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Open Access & Open Lives: The Changing Role of Academic Libraries

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Open Access & Open Lives: The Changing Role of Academic Libraries

Description

The ongoing impact of the Internet on library and information services cannot be understated. As with print journalism, the capacity and culture of networked life has transformed every aspect of the library profession, from technical to public services. In the past decade, the open culture and evolving technology of the Internet have created a set of user expectations that have presented libraries – particularly academic libraries – with opportunities to not only change their approach to traditional services, but to embrace new roles.

Disciplines

Library and Information Science

Comments

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Open Access & Open Lives: The Changing Role of Academic Libraries

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Introduction: Transformation of the Academic Library

The ongoing impact of the Internet on library and information services cannot be understated. As with print journalism, the capacity and culture of networked life has transformed every aspect of the library profession, from technical to public services. The first comprehensive examinations of the Internet's impact on libraries and library services began in the 1990s,¹ and by the turn of the century there was a considerable body of literature devoted to various dimensions of the topic. Not surprisingly, these examinations largely addressed the effect of the Internet on traditional library services and roles: cataloging/technical services, collection management, interlibrary loan, bibliographic instruction, and reference services.^{2,3}

These changes in traditional services are perhaps best exemplified by the changing nature of the library catalog. The transition from physical index cards to machine-readable records to networked catalogs alone has improved the process of bibliographic research phenomenally. With the Internet, libraries are able to provide remote access for their users not only to their local collections and catalog, but also to library collections around the nation and the world. With this capacity, metadata and resource description standards have become more important as numerous libraries contribute records to shared catalogs and local cataloging practices affect access for patrons across the world. However, while such Internet-induced changes in the library catalog are worthy of examination, these changes do not fundamentally alter the role of the catalog in library services.

¹ Liu, Lewis-Guodo. 2001. *The Role and Impact of the Internet on Library and Information Services*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

² See Note 1

³ Su, Di. 2001. *Evolution in Reference and Information Services: The Impact of the Internet*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press.

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Indeed, library literature in 2001^{4,5} reflects that, as much as the Internet had (to that point) changed the process and the possibilities of traditional library functions, the essential nature of library services remained the same: the acquisition, organization, and dissemination of and education about, information resources. In the past decade, though, the open culture and evolving technology of the Internet have created a set of user expectations that have presented libraries – particularly academic libraries – with opportunities to not only change their approach to traditional services, but to embrace new roles.

Openness and Online User Expectations

From its inception, the concept of *openness* has been integral to the success of the Internet. As some of its developers note, "A key to the rapid growth of the Internet has been the free and open access to the basic documents [...]"⁶ Collaboration and open sharing of documentation and code enabled swift development of the early Internet, and open source programming continues to be the backbone of some of the most robust applications available to Internet users today. The openness of the Internet extends beyond sharing source code, however. At its core, the open ethos of the Internet is today expressed in two ways: *openness of access* and *openness of identity*.

Openness of Access

In a 2010 global British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) survey (n=27,000), 80 percent of respondents indicated that Internet access is a human right.⁷ The expectation that equitable access to online resources is on par with access to clean water seems entirely reasonable. The Internet, like water, is freely available to anyone. It may require resources to procure the computer and hardware necessary to connect to the Internet, but the Internet itself is a free resource. Users pay for a computer and for access to cable lines or to wireless networks, but no

⁴ See Note 1

⁵ See Note 3

⁶ Leiner, Barry M., Cerf, Vinton G., Clark, David D., Kahn, Robert E., Kleinrock, Leonard, Lynch, Daniel C., Postel, Jon, Roberts, Larry G. and Stephen Wolff. 2001. "A Brief History of the Internet" in Liu, Lewis-Guodo, ed. *The Role and Impact of the Internet on Library and Information Services*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

⁷ Ayish, Muhammad. "Universal Internet Access is the New Human Rights Issue." *The National*, March 18, 2010. Accessed October 29, 2010. <http://www.thenational.ae/news/universal-internet-access-is-the-new-human-rights-issue?pageCount=0>

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one pays for a Web browser, for access to a search engine, to send E-mail, or to visit millions of websites.

The view of Internet access as a human right is reflected in how today's users experience the Internet, and what they expect when they go online: easy and free access to resources. The most popular Internet sites and applications, like Google and Facebook, are openly (freely) available to all. Many daily tasks can be accomplished on the Internet without spending a cent. Google Docs, Zoho or Open Office provide tools for work and school assignments, YouTube and Hulu provide entertainment, CNN (or Fox) provide news, Skype provides a connection to relatives in Detroit, Mint provides budgeting assistance, and Pandora provides the soundtrack for it all. As a recent Wall Street Journal (online!) column notes, "we have built a country-size economy online where the default price is zero – nothing, nada, zip. [...] For the Google Generation, the Internet is the land of the free."⁸ As much of an economic driver as the Internet is, the expectation of free access to online tools, resources and information is hard-wired into many Internet users. The 2010 Annenberg Digital Future Study found that, of 49 percent of Internet users who reported using services like Twitter, exactly zero percent would be willing to pay for such a service.⁹ This does not mean that users will never pay for an online service (e.g., for a "premium" version of an online service¹⁰) – but supports the supposition that users' default expectation is to experience free access online.

Openness of Identity

At the same time that users have been conditioned to expect open access to online resources, the Internet (particularly in the last decade) has also encouraged users to be open about themselves online. It *can* be argued that the Internet encourages not openness about identity but rather faceless (or deceptive) anonymity. But it would be difficult to argue against the predominance of online technologies and forums that enable (and expect) unprecedented individual openness. Users' full utilization of social networking sites like Facebook is directly related to the amount of personal information users are prepared to share and the culture of blogging and micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter) encourages people to expose their deepest (and shallowest) thoughts with ongoing immediacy. It has been noted that some online users do attempt to retain a certain level

⁸ Anderson, Chris. "The Economics of Giving it Away." *Wall Street Journal*, January 31, 2009. Accessed October 29, 2010. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123335678420235003.html>

⁹ Annenberg School of Communications. *2010 USC Annenberg Digital Future Study Finds Strong Negative Reaction to Paying for Online Services*, July 23, 2010. Accessed October 29, 2010. http://www.digitalcenter.org/pdf/2010_digital_future_final_release.pdf

¹⁰ Bulik, Beth Snyder. "On-Demand Generation Will Pay to Play." *Advertising Age*, April 12, 2010. Accessed November 1, 2010. http://adage.com/digital/article?article_id=143220

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of privacy within their online activities,^{11,12} and consistent outcries over Facebook privacy mishaps demonstrate that many users *do* care about having control over their personal information. However, a recent study by the Pew Center found that only 33 percent of Internet users are concerned about what information is available about them online – and only 33 percent of users have taken any action to limit/reduce the amount of information available about them on the Internet.¹³ In fact, some users are beginning to acknowledge that limiting the amount of available information may be less important than *adding* desired information to influence the nature of their online identities.¹⁴

Openness and Opportunities

During the past decade, this confluence of users' willingness to share personal information online and their expectation of receiving free access to online tools and resources (sometimes in exchange for sharing personal information) has contributed to an unprecedented culture of openness on the Internet. As users with these expectations and experiences arrive on college and university campuses (both as students and as faculty), they present academic libraries with the opportunity to provide services that are informed by both dimensions of this online openness. The remainder of this discussion will address the varied ways in which libraries are responding to these issues – whether encouraging openness by making knowledge as freely available as possible, or cautioning against openness by counseling students in the creation of their online identities.

Opening Knowledge: *Open Access and Academic Libraries*

Traditionally, academic libraries have purchased resources from publishers and other vendors to create collections of materials for student and faculty use. In turn, libraries have been defined

¹¹ Lange, P.G. "Publicly Private and Privately Public: Social Networking on YouTube." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13(2007): Article 18. Accessed November 1, 2010.

<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/lange.html>

¹² Holson, Laura M. "Tell-All Generation Learns to Keep Things Offline." *The New York Times*, May 8, 2010. Accessed November 1, 2010. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/fashion/09privacy.html?_r=1

¹³ Madden, Mary and Aaron Smith. 2010. *Reputation Management and Social Media*. Pew Research Center. Accessed November 1, 2010. <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Reputation-Management.aspx>

¹⁴ Thompson, Clive. "The See-Through CEO." *Wired*, March 2007. Accessed October 29, 2010. http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/15.04/wired40_ceo.html

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by their role as collector.¹⁵ However, as the cost of library resources, particularly scholarly journals, has risen dramatically over the past decade, academic libraries have been confronted with stark budget realities.¹⁶ The openness of the Internet has emerged as a partial solution: instead of merely subscribing to journals, academic libraries are now publishing them and are on the vanguard of the open access movement.

Open Access

Open access, in relation to scholarly publishing, has been described in various ways. The Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002) provides one of the most comprehensive definitions:

By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.¹⁷

Peter Suber, a well-known open access advocate, offers a more succinct definition: "Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions."¹⁸ Regardless of how it is defined, the call for free and unrestricted access to online journal content is born from a very simple principle, well articulated by John Willinsky:

A commitment to the value and quality of research carries with it a responsibility to extend the circulation of such work as far as possible and ideally to all who are interested in it and all who might profit by it.¹⁹

Willinsky rightly notes that a commitment to this principle and, by extension, to open access is something that is very familiar to librarians. Libraries' dedication to intellectual inquiry

¹⁵ Gilman, Isaac and Marita Kunkel. 2010. "From Passive to Pervasive: Changing Perceptions of the Library's Role through Intra-Campus Partnerships." *Collaborative Librarianship* 2(1): 20-30. <http://collaborativelibrarianship.org/index.html>

¹⁶ Van Orsdel, Lee C. and Kathleen Born. "Reality Bites: Periodicals Price Survey 2009." *Library Journal*, April 15, 2009. Accessed November 1, 2010. <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6651248.html>

¹⁷ *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. February 12, 2002. Accessed January 6, 2011. <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml>

¹⁸ Suber, Peter. *A Very Brief Introduction to Open Access*. December 29, 2004. Accessed January 6, 2011. <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/brief.htm>

¹⁹ Willinsky, John. 2006. *The access principle: the case for open access to research and scholarship*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press., xii

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demands equitable access to information. Academic libraries, in particular, are sensitive to their students', faculty's and researchers' needs to have the broadest and deepest access possible to relevant literature.

Libraries' desires to provide these comprehensive collections for their users have been challenged by the rising cost of scholarly journals.²⁰ These price increases are exacerbated by a pricing structure colloquially referred to as "the big deal". Large commercial publishers like Elsevier, Springer and Wiley (who, as of 2002, were estimated to account for 42 percent of scholarly journal articles published²¹) often bundle individual journal subscriptions together, tying desirable journals with lower quality titles and forcing a larger expenditure of library funds.²² As a result, rather than continuing to expand their collections, many academic libraries have been forced to make difficult choices about which resources to cut in order to maintain expensive subscriptions. For example:

The WSU Libraries have had to cancel a substantial number of journal titles in recent years. Some titles were cancelled outright. Others are now only available electronically. During this time, the library materials budget has been flat; we have not received increases to cover inflation in books or journals. Journal inflation, including access to abstracting and indexing services, is running between 5% and 10% annually. We now have this year's budget figures, and again there is no money to keep offering the access we currently have. We are going to have to cancel somewhere around \$600,000 of journals, approximately 15% of our remaining subscriptions.²³

Faced with the choice, some large research libraries have taken a stand, either electing to cancel subscriptions in protest²⁴ or taking their pricing issues public. In 2010, the University of California Libraries recommended that its faculty stop submitting to Nature Publishing Group

²⁰ Henderson, Kittie S. and Stephen Bosch. "Seeking the New Normal: Periodicals Price Survey 2010." *Library Journal*, April 15, 2010. Accessed January 8, 2011.

<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6725256.html>

²¹ McGuigan, Glenn S. and Robert D. Russell. "The Business of Academic Publishing: A Strategic Analysis of the Academic Journal Publishing Industry and its Impact on the Future of Scholarly Publishing." *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship* 9(3) (Winter 2008).

http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v09n03/mcguigan_g01.html

²² Nabe, Jonathan. "E-Journal Bundling and Its Impact on Academic Libraries: Some Early Results." *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship* (Spring 2001). <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/01-spring/article3.html>

²³ Kaag, Cindy S. WSU Pullman Libraries Collection Development Decisions Calendar 2008. Accessed January 7, 2011. <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/collections/cancelcover.html>

²⁴ See Note 19

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journals in response to a proposed 400 percent increase in the subscription rate for the UC system.²⁵

Such unsustainable journal prices have made academic libraries into fierce advocates for more affordable models of scholarly publishing, particularly open access – a model that benefits both their bottom lines and their users. SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (founded in 1997), is “an international alliance of hundreds of academic libraries and research institutions”²⁶ and is a driving force in the push for greater access to published scholarship, particularly that derived from publicly funded research. However, advocacy is not the most significant role that libraries have embraced. As leaders in the open access movement, academic libraries are now becoming publishers as well by providing a wide range of technological and organizational support for new (and existing) publications.

Library as Publisher

Although the relatively minimal costs of online publishing have been present (in increasingly sophisticated form) since the inception of the Internet, it has only been in the past decade that many libraries have begun to take full advantage of the opportunity to become actively involved in publishing activities. Two developments have been instrumental in this shift: the availability of publishing platforms (both open source and commercial) and, to a lesser extent, challenges to the viability of traditional university presses.

A 2008 survey of ARL (Association of Research Libraries) member libraries found that 43 percent of respondents were engaged in publishing activities and, of those libraries, over half were using the open source Open Journal Systems (OJS) as their publishing platform.²⁷ Open Journal Systems²⁸ is a platform created by the Public Knowledge Project, a partnership between the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, the Simon Fraser University Library, the School of Education at Stanford University, and the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University.

²⁵ Oder, Norman. “UC Libraries, Nature Publishing Group in Heated Dispute Over Pricing; Boycott Possible.” *Library Journal*, June 10, 2010. Accessed January 6, 2011.

http://www.libraryjournal.com/lj/home/885271-264/uc_libraries_nature_publishing_group.html.csp

²⁶ SPARC. *About SPARC*. Accessed January 7, 2011. <http://www.arl.org/sparc/about/index.shtml>

²⁷ Hahn, Karla L. *Research Library Publishing Services: New Options for University Publishing*. Association of Research Libraries, March 2008. <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/research-library-publishing-services.pdf>

²⁸ <http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs>

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OJS assists with every stage of the refereed publishing process, from submissions through to online publication and indexing. Through its management systems, its finely grained indexing of research, and the context it provides for research, OJS seeks to improve both the scholarly and public quality of refereed research.

OJS is open source software made freely available to journals worldwide for the purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals, as open access can increase a journal's readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale.²⁹

As open source software, Open Journals Systems is freely available for libraries to download, install and configure to desired specifications. However, there are also affordable commercial software options that provide libraries with the same ability to easily manage and publish open access peer-reviewed scholarly journals. For example, EdiKit®³⁰ is an editorial management and publication platform from Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress), and is available as stand-alone hosted software or in conjunction with bepress' hosted repository platform, Digital Commons™. As the ARL survey observed, using software like EdiKit® "frees a library from both hardware and software support, allowing staff resources to be directed to other publishing service functions such as consulting and workflow design."³¹

Whether they choose to use open source publishing software or hosted commercial software, libraries are being presented with new opportunities to offer publishing services and to create library-press partnerships as university presses face challenges to their sustainability³². A 2007 Ithaka report, "University Publishing in a Digital Age," offered the following recommendation for university presses:

Recommendation 6: Collaborate with libraries to co-develop tools and programs

Work together to identify content of institutional value. Co-develop products, tools and professional educational and training programs for faculty, researchers, and students around traditional and electronic publishing issues, procedures, etc. Co-develop joint programs for preservation and archiving or collaborate in support of third party

²⁹ Public Knowledge Project. *Open Journal Systems*. Accessed January 9, 2011. <http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs>

³⁰ <http://www.bepress.com/edikit.html>

³¹ See Note 27

³² Brown, Laura, Griffiths, Rebecca and Matthew Rascoff. "University Publishing in a Digital Age." *Ithaka Report*. July 26, 2007. <http://www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r/research/university-publishing-in-a-digital-age/Ithaka%20University%20Publishing%20Report.pdf>

platforms that ensure preservation. Co-develop tools for content creation and online collaboration.³³

As they enter into these collaborations, libraries are not only offering support for open access journals, but also are translating the open access model to monographic materials as well. For example, the Utah State University press recently became part of the university library, and many publications will now be available open access in digital form.³⁴ In doing so, Utah State joins the University of Michigan and Purdue University as institutions with presses that are units of the university library. In addition to monographs, Purdue University Press publishes both subscription and open access journals, using bepress' Digital CommonsTM/EdiKit[®] platform in its open access publishing activities. Even for libraries at institutions with strong university presses (or no university press at all), support for open access publishing, both locally and globally, has been a growing trend. At Columbia University, the University Libraries/Information Services unit created a Center for Digital Research and Scholarship (CDRS)³⁵ (in 2007). In addition to managing Columbia's institutional repository (another venue through which libraries provide open access to scholarly work), CDRS "offers journal hosting support services to Columbia faculty and students who want to start or continue publishing a journal."³⁶ CDRS supports both subscription and open access journals and uses a combination of open source and commercial publishing software. For example, CDRS uses OJS as a publishing platform, but its forthcoming *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* also uses bepress' law review submission software, ExpressOTM).

The relatively low cost and scalable nature of online publishing, made possible by the Internet (and platforms like OJS and EdiKitTM), means that institutions much smaller than Utah State, Purdue and Columbia have also been able to move in the direction of making publishing one of their core service areas. Over the past two years, the Pacific University (Oregon) Library has made an intentional effort to develop the capacity and structure to support scholarly publishing activities. The Library uses Digital Commons[®] as its institutional repository platform, and selected it because of its dual capacity to function both as a hosted repository and hosted publishing platform.

³³ See Note 30

³⁴ Jaschik, Scott. "Survival – Through Open Access." *Inside Higher Ed*. November 4, 2009.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/11/04/utahstate>

³⁵ <http://cdrs.columbia.edu/>

³⁶ A brief overview of the publishing services provided is available here:

<http://cdrs.columbia.edu/cdrsmain/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/journalservicesv6.pdf>

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Pacific University Library's first publication as a publishing body was an existing open access peer-reviewed scholarly journal, *Essays in Philosophy*. The journal had previously been hosted at Humboldt State University, but due to a change in editorship, the journal was seeking a new online home. This initial partnership with a faculty member from the Department of Philosophy led to the creation of a new open access journal, *Res Cogitans*, devoted to undergraduate philosophy papers presented at an annual conference. For both journals, editorial management related to journal content is managed by the journals' editor, but support for the final design and publication of articles is provided by the Library.

In recognition of its developing role in a wide range of publishing-related activities, in 2010 the Pacific University Library created a new unit, Local Collections and Publication Services (LCPS)³⁷. While coordinating some more traditional library services – archival services and online collections (image collections and institutional repository content – LCPS also became the home for library publishing services. The collaborative effort and strategic direction provided by the new unit (comprised of existing members of the library's faculty) will be integral to providing support for new publishing requests. A new interprofessional healthcare journal housed within the Pacific University's College of Health Professions and College of Optometry is planned for 2011. There have also been discussions about the possibility of hosting/supporting two professional society journals.

Beyond the examples of Columbia and Pacific University, yet another indicator of the rise in library publishing activities is their visibility in conference sessions, library publications and professional development opportunities for librarians. In the last academic year, as part of a scholarly communications webinar series, ARL offered sessions on open access publishing and open access publishing support, intended to "help libraries that are increasingly involved in providing journal hosting and support services, [and to explore] transitional models for economic support from subscriptions to open access."³⁸

While there are predominant open access publishers, such as BioMed Central, it is clear that libraries are doing their part to continue the growth of open access publishing. And for open-minded librarians, the figures are encouraging. The number of open access journals is growing continuously (the Directory of Open Access Journals added more than 3 new titles per day in the

³⁷ <http://www.pacificu.edu/library/services/lcps/>

³⁸ ARL. *Reshaping Scholarly Communications: Program 3A & 3B: Open Access Publishing & Open Access Publishing Support*. Accessed January 9, 2011. <http://www.arl.org/sc/institute/iscwebseries/2010iscweb3.shtml>

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last quarter³⁹). And even journals which are not strictly open access are making some content openly available, either voluntarily or due to mandates from both the government and educational institutions.^{40,41}

Beyond Publishing: Other Open Access Activities

As the number of open access journals grows and mainstream publishers adapt their policies to accommodate the demand for open access literature (e.g. Springer's Open Choice option), academic librarians are also taking an active role in educating their patrons (e.g. faculty members) about opportunities for making their work openly accessible. This role is seen most clearly both in librarians' advocacy for authors' rights and in the establishment of funds to support publication in open access journals.

Publishers have long argued the necessity for possessing the copyright for articles published in their journals. Arguments have included the need for centralization of permission requests and to protect publishers' ability to provide articles for indexing/inclusion in databases.^{42,43} As some have observed, authors relinquishing their copyrights to publishers had few serious implications in a print environment – but as the Internet made sharing work openly easier and more desirable, those rights have become more precious.⁴⁴ Academic and research libraries, particularly through the leadership of the SPARC alliance, have been at the forefront of arguing that authors should be able to retain the ability to share their articles openly – even if they have not published in an open access journal. Librarians, like those at Oregon State University,⁴⁵ put on workshops to educate faculty about how to determine which journals will allow them to retain the right to share and how to advocate for that right with journals that do not.

³⁹ Morrison, Heather. "Dramatic Growth of Open Access: September 30, 2010." *The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics*. Accessed October 4, 2010.

<http://poeticconomics.blogspot.com/2010/09/dramatic-growth-of-open-access.html>

⁴⁰ National Institutes of Health Public Access. Accessed November 1, 2010. <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>

⁴¹ Suber, Peter. "The Open Access Mandate at Harvard." *SPARC Open Access Newsletter*, March 2, 2008. Accessed November 1, 2010. <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-08.htm#harvard>

⁴² Winchester, Ian. 2009. Publishing Academic Journals in the Internet Era. *Journal of Educational Thought* 43(1):1-2.

⁴³ Polansky, Barbara F. 1984. Responsible publishers require copyright transfer . . . and everyone benefits. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 84: 891.

⁴⁴ Copyright Battle Expands To New Fronts. 1999. *Chemical & Engineering News* 77 (24): 40-42.

⁴⁵ Wirth, Andrea A., and Faye A. Chadwell. 2010. "Rights Well: An Authors' Rights Workshop for Librarians". *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*. 10 (3): 337-354. <http://hdl.handle.net/1957/17099>

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While many open access journals do not pass the costs of operation on to their published authors, many larger open access publishers do. For example, authors published in Public Library of Science journals can expect to pay between \$1,350 and \$2,900 (depending on the journal). For authors with grant funding or other financial support, these fees may not be a barrier. However, for authors without such support, publication in some high-profile, open access journals may be out of reach. In response to this need, some academic institutions have begun to establish open access funds to cover the cost of publishing and to ensure that their faculty/researchers are able to make their work openly accessible.⁴⁶ At some of these institutions, the library has been the leader in creating and administering the fund – a model seen both at the University of Oregon and the University of North Carolina.^{47,48}

When faculty authors take advantage of open access funds or retain distribution rights through the negotiation of a copyright transfer agreement, academic libraries also offer one final opportunity for additional openness: archiving and dissemination of published work through an institutional repository. Although not formal "publication" (and many works in repositories have already been formally published), inclusion in a repository offers faculty authors the assurance that their work will remain both discoverable and accessible. For authors who have already published in an open access journal, addition of their articles to a library's open repository adds another access point and opportunity for use of their work. For authors who have published in subscription-based journals – but have retained the right to post their work in a repository – the contribution of their work provides open access to their knowledge, and an act of "publication" with the potential to increase the impact of work that would otherwise be locked behind a monetary barrier.

For libraries, the shift from passive purchasers of external resources to vital partners in the creation of new publications is truly transformational. Whether they are publishing open access journals or providing authors with the knowledge and tools that allow open dissemination of their work, academic libraries have embraced the opportunity of openness provided by the Internet and are meeting (and sometimes exceeding) users' expectations.

⁴⁶ SPARC. *Campus-based Open-access Publishing Funds*. Accessed January 12, 2011. <http://www.arl.org/sparc/openaccess/funds/>

⁴⁷ University of Oregon Libraries. *Open Access Publishing Support Fund*. Accessed January 12, 2011. <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/scis/sc/oaps.html>

⁴⁸ UNC Health Sciences Library. *Open Access and Scholarly Communications*. Accessed January 12, 2011. <http://guides.hsl.unc.edu/content.php?pid=121319&sid=1262572>

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Opening Ourselves: *From Readers' Advisory to Identity Advisory*

While capitalizing on their own opportunity to contribute to openly accessible knowledge through online publishing activities, academic libraries are also faced with the challenge of responding to their students' personal openness.

Libraries have long been privacy advocates, championing intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of their patrons' information. The American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics states, "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted."⁴⁹ However, as technology has evolved, it has become more challenging for libraries to honor that commitment, as they are faced with decisions about how best to protect patron privacy in an increasingly distributed and unsecured digital environment.

While part of protecting patron privacy is certainly dependent on libraries' own policies and practices keeping pace with technological change, their users' practices must also be addressed. It is this realm that holds the greatest opportunity for a new service area for academic libraries: identity advisory.

Personal Privacy Online

Sitting at the nexus of popularity (1 billion worldwide projected users by August 2012⁵⁰) and controversy, Facebook has been the recent face of Internet privacy concerns, with news stories detailing issues ranging from the relatively innocuous (embarrassing photographs) to the deathly serious (the potential and inadvertent risk of affecting the security and safety of the troops located in war zones by posting to Facebook⁵¹). A recent simple search of the LexisNexis Academic database yielded approximately 1,000 recent stories discussing Facebook and privacy settings. Yet Facebook is not alone in its sometimes light regard for users' personal privacy – the Internet is rife with opportunities for personal information to be solicited, stolen, or bartered in exchange for services:

⁴⁹ ALA. *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*. June 28, 1997. Accessed January 14, 2011. <http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics.cfm>

⁵⁰ Grossman, Lev. "2010 Person of the Year: Mark Zuckerberg." *Time*. 176.26 (Dec. 27, 2010): 58.

⁵¹ Baldeor, Lolita. Troops warned of Facebook security risk. *The Oregonian*. November 21, 2010, A9.

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The word "web" was originally an image used to describe a decentralized system of interconnected information networks. Nobody imagined that a spider would actually take up residence at its center and start spying on the activities of all Internet users.⁵²

Indeed, it is difficult to visit a website without information about one's activity being stored and tracked for future use. For example, marketers place cookies (small text files) on users' computers when they visit a site. Those cookies help "deliver content that is customized according to user preferences",⁵³ but also represent a potential invasion of user privacy. Louis Vuitton, Starbucks, and countless others use cookies as a mechanism by which to reach more audiences with directed and relevant advertising and services.⁵⁴ But those targeted services are coupled with the reality that marketers know a user's Internet traffic patterns.

This environment, where corporations are able to track personal movements online and Facebook "knows exactly who you are and what you're interested in, because you told it,"⁵⁵ creates a personal experience for users online and encourages them to share ever more personal information in the pursuit of further tailoring that experience. As more of life is shared online, users would do well to heed Google CEO Eric Schmidt, who cautioned that "If you have something that you don't want anyone to know, maybe you shouldn't be doing it in the first place."⁵⁶ Openness, whether voluntary or not, appears to be the rule in the Web 2.0 world.

Such openness is not without potential consequences (beyond the simple over-sharing of information). Students, employees and potential employees have all been affected by unfortunate photos, videos or other material surfacing online at inopportune times. For students engaged in professional programs (such as teaching or medicine), the ramifications for a future career and employment can be disastrous.⁵⁷ Recognizing this, many colleges and universities have taken steps to prepare their students to live more private lives online. Some, like Syracuse University, have even taken the proactive approach of helping their job-seeking graduates create a better image for themselves:

⁵² Riviere, Philippe. "The Magic Mirror and the Web." *Oregonian* January 9, 2011: D2.

⁵³ Marshall, Patrick. "Online Privacy." *CQ Researcher* November 6, 2009: 933-56. Web. 10 Jan 2011. <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher>

⁵⁴ See Note 48

⁵⁵ See Note 46

⁵⁶ See Note 46

⁵⁷ Gilman, Isaac. 2009. "Online Lives, Offline Consequences: Professionalism, Information Ethics and Professional Students." *Interface on the Internet* 9. <http://bcis.pacificu.edu/journal/article.php?id=22>

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Brand-Yourself.com [...] created and run by four SU alumni, is an online reputation management company that builds positive web content and relevant Google search results for their clients. [...]

Recent SU graduates can use their Brand-Yourself account to build a personal Web site, monitor Google search results for their name, and build positive content on the web while burying the negative or irrelevant search results. Brand-Yourself also educates clients about the Google algorithm, which ranks relevant content in search results. By learning how to use social networks and outside linkage, clients can boost positive content higher on the search engine list.⁵⁸

Academic Libraries and Identity Advisory

As long-standing privacy advocates, it makes sense that academic libraries should play a role in educating their student (and occasionally, faculty) users about the creation and maintenance of their online identities. Within the library profession at large, the American Library Association (ALA) has undertaken several initiatives to create awareness of privacy issues for library users, including the first *Choose Privacy Week* in 2010. These activities encourage users to use the Internet responsibly and to be aware of how social networking and various other sites are collecting/using their personal information. Although tied to a traditional library practice (protecting privacy), this focus is fundamentally different – it is a shift from assuring users of how the library protects their information to advocating for how users should manage their own information (outside of the context of a library record).

In an academic setting, while college or university IT staff may also have a role in educating students about the importance of managing their online identities, this is an opportunity that college and university libraries can, and should, welcome. Libraries should be guided in their efforts by these questions:

1. How do we help students balance free speech with responsibility?
2. What kind of image does our students' use of Facebook present to employers, alumni, parents, and other students? Should this be our concern?

⁵⁸ Waugh, Danielle. "University Helps Students Clean Up Digital Dirt." *Campus Chatter (ABC News)*. Accessed January 13, 2011. <http://blogs.abcnews.com/campuschatter/2010/07/university-helps-students-clean-up-digital-dirt.html>

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3. Can we afford to not alert our students to the consequences of ill-informed use of Facebook?⁵⁹

While these questions refer specifically to the use of Facebook (and similar social networking applications), the principles raised are applicable when considering any online activities that may involve personal information, images or other data – particularly in regards to our final question above.

At Pacific University (Oregon), the Pacific University Library has taken a lead role in helping to address these questions and to provide identity advisory to incoming freshmen. Librarians have created online privacy-related instructional sessions to help emphasize that online identities cultivated during school may have an impact long after graduation. The sessions begin with ethical issues related to the use/re-use of online content (i.e. plagiarism and copyright infringement) and touch on issues of free speech in an online environment. The idea of free speech carries over into discussions of the creation of online identities; as intellectual freedom advocates, librarians may be loath to support censorship of any form, but the relative permanence of words/thoughts shared online necessitates conversations of occasional self-censorship in the service of maintaining a “clean” online identity. Finally, the importance of careful social-networking habits is covered, with examples pulled from recent news stories of photos or other online content creating academic or employment issues for young adults. Discussion of the potential impact of online identities has carried special relevance at Pacific University in recent years due to a 2008 incident in which a student resident assistant (RA) was fired after appearing in online pictures that implied his presence during underage drinking.⁶⁰

In these library sessions, it has become clear that students are not unaware of the risk of being too public online about their private lives. This confirms the results of a 2008 survey conducted by the College Board, which found that 74 percent of college-bound students had some level of concern about potential employers looking for online information about them.⁶¹ As some researchers have observed,

Facebook is increasingly recognized as a space within which some precaution must be exercised, and users respond by retreating behind a virtual line of privacy – in

⁵⁹ Oblinger, Diana G. and Brian L. Hawkins. 2006. “The Myth about Putting Information Online.” *EDUCAUSE Review* 41(5) (September/October): 14-15.

⁶⁰ Guros, Frankie. “You were drinking – Facebook told us so.” *The Pacific Index*. April 25, 2008. p. 7.

⁶¹ College Board. 2009. “Social Networking Sites and College-Bound Students.” *StudentPoll* 7(2). Accessed January 13, 2011. <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/data-reports-research/trends/studentpoll/social-networking>

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proportion to the extent to which their awareness has been raised by a concern that applies to them personally.⁶²

As the level of student awareness regarding social-networking privacy concerns continues to rise, it could be assumed that the need for academic libraries to educate students about their online identities and privacy would be reduced. However, precisely the opposite is true.

Although students may be aware that their online identities are representations of themselves that should be managed with an eye towards posterity, skills for online identity management should remain a core component of preparation for post-collegiate lives, much in the same way that resume writing and interviewing are standard skill sets. In addition, reminders of the *breadth* of possibilities for their online identities to affect their offline lives should continue to be part of library educational efforts. A study of first-year college students recently found that while 74.5 percent of respondents had a private social networking profile, 61.5 percent had not read their social networking site's privacy policy and 30.0 percent did not know what personal information their social networking site was gathering about them.⁶³ An understanding of how others use their personal information online – whether it is friends uploading and tagging photos⁶⁴ or corporations tracking browsing/purchasing information or mining e-mail for targeted advertising – is a vital component of students maintaining privacy and control of their identity and information.

Setting the Example: Identity Protection in Academic Libraries

Leading initiatives to educate users about responsible management of their online identities should serve as an additional (if hopefully unneeded) reminder for libraries of their responsibilities to protect those same users' information when they are using library resources. Libraries are no less susceptible than their users to the promise of new technology and applications and to the possibility of added functionality for their users. In these moments, libraries are faced with decisions about which, and how much, user information is appropriate to surrender (or put at risk) for the sake of improved services. Whatever decisions are made, it is

⁶² Lewis, Kevin, Kaufman, Jason & Nicholas Christakis. 2008. "The Taste for Privacy: An Analysis of College Student Privacy Settings in an Online Social Network." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14: 79-100.

⁶³ Lawler, James P. and John C. Molluzzo. 2011. "A Survey of First-Year College Student Perceptions of Privacy in Social Networking." *Journal of Computing Sciences in Colleges* 26(3): 36-41.

⁶⁴ Goodman, Tammy B. *Online Reputation Guide for College Students*. December 3, 2010. Accessed January 13, 2011. <http://www.safetyweb.com/online-reputation-guide-for-college-students>

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clear that if academic librarians are to be credible educators in this area, they must be confident of the protections afforded to their users' private intellectual inquiries.

For example, there have been ongoing discussions in the library community regarding the use of RFID (radio-frequency identification) tags as a method inventory control. Proponents argue that the RFID technology is a necessary cost-saving measure while others are more conservative in their approach, arguing for the delayed implantation of the RFID chips until after standards are firmly established that can insure patrons' privacy. An excerpt from a library association program on RFID tags sums up the tension well:

Accelerating technological change means accelerating moral and ethical challenges as well. It means that the margin for error is much smaller. And, in a sense, that is the key issue, and it is the issue that brought the book publishing value chain (libraries, book publishers, distributors, researchers) all together around RFID because there is really a creative tension that we have to, somehow or another, live with between benefiting from this technology, or these technologies, and the need to protect privacy.⁶⁵

Whether it is RFID tags, bibliographic database vendors tracking individual users, or cloud computing services that store users' research libraries, citation and notes, the issue remains the same: how can libraries provide the best services while offering the best protection for their users' personal information?

Equally important to considerations of the impact of new services is the assurance that libraries are taking the basic steps necessary to secure private information. Libraries must responsibly adhere to privacy practices and policies and not simply point to the ALA's Code of Ethics as a blanket assurance that they are doing what they should. Simple issues to address include:

- Reviewing the library's privacy policy. Does a policy even exist?
- Have library staff used e-mail to communicate about individual patrons?
- Are library computer passwords secure (in composition and location)?
- Do library staff remember to close circulation windows and logoff all patron systems when not in use?
- Are libraries sensitive to their surroundings and the need for privacy when assisting patrons?

⁶⁵ 2005. "Tiny trackers: protecting privacy in an RFID world." *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom*, 54(6), 273-6, 315-21.

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- Are library computer search histories and caches regularly cleaned? ⁶⁶

Libraries should also conduct regular privacy audits, determine what information is being collected in the course of providing services (whether locally or by third parties/vendors), and determine an appropriate course of action for developing policies, procedures, and training related to the protection of their users' privacy.

It is vital for academic libraries to continue to play a role in educating their users (primarily students, but faculty as well) about strategies for protecting their online identities. For libraries to take advantage of this opportunity, however, they must demonstrate through their actions that they believe in the importance of what they are teaching.

Conclusion: A Partnership with the Internet

Libraries have changed – and benefitted – in myriad ways due to the creation and continuing evolution of the Internet. And though the anachronistic stereotype of the academic library as the home of musty stacks may persist, the reality of library services (both traditional and non-traditional) continues to evolve along with it. Rather than Google and the open availability of information online sounding the death knell for libraries (students will get all their necessary information online, won't they?), the openness of online life has created transformational opportunities that are both revitalizing academic libraries. By taking advantage of these opportunities, academic libraries are positioning themselves as partners – and leaders – in the production of open information and in the education of students whose lives will be shaped by their skill in navigating a Web-based environment. In the library's emphasis on free information (renewed through its role as open access publisher) and its continual attention to privacy issues (made increasingly relevant by digital dirt), the open culture of the Internet could have no more appropriate partner.

⁶⁶ Fredrick, Kathy. 2009. "Privacy Please!" *School Library Media Activities Monthly*. 15(6) (February): 44.