Mark Your Calendars

The 33rd Annual NASIG Conference is set for June 8-11, 2018, in Atlanta Georgia. Early bird registration is available through May 11, with a special discount for NASIG members. New this year is NASIG on Demand: Features of the 2018 Conference, which includes video recordings of one concurrent session from each of six concurrent session groups:

- *"The New Dimension in Scholarly communications: How a Global Scholarly Community Collaboration Created the World's Largest Linked Research Knowledge System"* — Dr. Robert Scott (University of Georgia), Ralph O'Flinn, (University of Alabama, Birmingham), and Heidi Becker, (Digital Science).

- *"Cultivating TALint: Using the Core Competencies as a Framework for Training Future Information Professionals"* — Marlene van Ballegooie and Jennifer Browning (University of Toronto).

- *"Wrangle and Corral that License Agreement"* — Carolyn Carpan (University of Alberta) and Alexis Linoski (Georgia Institute of Technology).

- *"The Heart of the Cycle: How Can Metadata 2020 Improve Serials Metadata for Scholarly Communications and Research?"* (Juliane Schneider (Harvard University))

- *"Serials Clerk to Dean: 20 Years with a Head in the Clouds"* — Jeff Steely (Georgia State University).

- *"The Scholarly Commons"* — Maryann Martone (University of California San Diego).

NASIG on Demand can be purchased separately for those unable to attend in person and is included in all full registrations for the conference. In addition, NASIG will continue its tradition of offering video recordings of vision sessions for free to everyone. The full program is available online at: *https://nasig2018.sched.com/*.

TCR Reports from the Field:
Researcher to Reader (R2R) Conference London, February 26-27, 2018

. . . Reported by Anthony Watkinson, CIBER Research, <anthony.watkinson@btinternet.com>

R2R descends from the annual conference of the Association of Subscription Agents (*https://www.linkedin.com/company/association-of-subscription-agents/*) which was closed by unanimous vote in 2015 and inherits their London location, its convenient month (little competition) and much of its inspiration. Its purpose is described by its chairman Mark Carden as " to be the premier forum for discussion of the international scholarly content supply chain — bringing knowledge from the Researcher to the Reader."

For a small conference (165 registrants in 2018) it punches above its weight and certainly it has retained its mix. This year there were 37% publishers, 24% librarians and even 8% researchers. It is international in attitude with the local (UK and Ireland) contingent decreasing to the current 69% but (as we shall see) some of the usefulness to U.S. librarians lies in the challenge of what goes on elsewhere. For the programme and links to the slides see *https://r2rconf.com/r2r-2018/*.

The first keynote was of truly international importance. Alison Mudditt, the relatively new CEO of the Public Library of Science (PLOS), took this opportunity to provide her manifesto for scholarly communication under the title: *Changing the Culture of Research: It's Everyone's Problem*. She started with some grim statistics about the current loss of trust in science and what has followed and then gave her solutions. Publishers like PLOS have to help. She honed in on the reproducibility project in Cancer Biology (*https://cos.io/rpcb/*) and on "improving incentives" for scientists in general — her examples are focus on study design and methods (not just results), develop better ways to reward failure, and more and better (article level) metrics. A new infrastructure is needed to facilitate sharing not just of papers but of other scholarly outputs especially data. Peer review must change but not just by increasing transparency of the process but also by review of parallel research outputs (data, code etc.). This was a message for all involved in the scholarly ecosystem.

There was a highly relevant session of *Library-based Publishing*. Maria Bonn, now at UIUC but previously a founder of Michigan Publishing, spoke to the title: *What Do They Want Anyway? Understanding the Needs of Scholars in a Contemporary Publishing Environment*. She described the ongoing "Publishing without Walls" project and current results. For a concise explanation of the project see *https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/idx/j/jep/3336451.0020.219/--understanding-the-needs-of-scholars-in-a-contemporary?rgn=main;view=fulltext*. Lucy Lambe, the Scholarly Communications Officer at the London School of Economics, gave an account of how she has set about building a new library press which met the needs of her researchers.

I guess most readers of *TCR* will have come across Dr. Danny Kingsley, Deputy Director, Scholarly Communication & Research Services,

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Cambridge University Library. If not, her blogs are always of interest: *https://unlockingresearch-blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/?author=3*. I do not think the blog covers the session she convened on *who should manage scholarly communications within institutions* but this is a relevant post from last year — *https://unlockingresearch-blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/?p=1517*. This panel was concerned with UK arrangements. In the UK, research managers have a higher profile in universities: see *https://arma.ac.uk/*. One question that did come up was that given that scholarly outputs should be defined as what researchers think they are where should they be held? For her the answer is the institutional repository.

Another panel of interest in spite of the fact that it was mainly European in content asked the question: *How learned societies can survive and thrive in an open future?* Such organisations "may not have a divine right to exist" but innovation pays off in increased membership. It is surprising that libraries have little formal contact with professional and scholarly societies since they (essentially) represent the researchers they support.

The session on *open access books and journals* showcased two big studies summarised by Ros Pyne, who heads policy and development for Springer Open (*https://www.springernature.com/oabooks*). It showed academics who are publishing books in open form that they will get many more downloads and even twice as many citations that way. Jenny Fry of Loughborough University set out the findings of an academic study on the adoption of mega-journals (*http://oamj.org/*).

Up-to-date technology is always a feature of meetings like this and who better to present on *Data Science and Artificial Intelligence at the Scholarly Communications Frontier* than John Sack the Founder Director of Stanford spin-off HighWire Press? This presentation was mainly about how publishers can help researchers but as this involves discovery it must be of interest to librarians. There was no Blockchain session — a relief for some.

Paul Ayris an early OA advocate and former president of LIBER (the European ARL equivalent) collaborating with Tiberius Ignat spoke on the interesting topic — *The Empires of the Future are the Empires of the Mind.* His presentation was quite concrete and much was devoted mainly to University College London initiatives particularly to University College Press fully financed by the university. He is Pro-Vice-Provost UCL Library Services. One slide on a "four step test to engage in Open Science" (directed at librarians) was remarkably similar to the Mudditt plan in her keynote.

The closing keynote from Yale University Librarian (Susan Gibbons) answered the question — *How can libraries stay aligned with the changing needs of our users?* The work by Gibbons and anthropologist Nancy Fried Foster at Rochester may be known to many but developments at Yale have added to the range. There is a particular concentration on students. One snippet which may surprise is that in the last year students are moving back for the first time to single individual spaces rather than group venues.

A list of what was directed at the audience conveys only part of the picture. One additional aspect of the conference is that (almost) all registrants took part in workshops — even the really "important" people. The workshops were seriously directed and we worked hard and produced reports. It could have been the reason why interaction during the sessions was greater than in some other similar conferences. The closest U.S. equivalent (in spite of the disparity in size) is the annual **Charleston Conference** where there is something of the same buzz and openness to other views.

More TCR Reports from the Field:

Highlights from the Opening Keynote at ER&L's 13th Annual Conference, March 4-7, 2018

. . . Excerpted from an upcoming ATG conference report by Donald T. Hawkins, Freelance Conference Blogger and Editor, <dthawkins@verizon.net>

The Electronic Resources & Libraries (ER&L) Conference returned once again to the AT&T Executive Conference Center in Austin, TX on March 4-7, 2018. It drew over 1,000 attendees from 17 countries, as well as about 500 online attendees. Besides the traditional mix of plenary and concurrent sessions, the conference featured an exhibit hall with over 80 exhibitors, a number of poster presentations, and pre- and post-conference workshops. Following are bullet points from the Opening Keynote on the theme *"Content Standards and Their Consequences."*

Robyn Caplan, Researcher at Data & Society Research Institute (*https://datasociety.net/*), noted that the power of platforms lies in the central position that search engines occupy. However, distinctions between media companies and platforms have begun to blur, leading to ambiguity in our perceptions of how people are consuming information:

- Platforms might be thought of as publishers, but large ones like Facebook, Twitter, and Google cannot define themselves well because it is difficult for them to categorize their content well.

- Are platform companies really media companies? Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, has said that Facebook defines itself as a technology company because media companies are largely known by the content they create.

- Are media companies platform companies? Some of them think of print as just another platform, and news media have shifted their strategies to be platforms.

- Barriers between distribution channels and publishers are converging — analytics are being used interchangeably. Platform operators are wondering what content they should be prioritizing, which are decisions publishers used to make.

- The Internet was intended to break down barriers between producers and readers and was initially advocated as the true public sphere. But it is unlikely that early Internet companies could foresee today's situation that there would be only a few companies dominating the Internet.

Caplan referred to a report recently published by her organization, which she co-authored: *"Dead Reckoning: Navigating Content Moderation After 'Fake News.'"* It discusses fake news as an illustration of the problems of categorizing online content. Fake news can be detected by

- Intent: the author intends to spread false information, and

- The type of information being conveyed, such as hoaxes, conspiracies, satire, etc., and

- Its features: unique words, visual cues, sensational images, and social patterns.

When we make content decisions, we are implicitly classifying some of it as good and some as bad. For example, in the fake news case, it is difficult to tell the difference between someone intending to inform and someone intending to deceive. Solutions to the fake news problem depend on:

- Trust and verification by third-party fact checkers, who must exist globally to be effective,

- Demonetization of content not meeting standards,

- Banning accounts known to be producers of fake news and de-prioritizing their content, and

- Regulatory solutions (generally used outside the U.S.).

Platforms now rely more than ever on people to moderate and categorize content types. Content decisions depend on context and involve difficult decision-making. Platforms are trying to balance consistent policies with flexibility, global platforms observing local laws, transparency, and protecting user privacy. They have vastly different resources for these operations, and are trying to distinguish themselves from each other.

The 2019 ER&L Conference will return to Austin, Texas on March 3-6, 2019.

Ed Note: Watch for Don's full conference report in a future issue of Against the Grain (ATG). http://www.against-the-grain.com

Don't Miss This!

The 2018 Charleston Library Conference Call for Preconferences and Seminars closes on Friday, April 27. These in-depth learning sessions range from a half day to two days in length, and will be held on Monday and Tuesday, November 5 and 6. The Charleston Vendor Showcase will take place on Tuesday, November 6, and the main conference will be held Wednesday through Friday, November 7-9. The organizers are also open to proposals for post-conference sessions to be held on Friday or Saturday, November 9 or 10. The theme for 2018 is from Percy Bysshe Shelly's poem "Ode to the West Wind:" *Oh, Wind, if Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?*

http://www.charlestonlibraryconference.com/call-preconferences/

Short Takes

University of Hawaii has received a $100,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the digitization and open-access distribution of 22 out-of-print University of Hawaii Press books. The 18-month project is part of the Humanities Open Book Program, a joint initiative between the Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Among the books selected are a heavily illustrated, three-volume ethnography of Tahiti, as well as the biography of an important statesman who served the last king of the Hawaiian monarchy. At the end of the project, readers will be able to find direct links to open-access works from a new UH Press website, and download the digitized books in EPUB and PDF at no cost. A print-on-demand option will also be offered for select titles. Read more at *https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2018/04/03/uh-press-awarded-100k-to-publish-open-access-books/*.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), has selected the team of Rebecca R. Kennison (Principal, K|N Consultants Ltd.) and Nancy L. Maron (Founder, BlueSky to BluePrint, LLC) to design, develop, and deliver a new report on effective and promising practices within the research environment and scholarly communication system. The team will also identify areas where further research is needed and will assess progress since the publication of ACRL's 2007 white paper *Establishing a Research Agenda for Scholarly Communication: A Call for Community Engagement*. The project will be informed by interviews, a review of the scholarly literature, advances in practice, and focus groups reflecting diverse voices across the profession. The first online open forum is being scheduled for this spring, followed by an in-person open forum at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference on Sunday, June 24, from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. A first draft of the report is due this fall. Learn more at *http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2018/04/acrl-selects-consultants-new-research-environment-and-scholarly-communication*.