

Werner Ulrich's Home Page: *Picture of the Month**Now "Ulrich's Bimonthly"*

March, 2006



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Open doors: a plea for open access publishing (Part 2/2) The page of last month invited you to join the open access publishing movement. In the present page, I would like to complete my plea for open access publishing by mentioning some of my initial personal commitments to OA publishing. For your convenience, I repeat last month's invitation before introducing my personal commitments.

An invitation Unless a majority of researchers and research institutions commit themselves to OA publishing, it will make little progress. Hence, I suggested:

Don't just ask what others have done to facilitate open-access electronic publishing; ask what you can do to give it a chance!

Four basic practical recommendations to begin with:

1: Publish in OA journals. Before submitting your work to journals that are not committed to OA, try to find an OA alternative. The above-mentioned **Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)** may help you in finding such alternatives.

2: Amend copyright agreements. If a publisher requests you to sign a copyright transfer agreement, amend the preprinted agreement so as to retain your right to circulate the original HTML or PDF file of your article, to post it in personal or institutional web sites or OA repositories, and to authorize others to use them for non-commercial purposes (e.g., for teaching

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purposes), all on the sole condition that accurate reference is given to the original publication. As a help, you may want to use the **Author's Addendum form** offered for download by SPARC, the above-mentioned Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition.

See: <http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/addendum.html> and
http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/docs/AuthorsAddendum2_1.pdf

3: Read and quote OA journals. In your references to the work of other authors, make sure you primarily base yourself on the quality and relevance of their published work, rather than on where it is published.

4: Support the development of quality OA journals and OA repositories in fields in which they are not yet available. Where they are available, submit quality work to them and offer your services as a careful reviewer!

A personal commitment In the spirit of these recommendations, I have decided to support the open access philosophy of academic publishing by henceforth giving preference to open access publishing whenever it is possible without compromising academic standards, and by cooperating on initiatives to launch or promote open-access electronic journals. My (admittedly modest) efforts thus far include the following:

- I have signed the **Budapest Open Access Initiative** (see last month's page).
- I have become a founding Associate Editor as well as a reviewer of the **Journal of Research Practice (JRP)**, a multi-professional electronic journal that is committed to the open access philosophy and which is published by **AU Press** (Athabasca University Press) in cooperation with the **International Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publication (ICAAP)** at Athabasca University (Canada's Open University), Edmonton, Canada.

See: <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/index> or <http://jrp.icaap.org/>, or click on the following logo of JRP.



JRP is listed in, and can also be accessed through, the [Directory of Open Access Journals \(DOAJ\)](#) under the following subject categories: "Education," "Multidisciplinary," and "Philosophy."

See: <http://www.doaj.org/openurl?genre=journal&issn=1712851X>

- Under the institutional umbrella of the [Lugano Summer School](#), I have engaged myself as a (modest) sponsor of JRP, in an effort to support its innovative new financing model.

See: http://www.lss.lu.unisi.ch/current.htm#_jrp

and <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/about/journalSponsorship>

- I am committed to making available a growing number of my own publications in electronic form, free of charge, through the ["Downloads" section of my personal home page](#). Accordingly, I have formulated my copyright conditions for downloading and using my work in the spirit of the [Creative Commons Attribution Licence](#).

See: [copyright.html](#)

- Finally, whenever possible, I will increasingly publish my articles through journals committed to the open access philosophy. When this is not possible, my next priority is to offer journal publishers a non-exclusive copyright, that is, the right of first print and electronic publication of the article for commercial purposes, while retaining my right to use and distribute my work (particularly in electronic form) for non-commercial purposes. Whenever necessary, I will insist on amending standard copyright transfer agreements by means of, or in the spirit of, the [SPARC Author's Addendum](#). Finally, if the journal does not accept this, there always remains the legal possibility of circulating revised pre- or post-publication versions of articles; I will accordingly invest the time and energy required to prepare such versions.

Some further considerations

- **The issue of quality:** There is a widely held belief that commercial publishing, through peer-review and copy-editing, ensures quality, while OA electronic publishing does not. However, this is arbitrary; there is no intrinsic reason why OA could not be associated with carefully set-up procedures of peer review and copy-editing, as for instance the journals [Information Research](#) and the already mentioned [Journal of Research Practice \(JRP\)](#), among many other examples, prove. In fact, since conventional publishing is more expensive, commercial publishers increasingly tend to "save" the cost of careful copy-editing, with the consequence of declining editorial quality of many publications. As to peer review, "It is not the publishers who ensure quality, but the academics who carry out the work of peer review and they are as willing to do that for truly 'open access' journals as for those that are commercially published." (Wilson, 2005; Professor T.D. Wilson is editor and publisher of the above-mentioned OA journal [Information Research](#)).
- **On the rationale for open access:** "The rationale for open access is that the scholarly literature is produced without consideration of financial gain – other than indirectly through the academic reward system. If the means can be found, therefore, it makes sense to propose that what is produced without thought of gain should be available freely to those who may benefit from the reported research. Governments, charitable agencies and universities support research activity and, in effect, pay for the research outputs of their staff. Under a commercial publishing system, they must pay again to acquire those outputs for their libraries. Under an open access system some would be paying to maintain the system, but all would benefit from much lower access costs. Of course, this is of particular significance to the developing world, which cannot afford the subscription rates and which would benefit most, perhaps, from an open access system." (Wilson, 2003)

- **How to engage yourself individually:** For additional hints as to what you as an individual researcher and author can do to promote OA publishing, see the following sources:

[What You Can Do To Help](#) page of the BOAJ

See: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/help.shtml>

[Create Change](#), an Internet resource for scholarly (self-)publishing

See: <http://www.createchange.org/>

- **How to facilitate institutional engagement:** Are you working for a publisher or an academic or professional society looking for practical recommendations as to how to institutionalize an OA policy? The Open Society Institute (400 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019) in 2005 published a [Guide to OA Publishing](#). It is available both in HTML and in PDF format:

http://www.soros.org/openaccess/html/open_access_publishing_and_scholarly_societies.htm (HTML)

http://www.soros.org/openaccess/pdf/open_access_publishing_and_scholarly_societies.pdf (PDF)

The two links can also be found in the BOAI web site:

http://www.soros.org/openaccess/scholarly_guide.shtml

References

Wilson, T.D. (2003). "Open Access." Introduction to the open access electronic journal *Information Research*, <http://www.informationr.net/ir/openaccess.html>

Wilson, T.D. (2005). A step forward for open access publishing. *BOAI Forum Archive*, 16 Dec 2005, <http://threader.ecs.soton.ac.uk/lists/boaiforum/674.html>

This month's public domain picture: copleft Sather Gate, the main entry to the University of California's Berkeley campus. Digital photograph published by Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, in its article "[University of California, Berkeley](#)" under the [GNU Free Documentation License](#). The picture has been slightly edited so as to reduce contrast, improve colors, and increase sharpness. Original resolution 1024 x 768 pixels, memorized with 2.25 MB; current resolution 800 x 600 pixels, compressed to 109 KB. Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this photograph under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2 or any later version published by the [Free Software Foundation](#), provided this License is included.

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Open doors for scholarship: UC Berkeley's Sather Gate

* Eduardo Mendicta, ed.:
*Take Care of Freedom
 and Truth Will Take Care
 of Itself: Interviews with
 Richard Rorty.*
 Stanford, CA: Stanford
 University Press, 2006.

„Take care of freedom
 and truth will take care of itself.”

(Richard Rorty, American Philosopher, 2006)*

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Notepad for capturing
 personal thoughts »

Write down your thoughts before you forget them!
 Just be sure to copy them elsewhere before leaving this page.

Last updated 10 May 2010 (links) and 4 March 2006 (text, first published 1March 2006)
http://wulrich.com/picture_march2006.html

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