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A BIMONTHLY REPORT ON RESEARCH LIBRARY ISSUES AND ACTIONS FROM ARL, CNI, AND SPARC

THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT OF UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING

by Karla Hahn, Director, ARL Office of Scholarly Communication

The rapid change in scholarly communication practices ushered in by the advent of the Internet and the Web has prompted the consideration of previously unexamined assumptions, giving rise to a fundamental question: to what extent should the institutions that support the creation of scholarship and research take responsibility for its dissemination as well?

Some, but not all, means of production of scholarly works have long resided within research institutions: many institutions sponsor university presses; departments, campus institutes, and other units manage specialized series or occasional publications. However, scholars often give their research results to nonuniversity publishers, who edit, package, and sell those results to libraries. In the digital age, a wide range of campus servers host new kinds of digital scholarship created within and disseminated from academe—a renaissance of campus publishing has been seeded.

In this emerging landscape, publishing extends well beyond the traditional bounds of monographs and journals. An efflorescence of new kinds of digital works of scholarship has occurred on the Web as scholars and researchers use new technologies to convey content and relationships that could not be communicated in print media. The Web too has fostered new growth of working papers, technical reports, preprints, conference proceedings, and other valuable but previously hard to find types of works.

A first generation of new publishing models has illuminated the potential of digital scholarly publishing, as well as many inefficiencies of the

outsourcing model that burgeoned in the latter half of the 20th century. In re-evaluating the university's role in disseminating scholarship, we must consider the value of the dissemination of new knowledge as an engine of knowledge creation and the consequences of ceding control of knowledge to nonuniversity disseminators.

Although it isn't necessarily appropriate, possible, or desirable that research institutions publish all works of scholarship themselves, there are many indicators that university publishing is on the rise—a trend that should be appreciated and fostered in a digital age. Leaders at research institutions are being encouraged to initiate campus-wide discussions of university publishing, including taking responsibility for ensuring that dissemination models are fully congruent with the mission of cultivating new knowledge and learning.

This special issue of the *ARL Bimonthly Report* presents a number of perspectives on the changing environment of university publishing, paying special attention to new ways in which libraries are taking responsibility for exploring solutions. This is not to suggest that libraries alone can take care of these issues. Rather, these articles collectively provide a basis for promoting a broad consideration of the purpose of, and need for, significantly enhancing university publishing capabilities. The authors paint a picture of what campus publishing capability can look like (in embryo form) and frame the opportunity for engagement, not from just a few leading institutions but as a fundamental role of the research university.

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