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Group Therapy

Editor

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Group Therapy

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GRIFE: Submitted by **Kelly A Smith** (Electronic Resources Librarian, Eastern Kentucky University Libraries)

Do any of you have thoughts about whether to archive eBooks? In particular, we recently subscribed to the **Gale Virtual Reference Collection**, and we're trying to figure out if it would be worth our while to archive these titles. I'd be especially interested in hearing from those of you who have archived commercial titles. Why did you decide to do so? Was it a complicated process? Did you develop a search interface for the local archive?

RESPONSE: Submitted by **William Walsh** (Head of Acquisitions, Georgia State University)

When we talk about archiving and preserving eBooks, what do we mean?

So far, we have purchased six **Gale Virtual Reference** titles. (Because of our FTE, each title cost significantly more than its print counterpart, but pricing models are another story.) For what I consider a reasonable annual fee, **Thomson Gale** hosts these titles for us on their platform.

For each title we purchased, we received an archival copy of the book in XML format. **Gale's** FAQ states that these files are "for disaster recovery purposes." I asked our rep what that meant. Could they only be used in the event of a catastrophe? The answer was no, the files are ours. If we don't want to pay **Thomson Gale's** annual hosting fee, we are welcome to host the titles ourselves or have a third party host them for us.

But why would we want to? In the short term, I'm certain we don't have the resources to improve upon (or to pay someone else to improve upon) the **Virtual Reference** platform. In the long term, hosting the titles and developing a search interface for them isn't the same as preserving them.

"*Urgent Action Needed to Preserve Scholarly Electronic Journals*," edited by **Donald Waters**, the Program Officer for the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**, details four key actions that academic and research libraries need to take to ensure long-term access to the scholarly record. The first is, "Libraries and associated academic institutions must recognize that preservation of electronic journals is a kind of insurance, and is not in and of itself a form of access." To this and the other three actions, participants in the archiving challenge from the **Janus Conference** have added, "Libraries should affiliate with an appropriate repository. Libraries don't need to reinvent the archiving 'wheel,' but all need to cooperate, communicate and move forward together" <http://janusconference.library.cornell.edu/?p=83/>.

eBooks are not eJournals, but I don't think the best way for most libraries to proceed is to individually archive their eBook titles. Surely this calls for a collaborative effort between libraries and publishers — something similar to the preservation efforts (like **JSTOR**, **LOCKSS** and **Portico**) currently underway for electronic journals.

RESPONSE: Submitted by **Warren Holder** (Electronic Resources Co-ordinator, University of Toronto Libraries)

To quote **Carole Moore**, the Chief Librarian at the **University of Toronto Libraries (UTL)**;

"One solution we have decided on is to invest in a pilot project in electronic books." At **UTL**, we believe that our users do not care whether the information they are looking for is in a journal article, a section of a reference work, or a chapter of a book — they want the information online 24/7/365. To that end, we intend to undertake a pilot project with a critical mass of

eBooks, from as many publishers as we can afford, with the intent of ascertaining how users discover the eBooks, how they use the eBooks and what do they do after they get the information they were looking for."

To be honest, the archiving of commercially copyrighted eBooks is not the issue that is motivating many of us. We are motivated more by assisting in the discovery of information.

To that end, the **University of Toronto Library** has been very actively pursuing the local loading of e-resources for many years. What once was only a **University of Toronto Library** initiative has grown into a province wide project, here in Canada, involving 20 universities. This project is called **Scholars Portal** and from the homepage one can read that:

"Our goal at **Scholars Portal** is to provide access to scholarly electronic resources through a set of tools which allows the networked scholar to search, save and integrate these resources with their teaching and research to foster greater learning opportunities."

It is our belief that it is by hosting the content that we can best move forward to accomplish the stated goal. Here is some statistical information to give a sense of the stage **Scholars Portal** is at.

Scholars Portal users can:

"Query over 65 million references to scholarly journal articles from over 50 major index & abstract databases through a single search interface, it's like a **Google** search of scholarly information source.

The **Scholars Portal** electronic journal collection contains more than eight million articles from over 7,300 full text scholarly journals published by major distributors and presses (titles and numbers will vary with institution).

Our service integrates & supports **RefWorks**, a Web-based citation management system and interlibrary loan & document delivery protocols through **RACER (Rapid Access to Collections by Electronic Requesting)** system which provides connections to the university libraries in Ontario and to major research libraries throughout the world to get the resources you need."

RESPONSE: Submitted by **Heather Morrison** (Project Coordinator, BC Electronic Library)

In theory, of course the ideal is meaningful archival access to electronic materials, whether books or e-journals. At **BC Electronic Library Network**, we have a collection of **netLibrary** titles, for which we have

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fied them as from the First Baptist Church of New Port Richey, Florida. For the most part, these teenagers sang to their own adults from New Port Richey, some of whom operated sound equipment directly in front of the stage. Only a couple of tables in the back of the tent were occupied by people who appeared to be from New Orleans.

Stillness imbued **Good News Camp** that hot afternoon. Camp workers were out in the city on projects. Most activity at midday was the silent coming and going of vehicles. Delivery

trucks, a car. An ambulance pulled in, then pulled out without a sound. Outside, just beyond the driveway, a handful of men sat under shade trees. A blue church van from "Transformation Ministries" drove past, leaving the quiet of the encampment. As it did, librarian-volunteers eating box lunches and half-listening to the New Port Richey youth choir singing to a mostly empty tent could read the words painted on the van's side panel, a statement of faith that had to have been much of what there was to sustain some people who had returned to New Orleans after the flood, but to others, a statement belied by the facts. "God is Good," it said, "All the Time." 🙏

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purchased perpetual access rights. These titles are hosted by OCLC. If it were a simple matter to load them locally and manage the preservation and authentication issues ourselves, it might be tempting.

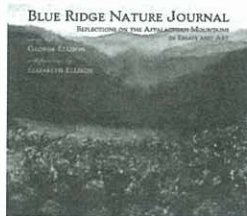
However, it is not that simple. The service we access through OCLC includes not only the content, but metadata, a search interface, authentication mechanisms, and preservation strategies. Preservation of electronic information is still a very new area. There is no handy procedures manual that anyone can follow yet. Let us think that electronic preservation issues will be easily addressed in the very near future, let's not forget that we still have plenty of books in paper form that are in the process of disintegration. Off-the-shelf database / search interface tools that one can easily add archival data to are not available yet, as far as I know.

As an open access advocate, naturally I see that the need for authentication to create accessible archives of purchased information illustrates yet another advantage of open access. With no need for authentication mechanisms, it is much simpler to create a usable archive of books, journals or whatever.

Until recently, I would have thought open access unlikely with books. It seems, however, that even though books have escaped open access advocacy efforts, there are those who are simply plunging ahead with an OA model for books — there are plenty of free online textbooks available already. See my blog posting, **Open Access Textbooks**, at <http://poetic.economics.blogspot.com/2005/12/open-access->

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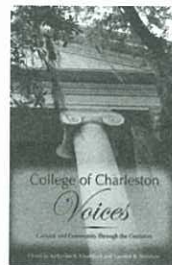
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[textbooks.html](#), for more details on this topic.

Thanks for raising an interesting question.

This is one of the areas where a few of us need to forge ahead and experiment — I look forward to reading the other responses. 🌍

International Dateline — An Interview with Michael Mabe

by Dr. Peter T. Shepherd (Project Director, COUNTER) <pt_shepherd@hotmail.com>

In May 2006, Michael Mabe took over from Pieter Bolman as CEO of STM, the international STM Publishers association. Michael is very well known in the library and scholarly worlds through his work over the previous seven years as Director of Academic Relations at Elsevier. In this position he played not only an important role in making the case for his company at a time when its business policies were being severely criticised, but he was also a significant contributor to the wider debate on the value of journals in the electronic world. As CEO of STM he will continue to be a leader in this debate.

Having taken an MA after doing research at Oxford into chemical aspects of radiocarbon dating, Michael began his publishing career as a scientific lexicographer working on OUP's *Oxford English Dictionary Supplement* in 1980. After leaving OUP in 1985 he worked in various capacities for the British Standards Institution, Pergamon, and Elsevier, where he was Publish-

ing Director of the international materials science programme. A frequent contributor of both articles and book reviews to *Serials*, *Learned Publishing*, *ASLIB Proceedings* and other journals that cover aspects of scholarly publishing, he speaks regularly on the evolution of the scholarly communications system.

Michael's research interests have covered bibliometrics, user behaviour and the quantitative, historical and sociological analysis of publishing systems and the needs they fulfill for their users. He has been a Visiting Professor at the College of Communication at the University of Tennessee and in the Department of Information Science at City University, London.

In his spare time Michael is trying to speak acceptable Italian, collects rather more acceptable wine and likes to visit Roman archaeological and historical sites. He does not

yet regard

STM publishing as being of primarily historical interest and feels that the rumours of the imminent death of the industry are much exaggerated. Provided that they continue to adapt, Michael envisages STM publishers continuing to play a key role in the research communications process well into the future.

In this interview Peter Shepherd not only explores with Michael the future of the STM publishing world, but also takes him on the occasional detour into the history of the business in which they have both been participants during the past two decades.

PS: What are your three main priorities for STM?

MM: I have three clear priorities for STM: First the organization must proactively advocate the true value added of the STM publisher in the scholarly process and assist STM mem-

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