



University of Tennessee, Knoxville
**TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative
Exchange**

School of Information Sciences -- Faculty
Publications and Other Works

School of Information Sciences

10-1-2010

Swan Song and Issues Unresolved.

Carol Tenopir
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Follow this and additional works at: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_infosciepubs



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Tenopir, Carol. "Swan Song and Issues Unresolved," *Library Journal* 135 (October 1, 2010).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Information Sciences at TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Information Sciences -- Faculty Publications and Other Works by an authorized administrator of TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.



ONLINE DATABASES

Swan Song & Issues Unresolved

By Carol Tenopir

AFTER 28 YEARS, 264 COLUMNS, 15 annual database marketplace surveys, and nearly half a million words, I am calling it quits for Online Databases. *Library Journal* and I are parting amicably: the responsibilities of administration and the concentration required on several large research grants make it increasingly difficult for me to wrap my head around the column. This year, cutting back from monthly columns to six per year actually made it more difficult as I no longer had Online Databases always percolating in my brain.

Writing this column for nearly three decades has allowed me to keep up with events; make library, publisher, and vendor contacts from all over the world; and attend dozens of fascinating meetings. Lately, I've been focusing on small, targeted conferences that I call "hidden gems," like the Charleston Conference, the "Fiesole" Collection Development Retreat, and the UK Serials Group (UKSG).

Shifting e-collections

At those meetings I take copious notes but don't always get it right. At the 2010 Fiesole retreat, Jim Mouw of the University of Chicago spoke about patron-driven acquisitions. I mistakenly quoted him in my June 1 column (p. 24) as stating that the University of Chicago Library (UCL) is spending 50 percent of its monographic budget on Patron Initiated Purchasing. Mouw was actually quoting figures from other major libraries. In actuality, while UCL is currently purchasing about 20 percent of its monographs in e-format, this is largely accomplished through traditional means. It has long had a system in place for purchase recommendations but has yet to deploy a patron-initiated purchasing program. As at Chicago, ebooks and innovative ways to acquire them will remain important topics this coming year, as libraries continue the shift to e-collections.

No consensus on way forward

This June I attended two small international conferences with a similar focus—the 14th annual conference on Electronic Publishing (El-Pub), held in Helsinki, Finland, and the Fourth Bloomsbury Conference on E-Publishing and E-Publications, held at University College London.

These meetings brought librarians, publishers, and researchers together to discuss the social and technical transformations happening in scholarly publishing. Goals and ideals are shared by conference attendees across the board, but

port from the U.S. Interagency Working Group on Digital Data, "Harnessing the Power of Digital Data for Science and Society." Unsurprisingly, new careers for data managers and expanded roles for libraries in data curation and e-science are a rising international trend as well, led in the United States by grants and projects funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

New roles for data

At Bloomsbury, Scott Brandt and Charles Watkinson of Purdue University Libraries (PUL), IN, and Purdue Univer-

Researchers are willing to share their data, but prefer means that will return some benefit as well

the way forward remains unresolved. For example, attendees at both gatherings acknowledged the importance of peer review but differed on how well the current system works and whether it should be open or closed, extensive or "light touch." There was similarly wide agreement about the benefits of increased access to scholarly literature but little consensus on whether open access economic models substantially support that goal or not.



The extension of research articles to include raw findings data was one improvement envisioned in both Helsinki and London, prompted by the increased role data access is playing in nearly all spheres. Highlighting this trend, *Nature* devoted its September 10, 2009, issue to the scientific data deluge, with frequent references to the January 2009 re-

sity Press, respectively, talked about just such an IMLS-funded venture to build data profiles of scientists with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

They have found that researchers are willing to share their data but prefer means that will return some benefit as well. Widespread best practices for data citation, data preservation, and editorial services could incentivize sharing, Brandt and Watkinson reported. It's easy enough to speak about grouping these functions, but remember that the nature and complexity of data vary tremendously among subject disciplines and individual researchers, as do restrictions. Original data sources range from primary texts for humanities researchers to gigantic shared data sets recorded by remote sensors to field data collected by social science researchers.

To address this burgeoning field, PUL is building out its research data capabilities to encompass the entire research life cycle including publishing, curation, and stewardship of e-data and e-publications.

Carol Tenopir (ctenopir@utk.edu) is Professor at the School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

