

Editorial

by TRIX BAKKER

This issue of LIBER Quarterly has a mix of themes such as Open Access publication, copyright, special collections in European research libraries, consortium negotiations with publishers, and teaching Information Literacy. Starting with the articles on Open Access, Paul Ayriss gives a very clear overview of the European information landscape and LIBER's contribution to the developments by supporting its member libraries and the researchers in these institutions to take advantage of these new developments. Although the European Commission mandates the publication or deposit of research outputs into Open Access sources if funded by European research funding, the critical mass of scholarly research information is still not available for a large part. Subscriptions act as a barrier to use. Open Access to the research literature would solve this problem. The article describes two European research projects - [DRIVER](#) and [PLANETS](#) - and the fifth LIBER Open Archives Initiative workshop at Cern, 18-20 April 2007 ([OAI5](#)). Some conclusions from the workshop are that there is increasing evidence that OA papers are downloaded, read, and cited more often and earlier than those that are only available by subscriptions. On the other hand there is a need for advocacy to get more content into repositories. One thing is for sure: the workshops provide a laboratory in which the library, technical, publishing and research communities can and do come together to explore new developments for a sustainable information infrastructure. The planning of the OAI6 in 2009 has already started.

David Prosser's article is very promising concerning the increasing interest taken in open access at a policy level worldwide. Over the past 10 years research became more and more collaborative and cross-disciplinary. This has given rise to the notion of 'E-Science' and 'E-Research' which will only reach its full potential in an open access environment such as institutional repositories. In the year 2003 the first statements of support for open access from funding bodies and research organisations were launched: the [Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities](#) by the Max Planck Gesellschaft in Germany and an extensive inquiry to scientific publishing in the UK by the House of Commons [Science and Technology Committee](#) which resulted in a recommendation by the Research Councils UK ([RCUK](#)) of a series of policy changes which will lead to a steady increase in the percentage of UK research that is open access. Another important public institute in the UK is the [Wellcome Trust](#), an independent biomedical research funder, which imposed the policy that a copy of any original research paper published in a peer-reviewed journal must be deposited into the repository [PubMed Central](#) as a condition of funding. In the US interest at a policy level also started in 2003 with the [Bethesda Statement on Open Access](#). In 2004 the US Congress instructed the [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) to develop a new access policy to the research it funds: copies of all papers reporting research funded by NIH are requested to be deposited in PubMed Central up to 12 months after publication. In Europe the European Union plays a direct role in the funding of a large number of research projects. In June 2004 the EC Directorate of Research commissioned a '*Study on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe*' which was published after a period of research and consultation in January 2006 ([European Commission, 2006](#)). The recommendation for guaranteed public access to publicly-funded research was probably the most important one. The continued interest of the Commission in access issues can be seen in the Green Paper on *The European Research Area: New Perspectives* ([European, 2007](#)). The future of Open Access seems promising. The scholarly community has to engage with policy makers not just within our own institutions, but with the funding bodies and at the political level, both nationally and internationally to encourage mandates and strong open access policies.

The third article by Kjell Nilsson on recent developments in copyright is far less optimistic. The 'balance' between the interests of the user community and the right holders has been gradually undermined, to the detriment of the consumers of information and culture. The revision of copyright legislation has favoured right holder interests over those of the users. Right holders more or less dictate the conditions of contracts and it has recently been shown by a survey of the British Library that licence agreements are considerably more restrictive than current legislation. The primary purpose behind the creation of copyright was to stimulate the creativity of the author. But how can the creativity of an author be stimulated 70 years after she or he has died? Why not admit that the primary purpose is to make sure the information and media industry gets a good return on their investments? The European Commission supports since 2000 the digitization of the European cultural heritage and this is intensified in 2005 with the project [i2010: Digital Libraries Initiative](#). With this term of protection of 70 years after the death of the author only documents published by the end of the 19th century will be digitized and made available. If the institutions want to digitize the copyright protected material they should pay for the right to digitize. But to whom are they supposed to pay and why?

Graham Jefcoate's rather short article about the future of special collections within the 21st century research library is very convincing about the need to promote the significance of special collections more effectively. Special collections are seen as "critical identifiers" of individual research libraries. Workshops in Weimar (2005) and Berlin (2006) led to the consideration of a possible statement of commitment to special collections by European research libraries. The

ARL Special Collections [Statement of Principles](#) on “Research libraries and the Commitment to Special Collections” (2003) was regarded as a ‘benchmark’ for special collections policy and practice which might be a useful tool for the European libraries. An informal working group with members from Germany, The Netherlands and the UK drafted a statement from a European perspective. At the Annual General Assembly in Warsaw on Friday, 6 July 2007, LIBER members were invited to endorse the draft statement and this was accepted unanimously.

In the next article Pierre Carbone, coordinator of the French consortium Couperin, sketches the past and future of consortium negotiations with publishers. Since the mid nineties libraries set up consortia for negotiating collectively with the publishers and information providers general agreements for access to e-journals, databases, and e-books. The level of access and downloading from these resources reaches a scale with no comparison to ILL or access to printed documents, but the costs did not reduce and the libraries budgets did not increase. After experiencing the advantages of the Big deal - access to a large bundle of titles based on the cost of the print subscriptions - the libraries are now more sensitive to the limits and lack of flexibility and to cost-effectiveness. The problem for the consortia and for the publishers is to evolve from this print plus online model to an e-only model. In Europe, however, the VAT legislations are a barrier to this evolution, as the VAT on electronic services is 10 to 18 % more expensive than the VAT on paper journals. A new Big Deal would be one established by consortia and publishers in a more equal balance than the existing. The transition to e-only also leads the libraries to deal with issues as preservation of electronic materials and perennial access to information.

The last article is about a specific approach to teaching information literacy at the Kuopio University in Finland. In this article Ewen MacDonald and Jarmo Saarti describe a course entitled ‘Critical Journal Club’ and how after participating in this course, students become more critical, more sceptical and more information literate. They learn to be aware that even articles published in eminent journals may contain errors; thus cannot be taken at face value. By the end of the course, all students have realized that it is a rare article that does not contain some inconsistencies and arithmetic, statistical or grammatical errors. With this course the authors aim to stimulate the discussion on the level of peer reviewing as well as stressing the importance of integrating critical information literature skills into the curriculum.

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European Commission: *Study on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe*. Brussels : EC Directorate C, January 2006. http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/pdf/scientific-publication-study_en.pdf

WEB SITES REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

i2010: Digital Libraries Initiative. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/index_en.htm

ARL, Special Collections: Statement of Principles. <http://www.arl.org/rtl/speccoll/speccollprinciples.shtml>

Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities.

<http://www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html>

Bethesda Statement on Open Access. <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm>

DRIVER - Digital Repository Infrastructure Vision for European Research. <http://www.driver-repository.eu/>

House of Commons Science and Technology Committee.

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/science_and_technology_committee.cfm

OAI5 - CERN workshop on Innovations in Scholarly Communication, 18-20 April 2007.

<http://oai5.web.CERN.ch/oai5/>

Planets - Digital Preservation Research and Technology. <http://www.planets-project.eu/>

PMC - PubMed Central. <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>

RCUK - Research Councils UK. <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/default.htm>

Wellcome Trust. <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/>