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eBooks in the Health Sciences: Trends and Challenges

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makes is much easier to provide access via discovery services.

We have just started to use DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) on selected statistical books to enhance usability of our PDF files of those books. Starting in 2005, selected publications will embed DOIs which we are calling "Statlinks" next to statistical tables. These Statlinks will link to live **Excel** spreadsheet files containing the numbers found in the table. In time, we expect to load these spreadsheets into **SourceOECD** so they can be found separately from the eBooks. We are also hoping to provide links, via **CrossRef**, in bibliographical references found in our books. Our eBooks are gradually becoming platforms from which other content can be found.

The division between books, periodicals, and statistical databases is blurring. We are finding that users don't really care what kind of publication information comes from: the important thing is being able to find it. Services like **Ingenta** are responding by making their systems more friendly to non-journal content. This, in turn, could very well influence how we present content in future versions of **SourceOECD**.

A number of other publishers have noticed the attractions of our model as well. The **World Bank** launched their e-library in 2003 and the **World Tourism Organisation** and **Oxford University Press** launched theirs in 2004, all using the **Ingenta** platform.

Conclusion

At the end of 1997, **OECD's** book publishing operation was losing clients at an unsustainable rate, and this decline raised questions about the future of the **OECD's** book publishing pro-

gram. By turning to the eBook, **OECD** has succeeded in creating a business platform from which it can move forward with confidence. The solution has proved to be the creation of an e-library sold on an annual subscription using the e-journals model. This model has succeeded in arresting the decline in the number of clients taking **OECD** standing order plans, has won back lost clients, and is actually bringing in new clients.

With online services, **OECD** now has the flexibility and potential to reach out and sell its books program to new market segments such as small and medium-sized institutions and institutions in developing countries. We now have the ability to publish a wider range of book types to an increasing readership.

Finally, the wonders of electronic distribution mean we now know much more about what is being read and what is not being read, and are better able to make publishing decisions for the future.

eBooks in the Health Sciences: Trends and Challenges

by **Ramune Kubilius** (Collection Development / Special Projects Librarian,
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This article describes a current health sciences electronic book scene that may resemble experiences in other types of libraries. The phrase "electronic book" is used in a general sense to describe book content available in a computer readable format... It should be noted that this survey "from the trenches" has an admittedly academic library emphasis.

Several years' experience has shown that things may not have changed much. Already in a 2002 survey of predominantly academic health sciences librarians, 99% of survey respondents indicated that their libraries provided access to electronic books.¹ In 2004, more types of libraries, those at hospitals and smaller health institutions, probably offer some eBook access. Libraries usually begin their venture by looking for reliable "classic" textbooks online, defined by local needs and core lists. More consortia licenses of electronic gateways include health sciences books, benefiting more users in diverse types of libraries. Local decisions determine whether to seek, catalog, and link reputable online free health sciences books, from government and digital library project sources. The number of publishers and providers licensing eBook content expanded since 2002, but the "players" of 2002 are also still on the scene. (The Appendix provides a list of some electronic health sciences book collections and providers.)

Once a list of desired titles is developed, it must be determined if they are available online (preferably via a Web gateway), and through which provider(s). Checklists of criteria guide selection. Decisions are based on price, licensing parameters and restrictions, permitted user

base, concurrent use, title-by-title vs. suite availability. Sometimes, desirable titles in a suite cannot be unbundled from less desirable titles. Sometimes they can, but a persistent librarian has to know to request (or demand) it! The search interface is examined for usability, linking, and printing. Publisher platforms, just as with electronic journals, offer more "bells and whistles," beyond providing basic print book content.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE? WHAT ARE PRIORITIES?

Curriculum support: Cutting edge research is announced in health sciences journal literature, but broad overview reviews needed by health sciences students of various levels are found in textbook literature. Licensing and accreditation bodies for health professional education and residency programs have information literacy requirements that may include reading lists of books or book chapters. Instructors devise required and recommended book lists for students. For user convenience, as well as the capability of linking books and chapters in online reserve / reading list sites and course management systems, libraries usually seek online availability of reading list books.

Clinical and reference: Some electronic titles may be considered by librarians to be part of a desirable "quick reference" collection and would include health sciences dictionaries, laboratory value, and drug information resources. For healthcare practitioners, synopsis handbooks or "lab coat pocket book" series may be licensed. Libraries may license or contribute funds to-

wards collaborative licensing of suites for general references, such as encyclopedias, English and foreign language dictionaries.

Basic sciences: Health sciences libraries are called upon to provide electronic access to more basic sciences books and content, including laboratory protocols and methodology. Basic sciences textbooks are curricular reading in graduate schools and fundamental courses of health sciences programs. Books are useful to laboratory researchers² and assistants. Some laboratory protocol series that "straddled the fence" in their print formats, as books, classed journal series, or loose leaf services, now resemble electronic journals or online databases. Much still depends on how indexing services, publishers, providers, and individual libraries treat them.

Examination review: Some educators are skeptical about the efficacy of commercial health professional board and certification examination review resources.³ Electronically available review resources present their own challenges. Examination questions may be "hidden" in appendices to online textbooks. Some review series are available in health sciences or even non-health sciences electronic book provider gateways. Some print series have evolved into examination review databases. Some databases have been designed "from scratch." This genre seems to be moving away from the "choppy" book-like format, as online modules are designed and licensed to target specific examination audiences.

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Beyond textbooks: Health sciences libraries may not actively license electronic books from general and niche subject providers, since available titles may be peripheral, secondary, or not "core." It can be beneficial to take advantage of, or contribute towards, licensing these collections. General gateways, such as **netLibrary** and **ebrary**, provide online access to consumer health, alternative medicine, health policy, and other books. Specialty collection licenses, such as **Eighteenth Century Collection Online (ECCO)** and **Early English Books Online (EEBO)**, include access to classic history of the health sciences titles, thereby providing wide access, in online form, to content of valuable, restricted access, or not widely available print titles.

CURRENCY AND ARCHIVING

Health science fields can easily be added to subject areas referred to by **John Cox**, who wrote about decisions of Irish University librarians:⁴ "There was...a definite feeling that eBooks could support learning activities in certain subjects (e.g., business, law, computer science) where information is structured in relatively discrete blocks and where a high premium is placed on currency..." Currency is not uniformly provided in the health sciences electronic book world. Some online textbooks are updated as "editions", similar to their print counterparts. Sometimes new print editions are released before or after the online version. Titles may be continuously updated, becoming database-like. There can be differences in content selecting when accessed among various providers. The venerable *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, for example, is called **Harrison's Online**, with daily updates and e-only content on the publisher provider site, while third party providers may only be provided with less frequently updated content of the basic text.

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Rumors from page 16

of more than 913,000 items. Annual circulation is more than 1.6 million. For more information, Judy.michaelson@gisinfosystems.com.

Remember the fabulous **Lynne Rienner** <lcr@rienner.com>? We keep trying to get her to **Charleston** but there is a national meeting she has to go to that conflicts with us (boo! hiss!) Anyway, **Lynne Rienner Publishers** is now the exclusive distributor of books published by the **Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies** at the **University of California, San Diego**. This new agreement, began January 1, 2005,

R.R. Bowker has introduced **Ulrich's Resource Linker**, a new tool that integrates all of a library's periodicals through a single service and allows library patrons to easily connect to those holdings by following a few simple links. The new product was developed in partnership with **Openly Informatics, Inc.** Built on the **NISO OpenURL Standard**. **Ulrich's Resource Linker**

against the grain people profile

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BORN & LIVED: Born in Montreal, Canada. From age 8 1/2, lived, raised, educated, and worked in greater Chicagoland area.

FAMILY: My parents were born and raised in Lithuania. In post World War II years, my father lived in Germany and England, before emigrating to Canada; my mother lived in Germany and emigrated to Canada. Canada is where they met and where two of my three siblings and I were born. We moved to the United States mostly because of job opportunities for my father, an electrical engineer.

EDUCATION: B.S. in Medical Records Administration; MALS in Library Science.

FIRST JOB: (As a minor): In 7th and 8th grades: "Babysat" 1st and 2nd grade boys for two summers while their mother worked—mostly involved biking and keeping them out of trouble... (After bachelor's degree): Medical records technician, Little Company of Mary Hospital, Evergreen Park, IL.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Since earning my bachelor's degree, I have worked in two hospitals and three medical schools. Four of the five jobs were in libraries. I belong to and participate in various activities of various library organizations: Health Sciences Librarians of Illinois (HSLI), Midwest Chapter / Medical Library Association, Medical Library Association, Special Libraries Association. In recent years, I have also gotten "hooked" on the **Charleston** Conferences, organizing the health sciences **Lively Lunches** and occasionally suggesting speakers...

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: I can't help myself...Aside from a bit of traveling, Lithuanian folk dancing and occasional aerobics classes, a number of non-family related activities revolve around information gathering or disseminating activities in the voluntary organizations to which I belong...

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Librarians (call us what you will) have a role in the library and information world of the future, but it may be up to each of us to carve out niches that suits our skills, personalities, and inclinations. In a democratic society it's hard to standardize or uniformly prognosticate what all of us could, should and might be doing...

is a fully hosted solution, which means that the library's staff is not burdened with the set-up, maintenance and updating of a link server, nor are they tasked with keeping track of all the changes in the various collections they hold in their catalogs.

www.openly.com.

www.ulrichsweb.com

Got a great email from **Charlie Rapple** <charlie.rapple@ingenta.com> who is handling **Ingenta's PR** during **Amanda Procter's** maternity leave. Charlie tells me that **Ingenta plc** has launched a new suite of services designed to save librarians time, money and administrative resources in managing their online collections. **IngentaConnect Premium package** features a selection of enhancements to the free services already enjoyed by Ingenta's 17,000 registered library customers. www.ingenta.com
www.ingenta.com/corporate/company/news/trade/icp.html

You have probably noticed that we don't have **Rumours from Paddington** any more! Sob! Sob! Anyway, **Daryl Rayner** is no longer at **xrefer**. But I'll bet she surfaces later somewhere else!

Meanwhile, back at **xrefer**—**xrefer** and **A&C Black** have announced that **Who's Who 2005** and the full **Who's Who archive Who Was Who** are now available to search and browse on the **xreferplus Specialist Reference platform**.

www.xrefer.com

www.xrefer.com/news/index.jsp?m=2#ww2005

American Anthropological Association (AAA), the world's largest organization of anthropologists, and the **University of California Press**, its publishing partner, have released of **AnthroSource (sm)**. This electronic scholarly resource provides access to the complete fulltext archive of all peer-reviewed journals, newsletters, and bulletins published by the AAA—over 100 years of published scholarly research across 31 publications—and access to current issues of 11 AAA journals. If you were in **Charleston** in November, I'll bet you attended the splendid **Audrey Melkin's** <audrey@atypn.com> session! <http://www.anthrosources.net>

The incredibly energetic **Karen Christensen** (CEO, **Berkshire Publishing Group**)

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Retrospective historical research tracks the progress of biomedicine (not only for medical malpractice reasons), and may require access to several editions of books. One 2004 electronic book survey respondent indicated: "There are concerns about older editions, since, unlike electronic journals, older electronic book editions are not archived."⁵ Archiving, if done, must be arranged and planned by the licensee.

ELECTRONIC HYBRIDS AND SUPPLEMENTS

The health sciences book collection development world is full of electronic book hybrids and flavors. Listings of health sciences books on book vendor or publisher Websites often provide choices beyond hardcover vs. soft cover versions. Print books may come with accompanying CD-ROM supplements. Books may be ordered with optional CD-ROMs (regular and mini-size), or be available entirely on CD-ROM or DVD, or for the **PDA**. Online sites supplementing print content may require a pass code or online subscription. Special installation or password control is not easy to manage in a multi-user library environment. One commentary that often engenders joking agreement among health sciences librarians is: "We wouldn't mind if the accompanying CD-ROMs just grew legs and walked."

Some publishers have reinvented popular print titles. Anatomy atlases can now be mounted for intranet use as CAI (computer assisted instructional) programs. Atlas images may be available on presentation software CD-ROMs for instructors. Librarian postings on discussion lists describe faculty requests to place CD-ROM, DVD, and other content on servers, accessible through course management systems. Some libraries have been asked by instructors to digitize and provide controlled online access to content from print textbooks. Publisher and copyright guidelines may not be clear or uniform, so librarians have found themselves seeking publisher permission...

PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANT (PDA) CONTENT

In describing health sciences content for **PDA**s, Carol Tenopir wrote: "**PDA**s are particularly suited to fact checking in structured information sources, such as drug or disease handbooks." **PDA**s are popular among health care professionals and incorporated in some educational programs. As Tenopir noted: "Doctors are early adopters of **PDA**s, with an estimated 35-50 percent of physicians (and 80 percent of U.S. medical students) currently using them."⁶

In late 2001, Sherry Thompson wrote that "the health sciences marketplace offers opportunities to distribute not only online eBook content and **PDA** content, but a variety of networked digital resources as well."⁷ In 2004, Tenopir wrote: "Information providers that serve the medical market are aggressively developing special search options for **PDA**s."⁸ Book publishers and vendors often list **PDA** books on their Websites, but usually individuals are the purchasers. Commercial and health professional Websites have sprouted up, providing health sciences **PDA** users with links to free and fee-based book content.

It's now common for public libraries to license large collections of electronic books available for loan and also content that can be read on **PDA**s.⁸ Health sciences libraries' guiding principles still mostly seem to be: Wait and see, survey, or seek a grant to explore.... Health sciences libraries have: collaborated with other departments on loading licensed content on **PDA**s (e.g., drug reference content); lent devices; provided sync or cradle stations; sponsored, taught or co-taught **PDA** use sessions. Many libraries create online guides and "shopping lists" of free and fee-based health sciences **PDA** book-like content. **PDA** downloading capabilities may be part of Web-based electronic book products already licensed by libraries. Patricia W. Martin, University of Michigan, described "Publishing for the **PDA**—A Medical Campus Collaboration."⁹ The goal of the team's project "was to publish locally-produced pocket manuals in a **PDA** format, for in-house use at the point of care" because librarians at the Medical Library "wanted to explore the role of the library as a publisher of local reference materials in a **PDA** format".

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Selections from
Reference & Research Book News
and *SciTech Book News*

*A Bibliography for Artists, Architects,
Designers, Photographers, Art Historians,
Educators, Museum Professionals,
& Librarians in these fields.*

We've selected more than 1,000 titles published during 2004 for our first subject-focused annual.

Like its long-established parent publications, *Art Book News Annual* features:

- Thoughtful annotations
- Subject arrangement by LC classification
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*Annotated bibliographies
for scholars in the arts
and sciences*

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES REMAIN

Electronic book choices resemble collection development decisions — they are based on institutions' budgets, guidelines, selectors' experience, staff perceptions and instinct, user surveys, and usability studies. "Riding herd" on health sciences electronic books is similar to electronic journals management, with unique challenges. Search interfaces are revamped. Book urls change with new interfaces or editions. Titles temporarily "disappear" or are replaced with other titles, due to behind-the-scenes business decisions not always announced to licensees. One colleague described collection development duties that now include examining usage and prices, then "swapping titles out and in," within a gateway, or switching providers. Many electronic journal and database providers have user advisory boards. Hopefully, electronic book providers take advantage of user and librarian input before they make major decisions or changes!

In the 2004 follow-up⁵ to a 2002 electronic book survey,¹ academic health sciences librarians responded to the question: *"What short phrases would you use to describe your library's satisfaction with electronic book availability, cost, and/or user satisfaction?"* Responses included: *Different users have different approaches to literature. There is still a mix of preference for the electronic versus the print formats. All formats get used. Availability is so spotty it's downright eccentric. Costs are way out of proportion. Costs are worthwhile. High user satisfaction — convenient, ready reference resources, meet learning and clinical practice needs. Frustration with some of the choices for packages, and lack of flexibility. Users should not have to learn each package's search interfaces. Would like more eBooks and more eBooks licensed for PDA use.*

One more descriptive response was: *Users are often unaware that electronic books are available. We still need to do a better job of promoting their use. Unlike e-journals, these are not on the users' "radar." Unless they are used for course assignments, users (both faculty and students) are not aware of their existence... Costs are always a factor and we may have to scale back our offerings. As subscription/standing order types of resources, they become part of the ongoing expenses within our budgets. We track electronic serials in one budget code and other electronic resources as electronic continuations — these include eBooks, databases, mixed format, etc.*

Users often have MEDLINE expectations, of "one stop searching," with convenient links to free and licensed full-text content. One medical student asked: *"Can we search across all of the eBooks, like we do searches in Google?"* At this time, Google Scholar is still under development. Challenges remain in areas such as online title availability, stability, costs, archives, and standards... To answer the questions posed by the student and the 2002 poster, "Health Sciences E-Books: Are We There Yet?"¹ it can be maintained that in 2004, we're still at the beginning of the journey... During our anticipated travels, we need to make "rest stops" — to develop a new working definition for "book" and to agree on our desired destination...

Author's Note: The author would like to acknowledge the input of her **Galter Library** colleagues who read over the draft of the article, **Stephanie Kerns** (Head, Education and Outreach/ Curriculum Librarian) and **Linda Walton** (Associate Director). Also, thanks go to **Feinberg School of Medicine** faculty member **Dr. Michael Altman**, with whom an article on "electronic medical textbooks" was discussed and drafted a few years ago, though it unfortunately never saw the light of day. Some themes from that early project must have simmered in the background until this time... — **RK**

Endnotes

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APPENDIX

This list is by no means intended to be comprehensive. It represents some of the more commonly licensed or discussed electronic book provider gateways offering biomedical and health sciences book content. Some of the gateways / suites now have evolved into databases and portals and no longer resemble the print books from which they originated. Some of the gateways offer more than just health sciences content.

American Psychological Association PsycBooks—<http://www.apa.org/psycbooks/>
 BioMedProtocols.com (Humana)—<http://humanapress.com>
 Books @ Ovid—<http://www.ovid.com/site/index.jsp> (click on: "Products and Services")
 Dekker eBooks—<http://ebooks.lib.dekker.com/>
 Early English Books Online (EEBO)—<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>
 ebrary—<http://www.ebrary.com/>
 Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)—<http://www.gale.com/EighteenthCentury/>
 Ergito—<http://www.ergito.com/index.jsp>
 McGraw-Hill: AccessMedicine and USMLEasy—<http://www.accessmedicine.com> — <http://books.mcgraw-hill.com/medical/usmleasy/>
 MD Consult (Elsevier)—<http://www.mdconsult.com/>
 MIT CogNet—<http://cognet.mit.edu/library/books/>
 NAP Reading Room (National Academy Press; free)—<http://www.nap.edu/info/browse.htm>
 NCBI Bookshelf (National Library of Medicine; free)—<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=Books>
 netLibrary (OCLC)—www.oclc.org/netlibrary/default.htm
 Netter's Interactive Atlases (Icon Learning Systems)—<http://store.netterart.com/> (click on "Institutional Software")
 Professional Library from WebMD, ACP Medicine (formerly Scientific American Medicine Online), ACS Surgery—<http://www.acpmedicine.com>
 Science Direct (Elsevier) book series and reference works—<http://www.sciencedirect.com/>
 STAT!Ref Electronic Medical Library (Teton Data Systems)—<http://www.statref.com/>
 Thieme Electronic Book Library—<http://www.thieme.com/ebooklibrary>
 Wiley InterScience (protocols series and reference)—<http://www.interscience.wiley.com/>