
RLUK/SCONUL digest of scholarly communication news

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This is taken from the 'Research Libraries UK/SCONUL Digest of Scholarly Communication News' of October and December 2008. This online newsletter (supplied to SCONUL representatives in member libraries) is a service provided by the RLUK/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.

No 'BLACK HOLE' FOR PHYSICS PUBLISHING – BUT AN OPPORTUNITY UNDER THREAT!

Unfounded fear of the end of the world caused by the new large hadron collider (LHC) accelerator at CERN is matched by unfounded fear of the demise of physics publishing caused by the new CERN-led SCOAP3 (Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics) model for physics publishing. Physics publishing will not disappear into a 'black hole'! The signs of a willingness by physics publishers to experiment with new publishing models are in the announcement by Elsevier, Springer and SISSA/IOP (International School of Advanced Studies and Institute of Physics) that they will publish the first results from the LHC on open access without requiring publication fees to be paid, and – although this was not related to the LHC – in the decision by the American Physical Society to launch a new open access journal, *Physics*. Before making a longer-term commitment to open access, publishers are looking for a willing-

ness by research institutions, funders or libraries to convert subscription payments into open access publication fees. SCOAP3 continues to receive new pledges of support from libraries across the world for its consortium-based open access model (see news of the latest SCOAP3 partners at <http://scoap3.org/>), but many libraries have still not decided on a willingness in principle to support the SCOAP3 model. Like the benefits from the LHC accelerator, the benefits from SCOAP3 will only be realised when the new model is at full power, the power for SCOAP3 coming from the support of libraries and publishers. The SCOAP3 model was designed specifically to meet the needs of disseminating research results from the LHC, and it is to be hoped that this opportunity will not be lost as the results from the LHC emerge.

Support for SCOAP3 is growing, though, and CERN now have pledges of support from research organisations and libraries who spend on subscriptions half of the 10 million euros per annum necessary to make the switch from subscription to OA publishing for the high energy physics journals. A similar world-wide commitment – albeit on a smaller scale – to finance the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* took around three years to secure the necessary funding. Meanwhile publishers continue to show interest in SCOAP3 if the model can be shown to be viable. *Europhysics Letters* has joined *European Physical Journal C*, *Nuclear Physics B* and *Physics Letters B* in offering OA publication free of charge to authors on a temporary basis. All now depends upon the willingness of other research organisations and libraries to express interest in joining SCOAP3.

'BIG DEALS' GIVE INVESTORS CONFIDENCE – AND LIBRARIES FUNDING PROBLEMS

Librarians may be glad to know that the big deals they sign up to are helping to restore economic confidence in these troubled times! An article in the business section of the *London Times* on Saturday 13 September considered media-sector stocks as possible good buys, and on the whole concluded that they are a risk, except for the following: 'RBS believes that the sector's more defensive stocks – such as Reed Elsevier, which has been able to lock in customers through multi-year deals – are worth sticking with.' The other side of this coin is that libraries locked into multi-year deals have to find extra funds to pay for changes in exchange rates at a time when the value of sterling is falling. The joint RLUK (Research Libraries UK)/SCONUL scholarly communications group would value information

from libraries about extra costs incurred due to exchange rate fluctuations.

NIH DEPOSIT THREATENED BY BILL

Meanwhile in the US a new threat to the increasingly successful deposit of publicly funded research into PubMed Central and other repositories has arisen through the introduction into the House of Representatives of a bill that would effectively reverse the NIH (National Institutes of Health) public access policy, as well as make it impossible for other US federal agencies to put similar policies into place. The legislation was introduced by representative John Conyers and is entitled 'Fair copyright in research works act' (<http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/pdf/HR6845.pdf>). The bill is drafted very broadly, aiming to change current US copyright legislation and prohibit the public availability of works resulting from public funds where there is 'meaningful added value' to the work by a third party (publishers would make such a claim). Several thousand biomedical articles per month are currently being deposited in PubMed Central, and the bill, if passed, would stop this flow of information to all US citizens and to many researchers outside the US who use the PMC database.

US PRESIDENTIAL VIEWS ON RESEARCH

It is reported that US President-elect Barack Obama has formed an inner circle of science advisers including Harold Varmus, a Nobel prize winner who has championed open access.

VENTUROUS AUSTRALIA: INNOVATION REPORT SUPPORTS OPEN ACCESS

A comprehensive review of innovation policy in Australia – <http://www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview/Documents/NIS-review-web.pdf> – contains the following amongst its many recommendations: 'Australian governments should adopt international standards of open publishing as far as possible. Material released for public information by Australian governments should be released under a creative commons licence ... A specific strategy for ensuring the scientific knowledge produced in Australia is placed in machine searchable repositories should be developed and implemented using public funding agencies and universities as drivers.' The review recommends that these specific measures should be introduced as part of a national information strategy 'to optimise the flow of information in the national economy'. For a British reader of the

review it is curious to read that 'to date progress in Australia [on open access] has been patchy and lacking the comprehensiveness and boldness of leading countries such as the UK'. Perhaps 'the grass is always greener'? In responding to the *Venturous Australia* report, Industry Minister Kim Carr said, 'The arguments for stepping out first on open access are the same as the arguments for stepping out first on emissions trading – the more willing we are to show leadership on this, the more chance we have of persuading other countries to reciprocate.'

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN WILL PRINT YOU A BOOK WITHIN MINUTES

With the installation of a state-of-the-art book-printing machine at one of its libraries, the University of Michigan is able to offer printed and bound reprints of out-of-copyright books from its digitised collection of nearly 2 million books, as well as thousands of books from the Open Content Alliance and other digital sources. The cost is about US\$10 per book and the service is available to researchers, students and the general public. The printing process takes between 5 and 7 minutes, depending on the number of pages. The University of Michigan was the first participant in the Google Book Search Program. For more information see the press release at <http://www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=6735>.

NEW RESEARCHER-LED DEVELOPMENTS AT UK PubMed CENTRAL

The eight leading biomedical research funding organisations that fund UK PubMed Central have consulted with researchers and authorised developments to the UK PubMed Central website (www.ukpmc.ac.uk) over the next three years. The developments will be carried out by the British Library, the University of Manchester and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory's European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI). Since being launched in January 2007, UKPubMed Central has grown to offer 1.3 million full-text, peer-reviewed research papers through its online digital archive. The new and improved features will include direct links to the 18 million records currently available on the US version of PubMed as part of the EBI's CiteXplore bibliographic tool, new ways to extract biological information from research papers using text analysis and data-mining tools, access to content not included in traditional journal literature such as clinical guidelines, technical reports and conference proceedings and an easy-to-use, intuitive inter-

face. Press release available at <http://www.bl.uk/news/2008/pressrelease20080916.html>.

IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY MANDATES OPEN ACCESS

The Higher Education Authority of Ireland has issued a policy statement requiring all its funded researchers to 'lodge their publications resulting in whole or in part from HEA-funded research in an open access repository as soon as is practical after publication, and to be made openly accessible within 6 calendar months at the latest, subject to copyright agreement'. The adoption of this policy follows a period of consultation and is in line with EURAB (European Research Advisory Board) and OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) recommendations. The text of the mandate is available at http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/Open%20Access%20pdf_.pdf.

MAX PLANCK SOCIETY AGREES PAYMENT OF PLoS FEES

The Max Planck Society have entered into an agreement with the Public Library of Science to pay the publication fees for all MPS researchers with articles accepted for publication in the PLoS open access journals. The initiative came from the Max Planck Digital Library, which is having a major influence upon open access developments in Germany. The PLoS journals have set high quality standards for their journals and clearly feel happy partnering with a major research organization like MPS. The press release is available at http://www.mpg.de/pdf/presseExtern/mpdl_pressRelease.pdf.

NEW SHERPA RoMEO FEATURES

SHERPA has announced the availability of three new features in its RoMEO service. The RoMEO homepage now includes a 'News' section, which has been added to help users stay up to date. The 'Recently added publishers' section allows users to benefit from being able to see the latest RoMEO additions at a glance. And RSS feeds are now available with the 12 latest additions to the RoMEO site. In addition, this information is now available in the form of an e-mail alerting service. If you wish to sign up for this service please contact Jane H. Smith at jane.h.smith@nottingham.ac.uk.

ARE WE ON THE ROAD TO FREE TEXTBOOKS?

They may only be straws in the wind easily blown away – but this year I have been noticing more messages on the various lists about the future of book publishing. The first message to make my antenna twitch was an announcement that a new book from Cambridge University Press, *Against intellectual monopoly* (on the economics of intellectual property) by US economists Michael Boldrin and David Levine, is available for a free download (we would not normally associate the topic of IP with a free download!). This announcement was followed in April by an ‘Open textbooks statement to make textbooks affordable’, signed by 1,000 professors from 300 US colleges. And a further sign that the book business model may be changing came when the *New York Times* published both an editorial on the high cost of textbooks – citing Rice University’s offer of free online textbooks to its students – and an article entitled ‘Don’t buy that textbook, download it free’. And on 22 September *New York* magazine suggested that there is a general crisis in the book-publishing industry in an article headed ‘The end’ (influenced by current gloomy predictions about the economy?). We should watch this space.

WILL THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC SITUATION CHANGE SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION?

Libraries in Europe and North America are reporting major budget cuts and reductions in spending power due to the global economic situation. In Europe (so far) the reduction in spending power is predicted to be due to the fall in exchange rates of some currencies against the euro and of European currencies against the US dollar. In the UK this effect will be mitigated very marginally by the temporary reduction in the value added tax (VAT) rate, which will make the cost of electronic content cheaper to purchase during 2009, but it is not so big a reduction as to negate the effect of exchange-rate fluctuations. In the US the problem lies not in exchange rates but in the substantial cuts in public funding for libraries, particularly at the state level. Libraries are reporting that cuts in endowment funding due to the fall in value of stocks and shares could mean a reduction in library funding of at least 10%. It is still unclear how libraries will deal with cuts of this magnitude. On both sides of the Atlantic opinion appears divided about whether the big journal deals are to be protected at all costs or whether the time has come to tell publishers that some of these deals can no longer be afforded. Opinion also appears divided on how to calcu-

late the value of purchases, with some librarians using measures like cost per download and others looking for new measures of value that relate to the benefit to research and teaching within their institution. An additional factor is the extent to which changes in the way research is undertaken, disseminated and assessed will influence library decisions. Will the growing interest by researchers in new forms of scholarly communication combine with funding problems to produce change, or will a conservative approach to research assessment produce funds for libraries to maintain the status quo? Comments to lis-sconul on these issues will be welcome.

LAUNCH OF EUROPEANA

Europeana, Europe’s multimedia online library, was opened to the public recently, and soon the service had to be withdrawn ‘due to overwhelming interest after its launch’. It is a sign of the low expectations of authorities regarding the need for public access to books and journals not available locally that the service was not designed to receive the use it did receive. When the service is restored, at www.europeana.eu, internet users around the world will be able to access more than two million books, maps, recordings, photographs, archival documents, paintings and films from national libraries and cultural institutions of the EU’s 27 member states. Between 2009 and 2011, some €2 million per year of EU funding will be dedicated to the expansion of this service. The European Commission also plans to involve the private sector in the further expansion of Europe’s digital library. *Europeana* makes it possible to search and browse the digitised collections of Europe’s libraries, archives and museums all at once. This means users can explore themes without searching for and visiting multiple sites and resources. *Europeana* is run by the European Digital Library Foundation, which brings together Europe’s major associations of libraries, archives, museums, audiovisual archives and cultural institutions, and the service is hosted by the Dutch national library, the Koninklijke Bibliotheek. Over 1,000 cultural organisations from across Europe have provided material for *Europeana*.

FREE GLOBAL LIBRARY OF WOMEN’S MEDICINE

The Global Library of Women’s Medicine has been launched online and is freely available to all. Over 650 world experts have provided a definitive resource on the latest therapeutic options in women’s medicine for doctors and women concerned about their health. The library is free to view

at www.glowm.com and consists of 442 main chapters and 53 supplementary chapters, supported by over 40,000 references, which will be kept permanently up to date. The chapters have been written by more than 650 specialists and will reflect some of the very best world-wide opinion. *The Global Library of Women's Medicine* is primarily designed for the medical profession but most of the information will also be accessible by anyone else who wants to try and understand more about the therapeutic options available to women. In addition, there are innovative features freely available to registered users – aimed at medical professionals – including surgical videos, specialist colour atlases of visual medicine, comprehensive guidance to laboratory tests and the significance of their results and an option to provide doctors with selected patient-information handouts. As an open access resource it is hoped that in addition to providing an expert resource for the medical profession in the Western world, it may also be of real value to doctors and others in parts of the developing world, where getting access to current clinical information has always been challenging. All the expert authors and editors of the *Global Library of Women's Medicine* have made their contributions without any form of financial remuneration – and the British publishers have originated, developed and implemented the site entirely from their own funds – in order to support this significant global initiative.

PAYING FOR OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATION

A recent JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) survey of biomedical authors and universities sheds light on the way in which open access publication is currently supported in the UK. A high proportion of the authors surveyed are interested in publishing in full or hybrid open access journals, and are managing to find ways and means of paying OA publication charges, although with haphazard support from their institutions or funders. Many universities responding to the survey request claim to be dealing with the issue of OA publication charges, although in some cases with no clear policy or mechanism in place and with a varied allocation of responsibility for the issue within the institution. The report on the survey is available at <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/aboutus/committees/workinggroups/scholarly-comms.aspx> under 'Documents and multimedia'. The JISC survey report will be included in the forthcoming report from the RIN (Research Information Network)/UUK (Universities UK) working group on OA publication charges, which will

make recommendations to all stakeholder groups on the issue.

ARL STUDY ON NEW MODEL PUBLICATIONS

A new Association of Research Libraries (ARL) study on *New model publications* looks across research fields and asks what new kinds of works researchers and scholars are using. The study involved two segments: the first phase – the field study – engaged librarian volunteers in arranging structured conversations with faculty members at their institutions to learn about new model publications that are currently in use by scholars and researchers, while the second phase consisted of interviews with selected managers of new model works and the preparation of a study report. ARL contracted with Ithaka to manage the field study and to write the final report, based on analysis of the collected works. The report provides a detailed picture of the patterns and trends that have emerged to date. The accompanying searchable collection offers 206 examples of new model works, along with descriptive information gathered for the study. Over 300 librarians participated in the field-study phase and interviewed hundreds of faculty members from across the disciplinary spectrum. They contributed records of more than 300 new kinds of scholarly works that are currently in use in a broad range of disciplines. The study is available at <http://www.arl.org/sc/models/model-pubs/pubstudy/index.shtml>.

GOOGLE AND PUBLISHERS SETTLE DISPUTE

The Authors Guild, the Association of American Publishers (AAP) and Google have announced a provisional settlement in their legal dispute over access to millions of in-copyright books from the collections of a number of major US libraries participating in Google Book Search. The agreement acknowledges the rights and interests of copyright owners, provides an efficient means for them to control how their intellectual property is accessed online and enables them to receive compensation for online access to their works. Compensation to authors and publishers will be provided through the creation of a book rights registry which will maintain accurate rights-holder information and enable rights holders to request inclusion in or exclusion from the project. The provisional agreement also includes arrangements for US universities to obtain subscriptions for online access to collections in libraries participating in Google Book Search, an application of the 'big deal' model to books rather than to journals. For this agreement Google will pay a

price of US\$125 million. Essentially the agreement reads as though Google have given in to publisher demands, perhaps considering that the price was worth paying in order to secure publisher support for Google Book Search. The problem with such short-term expediency is that there will be long-term consequences for the cost of access to the world's literature.

'GOOD NEWS' STORIES ON OPEN ACCESS

As open access to research publications becomes more prevalent, stories are beginning to be told of the benefits to research, teaching and learning of use of the open access model. One such story was told by Paula Callan at the recent 'Open access and research' conference in Brisbane. Paula described the experience of a chemistry researcher, Professor Ray Frost, who deposited 300 of his papers in the Queensland University of Technology repository and saw citations of his papers rise from around 300 citations in 2003 (the year before he made the repository deposits) to around 1,200 so far in 2008. Paula Callan and Alma Swan's presentation on 'OA: make it happen' (which contains some valuable advice on a range of repository issues) is available through <http://www.oar2008.qut.edu.au/program/>. Please send any similar 'good news' stories on open access to f.friend@ucl.ac.uk.

EUROPEAN COPYRIGHT MATTERS

The European Commission is now considering the responses submitted to its consultation on the copyright green paper. For many years the thinking of politicians and civil servants on copyright issues affecting academic users has been conditioned by constant and systematic lobbying by publishers, with only spasmodic input into the decision-making process from a handful of organisations pointing to the educational, social and economic value of strong exceptions to rights-holder control. The only really successful lobbying by the research community in recent years came in the form of the OA petition to the European Commission in 2007. However one sign of a possible change in the attitude of politicians came in the recent resolution by the EU Council entitled 'Council conclusions on the development of legal offers of online cultural and creative content and the prevention and combating of piracy in the digital environment'. The text of this resolution can be read at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/104198.pdf, but its significance lies in the order in which the ministers listed the

elements necessary to achieve a fair balance in copyright matters: 'The need to ensure a fair balance between the various fundamental rights, particularly the right to personal data protection, freedom of expression and information and the protection of intellectual property ...'. Is it reading too much into this wording to note that the protection of intellectual property now appears last in this list? Time will tell.

KEEP YOUR COPYRIGHTS!

A web-site set up by Columbia University illustrates the importance for academic authors of reading copyright contracts and not signing away all their rights. The web-site contains general information about copyright from a US perspective and sample clauses and contracts, 'some good some bad'. One particularly 'incredibly over-reaching' example of a contract is given at <http://keepyourcopyrights.org/contracts/clauses/example/60>, a contract which asked the supplier of content to a web-site to sign away moral rights (such as attribution) as well as all economic rights. How many UK academic authors know what they are signing every day?

AND FINALLY ...

... even the best people find it difficult to recognise an important development at first sight. In a presentation at the Berlin 6 Open Access conference, Paul Ginsparg of arXiv fame admitted his initial uncertainty about the world wide web development when he first heard of it. In an e-mail to a colleague at CERN on 13 November 1992, Paul wrote, 'I know nothing of www. What is it? Every other week someone tells me about some new wonderful network that I've never heard of but that will be the solution to everything.' Needless to say, Paul soon became enthusiastic about the WWW. His full presentation is at http://www.berlin6.org/?page_id=66.