

More Than Consumers

Students as Content Creators

Amy Buckland

What Libraries Publish

Thinking of our students as future researchers offers libraries many reasons to support those students as creators in the scholarly publishing world. The peer-review process helps students better understand critical discourse. The submission and acceptance process helps them learn about their rights as creators. Their participation in the publishing process develops their presence in the academic world, giving them oh-so-important “street cred” as academics. But other than writing a dissertation and the occasional conference proceeding, college and university students typically participate in the scholarly publishing continuum as consumers. Libraries have long helped students become better consumers by teaching them about authority and authenticity in publishing (be that online or in print) and are key to growing informed graduates. Currently, libraries are able to support a different role for students in this continuum—that of creator. This support can come in many different forms,

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from instruction around author rights and the publishing process itself, to launching student-run peer-reviewed journals, to making student work available through a repository.

These opportunities for engagement with our community present libraries as a partner instead of simply a resource. We are central to the education of these junior scholars, whether or not they choose to stay in the research and publishing realm. Partnering with students also helps us keep our services “plugged in” to their needs and better support the teaching and learning mission of the institution.

Both student-run journals and repository deposit are important as library publishing services, but there are even more ways to support students’ participation in the scholarly community. A significant amount of outreach, from information literacy workshops, to embedded librarians, to curriculum services, all can, and should, incorporate scholarly publishing issues:

- Understanding the concept of peer review, in all of its variations, and why that has long been the foundation for scholarly publishing, will introduce students to the concepts of critical discourse and public scholarship.
- Author rights are increasingly important in this age of open access, funding mandates, and the growing critique of traditional publishing models. Librarians are all too familiar with the issues around copyright transfer agreements and are well positioned to open the discussion with students. This discussion also opens the door to a discussion about attribution and the difference between copyright infringement and plagiarism.
- Discussions of online privacy can be enhanced through a frank conversation about student’s online presence as professionals, which ties in well with creating a public profile as a scholar through publishing.
- Exploring different publishing environments also helps students find their “tribe”. Before deciding where to publish, students can evaluate the resources available to them and truly find the right place for their research. This is especially important for graduate students who are looking to continue their career in academia. They want to be well-positioned in their field, and that may mean publishing solely in open-access journals or working with publishers that encourage new forms of publishing.

Incorporating the concepts of critical discourse, evaluation of resources, and participation in the scholarly conversation is what libraries do. Add two of the most frequent ways libraries support student publishing (student-run peer-reviewed journals and making work available through an institutional repository), and we have a solid setting to ensure that future researchers are prepared for public scholarship.

Student Work in Repositories

Libraries have a long history of supporting access to student work by making theses and dissertations available to the public. In the past, indexing and microfilming via third parties like UMI (University Microfilms International) and covering the costs for services like ProQuest's Dissertations and Theses Database (PQDT) positioned students within the scholarly sphere. The transition to in-house digitization services, born-digital workflows, and homegrown repositories is an example of the library's commitment to student success. Be it dissertations, working papers, capstone projects, or honors undergrad work, it can find a home in a repository. There is much debate as to whether making work available through a repository is truly publishing, but it is generally understood that it is publishing insofar as distributing a creator's work to a wider audience is publishing. Making work available via a repository places students within the scholarly community of their institution—offering them a place at the table, helping them create an online presence as researchers.

Theses and dissertations are often easy to collect and make available in a repository because there is no third party (publisher) that must give permission to make the work available. (Institutions may also have other requirements, including deposit in PQDT, various fees, etc.) Some institutions make the work available immediately while others offer students an embargo period for their work, when it is available only on campus, like other licensed resources. Much debate has ensued about whether embargoes are a good idea for students, with groups like the American Historical Association wading in to the debate. The AHA wants to see a six-year embargo for dissertations (AHA 2013), claiming that junior scholars are having difficulty publishing their first monograph as the dissertation, on which it is usually based, is publicly available. This is a

spurious argument as there is nothing but anecdotal proof that university presses won't publish worked derived from a dissertation (Patton 2013). University presses put pressure on graduates to buy in completely to the publish-or-perish model of scholarship, creating another generation of scholars who are beholden to institutional tenure and promotion policies instead of seeking new ways of sharing their scholarship.

Inclusion in the repository positions students as part of the institutional community, giving them an online presence for their professional lives. Some institutions have seen push-back on this front from senior academics, concerned that their work would be found alongside student work, and restricted the deposited works to solely PhD dissertations. Including master's theses, and even undergraduate work, however, is a way to prepare students for their future as scholars. Depositing your work in a repository, alongside that of famous alumni and respected scholars, gives another dimension to the value of the work. Students may be more careful and critical of their work. Librarians are well poised to help them evaluate their sources, learn more about attribution, and look at how their work fits within the discipline.

Booth (2012) sees the repository as a pedagogical tool:

If scholarship thrives on the exchange of ideas in public forums, it is critical to introduce students to the complicated experience of contributing to open discourse and mentor them in the social/academic accountability it entails.

Making student work available via the repository gives librarians the chance to discuss access issues when it comes to research work. Helping students understand the information economy and how institutional membership really is a privilege when it comes to accessing quality information is a discussion that needs to happen more often. Understanding that their work will be publicly available, and that those without institutional affiliation rely on such works, will raise the level of discussion that currently happens only at the faculty level. (Some schools have taken to using events like Open Access Week to teach students how to find scholarly OA resources they will have access to post-graduation, when they no longer have an academic library's resources at their fingertips.

Tying discussions around access to scholarly information to information on depositing in an open-access repository positions students as part of the solution, not the problem.)

In the University of Illinois system, the Ethnography of the University Initiative (www.eui.illinois.edu) integrates original student research into current classes and workshops. Not only does student work find a home in UI's repository, Illinois Digital Environment for Access to Learning and Scholarship (IDEALS), but groups on campus are encouraged to make use of this work in their current teaching and learning. Students are able to watch their work complete the scholarly publishing cycle, from creation, to use, to re-creation. EUI also hosts student conferences, offering yet another opportunity for students to join the conversation as researchers and scholars.

Student-Run Journals

Student-run journals are one of the most obvious examples of a need for publishing support, and another way for students to join the scholarly conversation. In these instances, the library offers varying levels of support (from hosting various publishing software all the way to advising on how to create an editorial board). Learning about peer review and the editorial process helps develop critical thinking and improve writing skills. Developing copyright policies for the journal helps students understand author rights and intellectual property issues. Participation of a faculty member to oversee and advise the journal ensures the library/department liaison model is sustainable and furthers strengthens ties between the two campus units.

As part of their role in the university community, students are familiar with having their work evaluated—be that by a professor distributing grades or by peers when workshoping papers in writing courses. Formalized peer review adds another layer to the process. Instead of being driven solely by grades, students must keep in mind the readability of their writing, authority of their arguments, and clarity of their voice. Peer review also offers students the opportunity to revise their work and address the queries of their colleagues, something that is not found in the typical class-based writing. On top of the review process, the knowledge that this writing will

be publicly available increases the importance of proper attribution, solid research, and a grasp of how this work fits in the discourse of the discipline.

Part of the publishing process involves copyright and intellectual property issues. Participating in a student-run journal gives students the chance to explore these rights issues from the viewpoints of both the publisher and the author. Including an image from an article in your term paper requires proper attribution to avoid plagiarism charges. Including an image from one article for inclusion in another that is to be published might require more than just attribution—the student may need to go through the process of getting rights for republication. Here the library can step in to discuss copyright transfer agreements and author rights and begin (or further) discussions around open-access publishing. As publishers, students begin to learn the logistics of scholarly publishing: the importance of copyediting and layout, production timelines, indexing and findability of the journal, and the concept of credibility when it comes to journals (especially student journals).

Many libraries offer journal-hosting services, where the library manages software and contractual agreements (sometimes paired with the repository). This helps lower the barrier for publishing by giving students a platform for making their work available. Libraries also help with ISSN registration, getting the journal listed in sources like DOAJ and Ulrich's and included in aggregators such as EBSCO, increasing the credibility of the journal by making it exist outside of the university URL.

One of the concepts taught to students when they are evaluating a resource is how to determine authority. Part of this authority can stem from the length of time a journal has been published. Continuity is important not just for metrics like impact factor, but also to establish credibility—a journal can't simply exist for a year and then be shuttered. Partnerships with faculties or departments help prevent the fly-by-night publication of journals. These agreements can range from a yearly publication of students' capstone projects to ongoing journals that publish quarterly. The importance is that there is someone in the faculty who will ensure that when the current editors of the journals graduate, there is someone to step into their place. This continuity is useful when discussing the importance of editorial boards, considering the difference between editors and editorial board members, and determining the vision of the journal. Faculty advisors (be they professors or librarians) are a great resources for

student-run journals—their familiarity with the publishing process, as well as their direct interest in student success, can help smooth the waters when issues arise.

Many institutions publish an undergraduate research journal. Offering a space that is not discipline-specific can be more welcoming to students who may be hesitant to make their work public. The *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research* (<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/jpur>) has student authors, editors, and designers, with faculty advisors. The journal has support from the library and Purdue University Press, as well as Purdue Marketing and Media and the Online Writing Lab. Partnering with writing groups on campus can cement the journal as part of the overall learning experience at the institution. Partnering with writing-intensive courses is another opportunity for libraries to support publishing. When students know that their final project of the year will be published in the annual volume of the undergraduate journal, they have more incentive to take advantage of library resources from the start, as opposed to trying to modify a paper for publication later in the process.

Graduate student publications frequently have long histories on campus and are a prime opportunity for library publishing support. As opposed to undergraduates, grad students have taken the next step in their participation in the scholarly community, with many deciding that joining the research or academic life is their goal. Grad students are able to take on more responsibility than their junior colleagues and are more familiar with the state of their discipline.

At UCLA, the library partnered with the Graduate Students Association to digitize the full runs of graduate student journals—increasing access and ensuring preservation by depositing them in the Internet Archive. This practice falls perfectly in line with the mandate of many libraries to digitize and preserve the institution's unique content—be that rare manuscripts or born-digital information. The GSA has also liaised with the library to offer a series of lunchtime workshops looking at issues around scholarly communication and publishing.

The Journal Incubator project (www.journalincubator.org) at the University of Lethbridge is an example of teaching students the skills required for publishing from a purely production angle. At Lethbridge, students learn production skills working on a suite of journals, all funneled through the same production office. In this instance, the focus

is on managing the peer-review process, managing revisions, copyediting, doing layout, and ultimately making the work available. All of this work is independent of the content (which is handled by subject specialists). Students learn transferable and sought-after skills while becoming familiar with the scholarly publishing process. From the library's point of view, an incubator-style service could be more nimble and easier to initially manage than rolling out a full-fledged publishing program and help standardize output of community publications. Having a single point of contact on campus for all publishing requests also makes the service much easier to promote. Combining activities like copyediting and layout design also saves resources and production costs for all journals involved in the incubator.

Intersections with Other Library Services

In “Riding the Wave: Open Access, Digital Publishing, and the Undergraduate Thesis,” Miller (2013) discusses the required senior thesis seminar at Pomona College. In this article, he highlights another way the library can support student publishing—the seminar is co-taught by three librarians. Students develop a research topic with the ultimate goal of making it available in Claremont Colleges’ repository—the students’ first foray into publicly sharing their work. Librarians help students craft their research topic, evaluate primary and secondary sources, and craft their thesis—all while thinking about the scholarly publishing world from the start, instead of as an afterthought.

At McGill, librarians are part of the Arts Undergraduate Research Fair, where they present on a number of topics, including student publishing. Jones and Canuel (2013) prepared a workshop discussing the benefits of student publishing. Focusing on building a professional profile and understanding how being a published author can be a competitive advantage when applying to grad school or on the job market, the workshop was well received. Following the first workshop, a number of students approached the library publishing unit on campus with ideas for new student-run journals.

At Pacific University, the library has worked with faculty in the English department to create a minor in editing and publishing for undergraduates. Virtually housed in the Editing and Publishing Center, the courses meet the

interests of students looking for opportunities to work on their editing and publishing skills. The library's course, Introduction to Scholarly Journal Publishing, directly connects the library's journal publishing services with students, giving them an opportunity to discuss scholarly publishing for credit. Tying it into other courses already on offer, the university was able to create a cohesive curriculum on the topic of scholarly publishing. The library found this a useful advocacy tool, as well as a chance to present scholarly publishing as more than something that is done solely at the university. Gilman (2013) reports that student evaluations frequently mentioned that students learned things in the course that they probably would not have otherwise.

In the *Library Publishing Directory* (Lippincott 2013), a number of institutions report supporting student-run journals. Of particular note is an initiative at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where there are plans to hire an Endowed Digital Scholarship Services Student Assistant to offer opportunities for students to work on digital publishing issues from within the library. This initiative is one that could be easily replicated and would make a useful practicum for libraries affiliated with LIS programs. Future librarians are both interested and equipped to begin delving in to the scholarly publishing landscape—offering them a place in the library to get real-world experience on these issues, while supporting scholarly publishing, is an appealing way to encourage student involvement.

Is It Really That Easy?

There are, of course, challenges with supporting students as creators. Objections may be raised regarding the quality of student work. Faculty are hesitant to have their names alongside those of students in the repository—as the implication might be they are of equal value. It is true that not all student work is publishable. Many students attend university with no intention of becoming researchers or academics or even going on to a life that requires scholarly writing on a regular basis. Teaching them about the scholarly publishing system, however, has value beyond students-as-authors. Learning to fully understand the system through participation in a student-run journal, by having their work made available in a repository, or even simply learning about how the peer-review process can add an

extra level of authority to articles, ensures that students become better information consumers. Their ability to critically evaluate what they read is instantly valuable in all aspects of life, regardless of their profession.

It is true that institutions have students as a captive audience for only a few years, depending on the degree (and how long ABD status can be maintained), so it is doubly important that discussions about scholarly publishing become a standard part of all library outreach. Information literacy cannot happen without evaluating the environment in which information is presented. Discussions around authority on the Internet can use traditional scholarly models as their basis. Libraries are able to participate in growing a more informed community for only a short amount of time; we must take advantage of the opportunity as soon as it presents itself.

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