive Programme

The British Library has launched a major new Endangered Archive Programme, a £10 million joint initiative between the British Library and the Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund to help save the world's endangered archives. The largest of its kind ever undertaken in the world, the programme will be administered by the British Library in conjunction with a panel of international experts deciding on the allocation of the grants. Institutions and academic researchers will be able to apply for grants to help identify endangered records and re-locate them to institutional archives in their local region. A copy will be maintained in a master archive at the British Library. This will ensure no original material is removed from its cultural home and copies will be accessible on an international basis. The Programme will also provide bursaries for overseas librarians and archivists for work attachments at the British Library to foster better archival management and preservation in the longer-term.

Google announces programme to scan older library books

The announcement that Google has negotiated the right to scan older books from five major research libraries has attracted considerable interest as well as raising a number of questions. The libraries involved are the university libraries of Harvard, Michigan, Oxford and Stanford as well as New York Public Library. Michigan and Stanford are placing no limit upon the number of volumes Google may scan. The New York Public Library is allowing Google to include a small portion of its books no longer covered by copyright while Harvard is confining its initial participation to 40,000 volumes. Oxford wants Google to scan all its books originally published before 1901. Scanning the number of volumes involved will be a daunting task, even for a company the size of Google. Some of the difficult issues involved are potential damage to rare volumes, the problems in scanning

text in obscure foreign languages and (of course) copyright. The proposal appears to be to include the metadata for the scanned books in Google's general search engine, providing links to the full-text if the volume is in the public domain. If successful the project could transform access to older monographs.

And finally, a message for publishers ...

Acknowledgment to RLG's 'Shelflife' for this item:

Putting books online can bump up sales

While many publishers fret that putting text online will cannibalise sales, many experts say that making books available electronically will actually motivate people to search out hard copy, either in the library or for purchase. 'People don't sit at a computer and read a book much,' says Carol Pitts Diedrichs, dean of libraries at the University of Kentucky. 'What we hope it will do is drive users to us to use our collections.' And Peter Givier, executive director of the Association of American University Presses, is equally optimistic: 'Most small publishers specialise, and what this does is put your specialty in front of a new audience.' Indeed, Amazon reports that after it started allowing shoppers to access book excerpts, sales for those books rose 9 percentage points more than those without in the first five days the feature was offered. (Kansas City Star 6 Jan 2005, <http://www.kansascity.com/mld/kansascity/news/nation/10579743.htm>)

CURL/SCONUL DIGEST OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION NEWS - APRIL 2005

Open access still in the public eye

Attention on public policy statements regarding change in scholarly communication has largely shifted towards the new RCUK publications policy, expected to be revealed any day now. The ability of RCUK to determine its own policy without undue influence from the Office of Science and Technology has become a political issue through the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report on 'The Work of Research Councils UK' (HC 219 <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/scrutinyreport.pdf>.) Referring back to the DTI's control over the Government Response to last year's report on scientific publications, the Committee report that 'Lord Sainsbury told us that Research Councils are 'totally independent' in their capacity to make policy on this front'. With a General Election imminent, it

seemed unlikely that the Government would risk another political row, and there were signs that the DTI is willing to take its commitment to create a 'level playing-field' in scientific publications seriously. One Member of the Science and Technology Committee, Dr Brian Iddon, also took the opportunity of a Debate on overseas development policy on 17 March to point to the importance of easy electronic access to scientific publications for researchers in Africa. Again referring to last year's report, Dr Iddon said: 'The Committee has been fighting—although, unfortunately, the Government are not yet convinced—for open access publications so that people in developing countries do not have to pay to access the most up-to-date scientific and medical information produced throughout the rest of the world.' (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmhansrd/cm050317/halltext/50317h01.htm#column_143).

Progress in Scotland

Changes in policy appear easier to achieve in Scotland, although the appearance of ease belies considerable effort by the Scottish library community working to influence political and academic leaders. The Scottish Declaration on Open Access last October (<http://scur.ac.uk/WG/OATS/declaration.htm>) has been kept in the public eye through an article in The Guardian of 14 March 2005 (<http://education.guardian.co.uk/elearning/story/0,10577,1437377,00.html>). The academic support for the Scottish Declaration is indicated in the words of Timothy O'Shea, Principal and Vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh: 'The University of Edinburgh wants to ensure that its research is as visible as possible within Scotland, the UK and the world. This open access initiative provides an important route to deliver this.'

Finnish Ministry of Education recommends open access.

On 18 March the Open Access Scientific Publishing Committee of the Finnish Ministry of Education issued a 38-page report on open access, of which an abstract is available in English at <http://www.minedu.fi/julkaisut/tiede/2005/tr08/kuvailu.html>. The Committee recommends the establishment of institutional repositories and the deposit by researchers of their publications in those repositories. The Committee also recommends that funding agencies should pay publication charges for publication in open access journals and that librarians should support these

developments by making open access metadata available. The Committee also makes its reason for supporting open access very clear: 'The aim of the recommendations is not to change the traditional standards used for evaluating the quality of scholarly publications, but to improve access to and the availability, distribution, visibility, usability and usefulness of the publications'. An article on the new report in CSC News, March 2005 by Kimmo Kuusela is available at http://www.csc.fi/lehdet/cscnews/cscnews1_2005.pdf.

French research agencies adopt repository policies

France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) (<http://www.cnrs.fr/>) - one of the world's largest national research institutes, covering virtually all scientific and scholarly disciplines, in a distributed network of individual research units - has now registered its commitment to implementing a CNRS institutional self-archiving policy. Another French research agency, INRIA (the French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control) (<http://www.inria.fr/>) is also about to launch an Open Archive dedicated to its scientific publications. About 2500 INRIA scientists will be strongly encouraged to use the INRIA repository for their research reports. In order to assist readers in tracing the research reports they need, France's Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (INIST) has created a series of portals that give researchers in CNRS access to subject-specific scientific and technical information. In 1999, INIST launched BiblioSciences, a multidisciplinary portal that provides access to a range of general and specialised bibliographic databases, and - following user-demand - INIST then developed subject-oriented portals. These portals make available the full text of open access and subscription articles. INIST also provides access to research assessment tools through another portal targeted at CNRS research assessors.

More evidence of higher citations through open access

As open access publication is relatively new, evidence of use and citations will take time to emerge, but the signs are that open access results in heavier use and more citations than conventional publication. Much of the research on this topic is being conducted at the University of Southampton, but a recent report by a Canadian researcher confirms the initial Southampton findings. The Canadian researcher is Chawki Hajjem and his French-language web-site is at www.crsc.uqam.ca/lab/chawki/ch.htm.

Particularly interesting amongst the Canadian's findings is that the higher citation levels for open access articles in repositories are not related to the impact factor of the journal in which the article is published - i.e. the reason for higher citation-levels is not that researchers are only depositing articles which appear in high-impact factor journals.

Launch of Beilstein open access journal

The Beilstein-Institut has announced the launch of the first major Open Access journal for organic chemistry. Beilstein Journal of Organic Chemistry will be published by the Beilstein-Institut in co-operation with BioMed Central. The peer-reviewed online journal will begin publication during 2005, and a call for papers will be issued in May. Director of the Beilstein-Institut Martin Hicks made the announcement at the American Chemical Society Annual Meeting in San Diego (a nice touch, given the ACS opposition to open access!). Professor Jonathan Clayden, of the University of Manchester, has been confirmed as the editor-in-chief, and an international editorial advisory board is also being appointed. The Beilstein Journal of Organic Chemistry will publish outstanding original research on all aspects of organic chemistry and related disciplines. As an Open Access journal, the Beilstein Journal of Organic Chemistry will offer the international community of organic chemists the opportunity to make their research results freely available immediately on publication. Supplementary data will also be published. The journal will be made freely available online, while an annual print archival edition will be available for purchase at cost.

New JISC scholarly communication studies

The JISC Scholarly Communication Group has commissioned four new studies to assist the academic community in understanding the changes taking place. The studies are: a guide to trends in scholarly publishing (to be undertaken by Key Perspectives); learned society open access business models (Mary Waltham); open access citation information (EPIC and Southampton University); and disciplinary differences and needs (RightsCom). The study reports are due late-June/early-July and will probably be made available through the JISC Website later in the summer.

Kaufman-Wills study for ALPSP, High-Wire and AAAS

Three publisher organisations – ALPSP, High-wire Press and AAAS – commissioned the Kaufman-Wills Group to study the effect of full open access and delayed open access business models upon publication policies. Preliminary results from the study are available in a Powerpoint presentation given at the London Book Fair (http://www.alpsp.org/2005ppts/oa_study_results_lbf.ppt). The study is based upon replies received from 85 delayed open access and 248 full open access journals. Twenty-two for-profit and not-for-profit publishers were also interviewed for the study. It is difficult to summarise a very full study, but one noticeable feature is that in terms of business models, the distinction between full OA and delayed OA journals is not as black-and-white as might be supposed but more varying shades of grey. For example, delayed OA journals seems to rely upon a certain level of payment from authors while many full OA journals are not totally-dependent upon income from authors.

Google scholar and CrossRef

Many organisations are talking to Google Scholar, and – if it succeeds – the importance of that service to everybody in the information world is recognised. Publishers are recognising the value of Google Scholar links to their content through CrossRef in order to attract users away from repository content. The latest CrossRef Newsletter states that ‘Google agreed with the principle that if there are multiple versions of an article shown in the Google Scholar search results, the first link will be to the publisher’s authoritative copy. Google would like to use the DOI as the primary means to link to an article so CrossRef and Google will be working on this as well as a template for common terms and conditions for use of publishers full text content’. (Ed Pentz, CrossRef Newsletter, 14 February 2004, <http://www.crossref.org/01company/10newsletter.html#anchor8>).

And finally...

Thanks to the Research Libraries Group’s *Shelflife* (now sadly ceased publication) for this item:

Pew study finds searcher misconceptions

A new study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project has found that only 1 in 6 users of Internet search engines can tell the difference between unbiased search results and paid advertisements. All of the major search engines return a

mix of regular results (based solely on relevance to the search terms entered) and sponsored links (for which a Web site has paid advertising fees). Only 38% of Web searchers are aware of the distinction, and of those fewer than half can always tell which are paid – even though they’re usually labeled by the search engines. Pew researcher Deborah Fallows says: ‘We’re still in the infancy of the Internet. People are still kind of so pleased that they can go there, ask for something and get an answer that it’s kind of not on their radar screen to look in a very scrutinising way to see what’s in the background there.’ (AP, 24 January 2005, <http://apnews.excite.com/article/20050124/D87QEK3O0.html>).