



ARL Bimonthly Report 215 **April 2001**

Living the Principles – A Return to Tempe

by Adrian Alexander, Executive Director, Big 12 Plus Libraries Consortium

On February 9 and 10, 2001, 23 provosts and 26 library deans from members of the Big 12 Plus Libraries Consortium¹ met in Tempe, Arizona to discuss the "Principles for Emerging Systems of Scholarly Publishing." These principles, now known as the "Tempe Principles," resulted from a previous meeting held in Tempe in March 2000, sponsored by the Association of American Universities (AAU), ARL, and the University of Kansas.² That meeting brought together 40 stakeholders in the scholarly publishing process to build consensus on a set of principles that could guide the transformation of the scholarly publishing system. Subsequent to that meeting, the AAU and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges commended the principles to their presidents and chancellors for discussion on their campuses. Heeding this call for action, the Big 12 Plus created an opportunity to engage their provosts, in the words of conference organizer Sarah Michalak (University of Utah), "in a discussion of what the principles really mean at the institutional level. We want their endorsement of the principles, but more importantly, we need their involvement in developing action plans for implementing the principles." This February 2001 meeting of the Big 12 Plus provosts and library directors was hosted by Arizona State University Provost Milton Glick and Dean of Libraries Sherrie Schmidt.

The Big 12 Plus (BTP) consists of 29 research libraries located in the central and western United States. Twenty-eight of its members are academic libraries, of which 24 also belong to the Association of Research Libraries. Scholarly communication issues have been a part of the consortium's strategic plan for over three years, with its first direct involvement in the "debate" dating back to April 1998, when the Big 12 Plus hosted a joint meeting of its library deans and members of the U.S. National Commission on Library and Information Sciences at the Linda Hall Library in Kansas City, Missouri. Speakers at that meeting included ARL Executive Director Duane Webster and University of Kansas Provost David Shulenburg, who emphasized the need for a re-examination of the academy's role in scholarly communication, including universities and scholarly societies. Shortly after this meeting, the provosts of the Big 12 Athletic Conference endorsed a statement drafted by Shulenburg and outlining this position, titled "Scholarly Communication and the Need for Collective Action."³

The discussions that provided the focal point for the February 2001 Big 12 Plus meeting were facilitated by Stanley Chodorow, former provost at the University of Pennsylvania and now Professor Emeritus at the University of California at San Diego. Chodorow was also a member of the original group that met to develop the Tempe Principles in March 2000. In addition to the provosts and library deans who gathered, the BTP also welcomed two special guests: George O. Strawn, Executive Officer, Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE), National Science Foundation; and Heather Joseph, President, BioOne, Inc. The discussion was organized around three major themes, each

containing several Tempe Principles to be addressed: 1) the promise and requirements of scholarly e-publication, 2) copyright issues of control and fair use, and 3) the economy of scholarly communication. The following is a summary of this discussion and the conclusions that were reached.

Session I - The Promise and Requirements of Scholarly e-Publication

- **Tempe Principle 1:** The cost to the academy of published research should be contained so that access to relevant research publications for faculty and students can be maintained and even expanded.
- **Tempe Principle 2:** Electronic capabilities should be used, among other things, to: provide wide access to scholarship, encourage interdisciplinary research, and enhance interoperability and searchability.

How can the universities and their libraries use the technological infrastructure that institutions have installed to achieve these goals and to ensure that the university's information assets are securely preserved and readily accessible to faculty and students?

This session began with a discussion of the "scholars portal" concept and its application to achieving a readily accessible, cost-effective system of scholarly communication. While there was general support for the idea, several questions were raised. For example, where should the editorial function and other control mechanisms reside? How would peer review be managed and paid for? One participant suggested incorporating a "fee for service" for manuscript review. Everyone did seem to agree that portals would need to be discipline-based. This led to a lengthy discussion of the importance of the role of scholarly societies in developing scholars portals. It was suggested that a good starting place for developing a portal might be with digitized public domain information already indexed in our libraries. But, the group asked, how do we collaborate on a project such as this? Could BTP libraries serve as a test-bed for such an approach? Before the BTP begins creating portals, cautioned a participant, there may be a need for the community to focus first on creating more "alternative" publishing outlets, such as was done with BioOne.⁴

The conversation then turned to ideas for how to move these concepts forward. One suggestion was to identify what should be included in a scholars portal to address the challenges and expanding possibilities of scholarly publishing. Then the BTP libraries could sponsor meetings of their faculty, with particular focus on those disciplines that would most likely benefit from and that are most ready to move to a new model such as this. After identifying such interested groups, the provosts' role would be to support—both financially and with policy—campus participation. Additionally, other academic consortia, such as the CIC, as well as scholarly societies, could be invited to participate. The University of Arizona's creation on its campus of the low-cost alternative journal *Journal of Insect Science*, which competes with an existing, higher-priced journal, was given as an example of a successful approach to tying the scholars portal concept to a source of academy-sponsored and vetted content for a portal. Another option proposed for local action was to identify on each of the BTP campuses journal editors who are key to effecting any changes in the system of scholarly communication.⁵

Session II – Copyright Issues of Control and Fair Use

- **Tempe Principle 5:** The academic community embraces the concepts of copyright and fair use and seeks a balance in the interest of owners and users in the digital environment. Universities, colleges, and especially their faculties should manage copyright and its limitations and exceptions in a manner that assures the faculty access to and use of their own published works in their research and teaching.

- **Tempe Principle 6:** In negotiating publishing agreements, faculty should assign the rights to their work in a manner that promotes the ready use of their work and choose journals that support the goal of making scholarly publications available at reasonable cost.

How does fair use of electronic publications differ from that of print publications? What position should universities take in defining fair use in the electronic media? What role should granting agencies play in helping to realize the goals of Principle 6? What should universities do to encourage the agencies—principally the NIH and NSF—to assist in this effort?

The Tempe Principles clearly acknowledge the central role played by copyright in the academic community's mission of advancing knowledge. The principles note that members of the community are both creators and consumers of scholarly publications, and by judiciously assigning the rights to their work, faculty members can help assure that scholarship remains affordably available to the community. This second discussion session began with a suggestion that faculty, when they publish, ought to stipulate that their work go into the public domain six months after publication, as called for in the "Public Library of Science" (PLOS) movement.⁶ The PLOS is a grassroots effort led by a small group of distinguished life scientists to create publicly available electronic archives of the life sciences literature. The leaders of the PLOS are encouraging scientists to talk with their societies and to sign an open letter pledging to submit to, review or edit for, or subscribe to only those journals that will make their content freely available in a public archive six months after publication. Participants noted that many of the original signers of the letter are journal editors themselves. Can BTP provosts and library deans do anything practical on their respective campuses to support this initiative? One response was that all of those present could endorse the PLOS concept on their campuses and encourage faculty to sign the open letter. It was also suggested that the BTP could recommend to the National Science Board that it adopt a policy with respect to placing publicly funded scholarly publications in the public domain. The group concluded this session by endorsing the PLOS concept and agreeing to work to encourage faculty to sign the open letter. In addition, they agreed to inform faculty of the importance of amending publishers' copyright transfer agreements in order to reserve the rights to use their own works in teaching and research. The Triangle Research Library Network's "Model University Policy Regarding Faculty Publications in Scientific and Technical Scholarly Journals" was pointed out as a good example of a useful model.⁷

Session III - The Economy of Scholarly Communication

- **Tempe Principle 1:** The cost to the academy of published research should be contained so that access to relevant research publications for faculty and students can be maintained and even expanded. Members of the university community should collaborate to develop strategies that further this end. Faculty participation is essential to the success of this process.
- **Tempe Principle 8:** To assure quality and reduce proliferation of publications, the evaluation of faculty should place a greater emphasis on quality of publications and a reduced emphasis on quantity.

How do we restore the proportionality of the cost of information within the economy of the academy? What opportunities do the electronic media give us to reduce the cost of publication and distribution of information? How do we preserve fundamental academic values while reducing the cost of publication?

The third session of the day began with a discussion of Tempe Principle 8, dealing with the issue of "quantity vs. quality" in scholarly publication. Chodorow cited several universities as examples of institutions where this issue has been explored, but noted that there isn't necessarily a single formula

that would apply evenly across disciplines or that could be applied uniformly by all departments. Nevertheless, the adoption of a formula could change a campus's culture over time. Some questioned, however, whether Principle 8 had its roots in the paper journal age, where concern over quantity is a byproduct of annual faculty evaluation systems that force us to emphasize placing "marks on the wall." Others were concerned that we might be fooling ourselves to think of Principle 8 as a means of reducing the cost of scholarly communication. In fact, selecting fewer articles for tenure and promotion might not prove to be an incentive to publish less at all, but might prompt faculty to publish even more.

Summation and Next Steps

The meeting ended with the hope that the impact of what was learned at this gathering will extend beyond our own campuses. The Big 12 Plus could become a catalyst for promoting change across the academy. The following points of agreement were reached:

- Support and fund the development of electronic journals that dramatically reduce costs to libraries, or which fill in gaps in the literature, such as *BioOne* <<http://www.bioone.org/>>, which was co-founded by the BTP, and the University of Arizona's new *Journal of Insect Science* <<http://www.insectscience.org/>>.
- Encourage faculty at BTP institutions to sign the "open letter" on the Public Library of Science website <<http://www.publiclibraryofscience.org/>>, and work with journal editors on our campuses to commit their respective publications to the PLS concept. Additionally, we will pursue the adoption of a resolution from the BTP provosts and their library deans to the National Science Board, requesting a new National Science Foundation policy that supports and implements the Public Library of Science concept for all NSF-funded research, and that creates an archive for that research similar to the National Institutes of Health's PubMed Central <<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>>.
- Endorse the original Tempe Principles on each of our campuses.
- Re-evaluate our respective promotion and tenure policies as they relate to the valuable work performed by faculty as journal editors, including work on electronic publications.
- Create a strategy to develop an array of scholars portal initiatives within the BTP, utilizing existing technical standards and including discipline-specific, customized scholarly content.
- Promote best practice (model language) in institutional intellectual property rights policy in order to achieve the goal of unconstrained access to scholarly materials for educational purposes.

—Copyright © 2001 Adrian Alexander

The **Tempe Principles** are published in their entirety at <<http://www.arl.org/scomm/tempe.html>>. For more information, contact Mary Case <marycase@arl.org>.

Footnotes

1. See <<http://www.big12plus.org/>>.
2. See <<http://www.arl.org/scomm/tempe.html>>.
3. See <<http://www.big12plus.org/pressreleases/scholar.htm>>.
4. BioOne is an online aggregation of journals in whole organism biology created through a

partnership of the Big 12 Plus, SPARC, the University of Kansas, AIBS, and Allen Press. See <http://www.bioone.org/>.

5. It was noted that a database of journal editor information is included as part of the Create Change campaign and would be useful in this initiative. See <http://www.arl.org/create/resources/journal.html>.
6. See <http://www.publiclibraryofscience.org/>.
7. See <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/scc/trln.html>.

Alexander, Adrian. "Living the Principles: A Return to Tempe." *ARL Bimonthly Report* 215 (April 2001): 1-3.
<http://www.arl.org/newsltr/215/tempe.html>

[Table of Contents for Issue 215](#) | [Other Scholarly Communication Articles](#)



ARL policy is to grant blanket permission to reprint any article in the Bimonthly Report for educational use as long as full attribution is made. Exceptions to this policy may be noted for certain articles. This is in addition to the rights provided under sections 107 and 108 of the Copyright Act. For commercial use, a reprint request should be sent to ARL Director of Information Services, [Julia Blixrud](#).

© The Association of Research Libraries
Maintained by: [ARL Web Administrator](#) Site Design Consultant: [Chris Webster](#) Last Modified: 25 April 2001