

Rowland Lorimer
Simon Fraser University

Abstract

In principle, open access is accepted by all of academe. In practice, the lack of understanding on the part of scholars and librarians of the value that publishers add, which leads to the belief that content is the main determinant of value and usage, stands in the way of implementation. To maximize the value of research in an exploding, information-rich environment by commanding the attention of key users, publishers require sufficient revenue to add value in all publishing functions, from professional editing and layout through to strategic marketing and planning. Value maximization also requires research into review and acceptance dynamics and the nature of accessing and using published research.

Keywords

Journal publishing; Digital publishing; Open access; Journal/library publishing partnership

An opening exploration of open access, information technology, and various stakeholders

The principle of open accessibility to publicly funded research seems fundamental to and unassailable in a democratic open society. Arguably, this principle should govern all information, particularly research supported by public funds, as it is necessary to the development of knowledge. In what appears to be endorsement of this principle, Canada's current government led by Stephen Harper has launched an "open

Rowland Lorimer is

Professor of Publishing and was the founding director of the Master of Publishing program and the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University, 515 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5K3. For the past 10 years his research has had a triple focus: the Canadian publishing industry, journal publishing, and the mass media. Email: lorimer@sfu.ca

CCSP Press
Scholarly and Research Communication
Volume 5, Issue 4, Article ID 0401180, 15 pages
Journal URL: www.src-online.ca
Received July 23, 2014, Accepted August 25, 2014, Published December 15, 2014

Lorimer, Rowland. (2014). A Good Idea, a Difficult Reality: Toward a Publisher/Library Open Access Partnership. *Scholarly and Research Communication*, 5(4): 0401180, 15 pp.

© 2014 Rowland Lorimer. This Open Access article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/ca>), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

government” initiative and Canada’s research funding agencies have been charged with its implementation in their areas of responsibility. This, by the way, is the same government that restricts scientists and even librarians from speaking publicly without clearance from the Prime Minister’s office.¹

Within a narrowed debate that sets aside a government’s self-exemption from the very principles it wishes to be seen to espouse, the goal of research accessibility must be tempered by other goals. These goals include the maintenance of scholarly communities in part through clarity and hence comprehension of content, preservation of information integrity, respect of provenance (recognition of authorship), the promotion of machine readability, and resistance to commercial capture of usage as a result of inadequate public funding. These other “effectiveness” goals are just some of the crucial functions that publishers address.

The implementation of open access must also take into account the dynamics of making a “public good” freely available.² In the absence of much research on the subject that focuses on research publications, consider broadcasting as a neighbouring example where reception “over the air” is free. In an attempt to create social benefit from the broadcasting of free content, the following problems emerged. First, from its beginning, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) has had to struggle mightily to obtain sufficient funds to build infrastructure and produce programs in the pursuit of the greater social good. Second, commercial broadcasters were allowed to compete, in the beginning, as Canada’s Broadcasting Act of the time noted, to “complement” the efforts of the CBC. To survive, the commercial broadcasters partnered with advertisers whose interests were to encourage consumption, not to pursue the ideals of the Broadcasting Act. Next, cable companies were authorized to become participants mainly by importing and distributing (free) programs, some of which were already being bought and broadcast by the broadcasters. Although the CBC was originally charged with the regulating of the broadcast system in pursuit of the ideals of the Broadcasting Act, private-sector lobbying led to the creation of an arm’s-length regulatory agency, now called the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), to regulate the exploitation of free content.

While the CRTC eventually became somewhat effective in orchestrating a trickle of funds within the sector to ensure that Canadian musicians and filmmakers could continue to create content that serves the needs and tastes of all Canadians, in doing so it has become a bureaucracy of significant size and maintains a program of continuous monitoring and intervention. Most notable for the purposes of this article, the CRTC has been singularly unsuccessful in preventing the very thing that drives enthusiasm for open access. The cable companies, the distributors of free content (which is most often not paid for by them), have become vastly wealthy in 50-plus years of their existence as regulated territorial monopoly distributors of “free” content.³ So in the end, Canadians have ended up with a relatively weak public broadcaster, well-off commercial broadcasters that must be coerced to produce socially valuable Canadian programming, and vastly wealthy cable distributors that must be coerced to provide funds to creators to deliver more programs to broadcasters, all built around free content. To bring the matter up to date, the emerging alternative model of Internet distribution of what was once free (TV series) with mostly reruns of B movies is

leading to yet another runaway concentration of wealth in the continental business Netflix, rather than a provision of a service for a fair fee.

In addition to providing a sense of the dynamics of free distribution within a mixed model of commercial and public producers, the example of broadcasting introduces a fundamental tenet of capitalism that should inform the open access debate. That fundamental tenet is that entrepreneurs in particular, and the business community in general, quite appropriately seek opportunities for exploitation. Examples abound and include such diverse activities as the bottling and selling of freely available high-quality water and the mining and marketing of aggregated patterns of social behaviour. This is the nature of capitalism and free enterprise, and it drives the economy. Scholarly publishers are capitalists who transform drafts of research reports into effective communications directed at certain audiences. If barriers are erected that make their current activities financially untenable, they are most likely to restructure their activities to serve the needs of the same market, for about the same cost. This, of course, assumes that publishers add value to knowledge dissemination. Based in part on my experience as a journal editor and publisher, as well as my usage and awareness of journals, particularly the successful top-ranked journals, it is clear to me that publishers add considerable value. Others have provided a more systematic description of the value-adds of publishers (see K. Anderson, 2013, 2014a).

In the context of opportunity and exploitation, and encouraged by favourable policy changes (e.g., the Finch Report in the UK; see Finch, 2012), many publishers are treating the application of the open access principle as a simple need to change business models from selling access to knowledge to selling publishing services to authors. The gain here is potential. Theoretically, universal access is a motherhood issue and it should benefit society. Probably, the greatest beneficiaries will be governments, businesses, consultants including lawyers, and perhaps students and scholars at small institutions.⁴ Practically, this application creates exploitable opportunities for publishers to market their publishing services to naïve consumers (in this case, authors) rather than products to more experienced acquisition librarians who are better positioned and more disinterested in judging quality and value. This market shift a) further separates readership from the market success of a journal; b) delivers rewards to authors who are frequent producers and are subsidized independent of the publication's value to readers; and c) increases the possibility of arguing quality, independent of actual merit. The founding of thousands of new publishers worldwide, some offering the added incentive of a conference in an exotic location, attests to this market change and its potential for overexploitation. It also appears to be opening new avenues for corruption via the pre-purchase of publishing opportunities⁵ and the purchase of pre-written articles by increasing author access to resources for "author fees" (Munro, 2013). It has also been apparent for some time that the larger publishers are moving into meta-publishing, a move that will further the strength of their call on research and education resources. Elsevier's Scopus (2014) represents such a tactical move, as does EBSCO's recent purchase of Plum™ Analytics, an altmetrics (alternative metrics) firm that would generate useful data for a regulatory framework (EBSCO, 2014).

Additionally, the ease of distribution offered by the Internet to any "publisher" makes it clear that the continued building of an orderly, effective, and reliably certified body of

knowledge, which represents a solid and efficiently operating foundation for extending understanding, is structurally compromised. The market is further compromised in its role as an authoritative record by the penchant for overlapping but not, strictly speaking, totally duplicative publishing in the form of institutional repositories (IRs) by university libraries. The “duplicative” element is more problematic than it might at first seem. Confusion of the record derives from the presence of content in multiple institutions’ repositories, both as a result of multiple authors and as a result of vigorous acquisition of open access material by many libraries. While libraries might, quite reasonably, justify these activities as serving their clients and individual communities, the promotion of IRs as an assurance of access, and therefore an alternative option for open access to published content, muddies the record. The quality of the organization of IRs is also an issue in institutions where resources are stretched.

Furthermore, IRs seem like a waste of resources and a case of “acting first and thinking later,” when libraries could instead attempt to partner with journals to assure access. A more useful and cost-effective way of proceeding would be to ask journals to post, by request of the author, all submitted or all accepted manuscripts in their then-current form. This function could be built into publishing software. Alternatively, rebranding IRs as “Submitted manuscripts for publication by university students and faculty” would help to clear up confusion of the record.⁶ Regarding the archive function of IRs, a national library/journal partnership oriented CLOCKSS-like backup would surely make more sense than individual libraries taking on the task of assuring perpetual access for their clients (see CLOCKSS, 2012).⁷

On the side of caution, once universities require deposit with their IRs, it is a small additional step to claim ownership of the output of scholars, thereby treating scholars as producing work for hire, a step already being taken by some U.S. universities (K. Anderson, 2014b). And once that step is taken, and members of academe deprived of their copyrights, it is just another small step for universities to put filters in place as to what content it cares to make public, thereby further impinging on academic freedom.

The resulting potential loss of value inherent in the transformation from a content-access market to an author-services market appears to call also for the introduction of a quality filtering function. In other words, substantial intervention and regulation parallel to the broadcasting industry will be required to ensure that scholarly publication continues to offer value as an authoritative record of research. Few discussions of open access have considered in any serious way the need for a sophisticated regulatory framework. However, unofficial regulation is already emerging. The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ, 2013) and Jeffrey Beall’s (2012) list of predatory journals are cases in point, along with the efforts of the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (see Redhead, 2013). It can also be argued that the increased attention being paid to impact factors and altmetrics represent acceptance of the need for regulation (Garfield, 1994; Groth, Neylon, Priem, & Taraborelli, 2010). A difficulty with these initiatives is that they are immature or overly simple techniques that have yet to be proven as credible measures of scholarly value. A second issue in assessing their value is their ownership and control. Private-sector evaluation of public-sector activity surely works against the spirit of open access. As well, the lack of

sophistication of impact factors compared with, for example, search engine algorithms, is an embarrassment to the scientific community.

This backdrop of complexity and the lack of a full consideration of important variables of implementation can be addressed. The academic community has the capacity to design research to help identify the likely consequences of the adoption of open access, yet it is choosing not to do so. Action is the clarion call of the day, spurred on by enthusiasm for technological development and the determination of the library community to expand its role in the dissemination and curation of knowledge. On the other hand, considered thought and evidence gathering is a reasonable option and is not without precedent. Other countries, such as the U.K., are searching for restructuring and alternatives to deal with unanticipated consequences.⁸ Yet Canada's proposed Tri-Council Open Access Policy calls for action rather than investigation and understanding.

Bold action in the implementation of open access by the research community at this point, given emerging reconsideration of actions taken in other countries, is both irresponsible and self-defeating in that it undermines the fundamental tenets of research and evidence-based decision-making. A call for further research and consideration is not to deny that major gains have been made in the health and biological sciences sectors as a result of the activities of arXiv.org (a "preprint" server that began with the circulation of unpublished papers in physics), PubMed Central, the Public Library of Science (PLOS), and the public accessibility requirement by such funding agencies as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). It is also not to discount such initiatives as the Social Science Research Network (SSRN, 2013), a service that encourages rapid dissemination of research in the form of abstracts and papers. It is also not to deny that Canada should join international action in dealing with so-called luxury publishers who charge far more than is necessary to sustain a set of valuable publishing services (Schekman, 2013).

However, there are at least two fundamental issues that need further research if open access is going to be of social and scholarly benefit. First is the investigation of the nature of the marketplace in which academic institutions worldwide must, through their libraries, acquire globally produced goods. This basic first issue is how academic consumers can exert more power in the marketplace. Second is the consideration of possible marketplace models (note the plurality) that would better address the needs of the primary producers, as well as those of the primary users of the content. The basic issue here is how to build on what already exists and is performing well, while at the same time encouraging new initiatives and new models.

Before providing some detail on how best to proceed in a timely fashion, there remains a niggling question that appears to demand an explanation: if the above analysis has any validity, why is the call to implement open access so insistent? The answer is a dual answer: self-interest and a technologically determinist vision held by the library community.

Taking the lead from Jaron Lanier (2013), universities are in a similar position as Silicon Valley and the information technology sector in general in their successful

undermining of copyright in an effort to monetize the accessing function. An example is Google, which is effectively an electronic newspaper of newspapers that earns billions of dollars offering users access to content paid for by others. It makes money by selling access with no compensation going to the information producers unless they, too, have a layer of advertising of their own. Alternatives are possible.⁹ With respect to universities and research, if content is free through open access, universities and other research institutions believe that they can better gain control over a much greater percentage of their information environment (and, they theorize, reduce overall expenditures). As well, they are in a better position to monetize a broad educational experience paid for by the public purse combined with ever-increasing student fees. The universities can bundle content within a “learning community” experience. Research funding agencies are agreeable to this arrangement because it enhances access to the activities they support, but do not financially exploit. Libraries are the front line in attempting to gain access to content that is cost-free to the user. The general lack of recognition of the value added by publishers – which includes verifying authority, enhancing readability, and serving as pillars to various structured discourse communities – in theory further consolidates the ability of universities to benefit from their own organizational activities.¹⁰ The difference between universities and the IT sector, as Lanier points out, is that the IT sector designed the information environment so that it would prevail. Universities and librarians appear to believe the current form of the information technology environment is not a designed element but is rather an inevitable result of the inherent nature of information technology, a technologically determinist position.

How best to proceed in this new world of scholarly communication

First priority in moving forward to the maintenance of a more effective knowledge record – and its efficient and effective availability – is to commission both analytical and applied research studies, by disinterested researchers, into the full dynamics of open access. The prediction of likely behaviours in an open access-dominated market, combined with empirical studies of major initiatives, would be instructive. Included in the empirical studies could be analyses of the implementation of Britain’s Finch Report (Finch et al., 2012), which, indeed, are forthcoming; the operations of notable initiatives such as PLoS and PubMed Central; the structuring of commercial open access (OA) journals (see, e.g., Elsevier, 2013; SAGE Journals, 2013; Springer, 2013); and the cooperation between journal publishers and authors, which allows authors to post versions of their published articles (Cutler, 2013). Particularly important to include in the research agenda would be analyses of usage behaviour and differential usage patterns across the various disciplines, including the normal half-life of articles in various disciplines (see, e.g., Davis, 2013, and Wojick, 2013). Such studies would inform the setting of reasonable embargo times and perhaps encourage the development of mechanisms for recognition of often-used materials.

Second priority is to commission a major research study into the nature and extent of Canadian journal and monograph publishing operations, including comparative cost-effectiveness. Canadian publishers are substantially different in nature, operations, and cost-effectiveness from international commercial publishers. My analyses (Lorimer & Lindsay, 2004) have suggested that while scholarly publishing in Canada is far from perfect, it is probably the most cost-effective scholarly publishing in the developed

world and, if functions were transferred to library employees, costs would likely double. However, there is room for increased professionalism.

Third priority is to study the SCOAP³ (2014) and its implementation in as much detail as possible.

Fourth is a smaller, focused study, perhaps illustrated by case analyses, of the value added by publishers in general and by Canadian scholarly publishers in particular. The focus of such a study would be to understand how that value could be maintained no matter how the market structure might change.

Fifth priority is an investigation of the feasibility, and hence the funding, of a mixed system that would both assist new OA journals to establish and maintain themselves and, in the context of the cost-effectiveness of Canadian scholarly publishing, provide the necessary support structures that allow publishers who wish to remain in the market and sell subscriptions to do so. Here, the creation of an overarching structure for short-term initiatives to arise and cease publication, but not disappear from the knowledge record, could be useful. The proof of both a traditional subscription model and an open access model should surely be in the marketplace pudding, where there is a distinct advantage to both the author and publisher of the widest possible sustainable circulation and readership.

Sixth priority is the exploration of hidden costs. Open access, both by definition and implication, entails worldwide public access. Yet if Canada's research libraries are going to play a role in providing that worldwide public access, from where will the infrastructure funding come from, given that the mandate of university libraries is to serve members of their institutions? Moreover, and this takes us back to the question of monetization (which must be read broadly as social and financial capitalization), is it wise that academic institutions play a larger role in the dissemination of research, leaving the academy with a smaller role? Given that institutions are dependent on governments for their operating budgets, there is arguably a substantial associated net negative with respect to academic freedom and the independence of inquiry.

My view is that now is the time for Canada to act differentially on a seventh, and perhaps most important, priority. It is true that, in league with other nations, Canada must contend with the luxury journals – the international commercial publishers that overcharge for their publishing services. But distinct from other nations, and led by SSHRC's support for scholarly journals and monographs, there is a real opportunity to take a lesson from information production in (normal) governments, institutions, consulting firms (including the large accountancy firms), and other organizations. They all produce free information involving publishers (perhaps not in name), and their professional writers, editors, graphic designers, strategic planners, rich-media experts, marketers, publicists, and conceptual leaders are embedded in the information generation process, often from the beginning, to help structure both inquiry and reportage. This embedding ensures that the investment of investigative effort bears informational fruit that can be digested by its intended public. Such an embedding initiative in scholarly publishing represents a real opportunity to demonstrate, once again, that Canadians are great actors in the sphere of communications.¹¹

There is an important corollary to proceeding with these seven priorities. Scholarly publishing is directed primarily at the scholarly community. Therefore it is the academy, rather than academic institutions or their libraries, that should direct this review and decision-making process. This is not to deny that others have knowledge and expertise. Representatives from libraries, university presses, and multi-title journal publishing organizations are probably the most experienced in and knowledgeable of these matters, and they, along with senior university administrators and representatives from research funding agencies, should sit on a review body. However, the interests of the academy are paramount, and in the true spirit of academic freedom and the pursuit of research in the name of the public interest, it seems logical that the academy would transcend a narrow self-interest and see its long-term interests as best served by ease of access and investment in public outreach. In that context, it is encouraging to see new public outreach initiatives being founded, adding to the many that already exist (see, e.g., *The Conversation: Academic Rigour, Journalistic Flair* [2013] and Harvard University Press's metaLABprojects series [Berkman Center for Internet and Society, 2013; see also R. Anderson, 2013]).

A current initiative

On October 30, 2013, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) made an offer to the Canadian Association of Learned Journals (CALJ) to transform the relationship between Canadian research libraries and some Canadian journals. This offer took up a suggestion presented to an annual general meeting of the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) in 2008 (Lorimer, 2008) and discussed at two meetings with CALJ, CARL, and CRKN representatives in early 2010 and later that year (Lorimer & Provençal, 2010a, 2010b). The simple form of the 2013 offer was this: in return for converting to worldwide immediate open access, CARL was prepared to ensure that a selection of journals would receive more funds than they currently earned from Canadian subscriptions (and possibly other Canadian sales of content) as an incentive. It appeared that the target figure for CARL was worldwide content sales, with the assumption that other nations might provide equivalent support for their national journals. Subsequently, it appeared that CARL representatives thought that it would be reasonable for them to gain access to SSHRC-reported costs of production and to determine for themselves the necessary amount that they should offer to top up SSHRC grants to cover reported costs.

The CALJ representatives responded positively to the principle, but much less positively to the proposed implementation. Given the dollar amounts initially discussed, the offer would assist OA journals and weaker subscription-based journals with circulation mainly in Canada and exclude the strongest journals with substantial international sales. They pointed to the need for an ongoing arrangement given that once a journal abandoned the market in favour of open access, it would be virtually impossible to re-establish that title in the market. They suggested that dealing with a single funding agency (on behalf of all users), as opposed to the many and varied users in the marketplace, exposed them to increased risk of sudden large arbitrary cuts as well as endemic underfunding.

Following the meeting, the journal representatives summarized the 10 key points that they believed need to be addressed as follows:

It is in the interest of academics as scholar-authors, and of academic freedom in general, that the publishing community, especially the scholar-controlled publishing community, be recognized as an extension of the academy and continue to operate at arm's length from submitting authors and academic institutions and that it continue to invest in the review, selection, professional preparation, and effective dissemination of scholarship and research. At the same time, new opportunities are arising for publishers to partner with libraries and other consumers to provide the best possible services, taking advantage of skills, experience, planning, and information technology. This includes working with libraries to ensure both an authoritative publication infrastructure and the widest possible circulation of information that is sustainable.

It is in the scholarly community's interest that any partnership agreement negotiated by publishers and libraries strengthen all publishers that provide valuable, empirically demonstrable publishing services to the academic community. If this whole sector-strengthening goal is unachievable in the immediate future, then the publishing community would look for a "limited partnership" that incubates some journals while avoiding weakening others that provide valued services, no matter their model of dissemination. This might be achieved through a review process involving selected scholars, publishers, and librarians aimed at identifying needed new journals and affirming recently founded journals that appear to have promise. The Emerging Publisher Grants of the Canada Council of the Arts could be used as a beginning model.

It is in the publishing community's interest, and in the interest of researchers, libraries, publishers, academic institutions, and Canadian society, that any agreement between publishers and libraries be ongoing and based on a formula-derived contribution that a) includes all post-secondary institutions and is based on numbers and categories of students and faculty and the nature of the institution, plus any other relevant variables; and b) is indexed to the most stable core elements of institutional funding.

In the pursuit of an appropriate division of labour and a full understanding of the ecology of scholarly publication, while perhaps not an absolute necessity, the publishing community would like to be more fully informed about the value the library community sees itself adding to the proposed partnership in areas such as curation, discoverability, and access to the general public, together with the mechanisms the library community proposes to put in place to ensure ongoing ability to make that contribution. In turn, it will provide a parallel statement to the library community outlining publishers' value-adds (see note 4 in this regard).

No element in the proposed agreement is meant to deprive publishers or libraries of the flexibility they might need to continue to play a central role in the solicitation, evaluation, organization, certification, enhancement, filtering, and dissemination of scholarly research.

Following the path of the Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics (SCOAP³) and CRKN, with respect to journal publishing, it is highly advisable for CALJ to set up an agency that parallels CRKN. Such an agency would negotiate on behalf of journals, receive funds in support of journals, and dispense those funds among member journals according to pre-established rules set in place by

the journals, which will constitute the main body on the board of directors. In proceeding along these lines, CALJ is interested in receiving a description of how universities are assessed in general terms for their contributions to consortium buying arrangements.

It is useful to inject a reminder of the principles of copyright law that make such commerce possible while protecting the public interest. Copyright grants a temporary monopoly to rights holders, which helps to create an orderly market and a continuous supply of research to be published. Copyright serves the social interest by protecting the expression of an idea, not the idea itself. In the absence of abuse of monopoly (in which arguably some international science journal publishers have engaged, although they have never tried to interfere with re-expression of the ideas contained in their publications), it is of dubious value to abandon the marketplace in the pursuit of free access, which, strictly speaking, is a call for user subsidies. Little systematic research has been carried out on the economics of free access, but where free access is well established, it is often under-resourced and riddled with level-of-service problems (e.g., health services) or highly regulated to ensure equitable flows of resources throughout the sector (e.g., CRTC regulation of the broadcasting, cable, film, and music industries). These management/regulatory regimes are costly.

Normal commerce sees producers investing in product development and offering their wares, which consumers are free to purchase or not. Publishers spend differentially on non-production elements – acquisition, plagiarism checking, professional development, technological infrastructure, marketing, sales, brand development, et cetera – which are part of positioning a title in the marketplace to attract targeted research and readerships. This spending is the foundation of competitiveness, and libraries are free to use their buying power to influence pricing. Publishers should remain free to set the price of their goods in the marketplace.

In an effort to contribute to cost control, libraries can play a useful role in the provision of hosting services and software directed at the incubation of new titles.

It would be highly useful for research grants to be structured explicitly to recognize publication as an intrinsic element and final step in the research process. Toward that end, a percentage (e.g., 10%) of funds could be set aside to cover the costs of publication of the central findings of funded research by a recognized, scholar-controlled publisher (inclusive of publication, finance, and editorial). To recognize funds received, publishers would discount their subscription prices in the following year by the amount received in the previous year. Needed funds should be set at a reasonable estimate of costs, perhaps in the order of \$50,000 for a monograph and \$1,500 for a 6,000-word journal article. Researchers would be eligible to apply for these funds, which could be granted based on an evaluation system similar to a much-streamlined version of the evaluation that takes place for the Award to Scholarly Publications Program (ASPP) grants. In the case of major grants from which a monograph or equivalent might be reasonably expected, experimentation with the embedding of a professional writer/editor at the beginning of the research to help craft the publication during the grant and at the culmination of the grant is advised. Recognized scholarly publishers¹² would be eligible to receive such funds and to assist

researchers in choosing a writer/editor. They would commit to publication of the final research report, inclusive of arm's-length peer review.

Concluding remarks

Perhaps the greatest irony surrounding open access is the absence of the solid, empirical, dispassionate research that usually forms a foundation for action.¹³ In addition to the economic studies suggested earlier, comparative multivariate analyses of the usage and value of OA and non-OA journals would be very useful, as would evaluations of any actions taken in funding publications or embedding editors from a publishing house. Studies of born-OA journals to determine their common trajectories of growth, usage, and financial foundations would also be useful. In the Canadian context, increased professionalization and informed adoption of technology are shortcomings that need investigation, and perhaps compensatory action in these areas would increase the uptake of Canadian research worldwide.

It goes without saying that information technology is presenting scholarly publishing with a host of emerging opportunities that can lead not only to greater and quicker dissemination of research, but also to richer presentations of knowledge and hence new understanding. The promise inherent in these opportunities gave rise to the principle of open access. The challenge remains to make open access sustainable, effective as a means of dissemination of easily discovered research worthy of attention, productive as an orderly official record of knowledge, and contributory to academic freedom.

Afterword

One of the difficulties of writing research papers about ongoing events is that by the time the paper is published, changes have taken place. Between the time that this paper was presented, February 2014, and the submission of the final draft, May 2014, changes did indeed take place. (More will take place prior to publication.) The library community has not expressed interest in encouraging the proposed research foundation. The working group of four representing libraries and journals foundered. A different informal working group was formed, spearheaded by the University of Toronto Library and Simon Fraser University's library and publishing program. Progress toward a meeting of minds that is mutually advantageous for journals and libraries is difficult to discern. As well, a draft consultants' paper addressing how open access to scholarship might be achieved worldwide was widely circulated (Kennison & Norberg, 2014). And a panel discussion and paper presentation focusing on a possible library/journal partnership took place at the annual general meeting of CALJ in late May 2014. The paper presentation was given by Mike Ridley (Ridley & Pagotto, 2014) on his work for CRKN on how Canadian libraries should cooperate with each other and position themselves in the evolving digital scholarly ecosystem and is now available online. In related events, the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences took some initial steps toward an OA policy for monographs that had not been announced at the time of writing, and the announcement of an open access policy by SSHRC as well as the National Science and Engineering Research Council was expected in May but was not released as of November 2014.

In the context of such a fast-moving flow of events, and drawing from the above-mentioned U.S.-based consultants' report entitled *A Scalable and Sustainable Approach to Open Access Publishing and Archiving for Humanities and Social Sciences*, it seemed wise for the journal community to put forward a placeholder proposal. It was as follows:

- An offer of support at \$3,500 per article. Possible journal response: Worldwide open access.
- An offer of support at \$2,000 per article. Possible journal response: Canadian open access.
- An offer of support at \$1,000 per article. Possible journal response: Open access to participating institutions.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank all those who provided comment and helped me refine this article, including Anne Marie Corrigan, Cameron MacDonald, Michel Duquet, Jenny Ryan, and Claire Philipson.

Notes

1. While the Harper government is anxious to prevent access to its own information and to information that it views as an "inconvenient truth," an argument could be made that recent (2012) changes to Canada's copyright act are so strong in their endorsement of public access that they constitute a partial expropriation of the intellectual and financial investment of authors and publishers. The changes legalize user-initiated copying and distribution of 10% of any book in any number of copies for educational purposes. A current lawsuit against York University by Access Copyright is testing this interpretation.
2. A public good is a good that is not destroyed by consumption, but can, simultaneously or subsequently, be consumed by others.
3. Subsequent to the cable companies establishing themselves as territorial monopolies by buying up the smaller cable companies that established themselves in town and districts of cities, the CRTC opened up possibilities for competition that precluded any but the established cable companies from competing for customers. Obviously, they were careful to compete to a degree that did not undermine their profits.
4. It is important to recall that most university libraries allow any person to walk in and to browse and read from their collections in print and online.
5. The following is an inquiry sent to a reputable large publisher and is typical of inquiries received weekly by this publisher: "I am a research scholar from xxx university. Your journal is the referred [*sic*] journal of this university. As a researcher, I have to publish paper in any one of the referred [*sic*] journals. I have research paper ready and I would like to contribute money for the same. If so what would be the amount. Kindly help me in this matter."

6. In considering the value of IRs, it is useful to know that researchers have largely spurned them, with the knowledge that they add little to dissemination of research, prestige, and career evaluation.
7. Some recognition of the value of world repositories is emerging in the identification of arXiv.org, PubMed Central, and Zenodo as capable of fulfilling that role. See European Research Council (2012) at p. 1 and the Appendix. See also France's *Hyper Article on Line* (HAL).
8. Britain, for instance, is reconsidering implementation of the Finch Report (see Lanier, 2013). In early 2013, two parliamentary committees held hearings on the Finch Report and government actions that were taken in the contexts of the analysis Finch put forward (see U.K., House of Commons, 2013; U.K., Parliament, 2013).
9. An alternative to Google making newspapers its content, a media phenomenon first identified by Marshall McLuhan, is such media partnerships as Reader's Digest Canada has through its *Best Health* title with the portal Sympatico-MSN.ca.
10. A flaw in the argument in favour of open access is, of course, that if content should be free and openly accessible, why should access to higher education not also be free and openly accessible? The answer "Let's be realistic here!" has nothing but rhetorical value. There is no answer in principle, only in practice. In dealing with the public and government funders (their customers), post-secondary institutions, especially universities, have sufficient brand power to charge substantial tuition fees. In dealing with post-secondary educational institutions (their primary customers), authors and publishers lack the same power to insist on paid access partly because so many authors and institutions extend their main contribution to society status by publishing, which is indirectly and more richly rewarded by making that content freely available. This reality gives a whole new meaning to "death of the author."
11. I am aware that an embedding model works more easily in a hierarchical administrative structure that is not typical of, nor appropriate to, universities. However, if accountancy firms can contract to do research and guarantee authoritative reports, the embedding model may be adaptable in some circumstances (as outlined later in this paper).
12. Admittedly, the criteria for recognition would require careful consideration, but it could be advised by eligibility criteria used by Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program.
13. The sometimes lack of sophistication of research in this area has been made glaringly and embarrassingly (to Canadians) obvious in Kent Anderson's (2014b) critique of a study carried out by three Canadian primary care physicians along with one colleague from the U.S. and another from the U.K. Anderson critiques the paper, published in *PLoS One*, pointing out how incorrect the conclusions are and how the authors made the mistaken assumptions they did. It is a bracing read.

References

- Anderson, K. (2013). *Updated: 73 things publishers do (2013 edition)*. The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2013/10/22/updated-73-things-publishers-do-2013-edition/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ScholarlyKitchen+%28The+Scholarly+Kitchen%29 [October 2013].
- Anderson, K. (2014a). *Updated: 82 things publishers do (2014 edition)*. The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/10/21/updated-80-things-publishers-do-2014-edition/> [November 2014].
- Anderson, K. (2014b). *Not as advertised—Why an academic analysis of medical journal advertising is fatally flawed*. The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/01/17/not-as-advertised-why-an-academic-analysis-of-medical-journal-advertising-is-fatally-flawed/> [January 19, 2014].
- Anderson, R. (2013). *The future (?) of the scholarly (?) monograph (?)*. The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2013/12/23/the-future-of-the-scholarly-monograph/> [December 2013].
- Anderson, R. (2014). *Open access mandates and open access “mandates.”* The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/02/12/open-access-mandates-and-open-access-mandates/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ScholarlyKitchen+%28The+Scholarly+Kitchen%29 [February 14, 2014].
- Beall, J. (2012, December 4). Beall's list of predatory publishers 2013. *Scholarly Open Access*. URL: <http://scholarlyoa.com/2012/12/06/bealls-list-of-predatory-publishers-2013> [December 2013].
- Berkman Center for Internet and Society. (2013). *metaLAB publishing*. URL: <http://metalab.harvard.edu/publishing> [December 2013].
- CLOCKSS. (2012). *CLOCKSS: A trusted community-governed archive*. URL: <http://www.clockss.org/clockss/Home> [January 19, 2014].
- The Conversation*. (2013). URL: <http://theconversation.com/uk> [December 2013].
- Cutler, K-M. (2013). Elsevier's research takedown notices fan out to startups, Harvard, individual academics. *TechCrunch*. URL: <http://techcrunch.com/2013/12/19/elsevier> [December 2013].
- Davis, P.M. (2013). *Journal usage half-life*. Report for the Professional & Scholarly Publishing (PSP) division of the American Association of Publishers (AAP). URLs: http://www.publishers.org/_attachments/docs/journalusagehalf-life.pdf ; <http://phil-davis.org> [November 25, 2013].
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). (2013). *Homepage*. [Website] URL: <http://www.doaj.org> [December 2013].
- EBSCO. (2014, January 14). Plum™ Analytics becomes part of EBSCO Information Service [News release]. URL: <http://www.ebscohost.com/newsroom/stories/plum-analytics-becomes-part-of-ebsco-information-services> [January 15, 2014].
- Elsevier. (2013). *Open access options*. URL: <http://www.elsevier.com/about/open-access/open-access-options> [December 2013].
- Elsevier. (2014). *Scopus*. URL: <http://www.elsevier.com/online-tools/scopus> [January 15, 2014].
- European Research Council. (2012). *Open access guidelines for researchers funded by the ERC*. URL: http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/ERC_Open_Access_Guidelines-revised_2013.pdf [January 20, 2014].
- Finch, Dame J., et al. (2012). *Report of the working group on expanding access to published research findings—the Finch Group*. Research Information Network. URL: <http://www.researchinfonet.org/publish/finch> [December 2013].
- Garfield, E. (1994). *The Thomson Reuters impact factor*. Web of Knowledge. URL: <http://wokinfo.com/essays/impact-factor> [December 2013].

- Groth, P., Neylon, C., Priem, J., & Taraborelli, D. (2010). *Altmetrics: A manifesto*. Altmetrics. URL: <http://altmetrics.org/manifesto> [December 2013].
- Hyper Article on Line (HAL). (n.d.). URL: <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/> .
- Kennison, R., & Norberg, L. (2014). *A scalable and sustainable approach to Open Access publishing and archiving for humanities and social sciences: Draft white paper*. New York, NY: K/N Consultants.
- Lanier, J. (2013). *Who owns the future?* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Lorimer, R. (2008, September 8). *Collaboration for open access: SCOAPing out a strategy for CRKN and Canadian English-language SSH journals* [PowerPoint slides]. Presentation to general assembly, Canadian Research Knowledge Network.
- Lorimer, R., & Lindsay, A. (2004). Canadian scholarly journals at a technological crossroads. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 29, 253–275.
- Lorimer, R., & Provençal, J. (2010a). *Towards a workable structure for digital SSH journal publishing in Canada—The Ottawa consultation*. Canadian Association of Learned Journals.
- Lorimer, R., & Provençal, J. (2010b). *Montreal consultation synthesis*. Canadian Association of Learned Journals.
- Munro, M. (2013). *China's academic "black market" fooled Canadian journal, report says*. OCanada.com. URL: <http://o.canada.com/uncategorized/chinas-academic-black-market-fooled-canadian-journal-report-says/> [November 2013].
- Redhead, C. (2013). *Principles of transparency and best practice in scholarly publishing*. Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association. URL: <http://oaspa.org/principles-of-transparency-and-best-practice-in-scholarly-publishing> [December 19, 2013].
- Ridley, M., & Pagotto, S. (2014, July). *Canadian Research Knowledge Network, Integrated Digital Scholarship Ecosystem (ISDE): Information gathering & opportunities for consideration*, stage 1 report. URL: http://crkn.ca/sites/crkn.ca/files/site/idse_information_gathering_report_-_final.pdf [November 26, 2014].
- SAGE Journals. (2013). *SAGE open*. URL: <http://sgo.sagepub.com> [December 2013].
- Schekman, R. (2013). How to break free from the stifling grip of luxury journals. *The Conversation*. URL: <http://theconversation.com/how-to-break-free-from-the-stifling-grip-of-luxury-journals-21669> [December 2013].
- SCOAP³ [Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access in Particle Physics]. (2014). *What is SCOAP³?* URL: <http://scoap3.org/what-is-scoap3> [February 14, 2014].
- Social Science Research Network (SSRN). (2013). *Frequently asked questions*. URL: http://www.ssrn.com/en/index.cfm/ssrn-faq/#what_is [December 2013].
- Springer. (2013). *Open access*. URL: <http://www.springer.com/open+access?SGWID=0-169302-0-0-0> [December 2013].
- United Kingdom House of Commons: Business, Innovation and Skills Committee. (2013, September 3). *Open access: Vol. 1. Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence*. URL: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmbis/99/99.pdf> [December 2013].
- United Kingdom Parliament: Science and Technology Committee. (2013). Chapter 3: Key issues: Embargo periods. *The implementation of open access*. [Report] URL: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldsctech/122/12206.htm> [December 2013].
- Wojick, D. (2013). *Estimating the adverse economic impact of imposed embargoes*. The Scholarly Kitchen [Blog]. URL: http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/01/07/estimating-the-adverse-economic-impact-of-imposed-embargoes/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ScholarlyKitchen+%28The+Scholarly+Kitchen%29 [January 2014].